

AGENDA

Meeting: Police and Crime Committee

Date: Wednesday 24 May 2023

Time: 10.00 am

**Place: Chamber, City Hall,
Kamal Chunchie Way, London, E16 1ZE**

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Members of the Committee

Caroline Russell AM (Chair)

Tony Devenish AM

Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman)

Len Duvall AM

Marina Ahmad AM

Sem Moema AM

Shaun Bailey AM

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

Unmesh Desai AM

Keith Prince AM

A meeting of the Committee has been called by the Chair of the Committee to deal with the business listed below.

Proper Officer: Mary Harpley, Chief Officer
Tuesday 16 May 2023

Further Information

If you have questions, would like further information about the meeting or require special facilities please contact: Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer; Email: lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk. For media enquiries please contact: Emma Bowden, Senior Communications Officer; Email: emma.bowden@london.gov.uk. If you have any questions about individual items please contact the author whose details are at the end of the report. If you have a public enquiry please contact the City Hall Public Liaison Unit on 020 7983 4000. This meeting will be open to the public, except for where exempt information is being discussed as noted on the agenda. It is suggested that any member of the press or public wishing to attend the meeting in-person contacts the clerk (listed above) in advance. A guide for the press and public on attending and reporting meetings of local government bodies, including the use of film, photography, social media and other means is available online at [Openness in Meetings.pdf](#). Public areas are located on the ground floor. There is access and facilities for disabled people, and induction loops are available. There is limited parking for orange and blue badge holders, which will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis and must be booked in advance. Please contact Facilities Management in advance via email at FM.Helpdesk@london.gov.uk if you require a parking space or further information regarding access and facilities.

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Certificate Number: FS 80233

Agenda

Police and Crime Committee

Wednesday 24 May 2023

1 Apologies for Absence and Chair's Announcements

To receive any apologies for absence and any announcements from the Chair.

2 Declarations of Interests (Pages 1 - 4)

Report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat

Contact: Lauren Harvey, lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

The Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Agenda Item 2, as disclosable pecuniary interests;**
- (b) Note the declaration by any Member(s) of any disclosable pecuniary interests in specific items listed on the agenda and the necessary action taken by the Member(s) regarding withdrawal following such declaration(s); and**
- (c) Note the declaration by any Member(s) of any other interests deemed to be relevant (including any interests arising from gifts and hospitality received which are not at the time of the meeting reflected on the Authority's register of gifts and hospitality, and noting also the advice from the GLA's Monitoring Officer set out at Agenda Item 2) and to note any necessary action taken by the Member(s) following such declaration(s).**

3 Membership of the Committee

The Committee is recommended to note the membership and chairing arrangements for the Committee, as agreed by the London Assembly at its Annual Meeting on 4 May 2023, as follows:

Caroline Russell AM (Chair)

Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman)

Marina Ahmad AM

Shaun Bailey AM

Unmesh Desai AM

Tony Devenish AM

Len Duvall AM

Sem Moema AM

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

Keith Prince AM

4 Terms of Reference

The Committee is recommended to note its terms of reference, as agreed by the London Assembly at its Annual Meeting on 4 May 2023, as follows:

- 1. To review and make a report or recommendation on the draft police and crime plan, or draft variation, given to the Assembly by the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime and on the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime Annual Report, in accordance with the provisions of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.**
- 2. To keep under review the exercise of the functions of the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime.**
- 3. To investigate, and prepare reports, as necessary, in accordance with the relevant provisions of section 33 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.^[1]**
- 4. To submit proposals, as necessary, to the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime.**
- 5. To hold a confirmation hearing in respect of the Mayor’s proposed candidate for Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and to make recommendations to the Mayor and decisions as necessary on the proposed appointment.**
- 6. To fulfil functions in relation to complaints about conduct matters, in accordance with the responsibilities accorded to the Committee by section 31 and schedule 7 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012.**

[Note: The Committee functions must be exercised with a view to supporting the effective exercise of the functions of the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime.]

Lead responsibility for scrutiny of:

**Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime; London Crime Reduction Board;
Violence Reduction Unit Partnership Reference Group.**

^[1] The powers of the London Assembly include, in particular, power to investigate, and prepare reports about:

- (a) any actions and decisions of the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime;
- (b) any actions and decisions of the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime;
- (c) any actions and decisions of a member of staff of the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime;
- (d) matters relating to the functions of the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime;
- (e) matters in relation to which the functions of the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime are exercisable; or
- (f) any other matters which the Assembly considers to be of importance to policing and crime reduction in the metropolitan police district.

5 Standing Delegations of Authority

The Committee is recommended to note the following standing delegations of authority to the Chair of the Committee, as agreed by the London Assembly at its Annual Meeting on 4 May 2023:

- (a) At its Annual Meeting on 1 May 2013, the Assembly agreed to delegate a general authority to Chairs of all ordinary committees and sub-committees to respond on the relevant committee or sub-committee's behalf, following consultation with the lead Members of the party Groups on the committee or sub-committee, where it is consulted on issues by organisations and there is insufficient time to consider the consultation at a committee meeting; and**
- (b) At the Plenary Meeting on 6 June 2019, the assembly agreed to delegate authority to Chairs of ordinary committees, sub-committees and working groups to agree, in consultation with the relevant party Group Lead Members and Deputy Chairs:**
 - (i) The detailed terms of reference for any investigation to be undertaken by the relevant committee, sub-committee or working group within its work programme as agreed by the GLA Oversight Committee, and any related project plans and arrangements for related site visits or informal meetings; and**
 - (ii) The topic and scope for any additional projects to be added to its work programme, where it is not practicable to secure prior approval from the GLA Oversight Committee and subject also to subsequent ratification by the GLA Oversight Committee.**

6 Minutes (Pages 5 - 78)

The Committee is recommended to confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 8 March and 22 March 2023 to be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

7 Summary List of Actions (Pages 79 - 98)

Report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat

Contact: Lauren Harvey, lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

The Committee is recommended to note the completed, outstanding and closed actions arising from its previous meetings, and the additional correspondence sent.

8 Action Taken Under Delegated Authority (Pages 99 - 204)

Report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat

Contact: Lauren Harvey, lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

The Committee is recommended to note the recent action taken by the former Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee under delegated authority, following consultation with party Group Lead Members, namely to agree:

- (a) The Committee's response to the Metropolitan Police Service's Draft Turnaround Plan for 2023-2025, as attached at Appendix 1;**
- (b) The Committee's report on counter-terrorism and radicalisation, as attached at Appendix 2;**
- (c) The Committee's report on missing children in London, as attached at Appendix 3; and**
- (d) The Committee's letters to the Mayor and Home Secretary following Sir Thomas Winsor's report on the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, as attached at Appendices 4 and 5.**

9 Responses to Committee Output (Pages 205 - 216)

Report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat

Contact: Lauren Harvey, lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

The Committee is recommended to note the responses to the Committee's report on Probation Services in London from the following:

- (a) His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service, as attached at Appendix 1;**
- (b) The Magistrates Association, as attached at Appendix 2; and**
- (c) His Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service, as attached at Appendix 3.**

10 Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime - Strengthening Oversight of the Metropolitan Police Service (Pages 217 - 220)

Report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat

Contact: Janette Roker, janette.roker@london.gov.uk

The Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note the report as background to putting questions to invited guests and note the subsequent discussion; and**
- (b) Delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.**

11 Police and Crime Committee Work Programme (Pages 221 - 224)

Report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat

Contact: Janette Roker, janette.roker@london.gov.uk

The Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note its work programme, and its meeting dates agreed by the London Assembly at its Annual Meeting on 4 May 2023; and**
- (b) Note the informal activity undertaken since its last meeting, namely a visit to the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre.**

12 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 7 June 2023 at 10.00am in Committee Rooms 2&3, City Hall.

13 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent

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Subject: Declarations of Interests

Report to:	Police and Crime Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat
Date:	24 May 2023
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out details of offices held by Assembly Members for noting as disclosable pecuniary interests and requires additional relevant declarations relating to disclosable pecuniary interests, and gifts and hospitality to be made.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table below, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests;**
- 2.2 **That the declaration by any Member(s) of any disclosable pecuniary interests in specific items listed on the agenda and the necessary action taken by the Member(s) regarding withdrawal following such declaration(s) be noted; and**
- 2.3 **That the declaration by any Member(s) of any other interests deemed to be relevant (including any interests arising from gifts and hospitality received which are not at the time of the meeting reflected on the Authority's register of gifts and hospitality, and noting also the advice from the GLA's Monitoring Officer set out at below) and any necessary action taken by the Member(s) following such declaration(s) be noted.**

3. Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 The Monitoring Officer advises that: Paragraph 10 of the Code of Conduct will only preclude a Member from participating in any matter to be considered or being considered at, for example, a meeting of the Assembly, where the Member has a direct Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in that particular matter. The effect of this is that the 'matter to be considered, or being considered' must be about the Member's interest. So, by way of example, if an Assembly Member is also a councillor

of London Borough X, that Assembly Member will be precluded from participating in an Assembly meeting where the Assembly is to consider a matter about the Member's role / employment as a councillor of London Borough X; the Member will not be precluded from participating in a meeting where the Assembly is to consider a matter about an activity or decision of London Borough X.

3.2 Relevant offices held by Assembly Members are listed in the table below:

Assembly Member Interests

Member	Interest
Marina Ahmad AM	
Shaun Bailey AM	
Elly Baker AM	
Siân Berry AM	Member, London Borough of Camden
Emma Best AM	Member, London Borough of Waltham Forest
Andrew Boff AM	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Council of Europe)
Hina Bokhari AM	Member, London Borough of Merton
Anne Clarke AM	Member, London Borough of Barnet
Léonie Cooper AM	Member, London Borough of Wandsworth
Unmesh Desai AM	
Tony Devenish AM	Member, City of Westminster
Len Duvall AM	
Peter Fortune AM	
Neil Garratt AM	Member, London Borough of Sutton
Susan Hall AM	Member, London Borough of Harrow
Krupesh Hirani AM	
Joanne McCartney AM	Deputy Mayor
Sem Moema AM	Member, London Borough of Hackney
Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM	
Zack Polanski AM	
Keith Prince AM	Member, London Borough of Havering
Nicholas Rogers AM	
Caroline Russell AM	Member, London Borough of Islington
Dr Onkar Sahota AM	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Council of Europe)
Sakina Sheikh AM	Member, London Borough of Lewisham

3.3 Paragraph 10 of the GLA's Code of Conduct, which reflects the relevant provisions of the Localism Act 2011, provides that:

- where an Assembly Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered or being considered or at
 - (i) a meeting of the Assembly and any of its committees or sub-committees; or
 - (ii) any formal meeting held by the Mayor in connection with the exercise of the Authority's functions
- they must disclose that interest to the meeting (or, if it is a sensitive interest, disclose the fact that they have a sensitive interest to the meeting); and
- must not (i) participate, or participate any further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; or (ii) participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting

UNLESS

- they have obtained a dispensation from the GLA's Monitoring Officer (in accordance with section 2 of the Procedure for registration and declarations of interests, gifts and hospitality – Appendix 5 to the Code).

3.4 Failure to comply with the above requirements, without reasonable excuse, is a criminal offence; as is knowingly or recklessly providing information about your interests that is false or misleading.

3.5 In addition, the Monitoring Officer has advised Assembly Members to continue to apply the test that was previously applied to help determine whether a pecuniary / prejudicial interest was arising - namely, that Members rely on a reasonable estimation of whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, could, with justification, regard the matter as so significant that it would be likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

3.6 Members should then exercise their judgement as to whether or not, in view of their interests and the interests of others close to them, they should participate in any given discussions and/or decisions business of within and by the GLA. It remains the responsibility of individual Members to make further declarations about their actual or apparent interests at formal meetings noting also that a Member's failure to disclose relevant interest(s) has become a potential criminal offence.

3.7 Members are also required, where considering a matter which relates to or is likely to affect a person from whom they have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within the previous three years or from the date of election to the London Assembly, whichever is the later, to disclose the existence and nature of that interest at any meeting of the Authority which they attend at which that business is considered.

3.8 The obligation to declare any gift or hospitality at a meeting is discharged, subject to the proviso set out below, by registering gifts and hospitality received on the Authority's on-line database. The [gifts and hospitality database](#) may be viewed online.

- 3.9 If any gift or hospitality received by a Member is not set out on the online database at the time of the meeting, and under consideration is a matter which relates to or is likely to affect a person from whom a Member has received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50, Members are asked to disclose these at the meeting, either at the declarations of interest agenda item or when the interest becomes apparent.
- 3.10 It is for Members to decide, in light of the particular circumstances, whether their receipt of a gift or hospitality, could, on a reasonable estimation of a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, with justification, be regarded as so significant that it would be likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest. Where receipt of a gift or hospitality could be so regarded, the Member must exercise their judgement as to whether or not, they should participate in any given discussions and/or decisions business of within and by the GLA.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are as set out in the body of this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers: None

Contact Information

Contact Officer:	Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer
E-mail:	lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

MINUTES

Meeting: Police and Crime Committee

Date: Wednesday 8 March 2023

Time: 10.00 am

**Place: Chamber, City Hall,
Kamal Chunchie Way, London, E16 1ZE**

Copies of the minutes may be found at:

www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-committees

Present:

Susan Hall AM (Chairman)

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair)

Marina Ahmad AM

Tony Devenish AM

Neil Garratt AM

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

Keith Prince AM

Caroline Russell AM

Dr Onkar Sahota AM

1 Apologies for Absence and Chairman's Announcements (Item 1)

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Sem Moema AM.

1.2 During the course of the discussion at Item 6, the Chairman welcomed students from the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London.

2 Declarations of Interests (Item 2)

2.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

2.2 **Resolved:**

That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Agenda Item 2, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests.

3 Minutes (Item 3)

3.1 **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 January 2023 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 Summary List of Actions (Item 4)

4.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

4.2 **Resolved:**

That the completed and ongoing actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee be noted.

5 Responses to Committee Outputs (Item 5)

5.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

5.2 **Resolved:**

(a) That the response from the Mayor of London to the Committee's letter on MOPAC: ten years on, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.

(b) That the response from the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to the Committee's report on probation services in London, as attached at Appendix 2 of the report, be noted.

6 Independent Review of Prevent (Item 6)

6.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat as background to putting questions to the following invited guests:

- Commander Dom Murphy QPM, Head of Counter Terrorism Command, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS);
- Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan, Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, MPS;
- Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC); and
- Oliver Levinson, Head of Countering Violent Extremism, MOPAC.

6.2 A transcript of the discussion is attached at **Appendix 1**.

6.3 During the course of the discussion, the MPS offered to arrange for Committee Members to visit the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre where further discussions on Prevent could take place.

6.4 **Resolved:**

(a) That the report and discussion be noted.

(b) That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.

7 Police and Crime Committee Work Programme (Item 7)

7.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

7.2 **Resolved:**

That the Committee's work programme for the 2022/23 Assembly year be noted.

8 Date of Next Meeting (Item 8)

8.1 The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 22 March 2023 at 10.00am in the Chamber, City Hall.

9 Any Other Business the Chairman Considers Urgent (Item 9)

9.1 There was one item of urgent business, which has been accepted by the Chairman, in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, in order for the Committee to delegate authority to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to respond to the Monitoring Officer's draft consultation paper on the grounds that the paper was not available until after the publication of the agenda, and that the response will need to be provided in advance of the Committee's next formal meeting on 22 March 2023.

9a Delegation of Authority (Item 9a)

9.2 The Committee considered the recommendation as set out on the supplementary agenda.

9.3 **Resolved:**

That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to respond to the Monitoring Officer's draft paper on the complaints received against the Mayor of London in connection with the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM.

10 Close of Meeting

10.1 The meeting ended at 11.23am.

Chairman

Date

Contact Officer: Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer;
Email: lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee – Wednesday 8 March 2023**Transcript of Agenda Item 6 - Independent Review of Prevent**

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): We now move on to our main item of business and I would like to welcome our guests, Oliver Levinson, Head of Countering Violent Extremism in the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC); Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, also from MOPAC; Commander Dom Murphy QPM, Head of Counter Terrorism Command, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS); and Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan, Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, MPS. Good morning to you all and thank you for coming.

I am going to start the questions about the background to the Independent Review of Prevent. How did the MPS and MOPAC engage with the Independent Review of Prevent?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Thank you very much and good morning. You might remember that there was a call for evidence from the lead reviewer, which we made a submission to. That submission in large part was derived from the evidence that we had accumulated in our Countering Violent Extremism Programme's engagement and review phase, which was the most comprehensive city-wide engagement and review activity in this policy area ever, therefore a significant amount of evidence. That report is published and still available.

We have continued to have ad hoc engagement with the reviewer and his team and most recently William Shawcross [CVO, Independent Reviewer] attended the Contest Board to discuss the review and hear from the membership of that board.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. I would like to say at this point we tried desperately to get William Shawcross here because it is a very interesting report and we have many questions, but unfortunately, we could not get him on this occasion. Hopefully he will come again. I am not sure who from the MPS would like to take this. Dom?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): Thanks for the question. In a very similar vein really, all of our engagement from the start of the review was with Mr Shawcross. He met the team both in London, in national Prevent for Counter Terrorism policing, and he also met a number of our advisory groups from Counter Terrorism in respect of how we lead on Prevent in terms of the police response for London.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. This one is really for MOPAC. What is your assessment of the delivery of the Prevent across London, and what is the Mayor and MOPAC doing to strengthen the effectiveness of Prevent across the capital?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): It is important to recognise that Prevent has delivered a lot of good work that has changed and saved lives, no doubt, but it has not been without its shortcomings and failures also. As a balanced interpretation, the Independent Review has offered some recommendations that will improve the systems within Prevent and that should be welcomed. There are a number of recommendations that we are pleased to see.

The report is not very prescriptive as to how those recommendations should be discharged, so we have to wait to see what the Home Office does with those recommendations, but it has been transparent with us so far. We hope that continues and we welcome that.

There are some recommendations that we do not necessarily agree with, and I do not think that will be a surprise to anybody because there are 34 recommendations. When we first heard about the Independent Review and lobbied for the Independent Review of Prevent there were really two outcomes that we would have liked to have seen from that. The first are some systems improvements and we have a smattering of those, which we are pleased to see.

The second is a point that we have talked about previously with the Committee, which is that we are concerned that a lack of awareness around Prevent, a lack of awareness and understanding around what the signs of radicalisation are, where help and support can be sought, and how people can engage it and what that help and support looks like; there is a lack of awareness around that. Certainly, more problematic, there is some continued mistrust and scepticism around the strategy.

Therefore, when the Independent Review was called for and announced, we thought that secondary issue would perhaps be dealt with as part of this review. Sadly, I do not think that is going to be the case, so that we are going to see a continued problem around awareness. I am not sure that the report is going to increase awareness hugely. Certainly, we feel very pessimistic about it moving people from a mistrustful or sceptical position. That is possibly some of the tone and some of the key findings of the report, which talk about things like an overwhelming interest in Islamist extremism. We have a longstanding issue where people feel that Prevent is all about Islamist extremism and all about the Muslim community, whereas we know that is simply not the case.

But also, perhaps some of the tone in the report around the movement from vulnerability to susceptibility, the movement from safeguarding to security, and again that has not moved that cohort who are worried about Prevent being too much of a securitisation strategy and not enough of a safeguarding strategy. Some of that probably sits within the tone and the wordcount of the report itself. But some of that has been exacerbated by the reporting of it, which is focused on those two issues.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Yes, we are going to go into this in more depth. This is basically more of the background.

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Sorry, I have jumped in too early.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): No, the thing is that what you are saying I think lots of us agree with you and I am hoping that will come up later. If it does not, at the end of the session please remind us and we will go back because that is a very valid point in my view. If I can ask either of you from the MPS, what do you think is needed to strengthen the Prevent programme in London?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): Thank you. First of all, any opportunity to review a part of the Contest strategy and our response to that strategy is welcome. Therefore, the review is welcome for that reason and in a very similar vein we do not necessarily recognise all of the recommendations as impacting upon our everyday delivery of Prevent in

London. However, that is not to say that there are some things in there that I am sure will help us to frame Prevent in a slightly different way or perhaps deliver it in a different way.

Of course, it is for the Home Office to come back with that strategy and that assessment, but for us this represents an opportunity to look at what we do. That is always welcome and it is welcome in every strand of Contest. It will not make any immediate difference to how we are delivering Prevent at the moment. I am sure we are going to get on to the definitions and the challenges between the different ideologies that we deal with within Prevent and some of the comments made by Mr Shawcross in the review. But primarily there are some challenges here for us, and of course we need to wait for the Home Office to come back with a strategy for how that might impact upon Counter Terrorism policing and particularly Prevent in London.

But there are some big challenges that need to run alongside this report. Changes in how we fund priority areas across London are going to be particularly impacted for us. That is almost on a par with this review as to the impact it is going to have on how we deliver Prevent in London going forward.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): For me it is helpful if you put a spotlight on Prevent; it is good because it gets people talking, it raises awareness around the challenges that we have around radicalisation and the questions that we grapple with every day are: what is radicalisation? What is that journey? At what point does intervention take part? Is it too early? Is it too late? What does success look like when we talk about the delivery of Prevent? That is a really challenging area too.

In London, and Mr Shawcross' report makes some good observations around disguised compliance, he specifically talks about Ali Harbi Ali and the tragic murder of Sir David Amess [MP]. He talks about how he knew what he was going to do at a very young age, and did he disguise his intentions to Prevent professionals? There is also talk about susceptibility and vulnerability and we are seeing younger people entering the world of terrorism, which is a real challenge for us because of course Prevent is about keeping people innocent while they still are that. We need the community support to do that.

Terminology I think is a really key challenge for us because, whether we like it or not, and it is not necessarily borne out in the report as much as we would like, but we do need to get to the position where we can describe what extremism is. Lord [Justice] Haddon-Cave's review in relation to Shakeel Begg [Head Imam of Lewisham Islamic Centre] and the yardstick he used is something that we should look more at going forward in terms of how we describe extremists, harmful but legal individuals that operate within our space.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Yes, we are going to explore that more. You have answered my next question, but I will ask this of you, the Independent Review of Prevent says that Prevent does not have sufficient focus on the threat posed by Islamists. Do you agree with that and what are you going to do in response to that?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): I entirely understand the point that was being made and what comes out in the review at this point is the challenge of taking a national view of something that has very local implications. In that case we do not recognise in London that we have removed our focus from Islamist ideology. In fact, our numbers are not necessarily borne out in the review in the way that we would like. We still see the majority of Islamist referrals into Prevent here in London. While extreme right wing does present a very significant challenge to us and is across some of our Pursue casework in increasing numbers, it is true to say that, in London, Islamist ideology is still the dominant ideology in Prevent referrals.

Our focus is where the threat exists and that is a key point that needs bringing out for Counter Terrorism policing certainly, but also for our partners; we need to go where the threat exists. Where we see that threat and harm to the public, or where we see that threat and harm to individuals who may be being drawn into an ideology as a result of a vulnerability of some kind, or an intention, that we respond to that threat. Therefore, we are less driven by an ideology, but driven by the threat, which is a point that the review brings out quite strongly and is something that we in London particularly - but for the whole Prevent network - are involved in.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): I am going to come to MOPAC about this as well, but I will stay with you then, Dom. Are you concerned that there is an imbalance or disparity in thresholds applied to Islamist and extreme right wing referrals to Prevent?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): That is not something we have seen in London; we are very alive to it. It is something we clearly monitor. But what I can say is - and to go back to my point really - we are in the game of trying to understand where the threat lies for the public and we will respond according to that threat. That is across the Contest picture. But certainly, for Prevent and how it connects into the Pursue activity that you might see us undertake, this is about the threat posed to the public and the threat posed to individuals who might be vulnerable or susceptible. Therefore, for us, we need to ensure that we are responding in that way so that disparity does not quite exist in that way because we are agnostic to what the ideology is, and we are threat-focused and potentially harm-focused. That is where we need to be.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Good. That is what we want to hear really. If I ask MOPAC the same question.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I have very little to add to what Commander Murphy said. All I would point out is the latest figures, which we have for this, show that there were over three times as many Prevent referrals in London related to Islamist activity than there were for extreme right wing. It is 384 against 122. That would suggest that they are going, and they should go, where the threat is. I know that is not the national trend, but I do not want to speak for outside of London. I would also agree with what William Shawcross said that obviously thresholds should be set at the same level regardless of what ideology you are talking about. I have not seen the evidence that he has and I have not had all of the conversations that he has had. I do not want to talk about what has happened in the rest of the country. But I have been reassured by MPS colleagues that in London they do feel that they are applying that in the right way and that they are not seeing those sort of disparities.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Good. If anybody is watching this, and I know people do, we are specifically talking about London now and how this affects Londoners. Sticking with MOPAC, in what ways has the London Prevent Board been successful in co-ordinating Prevent in London and where could improvements be made?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I can talk to that. The London Prevent Board is what I would describe to be a strategic and tactical board. It is cochaired by the Chief Executives of London Committee's Prevent Lead and the Home Office. Its members are primarily Chief Executives across London local authorities, sometimes represented by Directors of community safety, alongside multi-agency partners. That Board has existed for some time now. It has made some improvements in that time. It now has a better buy-in from senior local authority leads, which makes it more

effective. It has a good buy-in already from multi-agency partners. Jane attends it also. It is good at looking at strategic issues and trying to come up with tactical responses to those.

As an example of something that it is looking at right now is colleagues have touched upon the fact that, in the Shawcross review, Shawcross talks about the need for regionalisation of local Prevent delivery across the board in England and Wales. That is something that we have been talking about and potentially looking at for a number of years now and recommending that is looked at by the Home Office. But that is going to be complicated in London and on one hand, looking at a new model of delivery with the same amount of resource that you currently have, and that is very different to looking at a new model of delivery with much fewer resources. That seems to be the direction of travel and that worries us. Therefore, the London Prevent Board is looking at that very closely now and trying to come up with some potential models around how we can most effectively deliver Prevent locally in London based within those confines.

The last thing to say about the London Prevent Board is that it does report to the London Contest Board. Niall [Bolger, Chief Executive, London Borough of Hounslow], who chairs the London Prevent Board, is a standing member of the London Contest Board, which is purely strategic.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Yes. Let us hope they do listen to make it different in different parts of the country because we have different issues here to some other places for sure. Coming to both sets of you, in your opinion, has the Independent Review of Prevent helped or hindered efforts to increase public confidence in the Prevent programme? Shall I start with you, Dom, and then go back?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): I am not sure I am best placed to say if it has helped or hindered really. Our engagement with communities will bring that out as we understand some of the reaction to the Prevent review and any of the response that we get from the Home Office in terms of strategy, which I know there have been some public comments made. I know that we are waiting on what the strategy changes might be to the recommendations and they are really important to us, for us to take those on board and move forward with them.

I honestly believe that any opportunity to talk publicly about Prevent, about Counter Terrorism, and all the challenges we face in Counter Terrorism and the communities' challenge in how they deal with them inside their own communities and with us, and across our partnerships, is welcome. It is a really important point to make, because we have not necessarily always got it right when we are talking about Prevent with communities and how we explain that. It is something we are very alive to, how can we engage more publicly in these discussions, and this review is a catalyst to that and I welcome that as a chance to talk more about Prevent publicly.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Have you been surprised - because I certainly have - that it has not been in the media more? You are, you are all nodding. Because I keep looking and it is such an important piece of work. Whether you agree with the report or you do not, it needs to be discussed. I regret that it has not been out there more.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): It has certainly been on quite a few of the blog spots that I read and there has been quite a lot about it, but there probably has not been as much in the mainstream media, if I can put it that way, as you might have expected. What would I say about this? I would start with one thing, which is one that is linked to that is that these Government reports, or other reports, often have a lot less cut-through with the general public than we

might otherwise expect. Whether it is going to move the dial or not with lots of people, it is probably never going to move it marginally.

I would say though, even within that, whether it has helped or hindered, I suppose I would describe it more as a bit of a missed opportunity, really. When you look at the number of organisations, which boycotted this, I think it was around 450, and some of them are, I suppose, what I would describe as the usual suspects you would have expected to be the case anyway. But there were others, for example, Amnesty International boycotted it where maybe some of those people would have been useful if they could have engaged and they could have done that. I am not making comment as to the validity or not of why they did the boycott, I am just saying I think that is a bit of a missed opportunity on this.

Then a final point I would say on all of this is I do think - as Jane was saying earlier - the language matters in all of this. I suppose this will come out in the wash with what the Home Office does with this and how it refers to the strategy. But there had previously been - because of concerns within certain communities and certain individuals, especially the Muslim community - that it had become a sort of spying mandate or an overly securitised Prevent, that they had intentionally tried to move it to more talking about safeguarding and an ability to engage people and get communities looking at it.

If you look in London, still the lowest levels of referral to Prevent come from family and friends and from the sort of wider community. Therefore, I do think it will be important how the Home Office responds to it and the language which then gets adopted going forward, how we talk about this, in order that can help to build that confidence and trust with people so that they are willing to make the referrals. Because, as Oliver said at the start, Prevent is undoubtedly the only show in town, does a lot of good, undoubtedly changes lives, saves lives, but we need to somehow find the language and find a way of talking about that in a way that is going to encourage and engender that trust and confidence.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Absolutely. I was very surprised that so many people boycotted it. I read weird things and a speech that [Sir] Mark Rowley [QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis] wrote, I think it was the beginning of 2018, said he would like to see many impressive leaders stepping forward to confront issues, including William Shawcross. Even if you do not agree with somebody's report, it is good to engage with it and say why - in front of everybody - you do not agree with it. I was very disappointed and I am pleased we are giving it an airing and I hope we do again because it is such important work.

Moving now on to Assembly Member Desai.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Good morning, panel. I have three questions, I think the first question to some extent has been already answered, but I will put it in a wider context. Firstly, can I say that the Labour group in this room, we believe that Prevent is the only show in town and I think, as you said, Oliver, it is doing a lot of good work. But also welcome any attempt to improve its efficacy and also iron out any flaws. But, as I say, it is the only game in town; it is about how we can improve it. Therefore, I welcome this session and also there are aspects of the Shawcross review that are clearly meritorious, but there are also some serious flaws in the review as well.

I was going to ask both MOPAC and the MPS the question whether there is a false dichotomy between addressing extreme right-wing terrorism and Islamist terrorism and whether one should follow the evidence. Commander, you already answered this question to some extent by saying that your work in London is not driven by ideology, but by the threat. Therefore, perhaps I could ask your views, Kenny?

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I have nothing really to add to what Commander Murphy says. It should be driven by the threat. In London, if you look at the threat level as a whole, we have something like - I am about to be corrected here I fear - but something like 60% of the acute threat in London at any one time. Therefore, for Londoners as a whole, they would expect Prevent, they would expect Pursue, they would expect the police, they would expect the security service, they would expect the work that we do in MOPAC, and in the Greater London Authority (GLA) to follow where that threat is. The important thing is not what ideology it is you are tackling; it is that you tackle it and you keep Londoners safe. I am not sure whether you call it a false dichotomy or what you would call it, but I agree with what Commander Murphy said about following the threat and making sure that the same thresholds are applied consistently.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Perhaps this is a question we would like to ask Mr Shawcross, who I think was going to come, but has not been able to be here.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): No, he did not respond, and then eventually said he could not come.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): Assembly Member Desai, if I could just add to what my colleagues have said, it is worth noting within London, when we talk about regionalisation and prioritisation, the Home Office had introduced a system called Prioritisation where 40 local authorities across the country received additional funding due to the threat, risk, and harm. That threat, risk, and harm was not just Prevent referrals, but also investigations, suspects who were released from prison, and convicted offenders. London had 22 of those 40 areas. So that gives you an idea in terms of the scale of the threat in London when it comes to terrorism.

Obviously, as you know, we are going to move to a regionalisation model, and what that means, in reality, is that London will move from having 22 prioritised areas down to having seven, and that may even reduce further to five. That obviously causes some concern because what we do not have is that dedicated resource in those areas. But it is important just to give you an idea in terms of the scale of the threat and where we sit in terms of the referrals and us following that evidence in terms of where we need to focus.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): My second question really to both MOPAC and the MPS is about one of the major criticisms of Prevent being that it lacks legitimacy among our Muslim community. Oliver, you said earlier that there is distrust, to use your words. What exactly are we doing to address this mistrust?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): That is about engagement; it is about transparency. I am pleased to see that there are findings in the report that talk about a need for further transparency. It also is about perhaps not adopting positions that are polarised and not adopting a position where you say you either support Prevent or you do not. and you are an extremist or you are not and you do not understand it fully. We need to be a bit more broad-minded about that and look at the history of the strategy and accept that it has had a bumpy road, but also be avowedly supportive of the progress that it has made and the good work that it has done in a transparent way. There are a lot of recommendations in the Shawcross review about the Home Office doing that better.

There are good recommendations in the Shawcross review about rebutting - more transparently and openly - criticisms of Prevent. I think that is really good because they can become somewhat urban legend and urban myth, which it does not matter if they are true or not because the perception creates a disengagement with the

strategy. A lot of those criticisms, urban myths, legends, if you like, relate to Muslim community members who have had involvements with Prevent. So, the creation of a system or a team that can rebut those transparently is very welcome. One of the best things about the report is a recommendation to create an independent body that will accept complaints and criticisms and be able to review those and respond to those. That is a very positive thing.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): I completely agree. The thing for us is we have over 1,500 Prevent champions now in local Basic Command Units (BCU), police officers and police staff who represent Prevent, and they are based with communities in our BCU areas. Any opportunity that we have that allows us to engage communities directly on the realities of Prevent and the perceptions that we all accept exist, unfortunately, is a welcome one. I do think this is a really good start to that process, being able to sit and talk about it and discuss the challenges we face and what lies ahead.

We will take every opportunity we can to be involved in any scrutiny of Prevent like this Independent Review and the engagement that follows with communities and our partners and that is a really important point. This is not just about MOPAC, this is not just about the police, there are so many partners involved in delivering Prevent and so many of those partners are locally based in the areas of London and we need to keep that engagement. We have local officers now who are permanently based in the communities. It is helpful. Would we want to do more of that? Absolutely, but this is that start point and if some of those recommendations were to be brought in and supported by the Home Office, we would support those.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you. The final question, Chairman, again to both MOPAC and the MPS, just again speaking very generally, do you think the Prevent review is a fair and unbiased review of the facts? In particular I am concerned with methodology used by Shawcross, I have some figures here that really focus on a handful of cases, six out of 1,500 are focused on 15 organisations from a total of 110. The explanation in how these were chosen and whether they were a representative sample or just cherry-picked.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I think that the report is a welcome contribution to the wider debate on Prevent. I am not going to get into any ad hominem attacks on whether it is or is not. I have not seen the facts or the evidence that Mr Shawcross has and all I can talk about is what we would like to see as a result of it in London, and I think we have been doing that.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): In danger or repeating myself, I agree entirely. I have not met these two gentlemen before either, therefore it is entirely genuine. This is again - and I am in danger of repeating myself - a really good opportunity for us to look at it. I do not think it would be helpful for me or us to look at the report and how it has been drafted; we are where we are. We now have all of the material and, as we say, we do not necessarily recognise every recommendation. Some of them will have a greater impact in London than they may elsewhere. It is time for us to work with the Home Office and others to try to move forward now with this and help it contribute to how we deliver Prevent.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Moving forward, that is OK, thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Before I carry on to my other colleagues, I would like to welcome, and my colleagues would like to welcome, students from CONEL College [of Haringey, Enfield and North East

London], Level 3, Year 1 and 2 Public Service classes, so hopefully future police and uniformed personnel. Welcome. Do you want to give us a wave? Hello. Today we are talking about the William Shawcross review on Prevent, which is Counter Terrorism. Absolutely fascinating stuff, I hope you enjoy it.

I am now going over to Assembly Member Russell.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you, Chairman. I just want to just circle back to the issue of public confidence and the fact that a huge number of the grassroots organisations that you have talked about as being so important in terms of the delivery of Prevent did not engage with the Shawcross review. I understand from statements that these groups have made that is because Shawcross is perceived to have a bias against Muslim communities. I just wonder whether you think that is going to be challenging in terms of taking the recommendations of the review forward. Everything you have both said about the recommendations, you have been clear you do not agree with all of them, and you have talked about it as an opportunity to review Prevent and talk about Prevent, and it all depends on what the Home Office comes back with in terms of how the review's recommendations are put into practice. I would just be interested in anything you can say about the absence of those community voices in this review.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): It is a really difficult question because I know Mr Shawcross did reach out to a number of communities and here in London, for example, he spoke to the Counter Terrorism Advisory Group. That is a group of survivors and victims of terrorism, a group of community members who run a number of charities and certainly some of them are supported by funding from MOPAC under the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programme, as well as academics. They act as our critical friend, really, and they have spoken out about the Shawcross report. I guess for me that is my temperature check. Alongside that I manage the Strategic Engagement Team, we have over 400 community contacts that we reach out to, to understand sentiment across London, and again that is a really good test for us in terms of are we getting it right.

When we talk about working with non-governmental organisation (NGO) groups, it comes back to the question around are we intelligence focused. I see community groups as being a really good opportunity. For example, we do a huge amount of work in sports and you look at sports and you say, "What does that have to do with Counter Terrorism?" It has lots to do with Counter Terrorism as we know within some sporting sectors it can be a draw for people to come together to discuss ideologies. We know it can also be a diversionary activity in terms of young people wanting to get off some energy and meet groups and form healthy relationships. We know it is another eyes and ears of the community, whereby the leaders and the organisers and the people who commit their time to work with these young people can spot the signs in terms of radicalisation, and therefore make referrals to us. They can offer that safeguarding influence.

Therefore, for us, working with that third sector is really important and we have to be focused in our time and effort because it is a challenge. It is a challenge reaching such broad communities and it is a challenge sometimes having the conversation. But I think London and London communities are really committed to this, I really do. I do see referrals come from families and friends and, although low, it is very difficult to pick up that phone and talk about your loved one, or sometimes not so much loved one, to say that you are worried about them. Because of course you are worried about what the next steps are. However, we do have a high proportion of people who do that.

We also know that communities really matter and in terms of information that comes into Counter Terrorism, whether it be people phoning the anti-terror hotline or the Act Early support line, we know that 20% of the

information that comes in has a direct impact on terrorism investigations, therefore that is really significant. Therefore, if I was to use the data that we have and the feedback that I get from that outreach, I think we are doing a good job in London. Can we do more? Absolutely. Is this review an opportunity? Definitely. I welcome the Prevent duty guidance refresh. What I am hoping is some of the recommendations around Mr Shawcross' report, around some of the groups that are not included within the Prevent duty, for example I would love to see doctors being included. I would like to see them having a duty. I would like to see immigration included and have that duty, so that we can work as a partnership to really identify and support people who are vulnerable to being radicalised.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): If I could I just add one further thing, that was an excellent answer from Jane in terms of Prevent. For me, if you look at the Commissioner's plan to grow and develop our community policing model, we will increasingly have more officers and staff based in the communities and responding to community needs. That has to work in conjunction with all of the activity that we are undertaking across the Contest strategy in addition to all of the challenges we face in policing London and safeguarding our public. Therefore, that is absolutely true for Prevent but, as part of the MPS, we need to look towards the opportunities that an increased community policing model will provide to engage those communities and increase public trust and confidence in Prevent as well as the police and our response.

Caroline Russell AM: I am hearing a very strong desire for deep community engagement. But I have not really heard an answer to is it a problem that these groups' voices have not been heard in this Prevent review because so many of those groups decided not to engage with it?

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I do not think it is as simple as a yes and no answer. As I said earlier, I do think for very many of these groups and individuals that boycotted, it is a missed opportunity and it is a shame that they have not had a chance to have their voices heard, and they all have their own reasons for that and I am not going to speculate on what they may or may not be. What I would say is, it is not as simple as saying it is A or B, for example.

There are groups there who, regardless of who the reviewer had been, regardless of what the terms of reference had been, almost inevitably would have boycotted it. Am I particularly worried that certain of the groups that are mentioned in his report - and we can all think of which ones I am referring to here probably - have not engaged with the review? No, I am probably not if you think of a group like CAGE for example, I suspect they would not have engaged regardless. So, I do not think that makes a huge difference.

But then there are probably groups in the middle where it would arguably have been useful, but then the question is how likely they are then to have an impact on the people who would not already be likely to report individuals to police if they were at risk of radicalisation or report into Prevent. We know from the Public Attitude Survey; I think it is something like 87% of Londoners say they probably would. Therefore, you are looking at what impact and what contact they have with that marginal 13% who already would not and how likely are they genuinely to have an influence with people at the margins? You are probably talking relatively small numbers in the grand scheme of things.

I still would contend that it is a missed opportunity because I think the more positive voices you have speaking up for Prevent and seeking to influence those people who are influenceable in this the better it would be. I suppose my direct answer to your question would be that it is a bit of a missed opportunity, but it is not quite as cut and dried as it might initially seem, if that makes sense.

Caroline Russell AM: I think I am hearing that practitioners in the field are using that deep knowledge of those community organisations to frame your response to the recommendations.

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Yes, I think that is right. It would be slightly remiss of us to believe that this was the one opportunity for those communities to engage. Engagement is a continuum and it will change all the time depending upon the challenges we face, particularly in the Counter Terrorism world, how we engage and who we engage with will change and have to flex and be more agile. But we see very much this engagement being an ongoing thing. This is a missed opportunity, as you say they did not engage with the review, however that is not their only opportunity and we are keen to ensure that every community has a voice in this process.

Caroline Russell AM: That will presumably help in terms of building trust and confidence in the processes. Thank you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I had wanted to ask, it is probably to Kenny or Oliver, I just want to know, just listening to the discussion, is there need really for a refresh/rebrand of Prevent, maybe calling it something else, bringing in a different package, taking some of the things out of this review, what is needed in order to try to deal with it. Because in some ways it is a toxic brand and how can you take that forward? Is that what is needed perhaps at this stage?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I can give you, I guess, an honest and personal answer to that. That would have been a good idea a number of years ago. To an extent that ship has sailed. What I mean by that is a number of years ago you had a Prevent system that was not nearly as effective, fair, or equitable as it is now. If we had have had that rebrand then and produced what we have now, which in essence is a pretty good system, Prevent and Channel are pretty good things, they are not perfect, but they are pretty good things. Now you run the risk of improvements having been made and the association to the word "Prevent" still being the problem. Therefore, it is a lot of the time a perception issue and I am not sure that would solve the issue now.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: That is helpful. I just thought from the discussion, I just wanted to tease that out. Thank you, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Garratt.

Neil Garratt AM: Just a quick question, maybe quite a basic question, talk about extremism and tackling extremism, what is the working definition used of "extremism"? it seems to be quite a vague term. I do not know, Dom, whether you can help me out on that?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): I might well defer to others on that one. For the reasons you mentioned, how we practically apply that is very different in a number of different types of investigations.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I think this goes to the heart of the problem in that there is a genuine legal definition of terrorism, the Government obviously brought in 2015, I believe it was, a Counter-Extremism Strategy, which had a very wide working definition and included issues in it, like female genital mutilation, which was very contested area as to

whether that should be within Counter-Extremism Strategy or not, for example, which broadens the whole thing. My understanding, and certainly the reporting is that the Bill, which was meant to accompany that strategy, never saw the light of day for very many concerns about how they would be able to frame that definition in a way that was workable. Therefore, you get exactly to the heart of one of the points, for example, in this Mr Shawcross talks about whether you should use a non-violent extremist to deal with somebody who is deradicalised, if I can use that term, somebody who will define a non-violent extremist and what you mean by that. That is one of the problems. Obviously there will be a spectrum there and everyone will agree you should not use, if you have somebody who is an extreme right-wing terrorist, you should not use somebody who everyone would recognise as being an outspoken extreme right wing propaganda, whether they are extreme left. But then as you move down that spectrum, I think that will be a much more contested definition.

Neil Garratt AM: Sorry, just very conscious of time, would a fair summary be that there is not a really clear definition and once you move away from people who are actively working or somehow involved in terrorist activity the question of the difference between an extremist ideology and just a non-mainstream political idea is a very grey area that is not well defined. Is that where we are?

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I think what you are getting to is from what William Shawcross says about some of the stuff which is used in the extreme right wing there. I would absolutely say that is right and that was part of the issues that the Government had when it tried to bring in the definition for the proposed Bill previously.

Neil Garratt AM: None of his recommendations, I think, include having one or the need to have one, so that just sits there as an unanswered question.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): That is why I am genuinely interested to see how the Home Office takes his recommendations and wants to act on them. That is something I have also been grappling with since 2015 and maybe this is a fresh opportunity for it to come forward with that.

Neil Garratt AM: Great. Thanks, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Let us hope so. We are now moving to safeguarding and vulnerability and I will go back to Assembly Member Russell.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. Do you agree with the Independent Review that Prevent has, and I quote, "increasingly come to be seen as synonymous with safeguarding"? Is this a concern or not, and why? Who wants to go first? The MPS first?

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, I will answer that question. It is a really difficult one because we talk about "safeguarding" and then we say, "Well, what is safeguarding?" From a policing perspective, that is really about information sharing, and it is about making sure that we fulfil our role in terms of child and adult safeguarding procedures and that we work with relevant partners.

In terms of the cohort of individuals that we deal with within the Prevent Programme, there are a lot of safeguarding needs. About 40% have some form of mental ill-health and we also see a large range of other

complex needs, whether it be adverse childhood experience; we see a range of domestic abuse within our casework; and just individuals who are looking for a sense of belonging.

Is that safeguarding and does that mean that there is not a terrorism risk? Well, there can be a terrorism risk and there can be a safeguarding [risk]. What Mr Shawcross does mention, which I think is useful, is that we should absolutely still safeguard young people. It would be a loss for us to move away from that and to just look at terrorism risk. I would much prefer to intervene early and identify an early indication that somebody is not going on to be managed under Prevent because they have not gone so far down that radicalisation journey. Safeguarding still has a big place in Prevent.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. Yes, when we think about cases like Shamima Begum, who was a child who was radicalised, that is absolutely a failure of safeguarding.

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): It has been found to be synonymous with safeguarding, and that is a good thing. When things have worked well, it has been. Prevent does a lot of different things and sometimes that is a challenge in itself. If you think about the different ends of the spectrum of Prevent delivery, at one end you have got Prevent working with a very young although vulnerable person, who perhaps has a number of vulnerabilities and safeguarding issues but has also potentially an association to radicalisation. It is entirely right to consider that as safeguarding work and vulnerability. At the same time, Prevent is trying to deradicalise hard-core terrorists, who are in prison, and under that lens "safeguarding" perhaps is less of an appropriate term. It is quite difficult to talk about all of that spectrum of work in one way. For much of what Prevent does, safeguarding is critical.

The review talks about changing the word from "safeguarding" to "susceptibility". To me, that is a synonym of "vulnerability" and I do not think that is a huge change in itself. There are instances where it is absolutely right to look at it as pure safeguarding, exploitation and manipulation. There are other instances where it will work with people who have more agency where it is about public protection and securitisation.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. We are moving into the questions that are coming up later.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Ahmad?

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you, Chairman, and good morning, panel. How does the MPS achieve the right balance between safeguarding vulnerable people, who are susceptible to radicalisation, and also protecting the public from dangerous extremists? Do you think you always get the balance right? Without naming names, it would be really useful if you could give a brief example of where you have got it right and what you learnt from that and where it maybe did not go right and what you learnt from that, please.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): It is going to be really challenging to give you specific examples and case studies, although I am happy to make the offer for you to come and spend some time with Jane as a group to perhaps understand those case studies in a bit more detail. I am very happy to facilitate that and have you come and do that. It would be a much easier forum for you to understand that detail.

Do we get it right every time? The truth, of course, is we cannot get it right every time. We have a lot of people working in Prevent and a lot of partnerships in Prevent. I was just reflecting on the previous question. We are, in effect, using the ability to safeguard somebody as an extension of managing the threat and

potential harm to the public or that individual. That is really what we are talking about here and we have to take a decision that we will apply the Prevent and Channel Programmes to those people who we believe present the greatest risk, either to themselves or to the public. Frequently, referrals are escalated to our more serious casework and in London that number is particularly high. In fact, I think the number is around 6% of all referrals, and that is a high number compared to the rest of the country. I suppose it demonstrates to me that we are applying Prevent in those areas where there is risk. We are reliant upon those referrals and all of the information involved in this process to get that right every time and there will of course be challenges with that.

We have seen this in the case of Ali Harbi Ali and we have seen this in a number of other cases in the past where a subject, who goes on to commit a terrorist attack or be involved in a terrorist investigation, was the subject of Prevent. We are always open to a review of that process to understand what can be learnt from that individual's journey and our response to it and that is really important to point out.

Marina Ahmad AM: With the difficulties that you have identified, in your opinion how will the move from the language of "vulnerability" towards the language of "susceptibility" better identify those at risk? That is absolutely on the back of what you have just said.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): It is really hard for me to draw a distinction between those two languages because it is such a small point in relation to how we deal with individuals. We need to understand who might be susceptible to those narratives but then who is vulnerable to actually taking that journey and that step. If we were to draw a defined line between those two things, we would end up restricting some our activity.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): As a real-life example of how I do not suspect that will make too much of a difference, we have the Vulnerability Assessment Framework, which is what is currently used by Prevent to look at all of this. One of the recommendations is that because Mr Shawcross would prefer to talk about "susceptibility", he does not think it should be called that anymore; that it should be called the Prevent Assessment Framework. However, at the same time he praises that framework for being quite sophisticated and really effective and is not suggesting any changes to it in that regard. I am not sure that change in language, as Commander Murphy said, will make a material difference at this stage. I may be wrong, of course, but until we see what the Home Office says that is our view at the moment.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you and my final question is for both agencies. There have been a number of reports in the last few years that a significant proportion of referrals to Prevent includes individuals struggling with mental illness and we have touched on this. Is that your experience widely and how does that change the way that Prevent actually views safeguarding? Perhaps we could start with MOPAC.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): We just agreed that the MPS would start there, but that is fine. Jane quoted a figure - was it about 40% of people --

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): -- who are referred in have mental health issues there, who need to be dealt with. I read with interest that Mr Shawcross said that this was potentially a way for some people of being referred in to then get quicker access to services. I am not sure, unless my MPS colleagues say otherwise from here, but we have seen a huge amount of evidence of that being one of the reasons for referral within London.

What I would say though is that there is clearly a wider debate happening at the moment about the provision of mental health services across the country, including in London. There is certainly a move within the MPS moving to a model called Right Care, Right Person, which is being brought down from Humberside [Police]. That is a move to making sure that people do get the right treatment in the right place. If the people who have those mental health issues do need to be referred into either Prevent or to Channel, that should happen regardless of whether those have those mental health incidents. What should not happen, if it is happening, would be through the wider system is that people are referred in there simply so that they can get that help, even though there is no wider threat to citizens as the result of that.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): I manage the Vulnerability Support Hub, which covers South England, and that is made up of psychiatrists, psychologists and nursing staff, who work alongside Counter Terrorism colleagues and we have three hubs nationally. That is to help us navigate the really complex world of mental health and to make sure that we are treating people fairly with respect and understanding how their mental ill-health condition might impact their offending or their behaviour, and whether or not there is a correlation or a causation between the two.

What I would say is that Prevent goes through a range of assessments to decide whether or not somebody is going to get an intervention or a support. The first thing is deconfliction where we make sure that it is not already being investigated by any of our services. The next thing is it has to pass their suspicion test where we have to suspect that there is a Counter Terrorism relevance for that case to progress. For example, if you referred somebody in today, it would go through deconfliction and then we would have to look at it and say, "Do we suspect there is a Counter Terrorism relevance?" If it hits that suspect position, as 75% of our cases in London do, then we reach out to partners to get all that information and then we make a decision as to whether or not we now believe that there is a Counter Terrorism relevance. It is at that point that it gets referred into Channel for that multiagency support.

We cannot say that somebody with mental ill-health, who is referred in because somebody wants to get them support, will automatically reach that kind of suspicion and then that belief stage. However, we are of course mindful of making sure that we really understand how a mental ill-health condition is impacting and whether there is anything that we can do practically to support that individual to divert them away from terrorism.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Pidgeon.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: It is all very interesting. I want to pick up a couple of specific questions around the Dovetail model so probably to the MPS, I do not know. Jane, you are nodding. Maybe I should come to you first. What impact has that Dovetail model had on the MPS' ability to gather information on individual cases at risk of extremism? The Dovetail model is about bringing local authorities in.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): Dovetail was basically where the local authorities take ownership of Prevent. At the moment, for example, referrals come into the police whereas in the Dovetail model they get the referrals, they make the assessment and then they make a decision in terms of progression into Channel. It is what we call the Section 36 decision. However, all the while that is done in conjunction with us and it is not done independently.

I have not seen anything but really good work from our two Dovetail sites, which are in [the London Boroughs of] Haringey and Croydon. I have seen them work really, really well, our partnership is very good, and I certainly think there will be some loss when we lose that Programme. What I would also say about those areas is that we probably see a higher conversion into Channel, and we see a higher percentage of cases hitting that threshold where people are given that kind of intervention and support. There is a question for us in policing in terms of “Is our bar too high in terms of referrals?”

I would say Dovetail was good. What I would say is what we need to do in London is take forward the recommendation by [the] Parsons Green [train bombing review], which is to introduce the National Referral Form. It is something that not all London boroughs have done. For me, that is a risk because nobody has ever died when we have shared information, but they have when we have not. The National Referral Form is about making sure that the right agencies are aware of the referral at the right time and that people are not doing their own individual screening of cases to make their own assessment. The problem with that is that that could be just one piece of the jigsaw.

What I would like to reassure Members about is that we are not about gathering information on people unnecessarily. We are busy and we really are only interested in people that we can support and divert away from terrorism.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Then the next step is looking at creating a hybrid model for referrals, risk assessment, information gathering and so on. What would this mean for the MPS? Have you started to develop that and are you able to take some of the good things from the Dovetail model into this?

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): To be honest with you, I am not sure whether or not that is going to be taken forward because it has been agreed by Ministers that Dovetail will cease. In London, it is not so impactful. In the Counter Terrorism [Policing] North West region, it is extremely impactful because all of their sites are Dovetail sites.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): One of the things is what do we do moving forward now then if we are losing --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes, the hybrid.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, into the hybrid model. We are going to need to think about what greater levels of co-ordination across all local authorities means for London and that is going to be really challenging for us. There are some boards in place already, but we might just need to think about how we use those boards slightly differently to fill that space. We are now going to have to come together in a different way to try to

have the same effect, with the regionalisation model potentially having fewer resources. It is a challenging period ahead. We can do it; the engagements are in place and already there is some work going on now across London to try to bring everyone together to share some of the information and create a process that has assurance around it for us all.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes, there is a lot of uncertainty. I will leave it there. Thank you, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): We are going to move on to Prevent duty and that is going to be started by my colleague Assembly Member Sahota.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you, Chairman, and this is about the Prevent duty. Simply, is it working or not working and what is the evidence for your statement? Over to you, whoever wants to take it first.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): I would say the Prevent duty is a good thing, it is something we need and it comes alongside other activity. However, for me and for our execution of Prevent, we need it to be socialised more. We need there to be more information on it and we need to understand how it is embedded much better in all of those people who come into contact with those who might be vulnerable to radicalisation and can then refer to us. Jane mentioned earlier about General Practitioner (GP) and other locations and we still have low referrals here in London from schooling generally in comparison to the rest of the country. Therefore, we need to understand how we have got the information about the Prevent duty out there and how we can make the best value of that requirement.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): I would just add that I have certainly asked Homeland Security group if the refresh that is currently ongoing in relation to the Prevent duty guidance is going to take into consideration Mr Shawcross' recommendations within that Prevent duty guidance. I see that as a really good opportunity to strengthen it, particularly when we move from that prioritised to regionalised approach. Then that duty guidance in my view will need to have some teeth and some clear guidance around how we test how effective we are in delivering Prevent.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: When I was sitting here, I was very worried that I did not know the pathway into Prevent as a GP but relieved when Jane said that doctors were not covered. Is this true? I thought that the 2015 [Counter-Terrorism and] Security Act had placed a duty on health boards to do so.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): It is for health boards, but GPs are not included. We have one lead for London, Paul McCann, who represents the National Health Service (NHS), we certainly do work with doctors and surgeries, and in some London boroughs we attend forums that you have to raise awareness. However, there is not the same duty placed on you. Obviously, if you would like to represent London and say, "We, as a GP network, would be keen to adopt the National Referral Form", then we would be delighted.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: It is a big challenge because the conflict would be between the duty of care to the patient and the extra; that is a debate which needs to be had. You thought that it would be good to extend it to the GPs, did you?

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): Absolutely. As I say, we work with the NHS very closely, I have NHS employees who work directly within my teams, and we can tell you exactly what the information sharing protocols are. Again, this is not about persecuting somebody; this is about keeping people safe, both the individual and the public.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you. Do you think that the duty to Prevent should be extended to Border Force, [UK Visas and] Immigration and the Department for Work and Pensions?

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, I do. Yes.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: That is short. Is there any disagreement?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I would not disagree, but there is an element of importance around transparency as to why that is happening. If you do it without the transparency and the evidential base, then you are talking about potentially creating fuel for the people who are in the anti-Prevent lobby, talking about the stigmatisation of immigration and the stigmatisation of economic disadvantage. There are lots of very good reasons to do it, but let us be transparent about what they are and let us bring the evidence to the table.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. We are now going on to Assembly Member Devenish.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Chairman, and good morning, everybody. I am asking the question we always ask in these sessions about joined up Government, that wonderful expression. If I start with the MPS first, please, the question is: do you welcome the Government's proposal to launch a Prevention Partnership Forum? How do you envisage this will strengthen London's approach to sharing information amongst partners and build understanding of the threat of extremism and radicalisation in the capital?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): I am going to pass to Jane, who will have a lot more detailed knowledge on this than me. However, the short answer to your question is any opportunity that brings together the sharing of information and our ability to take a joined up approach, to use your language, to how we do this is welcome. We cannot deliver any aspect of Counter Terrorism, irrespective of what it is, without those partnerships and Government, MOPAC and all of our partners in local government are critical to almost every aspect of what we deliver. Yes, to any forum to bring together people who can do that and clearly, we will need to understand the sharing protocols. Counter Terrorism is frequently quite challenging in terms of sharing information because of the national security nature of what we do. Focus in the right areas though of vulnerability and particularly in the area of Prevent, yes, is a good thing.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): I will agree with Dom, but for London it is a challenge. This is where we will rely on the London Prevent Board to get the local authorities to work together, support each other and learn from each other. In principle, yes, it is a great idea. Certainly, some of the work that we have done with

MOPAC in collaboration around some key projects act as diversionary opportunities and, once that has a good evaluation process in place, then it is a worthwhile investment.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you. Kenny? I feel like I am going to ask you to produce an org chart on this.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): No. I absolutely agree with everything that has been said to date. I would say the devil will be in the detail of ensuring that it is not, as can sometimes be, something imposed from on high but takes account of the local knowledge and local circumstances. Again, you cannot really argue with something if the aim behind it is to increase sharing of relevant information and keep people safe. In principle, I am supportive, but we just need to work through the detail of it, would be where we stand.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Assembly Member Garrett?

Neil Garratt AM: Yes, it is something that has come up in conversation a bit and it might be one where you need to write to us with an answer. I am just interested. Do we have a breakdown of where referrals come from? You mentioned earlier that London disproportionately has fewer from schools. It is not an opportunity now to reel all of those off, but it might be useful if you could write to us with the breakdown of where they come from in London and how that compares with the national picture.

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service): We do have all that information. When you come to see us, we will be able to share that information in a bit more detail and perhaps go into some of the detail behind the information as well if that is helpful.

Neil Garratt AM: Thank you very much. Thank you, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. We are now moving on to organisations funded by Prevent, starting off with my colleague, Assembly Member Prince.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Chairman, and this is first of all to MOPAC. The Independent Review of Prevent expressed concern that Prevent funding is often given to ineffectual organisations and even to some promoting extremist views. How confident are you that MOPAC and the Shared Endeavour Fund do not engage with or fund extremists and what oversight arrangements does MOPAC have in place to ensure this?

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): We are as confident as we can be, would be my answer. We do due diligence and it is not outsourced to a third party firm, as Mr Shawcross criticised the Government for. We do look at their social media and we do speak to previous people who have worked with them. We are confident that no money has gone to people whom the police would describe as extremist in that way.

On his point about the efficacy of some of the organisations who get Prevent funding, there is always a risk. You have to accept there is a risk if you go out and you fund small, grassroots organisations to do really, really difficult work that not everything is going to work all of the time. That is not to say that it was wrong to give those people the money. That is to say that when you work in difficult areas like this, you are necessarily

going to have to experiment and you are necessarily going to have to try things and build an evidence base as you go.

What I would say is that the Government has not been good at producing and publishing any evaluations of the work which is done in that regard. I would compare that with the work that Oliver's team does quite unfavourably where they have produced work independently done by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, which has looked at the work. It has not been universally saying that everything that we have funded has been absolutely perfect. It has given us recommendations year-on-year for ways in which we should improve the programme, which we have then acted on. If you look at the metrics which they use individually, that would say that the effectiveness of the programmes has improved as we have learnt the lessons as we have gone on.

That gets back to one of the points we talked about earlier in relation to Prevent, which is about transparency, and we do think that is really important. Hence the reason that Oliver's team does, and has, commissioned that and does have a theory of change, which is out there in public for why we think that works. Obviously, it is never going to be 100% right, and nobody is ever 100% right. If you have got a programme that is saying it is 100% right, you know somebody is lying to you, is my basic point. However, it is important to put the stuff out there, to act on it and to be transparent about what has been and what has not been working well and what steps you are therefore taking to improve it. That is something which Mr Shawcross recommends to the Government and we would fully support that.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you for that, Kenny. Oliver, do you want to add to that?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Kenny has pretty much comprehensively covered that. He has not mentioned some of the other things that we do around due diligence and I am not going to mention them either because that would help people circumvent our due diligence strategy.

There is just one final point maybe. The Independent Review of Prevent talks a lot about the importance of challenging ideology. That is a critical feature of countering extremism and terrorism, but it is not the only feature as far as we are concerned. There are other important ways and important outputs and important strategic objectives that allow you to do that. For example, just providing critical thinking or online safety skills plays a role in countering extremism and terrorism. There are psychosocial outputs and achievements that you can create, which reduce the risk of somebody being radicalised like increasing their sense of belonging, increasing their sense of purpose, increasing their empathy towards others or people of different views and decreasing their sense of cultural threat. Those are really important components, we think, of a rounded portfolio to counter extremism and safeguard people who are vulnerable to radicalisation and that is how we embody our work in this area.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you. Dom or Jane, do you want to add to that?

Commander Dom Murphy QPM (Head of Counter Terrorism Command S015, Metropolitan Police Service): The only thing I would say is that in this territory more than in any other, sometimes we need to engage with people whose views are counter to our own and which we might consider extreme. However, we need to do those engagements because we need to understand where they are coming from. We need to understand what their circle of influence is, and we need to understand the risk or danger they pose to society as a result of their views. Sometimes, that means us being in a room with somebody whose views might be quite challenging for us; not illegal, I should say, because we have got another recourse to those who express

illegal views in meetings that we are in, which is not quite so engaging, I should say. Still nonetheless we will not always get that right, but we do need to be in those locations to be able to speak to those people.

Keith Prince AM: Jane, did you want to add to that at all?

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): No, just to say it is really difficult. Due diligence is a really challenging area for us all and it would be good for Government to have some thought around what due diligence looks like because really it is about information sharing to keep people safe.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you. Chairman, back to you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. If I can just ask Oliver really, the review said that Prevent funding “too often goes towards generic projects dealing with community cohesion and hate crime” and instead should be directed to those that “challenge extremist and terrorist ideology via counter-narratives and activities”. Will MOPAC apply this to the Shared Endeavour Fund?

Oliver Levinson (Head of Countering Violent Extremism, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): We already do and we would absolutely agree that there has to be some connectivity to extremism and radicalisation for us to fund work for, but we do not agree that that has to be ideology, ideology, ideology. We do not think it is practical to just deliver a project portfolio that only delivers ideology. If it is delivering work which in some way is rooted in countering hate, intolerance, countering ideas of supremacy, then we are interested in it.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): How do you vet those recipients of money from that fund?

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): That is what I just addressed before. The way that we look at that is - I am not going to go into all of them - we do look at their social media and we do speak to people, including the Home Office, they have worked with before. As I say, we are reasonably confident that we have not given money to anybody that the police would have any concerns about.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Good. That is all good news. I have two people who want to ask very, very quick questions. Assembly Member Russell?

Caroline Russell AM: Yes, just building on this, recommendation 9 from Shawcross is:

“Restrict Prevent funding to groups and projects which challenge extremist and terrorist ideology via counter-narratives and activities. [Then it says] Prevent budgets should not be allocated towards general youth work or community initiatives that do not meet these criteria.”

Do you think there is a risk that there are some groups that do deep community engagement, particularly with young people, where they may not be specifically engaged in challenging extremist and terrorist ideology in their work but that they could be very effective referrers and identifiers of young people who might be in need of support through the Prevent Programme to avoid radicalisation?

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Yes.

Caroline Russell AM: I just wondered what you felt about that particular recommendation.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Yes, basically. I agree with what you are saying there. This goes back to what Oliver was saying earlier about there being a spectrum of things which Prevent covers. I do not think we are going to be in the place within MOPAC, for example, of dealing with Terrorism Act (TACT) prisoners or people who are at that far harder end of the stuff where you are really looking at ideology and all of the other issues around them. Any sensible programme and any sensible cohort of things which you can look at is going to include some, I suppose Mr Shawcross would see as being, at the softer end of the spectrum as well as stuff at the harder end of the spectrum. As Oliver said, we absolutely do think stuff about critical thinking and building a sense of cohesion is important and that is an important bit of the work.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. Jane, you looked like you wanted to chip in.

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan (Head of SO15 Local Operations and Lead for Prevent, Metropolitan Police Service): Very observant. It is back to my earlier sports example; that we often use as a diversionary programme some organisations that are not there to tackle extremism, but it is what the individual needs in terms of support. I do not think we should lose that. That said, we work very closely with MOPAC in terms of sharing of the information as to what we know about London, the terrorism risk and the Prevent profile so that we can then tailor our approach and hopefully influence where they might want to spend the money.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Desai?

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Chairman, I will be very brief. I hope I am not straying away from the main topic of discussion today, which is the Independent Review of Prevent report. It is more about monitoring of outputs. A fair bit of resource money is going into this very important area of work, which I welcome and I welcome the political will here. It is about looking at the positive side. What are the outputs and how do you monitor them? Can you share some good practices with this Committee and how are people changed? I would like more concrete details.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): We will send you the evaluations which we do on this. It is very difficult in this space to do longitudinal studies for the obvious reasons that people may have engaged with us. We use a system where it is been developed with our Evidence and Insights Team and with the Institute of Strategic Dialogue in that. It is a kind of self-assessment process that people go through at the end of their interventions, but we can send you all of the reports. As I said, we are in no way pretending that we get absolutely everything right in this space and those reports will show and do show that there is lots there to improve call-on-call if that makes sense. That has got to be the right way of doing this. Some form of independent evaluation, us trying to learn the lessons from that and us continuing to improve it as it goes on, is one of the areas where there is no equivalent that I can see from central Government and where I do think the wider Prevent Programme could benefit from that.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Chairman, some of the outputs are not difficult to quantify and the work is over a long period of time. What I am looking at, to put it very simply is, project A: how much money

was given, this is what we achieved for the three, four, five individuals or 50/60 that we managed to put on the right path.

Kenny Bowie (Director of Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime):

Absolutely and we will send you the links to those reports.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): That would be very helpful and we absolutely will take you up, Detective Superintendent [Jane Corrigan] on a visit to see you because I am more than aware there are things that you cannot say in public and we must respect that. I have to say I am a massive one for sharing information and my favourite quote today has been "Nobody has ever died when we have shared information, but they have when we have not". I love that because that says it all. Thank you.

I really would like to thank you all so much for attending the meeting today and answering the Committee's questions.

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MINUTES

Meeting: Police and Crime Committee

Date: Wednesday 22 March 2023

Time: 10.00 am

**Place: Chamber, City Hall,
Kamal Chunchie Way, London, E16 1ZE**

Copies of the minutes may be found at:

www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-committees

Present:

Susan Hall AM (Chairman)

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair)

Marina Ahmad AM

Tony Devenish AM

Len Duvall AM

Neil Garratt AM

Sem Moema AM

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

Keith Prince AM

Caroline Russell AM

1 Apologies for Absence and Chairman's Announcements (Item 1)

- 1.1 An apology for absence was received from Dr Onkar Sahota AM, for whom Len Duvall AM attended as a substitute.

2 Declarations of Interests (Item 2)

2.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

2.2 **Resolved:**

That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Agenda Item 2, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests.

3 Minutes (Item 3)

3.1 **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 February 2023 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 Summary List of Actions (Item 4)

4.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

4.2 **Resolved:**

That the completed and ongoing actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee be noted.

5 Action Taken Under Delegated Authority (Item 5)

5.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

5.2 **Resolved:**

That the recent action taken by the Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee under delegated authority, following consultation with party Group Lead Members, namely to respond to the Monitoring Officer's draft consultation paper on the complaints received against the Mayor of London in relation to the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM, be noted.

6 Independent Review into the Standards of Behaviour and Internal Culture of the Metropolitan Police Service (Item 6)

6.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat as background to the question and answer session.

**Greater London Authority
Police and Crime Committee
Wednesday 22 March 2023**

- 6.2 The Chairman welcomed the first panel of guests to the meeting:
- Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB; and
 - Sarah Kincaid, Lead Reviewer, Independent Review into the Standards of Behaviour and Internal Culture of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).
- 6.3 A transcript of the discussion is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 6.4 During the course of the discussion, Baroness Casey agreed to provide the Committee with the Ipsos MORI survey of MPS officers and staff.
- 6.5 The meeting adjourned at 11.14am and reconvened at 11.21am.
- 6.6 The Chairman welcomed the second panel of guests to the meeting:
- Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime; and
 - Sir Mark Rowley QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.
- 6.7 A transcript of the discussion is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 6.8 **Resolved:**
- (a) That the report and discussion be noted.**
 - (b) That the monthly report from the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.**
 - (c) That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.**

7 Complaints About the Conduct of the Mayor of London as the Occupant of the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (Item 7)

- 7.1 The Committee received the report of the Monitoring Officer and the Chairman welcomed Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer, Greater London Authority (GLA) to the meeting.
- 7.2 **Resolved:**
- (a) That it be noted that, after having taken into account the Committee’s consultation response and King’s Counsel advice, the Monitoring Officer has determined that the complaints identified below are not ‘serious complaints’ under the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Conduct) Regulations 2012.**
 - (b) That it be noted that the consequence of this determination is that the complaints must now be dealt with under the GLA ethical standard regime for assessing complaints alleging a breach of the GLA’s Code of Conduct for Elected Members.**

8 Police and Crime Committee Work Programme (Item 8)

8.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat.

8.2 Resolved:

That the Committee's work programme and the recent activity undertaken, namely the informal meeting on 1 March 2023 with the Metropolitan Police Service on the topic of fraud, be noted.

9 Date of Next Meeting (Item 9)

9.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be agreed at the London Assembly's Annual Meeting on 4 May 2023.

10 Any Other Business the Chairman Considers Urgent (Item 10)

10.1 There were no items of business that the Chairman considered to be urgent.

11 Close of Meeting

11.1 The meeting ended at 12.56pm.

Chairman

Date

Contact Officer: Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer; Email: lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee - Wednesday 22 March 2023**Transcript of Agenda Item 6 - Independent Review into the Standards of Behaviour and Internal Culture of the Metropolitan Police Service – Panel One**

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): We now move on to our main item of business and I would like to welcome our guests who are joining us for the first part of this session, Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB; and Sarah Kincaid, Lead Reviewer.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): First of all, thank you so much for coming to our Committee because I do appreciate just how busy you are, especially today. I am going to start with questions, but first of all I would like to say that the report mentions the Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection Command, and there are clearly some issues there. However, I would also like to point out that, very sadly, it was six years ago today that we lost Police Constable (PC) Keith Palmer [GM] of that group. Therefore, it just shows that there are good and bad wherever we look, and we remember him today. Thank you.

We all have various questions, so I have been very ruthless with my colleagues to tell them to be nice and short with their questions and I would be really grateful if you can be as concise too. I noticed when we were looking at how you did your questioning that around 6,500 people responded to the survey. Can we have sight of that survey? We could not find it when we looked for it.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: May I, Chairman, just start by saying how grateful I am to you and the Committee for giving us the chance to appear before you this morning and I too would like to mark that this is the anniversary of the sad death, due to a terrorist attack, of PC Keith Palmer. I would also like to say - as I said throughout this review - that as we sit here at this time of the morning, and I saw them on the way here, there are police officers out responding to 999 calls. There will be a woman somewhere in London who is probably making her first account of a rape that happened to her yesterday or the day before. We always have to remember that the police have to stand up when we are under duress and there is a threat, and that they stand in the line of duty to do that. In fact, over the weekend, as colleagues will know, there were two off-duty officers who stood up to a crime that was happening in Soho.

Therefore, as much as this report is very grave, it has quite significant findings, I do not think any of us should underestimate - and I have said this on camera throughout and I have said it to colleagues, staff, and officers in the Metropolitan Police [Service] (MPS) by way of an internal video - that I am very conscious of that and that we are grateful to them for that; that happens 24 hours of the day, seven days a week. They are not a profession or a function that can close itself down for a week or 24 hours to think about what it might do next. Therefore, reforming itself is always reforming itself while it is running 24 hours of the day. That is a huge challenge.

In answer to your question, Chairman, and I am not great at being concise, therefore if anyone is going to mess up this morning it will be me, not anybody else in the room. The Ipsos MORI polling is threaded throughout the report. We have given it separately to anybody who wants it and I am very happy to do so.

Sarah Kincaid (Lead Reviewer, Baroness Casey Review): We undertook it in the lead-up to Christmas and then - as well as the survey of officers and staff - we also undertook a survey of Londoners just shortly

after. We had a very, very good response to the officer survey; Ipsos were really pleased at the response rate. We did a couple of questions where we have compared how officers and staff have reflected their views as opposed to the views of Londoners, which you might have picked up in your report.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Normally people are prepared to answer something when they have a beef against something. Did you find that, or did you find that you had lots of positive answers to your questioning?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: If I can potentially predict where you may be heading, Chairman, the report asks very open questions. You can see the questions and you can see the answers for yourself. What we have to be mindful of today is that both police officers and police staff completed that survey. We have taken testimony from countless others. I have done visits and listening exercises throughout the last 12 months with hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of officers. What the report reflects is what the staff and officers of the MPS think and feel about the organisation. It is not a report that is attempting in any way to reflect anything other than that. I do not have a beef, quite the opposite, with the MPS --

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): No, not you.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: -- at all, quite the opposite in fact.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Let me correct, I was talking about the people that were coming to answer; I am not suggesting by any means that it is you. I am saying people are more likely to get involved in questionnaires if they themselves have an issue. That was not going anywhere other than saying did you get people that were positive as well as negative. It was not reflecting you; it was reflecting the people that responded.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: Yes, and that is reflected in the report that you will see that we put it all on, both positive and negative. Throughout the review there are answers that are more positive and answers that are more negative and that is what we have reflected.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Have you removed anything from the main draft reports that came out, or you have left it more or less as it intended to be?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: Are you referring to the Ipsos MORI survey?

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): No, the report in general, did you present a report anywhere and were asked to change anything, or is it literally as you wanted it to be?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: There is always -- in the terms of reference, there was an agreement, which we have honoured very positively from both sides that the MPS will be able to have full access to the report in draft and could give both factual feedback, and frankly we took factual feedback from the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, and the organisation, as well as other views. So I decided, given the situation, that I gave them an early copy, around about mid to late February, and we went through a process of receiving their feedback. As you can see, it is a 360 page document, therefore it had a couple of rounds of feedback, and we went through those thoroughly so that we could agree that the contents therein were accurate in terms of the MPS as well as ourselves. I have to say, if there are mistakes in it, then we take responsibility for those, not colleagues in the MPS.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): I just wondered if it had been changed very much, but you have answered that. Very, very briefly, because of my time as well, I am thrilled to see that you are not best pleased with Basic Command Units (BCU) because I have been banging on a long time that I think that is when we started to lose connectivity in the boroughs with them and I appreciate your comments on that. Very briefly because of my time, what is the staff's views of the BCUs as compared to borough-based policing?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: I have concluded, and I think Sir Mark Rowley [QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis] is in agreement with this, that we have not suggested in recommendations restructuring, either huge - ie the overall MPS - nor indeed have I suggested restructuring in terms of the BCUs. In part, Chairman, because it is always an easy option for review to go down the structural route, but it is much more difficult for colleagues. You cannot restructure your way out of a cultural problem, let me put it that way. That is one of the areas where I would suggest that over the last decade potentially mistakes were made in that the BCUs essentially are very big and they lost their connection on a borough-by-borough basis.

One of Sir Mark and Dame Lynne's [Owens DL DCB CBE QPM, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service] first suggestions - and they are enacting it - is to put a lead Superintendent into each borough and I am hoping that will restore some of the glue. What we also note in the report is that restructuring, which I personally have made very clear I think was financially driven, essentially that restructuring, alongside neighbourhood policing also disappearing to the degree that it has, what you see in London is a police service that is quite disconnected from boroughs, but also importantly the people living in those boroughs. It is both the accountability and also a reality of the day-to-day experience of Londoners in terms of our glue often being the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and things like that. I think you are right about that.

There has been a cross-party response yesterday in terms of leaders of local authorities across London also saying, "Good to have this recognised in the report and good to talk about it." Therefore, it is a really important place that this is one of the things that this Committee in particular should have more to say on, as it were, than other forums. Because you are also democratically elected by the people of London, therefore it is a very important connection for you to be satisfied with.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Good, thank you. We are coming on to where this Committee stands with another colleague, but I will go now to Assembly Member Desai.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you, Chairman. Good morning, Baroness Casey, and good morning, Ms Kincaid. Firstly, can I, on behalf of my Labour colleagues, thank you for all the work that you have done in compiling this report, which we accept, we welcome it. Baroness Casey, the culture of the MPS has proven resistant to change over the decades. Even before [Sir William] Macpherson's landmark report [Report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, 1999] there were many, many reports going back to the 1960s and 1970s talking about the issues that you address in your report. The Commissioner has made a good start by accepting that there are serious issues to address. How can he overcome the deeply entrenched attitudes that are resistant to change? Does his failure to accept that these problems are institutionalised within the MPS hinder this?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: The job for the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner is huge. When they probably applied for the job and got the job, they had a sense of the enormity of what they were taking on. In the same way that, as the report shows, the officers and staff of the MPS also feel that things need to change. This review was done with colleagues, it is not a "done to" review. I have been in other places, for example in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, where from the arrival we realised that we were not going to get co-operation, we were not getting an open door. To be fair, Deputy Chair, the MPS

has been phenomenal in opening up their organisation. I do not think anybody has had the sort of help, support, and kindness and graciousness, that we have enjoyed and needed, given how tough the job has been.

Therefore, I want to be quite measured today in terms of making sure that I am really clear about this particular issue, because the findings in the report go far beyond the issues of institutional racism, misogyny, and homophobia. Overall, a culture of discrimination and prejudice, which is illustrated fairly graphically in the report, and that prejudice and discrimination is suffered by many of their own officers and staff. When you have statistics that say that close to 50% of the staff and officers are themselves experiencing racism, 33% of women, and I think that having interviewed and listened to so many women their bar on what they would consider sexism is potentially lower, probably, than my bar would be, and many others in other public sector organisations. Therefore, for 33% of them to say that they have experienced sexism and the one in ten, which is a deeply worrying statistic, who says that women officers and staff have experienced harassment and assault, is pretty graphic. Then the issues in relation to gay officers also experiencing homophobia, also are not easy reading.

Do I think that all of that adds up to institutional, organisational, systemic, pick whichever word you want to? Yes, it does. Do I own them at first in definition? Yes, I do. Do I think them at first in definition allows everybody to know that not every single serving officer, it is so clear, and I know that it is really hard because 30 years ago Stephen Lawrence lost his life, 24 years ago [Sir] William Macpherson wrote his report. If I had not found – and I have four tests -- I will be much shorter on the other questions, but it is important that I lay this out - I have four tests that I have put into my report, which gives everybody a fresh start. It gives Londoners a fresh start; it gives the MPS a fresh start; it gives its officers a fresh start; and it gives the Commissioner a fresh start.

Those four tests are these: (1) do you have racists in your organisation? Yes, you do. Does that mean every person working in the MPS? Absolutely not. I am absolutely clear about that. (2) Do you have people in your organisation experiencing - let us take - misogyny? Yes, you do. Not everybody is experiencing misogyny or sexism in your organisation but enough for you to be concerned that you should do something about it. (3) Do you have systemic and therefore institutional, is your institution's processes biased disproportionately? Yes, they are, 81%, I am sitting in a room where nearly everybody in this room is white and I can say to everybody in this room who is white, 81% of people with the skin colour that is Black are disproportionately more likely to be in the misconduct system. That cannot be because their skin colour is not mine. There is another thing happening there. Then, fourthly is it not time that we all had a fresh start on this, the officers and staff, as much as for Londoners? Without a doubt, previous Commissioners, previous politicians have accepted the disproportionality that Black communities suffer. They are over policed and under protected. The use of stop and search, over policing, using force disproportionately to a skin colour that is different to mine. Balanced against that, if a woman is Black she is 65% more likely to be on the receiving end of domestic violence.

If you take all of that together, for me this was the moment to say to [Baroness] Doreen Lawrence [of Clarendon, mother of Stephen Lawrence], to the countless people out there, "Yes, this is institutional, it is organisational", and then you can move on to then have a more straightforward and a direct discussion with the people of London. In a way, it is time, and I wish in a way that we did not have to talk about it today; that we could give the new Commissioner the time and the space to allow himself and his organisation to hear the findings of this review, to consider particularly the ones that have been with the MPS for a long time, and take a moment or a month, or two months, to then consider it. It just rings hollow to say, "I do not like the word, and it is not a word I would use". I know [Sir] Mark Rowley, he is a man of utter decency and integrity. Therefore, we need to give him time and we need to give him the respect that he needs, and he warrants, as does his Deputy Commissioner.

If somebody said to me, "Louise, the MPS is in a terrible place, you should bring in people to take it over to run it", I would think that there are possibly no two more outstanding leaders that I could think of than [Dame] Lynne Owens and [Sir] Mark Rowley. I appreciate that this is difficult, and I appreciate everybody wants to have that sort of debate, but I am just asking for the gift of a little bit of generosity of time and

gentleness as we move into the debate. Therefore, I have asked them to think about how it must feel to wake up if you are Doreen Lawrence in April. I am asking them to think about what it feels like for the countless Black Londoners who are working in their force, let alone people on the receiving end of some of what they do. Therefore, I am asking everybody today just can we just keep this a little bit where it is, give people time to listen to each other.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you. Chairman, in the interests of time I will leave it at that.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. Thank you. Assembly Member Russell.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. The point that you make about the impact on serving MPS officers of this institutional, the systemic difficulties that you have uncovered, really shocking things, is a really important point and very well made. I understand what you say about the gentleness that is required, but Londoners, many Londoners, those Londoners who have been overpoliced and under-protected, need to hear that after decades of knowing about institutional corruption in the MPS that it is being taken seriously. There is a problem that the term "institutional racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia", that it has become so politicised that the Commissioner was not able yesterday to just say, "Yes, there is a systemic problem", because Londoners really needed to hear that.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: May I just say, Assembly Member Russell, from my own bit of London, when people say something has become politicised it is often a get-out-of-jail card for the word "difficult". I have heard it so many times. I am sorry, you are dealing with a dinosaur, I have been around a long time. Sometimes it is right that we step into what is difficult and particularly when people like me, I say I am independent, I am not political, I do not want to get into that debate, is sometimes a watchword for "it is difficult". It is difficult, and in a way the gentleness has to go both ways, the MPS has to realise, the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner, that they also owe gentleness to the people of London that want a recognition that their organisation is organisationally, systemically, and institutionally biased. Sorry, I had not thought about this before my mouth opened, I have been trying to think overnight how to guide us all through this difficult process that we respect and acknowledge the extraordinary difficulty. The statistics in the report are so sad when it comes to Black Londoners and non-white Londoners, both in terms of staff in the MPS and its own officers. Therefore, I am asking really today for gentleness both ways. I am asking the MPS to just take a moment and think about what it might feel and what people are hearing when people will not use a particular word, do not die in a ditch over it, and I am asking people to own where we are with this, which is: this is the lived experience of people in the organisation and with people outside of the organisation.

It is the race one, that finding, that people are finding so hard. I doubt - my gut feeling is, and I have not had this conversation, I am having it live probably on camera here - would we be in the same place if this was just about sexism and misogyny or would we all just chalk it up and say it? Would we be in the same place - I do not know - if this was about homophobia? I do not know. The fight to be treated as equal if you are gay is more recent in our memories; it is not that long. It was a David Cameron Government that put through the legislation [Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013] that allowed people who are gay to get married; that is really recent. Therefore, I just wonder that this is deep into the history of London and that in a way means that we should not call it political. What is wrong with being political? You are all political. You are democratically elected; it is your job to be political. It is for civil servants and people in [Sir] Mark's position to think about how they serve the public and how they serve democratically elected Members. I am not political in that way. I am not affiliated to any political party, but I am very happy to talk politics, and when politics gets difficult let us talk about that difficulty.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Assembly Member, you have had your time. Do you want a very quick and a very short --

Caroline Russell AM: I just wanted to very, very quickly ask about the issue that you raise in the report about the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and access to data, and particularly around strip

search. I recognise that massively because I have a question that I put in July 2022 about the locations of more intimate strip searches of children. It was really shocking to see that MOPAC has been unable to get hold of data on the strip searches because the coding of the events was being done in such a random way that there was no consistency, and it was not possible to look at it properly. I just wondered if you would like to comment on that lack of data and the problems that MOPAC has been having getting hold of data from the MPS.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Assembly Member --

Caroline Russell AM: That came in on 12 September --

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): -- we have to be fair to everybody.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes, I know.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): I can see Baroness Casey will be able to answer that very quickly for us.

Sarah Kincaid (Lead Reviewer, Baroness Casey Review): If I could just answer that briefly, and I will be brief. The problem of data in many different forms, not only in relation to the problem that you are talking about, but in relation to the misconduct data, in relation to body-worn video, right across the piece we found very complicated and difficult datasets to understand. They are riddled with inconsistencies, inaccuracies, that were very difficult. If I could just mention one particular issue that we have found very concerning: we looked for about three months to get data on the number of cases each Public Protection Officer was holding, and we never got to the bottom of it. We talked to many, many different officers, we looked right through every system we could. We had to rely in the end on the MPS's latest estimate that it had, which was I think 18 to 21 cases per officer, which I think it put in its Force Management Statement. However, many, many officers we spoke to were carrying an awful lot more than that, and the officers who interview women were also very much carrying double that number.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. That is reflected in the report as well. Thank you.
Assembly Member Pidgeon.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you. Thank you so much, Baroness Casey, for this report. I have spent the last 24 hours reading it really thoroughly, and it is going to be shaping our work over the next year. You talk about toxic masculinity, you talk about oversexualisation in the workplace, carrier culture, how is Sir Mark and his team going to tackle these fiefdoms, these bastions, under the control of this small clique that have been there a long time and have, clearly, some awful views and poor management practices? How many officers do you expect the MPS to be getting rid of as a result of what you have found and if processes are improved in terms of misconduct?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: The first thing to say is that there is a deep recognition by the new Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner that things need to change and specifically in those dark areas where the behaviours are just off the barometer. The challenge will be that people have tried to do it before. What is quite interesting is that the overall report, which is other senior people have gone into some of those units at quite senior levels, but they have gone in and been overwhelmed. This really is almost like a metaphor for the MPS, which is two people cannot change a culture, and therefore what has to happen is there has to be an acceptance. It is interesting that - I have not looked at it in detail yet - certainly as we move towards the end

of the report we felt that we are holding up a mirror to what many people in the organisation already think and believe; so we were not pushing against something, we were with the tide as it were.

That is where I have made a recommendation, that I believe has been accepted, which is in some of the areas where one has the most concerns you would bring in people from outside, which is not a very MPS thing. The MPS is not great, it says it brings in good practice, but it does not really. It is not great at that, it is like, "We are the biggest, we are the best; we are the best, we are the biggest". Today it will recognise that has gone for a bit. I hope it becomes the best for London, I know that it can be. Then I want it to be the best for the world again. But right now, frankly, that is something it has to earn back.

Therefore, I think that is why in some of those areas, for example cleaning up the MPS has to be the top priority for this Commissioner, alongside the deal for women and children in London. In order to clean up the MPS, it needs to bring some people in from outside to help it do that. For two reasons: one is because I think the trust of many people that it can do it for itself does not exist, therefore there is a huge level of cynicism within its own workforce, and we show it very clearly that essentially those patterns of, "If you complain you get side-lined". Let us take the one that for many reasons in a world where we say we are serious about violence against women and girls, if 95% of the police-perpetrated domestic abuse and violence cases have no further action,¹ I ask myself whether that is correct. I now know that is because they do not believe the women who are coming forward and they do not process it.

Firstly, I do not think the MPS can do it on its own because just adding extra officers from one bit of the MPS into another bit of the MPS is not going to change it. Therefore, when people say, "I have added more people", it is not going to work alone. It is helpful, but it will not work. Secondly, it is a metaphor more broadly, which is we have cranked the MPS open, that is our gift to the MPS and to the new Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. Essentially, while it is open, let us keep it open. That is your borough-by-borough consideration as well, Chairman, I think that is well made. How do you keep it open? Part of that is bringing people in from outside.

I have to say that many police chiefs around the country have said just by text and email in the last 24 hours how refreshing that is and that the thing about [Sir] Mark and [Dame] Lynne is I do not think they are defensive about it. I do not think that they are in denial about it. I think they will go and get some decent people and bring them in. It is just having the creativity to realise who will they be and how will they help. Not as advisors. That is the other thing; you need people in the organisation doing rather than telling the organisation what to do. Do you see what I mean?

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes, absolutely.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: There is a culture, is there not, in lots of public services that we are long on getting advice in and short on getting people to do the changes. That is clearly what happens in the MPS, but I do not think it is just the MPS.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Do you have a feel for the number of officers that could end up being removed as a result of all of this? Because some people, in fact officers have said they felt they were complicit in this because that was just how things were and you just kind of got your head down and carried on with the job.

¹ Correction: Only 14% of police-perpetrated domestic abuse allegations result in a case to answer.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: The answer is on two fronts, we do not know the answer to that question and that is concerning enough in itself, both for myself, you have an outstanding, newly-appointed Assistant Commissioner in Barbara Gray [LVO QPM] who brings with her the experience of moving from the Royal Ulster Constabulary to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. You could not have more brilliant experience and a head held high when it comes to misconduct and professional standards. They have installed a great leader. They now need to install people around her in the team who think differently and act differently. Sir Mark will have a greater sense for himself. I just know that we are not talking hundreds, we are talking several hundreds, that would be my estimation, and that would be the same, I think Sir Mark will say the same thing later on this morning and we have not crossed notes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you very much.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Assembly Member Garratt.

Neil Garratt AM: Morning. Just slightly parochially really, thinking about this Committee, it took me a while to think of the Casey Report not as being about child sexual exploitation, that report stuck with me and, in particular, something that sticks with me in my work now is this sense that there are people in public office who knew things or suspected things or could have found out things and did nothing. That is something I challenge myself with regularly as a result of reading that report.

Therefore, when I read this report and I think what can we, as individual Members of this Committee, and what can this Committee do, it seemed to me there was not much after 360 pages about this Committee. It seems to me there were two things that struck me. One was that transcripts of this Committee, it is a rare forum where scrutiny happens in public, and that was obviously a resource that you drew on in creating your report. Then secondly our job is to challenge MOPAC. One of my colleagues is going to ask about MOPAC and also to air concerns that have been raised by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). However, I wondered whether you had thoughts on what this Committee could be doing better, could be doing differently, to make sure that we really are - in the role that we have in this scrutiny ecosystem - making sure that all these problems that are exposed do not just get forgotten.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: This is one of those Sir Humphrey moments where I have to work out do I talk in code and do a Sir Humphrey or do I --

Neil Garratt AM: Let me tell you, it is my question therefore I am going to set the terms, I would like brutal honesty, because there is no point hemming and hawing about an issue that is so serious. If you think we are useless then please say.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: No, I would not say that. Your reputation goes before you. If I was asking for a fresh start for the people of the MPS, and the people of London, and the Commissioners, and MOPAC, and yourselves, I would ask you to put yourselves in that fresh start as well. We have to draw together, politics is important; you get elected, you have to represent your own people, your own party, I understand that. I have not and would not - unless I was asked - I did not do a major deep dive into this particular Committee, but I have noted that people dread appearing before it. It takes up hours and days of their lives. It happens regularly, therefore that is quite a lot of time out of people's lives that they have to get themselves briefed up to know what lines to take. I have worked for Prime Ministers; I have worked for Secretaries of State; I have worked for Ministers, and I respect that process. Nobody should appear before a

Committee like this unless they know what they are talking about and they respect your power and your authority.

Gently, I would ask you that, in the months to come, there is just more a coming together once the Commissioner has a strategy. Remember now he is out for consultation on the [Metropolitan Police] Turnaround Plan [2023-2025]. In the middle of that consultation this review drops. No matter how much he knew, and they knew, because they have been on this journey with us, this was going to be a tough call and a tough ask, tough by their people as much as tough by me. I think they need time to pull together to the next strategy that will go from being a Turnaround Plan to a reform plan for the MPS. They need every single officer and staff member to pull behind them and they cannot do this unless they have that support. Therefore, quibble though I may, and not just quibble, passionately believe about some of the language that I have used, and I will stand by that language, I also think it is time that from April this year, or whenever they publish the next version, that we all hold them to account for that.

I cannot really comment too much on this Committee, but I feel scrutiny should be a process that helps, not a process that is dreaded and hindered. It hinders and it is dreaded. I am not speaking for [Sir] Mark Rowley, for [Dame] Lynne Owens, for [Dame] Cressida [Dick DBE QPM, former Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis], for [Sir] Steve House [QPM, former Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service], or for any of the others, I am just saying collectively, as the staff association representative this morning, that this has gone beyond a sense of being held to account, to a sort of hindrance. The stakes are just too high, Assembly Member Garratt, and I think you know that, because that is why you mentioned Rotherham, which is seared. We did Rotherham together, Sarah [Kincaid] was the lead inspector on that report. The stakes are high and I would ask you just to step back, consider your role, think about how we help the MPS get on to the next stage. That is probably too blunt, but that is what I think.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you.

Neil Garratt AM: Perhaps, is that my time?

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Your time.

Neil Garratt AM: OK, thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): The trouble is we would all like to ask you so many more questions, forgive us. Assembly Member Moema.

Sem Moema AM: Thank you. It is a pleasure to meet you both. I was up until 8.02am reading your whole report. I did not read the appendices but, while reading it, I was thinking to myself that I was just starting primary school when Stephen Lawrence was murdered, and at the rate that you have outlined in your report in terms of progress around race, misogyny, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) hate, I will be in my 70s before that is fixed with the current rate of progress. I know that Sir Mark has a plan in place, which is a really positive thing. My question is in two parts really, it relates to Assembly Member Garratt's question about the way that the police operate and the structures, rather than who knew what when. The Turnaround Plan that Sir Mark has, we have had - as others have said - report after report after report and it feels like virtually no progress has been made. I worry equally for - I will just use the example of Black Londoners because for obvious reasons that is the example I know best - but also for those Black and minority ethnic staff

and those women who work in the MPS, who run a gauntlet every day going to work and are at risk of losing their jobs and being stuck at the bottom of the ladder in perpetuity if they do stay.

But in terms of the report itself, I was really struck by the fact that you mentioned over and over that at every level, and you mentioned senior management, I know that you are not talking about Sir Mark and Dame Lynne, but there is a withdrawal from wanting to make those changes. Having spoken to one of my three BCU Commanders in the last week or so, the levels of management that you outlined between the BCUs and the senior staff at the MPS, the first layer at Scotland Yard, how does meaningful change happen? Because it strikes me that there is a big problem in this big wedge section that nobody gets to see. The people of London get to see the bit at the bottom, which has been decimated and depleted and they are run ragged, and there also are bad people in their midst and they live in fear of them, Londoners and staff alike. What would be your assessment of how to deal with the resistance from people who have been in the organisation for a long time at all levels, but in particular in the senior parts of the MPS, to make it better?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: First of all, taking the time to read a 360-page review and every thought and every part behind it, to seek to ask their colleagues and staff what they think is behind it, what they have said, what they think, a sort of openness really to question oneself is the starting point. I completely understand that the Commissioner arrives, he cannot not do something, and we would all be all over him if he did not and there would be another bit in my report that said, "Well the new Commissioner arrived and did not do anything for six months". It is a no-win situation, is it not?

Now that we are where we are, what I am looking for is a much more wholesale involvement of officers and staff across all of the layers you have just described, which essentially we did feel/believe - let me be clear, I am a woman, I always use the word "feel", I should woman-up for a minute - I think, believe, and can evidence that the disconnect between the specialisms and what they call the Basic Command Units - I wish we would go back to calling them Borough Command Units, that might make people feel they are a little bit more than a basic cop - and in a way that in itself is symbolic of something, is it not? That they forgot their people when they did that restructuring. They did not just forget the Londoners; they forgot their people.

To my mind, the police officer that responds to me in a 999 situation or is the first person I talk to when I have been sexually assaulted, or when I am an elderly person who has been burgled - true story in my street - and the young probationer cop that comes to see her to talk to her, they are the people who are the most important people. They are the people who carry the responsibility for policing by consent in London. Yet, what did we do? We called them "basic". Worse than that, they talk about being busted back into uniform or, "I had to go back to the borough" or in order to get promoted they had to go and do some specialism over here. This sort of elitism, which I probably think is policing overall, not just London. But you see it writ large in London.

It is time as well, the manner with which they deal with the contents of the review is going to be so important. I hope it is OK that they do not mind me saying this, but [Sir] Mark, [Dame] Lynne, Louisa Rolfe [OBE, Assistant Commissioner for Met Operations], Barbara Gray, all of them spent I think - my days are now getting confused because somebody attempted to spin the report ahead of time, therefore it could have been Thursday - but they had already put a meeting in. We discussed it about how they were going to talk to the vast majority of people in their organisation from Superintendent upwards. They have had a special conversation with the Chief Superintendents that run our boroughs, who in my mind are some of the most important people in the MPS. It is symbolic, is it not, that in their sort of Monday morning roundups they do not have the Chief Superintendents that run those boroughs. You have people who we are all completely

reliant on for policing not involved in those conversations because they report up to a Commander, the Commander reports to a Deputy Assistant Commissioner. The Deputy Assistant Commissioner reports to the Assistant Commissioner (AC). The Assistant goes into the Deputy, and then the Deputy Commissioner reports -- we cannot carry on like this.

You are democratically elected Members. Local authority leaders are democratically elected. Each of those "Basic" - can we just change the name - Borough Command Units are representative, I think most of them are the size of a force outside London. In a way, the leaders and yourselves, it is a different structure, but alongside the Mayor, are the equivalent of Police and Crime Commissioners. Therefore, when I see that colleagues who are leaders across the political divide talking differently about it, not feeling they can get information, they will get communication, but it is not information that they can then work out what is happening in their borough.

For a ten-year old kid to be tasered by the Territorial Support Group on a borough and it takes the Borough Commander ten days to find out how that happened, undermines him before he can even open his first coffee in the morning. Two answers to the question: one is I detect in the current new leadership a much greater understanding that they cannot just stand at the front and shout or tell, that they realise that this has to go through, right the way through. Jumping over some of your middle and going out directly and listening is one of those important exercises that we did.

Secondly, there is a real challenge here for Chief Executives of local authorities, leaders of local authorities, yourselves, as Assembly Members, and the Mayor and London Councils, to work out what that connection would look like and how you would improve it, not hindering colleagues in the police, but helping the people you represent have more information and more candour. A little target for me would be that the Borough Commander is able to take responsibility for any policing that happens in his or her, God willing, borough and that they are not left behind as other people come in and do things. That has to stop, or else we are all undermining policing by consent if we do not allow cops to be responsible for how they manage that consent.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. I agree with everything you have said. Assembly Member Prince.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you. Good morning, both. In your report, on page 217, you refer to a "dysfunctional relationship that has developed between the MPS and MOPAC". How long do you think that dysfunctional relationship has been going on? Why do you think it has occurred? Could I also, in the interest of time, ask how you found co-operation from the Mayor's office in general and the Mayor himself?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: I do not have any idea what time it is. As you can see, I can talk for Britain.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): We are running late.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: What time is it now, just so I know how dreadful I am being?

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): It is ten to. You are not being dreadful; everything you are saying is interesting.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: When you have done this work for a year and you really care about it, it is impossible to not want to get it 100% right. I am conscious that I am before you and I need to get every answer right, as it were, because the stakes are quite high for all of us.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Absolutely. If we could go just slightly over, we would be so grateful, because we have all got questions that we are dying to ask you.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: This is fresh-start territory. You are part of that fresh start; MOPAC is part of that fresh start; the Mayor is part of that fresh start. However, the biggest fresh start has to be for the MPS. The MPS has a culture of defensiveness and denial. Let us be honest about it, there is no which way around this. Where do I start? The idea that under the old MPS, not just the last Commissioner, but the previous Commissioner, it had this culture: the biggest and best in the world, nothing is wrong here; nothing to look at here; it is just a bad apple; it is not a culture; it is not institutionally racist, it is just systemically racist. There is a culture, is there not, of not just owning where you are?

They are almost impossible, as Assembly Member Russell has said, to get information out of. It is like a clam that is closed. The more they are under attack, which is how they have seen it, the more they clam up. I would caricature, and I have done in the report, that this seesaw has to stop. The MPS will not give MOPAC information. It will give them loads of information, countless reports that go on like that, it is soul destroying; thank God I did not have to do some of this myself. Long on information, short on candour is a culture within the MPS and possibly, dare I say it, within policing more generally. You are not the only equivalent of Police and Crime Commissioners that are trying to get this.

One of things that I found so illustrative of this, and we were trying to get our heads around it, is -- stop and search is a pretty totemic issue, is it not? Whether you agree with it, disagree with it, think it could be better, think it could be worse, this is London, we do it a lot and we do it a lot to Black people. We then look at -- the really straightforward thing here is: would you not look at having a project that did an overview of body-worn video? To be fair to MOPAC, it has spent since 2018 asking a really simple question, which frankly you could ask MOPAC to do this for you, which is: could we get somebody independently to review a load of body-worn video when it comes to stop and search? Where is the harm in that? That is not anybody's operational independence.

That is like me coming in, but in a mini version, that would say, "Yes, do you know what, they do this right in most of the situations or actually they get this wrong". That is since 2018.

Keith Prince AM: It is done in boroughs, is it not?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: To be fair, Assembly Member Prince, it is very mixed at borough level. It is very, very mixed. I could literally bore for Britain on this. It is done in very, very different ways at borough level, it is done in a way where they pick the people coming in. The people coming in are not people that are necessarily able to scrutinise beyond what is lawful, so there is a real culture of saying stop and search is justified by being lawful. That is a very different thing to whether stop and search is being done well. It is another example of the MPS doing show and tell, it is another example where instead of going -- because some of the times it will be getting things right. Not everything it does is terrible. Some people do stop and search well.

Instead of that, it has this clammed up approach; that is what is dysfunctional. Until it opens it up, I cannot then say whether HMICFRS is doing its job properly, whether the Independent Office for Police Conduct is making its judgments effectively, whether you are able to hold them to account effectively, frankly whether the Mayor is, or the Deputy Mayor. That is why I am saying now is the moment for change. It is dysfunctional at the moment. Who, on balance, do I apportion the responsibility to that to? The MPS.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. Assembly Member Ahmad.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you, Chairman. Could I add my thanks, Baroness Casey and Ms Kincaid for the incredible work that you have done, and to your team as well? Baroness Casey, your review talks about what could happen if sufficient progress is not made at various review points. You seem to be suggesting that the MPS is standing at the Last Chance Corral at the moment. Over the next two years, which -- two years being the first review point that you are suggesting, what do you regard as sufficient progress? Secondly, you talked about two years and then a five-year review. Why three years between that and the first review point?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: It is important to give the organisation time to breathe and time to change. Asking people to change something that is so deep set into policing, let alone into the MPS, will take time. It would have been wrong, and I have been gently cautioning the new Commissioner, not to say he can solve everything immediately, that we are going to be in a situation, he has used these words himself, where every week, every month and probably for a while, there will be pretty tough misconduct cases or criminal cases that go into the public domain. In part because, in 2021, it set up its own version, this is a good thing it did, of a special team to target sexual offenders within its own organisation. That is what is bearing the fruit that you are seeing right now.

We cannot say clean up should take forever. That, essentially, if you think about it, I am sure many of you work in your own organisations, that what we find with the misconduct system is two things. First of all, at the outset, I am not sure that everybody is clear pre-vetting, during vetting, in training, about what ethical standards in the police are and what consent means. Consent is not about being lawful when you stop and search. Consent is making sure people understand why it is happening and give you permission to do it. We give permission to the police to stop me, to search me, to handcuff me, to arrest me and to keep me in a custody suite for 24 hours of the day. I give them that permission on the basis of my consent. The stakes around the starting point of ethics.

Again, you are in a world of the College of Policing doing ethical good practice. Somebody else having some more good practice here, good practice there, good practice everywhere. Let us get the ethical standards in place, and let every cop know what they are. Less good practice more determination. We do not need another document telling us what good practice is, we know it. Why do we not make sure it is clear? Why do we not change our vetting process so people know if they fall foul of it, we will come for them? They are not sufficiently clear about the standards in the first place. When you have made those things clear, you need to make sure that your recruitment, your vetting, and your training gives you every standing possibility to root out problem-makers.

You also have an organisation that is 45,000 strong. At the moment you do not believe people who are Black or women when they come forward and make allegations. In fact, you do the opposite. Change it. You cannot say to an organisation where the stakes are as high as they are – because I give them consent to police me – “you have ten years, five years to sort out your misconduct system.” You should see a massive rooting out, frankly, in the next year, two years and then you should see it settle. They could employ specialists that

could do a lot better job of organising that for them than I am. We do need to clean up the MPS. It has happened previously, back in the decades of other Commissioners. This is the time, if Sir Mark does nothing else, he has to clean up the MPS.

That will not necessarily make him popular with everybody, but it is absolutely the right thing to do. If I have to trust a police officer or have confidence in them when I am sexually assaulted or they are stopping and searching my son, they have to have standards I can trust. The clean-up thing has to happen pretty quickly. I do not want to say you have five years to do that. The clean-up thing, they should be determined, and they should get it done. The issue about how you reconnect, how you rebalance, how you re-earn the trust of Black Londoners is so vital. It is on the floor; trust and confidence has been on the floor for a long time now. It has been joined by women and now it has been joined by white people. Therefore, it has become a much more mainstream issue.

Let us go back to the root and sort out that first and foremost. We do not need to be in this place, in this country, with Black Londoners. Then finally, the other thing that would be a test for me is when those officers have decent places to put specimens, and I am not the first person to have found that, HMICFRS did. Also, when we have good specialist teams that have in-place learning that they could take from elsewhere in the country, but they are reluctant to. This new lot will not be, so we will get a much better service for women who are raped, who are sexually assaulted and people -- 50% of the child abuse detectives have not been on the Advanced Child Abuse Training. These things do not take five years. Those things take a shorter period of time.

The Commissioner could set himself a Reform Plan; we do not need to impose it. We have given some ideas in the report about the type of indicators we would look for if we were trying to respond to our review. They are recommendations. I do not want them watered down, obviously. They could own that themselves and work out what their indicators would be. Would that not be amazing? Particularly on the race one, that you reversed the number of racists in your organisation. You meant the experience of cops in the organisation instead of being the words used about them, it goes down. You sack the people that use them, that you rebalance your misconduct system, which we know is so unbalanced. That is not an impossible task in two years.

You had a different dialogue with London, where Black people and non-white people's confidence in the police would be, at least a little bit, restored. Would that not be an amazing achievement for the new Commissioner and a new MPS? That is what we should get behind.

Marina Ahmad AM: Yes. Yes, it would, Baroness, thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Sarah Kincaid (Lead Reviewer, Baroness Casey Review): Could I add to that, very briefly? In terms of when they come back in a couple of years, it would be very important that it is not other police officers that are doing that. It could be civilians who decide whether it is good enough for them as well.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Yes, I think we all agree with that as well. Assembly Member Devenish.

Tony Devenish AM: Good morning. You spoke earlier about public sector consultant versus doers. MOPAC is a very large organisation at the moment. Do you bluntly think that some of the tens of millions from MOPAC could be moved into the MPS to have more doers and less overseers?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: I did not review MOPAC, so I do not know the answer to that question. I do know that if you look at Police and Crime Commissioners around the country, including Conservative Police and Crime Commissioners, they do have people that support them in that work. In the much more direct relationship between those Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables there is a much, in some case, more open way of being accountable and giving information. You have a pretty tough situation here, which is that the previous MPS Commissioners and the organisation do not share information in an open and candid way. I am not going to criticise MOPAC because I see no reason to at the moment.

To be honest, you have to remember that Baroness Nuala O’Loan [Chair of the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel] could not get her report out for 12 months, because the MPS did not want it to go public and it refused to be engaged. That does not help anybody. I do not want to get into some political battle between the Conservatives and Labour. We have to get behind the change needed. That includes the relationship with this Committee; it includes the relationship with MOPAC; the Mayor; the Commissioner; and the Home Office as well. This pull between somebody at 2 Marsham Street and somebody at City Hall -- let us all try and get behind them there.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you. In terms of the BCU model, you have been quite damning about that model today. Do you think we need smaller BCUs going forward?

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: If I could wave a magic wand, I would reverse the decisions that were made in 2014/2015/2016 and I would not have, in some cases, such huge BCUs. When cops cannot drive from one end of their BCU to another without it taking ages it is a worry to me. That is not a top priority right now. If I am honest, I would have put it in my report, Assembly Member, if I thought it was. My preference would be that over time they did some restructuring that made sure that there was a more direct connection. It is not a priority for now; it is much more of a priority that they are able to give information and explanation with candour and transparency to people like yourselves and your equivalents as leaders and chief executives at borough level.

That is really what I want to change in the immediate months to come. At the moment, if you are a leader of a local authority or the Chief Executive, you are a bit “done to” by the MPS, as opposed to “with”. That is a cultural change that is needed. You get a call when you are needed but otherwise in peace time nobody talks to you. When there is a problem, the phone goes off the hook. That is across the political divide. I have relationships with many leaders in London. To be honest, that would be my starting point.

Tony Devenish AM: I will leave it there, Chairman, thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. Assembly Member Duvall.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you very much. I welcome your report. It is timely, no matter how difficult it is -- about some of the changes that had already been identified, your report gives added value to this process that we are in, whether we like it or not or however uncomfortable it may be. For me, it causes me to reflect on actions in the past that I might have been involved with or not and thinking about some of the issues today. What I am taken with is some of the recommendations here have all been before this Committee in one form or another and we have reached some of the same conclusions, which is interesting, from different avenues, and I recognise yours is an evidence-based report.

The drivers of change, you rightly focus on what the MPS should do itself. We know externally there are some Government changes that need to be made, that only Government can make, around some of that to spur the MPS on to do that. Equally, one of the other drivers that you promote within the report is the Police Board and the quarterly meetings and how you see that working. Of course, we need to reflect whether we need to change or not, in terms of how we do our work. We are not immune from this issue as well, but primarily it is the MPS that needs to change in the way it carries out its business. What role do you see, or could you foresee, for this Committee? Also, could you build on a little bit about how you saw the Police Board working in driving that change and oversight arrangements?

On the MOPAC issue, I do not necessarily see it as a political issue. Some may want to make it a political issue. Surely, we should be considering whether we review the MOPAC issues in a -- not in a positive way. Reviews always say bad things. However, your report talks about some difficulties, inconsistencies, bad practices, discrimination that goes on, you can do better, you can make things better. In that sense, I take it from that, that maybe we should be reviewing about how MOPAC works. I was very much taken by what you said in the report about MOPAC not being given the information. I do not understand that, and I do not understand how reviews can be denied information as well. That has to stop in some ways on the way forward. The MPS has got to make that decision that it is never going to engage in those tactics ever again.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: Thank you very much for that question. Thank you for what you said about all of us needing to reflect our own responsibilities. To be honest, I have been a public servant in this space for a long time. It has given me cause to think about when I was in the Home Office. I was critical of accountability. What did I say? What do I think? It is important that that is very much the spirit with which we come at this too. Too much is marked within. You have a Management Board in the MPS which is not really a Board in the way we would think it is a Board. It talks the language of Executive Committee as if it is a company. It is not. [Sir] Mark Rowley is trying to shake that down and make that much more senior leadership management of the organisation.

Then the Turnaround Board is people who are largely from within the system. Partly the Turnaround Board is to meet the responsibilities that they have to HMICFRS. It is their way of managing the engage issues, which are not the same as special measures. I keep trying to explain to the BBC that special measures do not exist in policing. There are no levers in policing, none, in the way that there are in other public sector organisations. That is one of the big issues that falls out of this report. What I talked to the Mayor about - and he got ahead of me if you think about the Transport for London Board. What we need is something that, again, we have prised it open: keep it open in a positive way; this is now supporting the changes needed in the MPS, not knocking them over.

The report lays it bare, says what the diagnosis is, gives people a way to have hope and change. It cannot be any worse than this, so the only way is up, as long as you do it properly. Fake change is the worst type of change, so if you are going to make change, do it properly. Do less, get it done properly, right throughout your system. Part of that is having a different type of Board, which again brings outside people in. It could be representatives from here; it could be representatives from different parts of the world outside; it could be people that understand what oversight is; it could be a specialist in race. What the Mayor needs to create, as the Police and Crime Commissioner for London, is a much more open Board. When we use the word "scrutiny", it should not be seen as a negative thing. It should be seen as a "how can I get behind you and problem solve?"

That is why I wanted, again, a fresh start. All this is about saying to the world, "Let us have a fresh start. Let us acknowledge our problems, reach in and understand them and work out what is next". The new London Policing Board should be a Board that has heft to it, deals with strategy and how strategy is enacted, hopefully takes what we have done here and lets it be operationalised by the police and then held to account in a very different way than this, people come before you and have a line to take or MOPAC cannot prise them open. Let us try and jump over that to a world where we are trying to be open, direct and honest with each other. That is why, Assembly Member Duvall, I thought this was a different way of doing it.

You do not always have to criticise the past to suggest a fresh start is needed. You do not always have to diagnose everything and review everything; what matters more is the service to Londoners and how we get that right. All we need to think about when it comes to structures is what structures that you are democratically elected to hold, and to hold the police to account for, enact that change you need on the street. That is very much where I have been coming from. This is not a knocking report. This is an opening up report, allowing people to see what it is that they think should change and that is very much where I have come from.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. We have got to the end. I know each and every one of us has got loads more questions we would love to ask, so perhaps another time we could ask you to come back. Certainly, we take from this that we all have to work together to make sure that we end up with a better police service, one that we can all be proud of and one that we all assist with, quite frankly. We cannot do without a good police service. Thank you very much to our guests for attending the meeting today.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB: Chairman, may I thank you for having us today and being so open to the type of answers and discussion that we have had? I feel so strongly, as I publish this report, I want to mention the fact that my review was commissioned in the light of the abduction murder of Sarah Everard, and it is book-ended by the multiple rapes of David Carrick, and Mina Smallman's girls, which is the way we can only think of them, they were girls to her though adults to the rest of us, that police officers that were there to be our guardians of their bodies. That was their job that night and they stand for all of us to do the things that we might find difficult. They were the guardians of her children that night and they took photographs.

I feel that whatever you do as we go forward, I will step out of this at some point and try and see if somebody will give me something else to do, that we hang on to the fact that the stakes are so high. That is why getting this right is so important. That is my final request before you see [Sir] Mark and Sophie [Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime]. Thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): It is important getting it right. It is also important, say, for the parents of serving police officers who know that their lads and lasses go out to do their very best. For everybody's sake we need to get this right. Thank you very much.

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London Assembly Police and Crime Committee - Wednesday 22 March 2023**Transcript of Agenda Item 6 - Independent Review into the Standards of Behaviour and Internal Culture of the Metropolitan Police Service – Panel Two**

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): I would now like to welcome our guests for the second part of this discussion, Sir Mark Rowley [QPM], Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, and Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. Good morning, both of you. Sir Mark, would you like to say a few words before we start?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Yes, I would. Thank you very much, Chairman. Thank you, Committee. As I heard Baroness Casey [of Blackstock DBE CB] say during her evidence to you, it is worth reflecting before my comments both on the people and the incidents that triggered this event and this review that was commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) just over a year ago, most notably the murder of Sarah Everard. That talks to the duty we have to Londoners, to be so much better, and also the duty we have to police officers who give their best, which is illustrated by today being the anniversary of [PC] Keith Palmer's [GM] death six years ago. I do not make any equivalence between them. I use them simply as exemplars that this is serious about the best of our people in an organisation that is not as good as it needs to be in terms of serving Londoners. Some awful incidents have illustrated that.

Baroness Casey's report is profound, and it is very important. This is a critical moment for policing, and we welcome this report. I welcome its findings. It must act as a catalyst for police reform. You have heard me from day one talking about police reform and the need to renew policing by consent. [Baroness] Louise [Casey] adds further colour to the cause of that and further insight on steps that we could take to make a difference. I have already apologised to the people of London, and those in the organisation who we have let down. I have repeated over the last couple of days that I do recognise that.

This report does three things, if I try and be very broad on something that is very deep and profound. It calls out discrimination in the organisation, not just about the individuals, the racists, homophobes or misogynists, but also the systemic failings within it, the management failings and the cultural failings. Secondly, it talks to a culture which is not sufficiently orientated to looking at what we deliver from the perspective of the victims and the communities of London. Thirdly, it talks to a workforce of a majority of good, passionate, vocational people who do not feel set up to succeed. It talks to those three themes in very rich and vivid pictures. I welcome the findings and hope it acts as a catalyst.

My second point is the different type of report this is makes it all the more powerful. Louise and her team have worked very hard to pull out individual testimony accounts. The emotion in the report, and I use emotion in a positive sense, the emotion, the personal testimony, makes it all the more powerful. Having had three weeks to digest different iterations of the report, myself, my senior leaders, we have been through a bit of a rollercoaster of emotions: anger, frustration, embarrassment, upset, all the things you would imagine. More positive emotions, it redoubles your intent and your resolve. I returned to policing because I believe in reform, and it redoubles that. It also adds to my pride in the majority of our people, because they step forward and they called this out. That is very powerful as well. Let us hope we can all find a way that this becomes a shared lever for reform.

As Louise was saying earlier, I cannot wait to do things. I have to get on and start to move things on, so we published our Turnaround Plan [2023–25]. Our analysis and plans are already shaping. You fed back to us, which was very helpful. A lot of the themes are similar, but that is not to decry Louise’s insight, that is really important. We always said there would be a Version 2 of that, so we have to absorb over the next few weeks the weight of Louise’s thinking and feed that into our thinking. Version 2 will be all the more profound and serious for it. We are on it. We have momentum. We are building momentum. We welcome the additional thinking that can make it more profound.

Fourth, it is helpful that the report calls out external factors, funding, governance, growing demand, both growing proper demand and demand that is overflowing from other agencies that should not be ours. Those are all relevant to these problems, but we must not use them as an excuse. The core of this is on us, it is on us to fix. My last point, the point for me about all of this is about galvanising. I and my new leadership team, we are galvanising the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and we are bringing other people in to help us. We will use this report to galvanise beyond us. This is not my police force. This is not our police force, in terms of myself and [Dame] Lynne Owens [DL DCB CBE QPM, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service] or me and the top team, or even the whole organisation. It is our police force in terms of London.

That is the idea behind policing by consent that I have been speaking about and that Louise has spoken about as well. It needs to be collectively galvanising. In a forum like this where you are going to be, rightly, upset and probing, we need to be sharp about how we do this, so that it galvanises in the right way and does not become about pillory and blame of the good majority, but becomes properly about galvanising the organisation, its leaders, partners and others to come together around police reform. That is what I hope this can be.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Yes, I am sure we all do. Thank you. Deputy Mayor, would you like to say anything?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Thank you very much. To add to what Sir Mark Rowley has already said, this report is incredibly powerful, I am sure, for anybody who has managed to read it, it takes times to digest. It is a watershed moment for the MPS. I was not shocked by it, because to be shocked you have to not know what is happening and it all has to be new, but what is in it is really quite appalling. Many people who you have been working with and we have been working with will feel validated by this report. Many officers and staff within the MPS feel validated because what they have been talking about for a long time is now evidenced and their case studies are within the report. Many communities will also feel validated because they have been saying for a long time that there are significant problems and failings within the MPS.

It is a difficult, difficult moment. I do want to say, as [Sir] Mark has said as well, we must not forget the many, many brilliant, professional, dedicated, committed officers that are within the MPS. Yesterday when I was walking to City Hall through Dalston at about 7am I saw a police car do a U-turn on Kingsland Road and put their blue lights on. It struck home for me what policing is for London. As we all know, that even with this report being published there were frontline police officers putting their blue lights on and going towards an emergency, to support and protect and help Londoners. We have to remember that there are a lot of professionals within the MPS that do that every day, day in day out.

We also need to thank those victims, those officers and staff within the MPS who have spoken up, who have bravely spoken up. We must remember the victims and the communities of London who have not had the

service that they deserved in London. As Sir Mark has talked about, it is the anniversary of [PC] Keith Palmer's death today, a moment of absolute bravery. We know that many officers often put their lives on the line to protect us. With all that, this is a moment for change. This is a moment for urgent change. Myself and the Mayor will do all we can to support and challenge the MPS, support them in a difficult journey ahead, and support them for the changes that are needed, not just in the delivery of the recommendations but in the overarching recommendations around changing the culture, improving the performance and improving the management of the MPS.

We will challenge them as well, in terms of ensuring that they are held to account and that that accountability and transparency that is needed for Londoners is delivered as well.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Reflecting on what you were saying, you said you were not shocked; I was deeply shocked. I knew there were slight issues. I had no idea that the issues were this deep. If you were not at all shocked and you knew about it, how long have you known that it is as bad as it is portrayed in this report?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I used the word "shocked." The word shocked often means it is total news to you and it absolutely comes out of a clear blue sky. Clearly this did not come out of a clear blue sky. After the murder, rape and abduction of Sarah Everard, the Mayor asked the previous Commissioner to commission this report, because he and I had come to the end of the road in terms of the oversight, accountability and the real need to ensure that there was a light shone on every part of the MPS. In addition, the Mayor ensured that it was Baroness Louise Casey that was there to conduct this review. In that sense, we were waiting for this report. We knew from our own oversight and oversight boards and the work that we had been doing that there were significant problems.

For example, in 2016 and 2019 in-depth studies on misconduct, carried out by evidence and insight and also referenced in Baroness Louise Casey's report in November, showed the disproportionality in misconduct. We knew there were significant problems there. We knew there were significant problems in terms of public protection. The London Rape Review of 2019 showed what was happening to victims. We spent a lot of time analysing the figures around detection as well. As you will know, Operation Soteria, which is now a significant national programme, to change the way in which rape investigations are carried out, came about because we put aside significant Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) officer time, as well as funding, to ensure that that could happen.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): I am sure we will come back to that. Sir Mark, if you look at the findings, is there anything in there that you think you can do quite quickly?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I am cautious about answering that, simply because I do not want to give a glib answer that suggests that we can fix all this rapidly. This is a massive piece of reform. However, what we are going to do is we are going to demonstrate to Londoners step by step improvement as we work with them to improve things. Some examples I can pull out about what we have done so far or things that are happening at the moment: we have been putting a lot of focus on our investigations in terms of rape and other offences. We are solving something like 200 more rape cases this year than last year. We are making progress on solving more indecent exposure cases, for example. In the next few weeks we are launching an approach where we more proactively go after the top 500 predatory offenders in London, men who prey on women and children.

That would be one series of examples. Stop and search is still productive; it is still contentious with communities. We are building a new approach, which will launch in the next few months, where we want to deploy stop and search more in collaboration with communities, rather than doing it to communities. Where we see a surge of crime that we think generates an intensity of stop and search required in an area, to deploy that in consultation with communities rather than unilaterally on our decision. We are making multiple steps with some of those plans that are there already. Those are some of the examples. On the standards and behaviour issue, which is one corner of the report we have spoken about before, I will be publishing some data in the next couple of weeks, which I promised to by the end of March [2023], in terms of the reviews we are doing.

That will show that dismissals and suspensions, for example, have gone up quite sharply. The number of investigations and the amount of reports from officers is going up, so you can see progress on that. We are also testing a different legal route to remove officers who we think no longer pass the vetting standard, which is something that has not been done in the past. Removing the hundreds of people who should not be here is clearly a part of the solution and you will start to see progress on that in my next update, as much as setting up the vast majority of good people with better equipment and better resources to do that.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): The Deputy Commissioner found out through means that there are 8,800 officers, and you referred to it in our last meeting, that are on restricted duties or whatever else. Is there a main thing for that?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Yes. Once [Dame] Lynne gets her teeth into something she will succeed on that. There are a whole mix of things in there. Some of that are a large number of recruits and they are notionally on the strength of local units, when they are at training school. Some of it is that abstraction. Some of it is proper serious issues of disability or injury on duty, where people need properly redeploying, but we have not always found the right role for them, which means they are not being used to best effect. Some it is people who are under misconduct investigations, and we should be faster at dealing with them and deciding they are fit to serve, or they are not fit to serve. There is a range of factors in there. The thing is it adds together, and that abstraction takes a load off the front line.

We are trying to work through it so that everyone can be meaningfully employed. There has also been, because of the pressure on numbers, a tendency to create posts above and beyond those that we have funding for. Those temporary teams effectively create abstractions on the front line. The point that Louise Casey makes in her report, which is exactly right on this, is that the orientation of where resources sit is not enough focused at local levels on boroughs and Basic Command Units (BCUs). It is too pulled towards Scotland Yard. A message I am giving internally, in terms of our thinking, we have to flip what I see in the organisation too often where organisational concerns come first, the front line comes second, and communities come third. Clearly that is inverted.

It is easy for a big bureaucracy to slip into that, because of the complexity of its size and policies and all those issues, but that is clearly wrong. It is not rocket science. By flipping that round and in every decision we make we ask: does this make sense for communities? Secondly, does this make sense for the officers who need the resources and frame of reference and equipment to be able to deliver a great service? Thirdly, does it work from an organisational perspective? Flipping it round in that way is so important. The way we allocate resources, which is the point of your question, Chairman, is exactly on that point.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. I will move to Assembly Member Desai.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you, Chairman. Good morning, Commissioner. Good morning, Deputy Mayor. Commissioner, firstly can I put on record for the umpteenth time the support of my Labour colleagues, and I speak on behalf of the whole Committee, appreciation of the work done by the overwhelming majority of your officers. The Chairman has also alluded to their good work. That has to be repeated time and time and time again.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Thank you.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): I have question to ask you later about morale within the force. However, Commissioner, to put on record, do you accept and will you implement all the recommendations for the MPS?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I accept the findings and I accept the spirit of the recommendations. Some of them are written in headline terms such as the effective disbanding of Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection. I have discussed with Louise that we are going to do the most radical reform possible in that area and I think that meets the intent of her recommendation. I am nervous about some of the words because I cannot simply take away all the people and stop protecting embassies, Parliament and that sort of thing. For the most radical form in that space, we already have new leaders, we have new supervisors at frontline level - I think a third or half of them are new - and we are looking to bring in a different type of mix of officers. We are doing as much change as we possibly can do. That adds together to her intent of effective disbanding, although I am nervous about other people's interpretation of the word "disband", which is why I explain that. However, I completely agree with the intent of Louise's report.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): In fact, I was going to ask you a question about the disbanding of the Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection Unit. I was in Parliament yesterday and passed by some of the armed police officers, thinking about what Baroness Casey has said. Is it too early to ask you what your thoughts are about a replacement unit?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): The secret to this is about leadership and it is about whoever is doing the role organising it well. One of the things we have found in our own study of that area is that the shifts have been so organised and in the different locations in work that it has made it very hard for Sergeants to have much contact with their teams. Therefore, the way they are organised has not been effective to help supervision work. We have not been good enough at our ability to recruit, and recruit firearms officers, so therefore the turnover in the department has been slow. Any department that does not have enough turnover can get stale and that is a danger in there. There are some quite deep, systematic issues to deal with like that. We struggle to have as many firearms officers in the MPS as we are resourced to have, and I think about half that Command is on. There is not a rapid solution to take everyone away, there is no one to drop in behind them, but what we have to do is change the way we approach these things to do that.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Helen Millichap was overseeing that area until recently; she has now moved into Local Policing. She has done some really profound work to change the nature of people applying to it. She has done very clever, targeted work that is bringing in a very large number of applicants, who are much younger in service with a much larger number of women officers applying, for example. We are looking at the

training and the qualifications and whether there is a different way we can set up the technicalities of the armed role that means we can train more people more quickly without losing standards.

All of these technical issues come together so that we can create greater churn to have a different, fresh culture in there with new leadership at different levels, better organised. Some of their facilities, as Louise points out in her report, are pretty awful and the speakers of Parliament are alive to that and making investments to help change that as well. There are multiple parts of this that make it a completely different environment.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Commissioner, something I put to Baroness Casey is what I call the change-resistant attitudes within the MPS, which have frustrated previous attempts to reform. In what way are you confident that “every officer and member of staff in the Met will step up to the challenges identified in this Review, to accept its findings and commit to change”?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): They have two choices. I am serious about this. We are not pussyfooting around the subject. I see a resolve in most people; that they are as embarrassed and upset by this as you would expect them to be and they want to change. We will take on the ones who are not up for it. Yesterday, I think the Deputy [Commissioner] and I might have spoken to as many as a fifth or a quarter of the organisation. We went out across multiple police stations, we did briefings and we connected those briefings by video conference across the MPS. There were some very reflective people; people get this. They are nervous about what this means for interactions with Londoners because they still want Londoners’ support. They get that there are problems in the organisation. They know there are things that they can do on their teams to improve the culture but, as I have said, they also know that most of it sits with leadership, and it sits with us to sort out. We have a shared resolve. For the minority who do not want to get on the bus, that is their problem and we will sort them out.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Commissioner, I referred to morale. How is morale right now? The Deputy Mayor was talking about seeing a police car at seven o'clock in the morning, blue lights on, do a U-turn and go off to deal with a situation. They are doing all this work, they see what is going on around them, read the papers and see the news. Morale presumably has been badly affected?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): It is shaken, and it is very finely balanced. We are an organisation at the moment which is 1,000 officers below its authorised establishment. Our projections for the next year on inputs and outputs, so to speak, in terms of recruitment and departures suggest that probably the most optimistic is that we might only stay 1,000 light.

Being 1,000 light, the Government policy at the moment is therefore that it withholds the money, rather than giving us the flexibility to spend it on other posts that help us strengthen the organisation in different ways. Like all other workers, they are hit by the inflation burst that we have had over the last year on top of a 17% real terms pay cut over the last decade. Therefore, pay is in there.

There is frustration with an organisation that is not working in the way it ought to. The thing Louise pulls out in her report about not feeling that they have the equipment and the resources come out. That is why we have been investing in mobile phones and technology for them and just starting that journey of improving, but there is a lot to do there.

Then wrapped around that is the debate of this, which is why I said what I said earlier about it being hard to do. However, it is about having a debate, which is about being targeted about what is wrong, being really pushy about the need for dramatic reform, which you are and I am, but not letting rhetoric turn that into something which may seem to be pillory or blame for the majority. It is quite a hard thing to pull off, but it is important.

There are multiple factors in this, that morale is very precarious at the moment, but the people I sat in front of just want to go out and do policing. They are fantastic people. It seems a lifetime ago now when I was being interviewed by Sophie [Linden] and the Mayor - nine months ago, whatever it was - and similarly by the Home Secretary at the time, [The Rt Hon] Priti Patel [MP]. In those separate interviews, they both asked me about there being obviously a lot of challenges, "Is this doable? Are you optimistic?" I will say now what I said then. There are lots of challenges and lots of ways the MPS needs to change and improve, but the reason we will succeed is that the majority of our people really care. They go out there, day in and day out, and they do extraordinary things. I see the overnight sheets and there are examples of that overnight. They have the spirit to continue, and this is what I was saying to them yesterday. If we can turn that passion, zeal and determination, not just to fighting crime and building trust with communities, but also in becoming a better organisation in how we work together, then we can take on anything.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Yes. Just two questions, I will only be brief, Chairman. Commissioner, the review highlighted that these cultural issues are longstanding, including long periods when you yourself were in senior management in the MPS. Given your experience, why would standards have slipped so dramatically over several years? How much were you aware of the toxic culture in the Specialist Firearms [Command] (MO19) and Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection units that Baroness Casey highlights?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I have always taken on bad behaviour that I have seen as a senior leader. I did 31 years in the MPS in policing before I retired. I did my last six years in the MPS, most of it in the Counter Terrorism Command, which also includes the Protection areas. I made changes there, including in Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection, to try to improve it. I did not see the richness and the vividness of what Louise has here, clearly, and what Louise has pointed out is that the organisational radar awareness of this has been weak. It was not on my radar, and I wish it had been. As [Dame] Lynne and I have both said, having served in the MPS at different times, you have to reflect on "What could I have done differently to have spotted this?" I have always tackled everything I have seen that has been a standards issue, but you look back and think, "I wish I'd had a better radar. What could I have done to have had one?" We have got it now and we are going after it.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. I am going to Assembly Member Russell.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you, Chairman. Good morning, Deputy Mayor, and good morning, Commissioner.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Good morning.

Caroline Russell AM: I have a question for each of you and I am going to start with the Commissioner. Also, the session this morning with Baroness Casey really laid down a challenge to all of us in this room - both of you and all of us around this side of the table - to take this moment to reset everything, not only in how the MPS is run organisationally but also how that scrutiny happens. I just want to say I really look forward to looking at how we can address that challenge from Baroness Casey going forward.

Commissioner, I want to pick back up again on the term “institutional racism”. You have rejected that term and said that it is politicised. Baroness Casey was very clear this morning that she is using the [Sir William] Macpherson definition. She says she owns that definition and she also said that when people say something has become politicised, it is often a way of saying it has become difficult; it is a get out of jail card for difficult. We also know that defensiveness and denial are two of the deep-seated cultures that Baroness Casey has found that need resolving.

My question for you, Commissioner, is: how can Londoners have confidence that things will change? They want to see that defensiveness/denial being addressed. I absolutely accept that you accept all the findings in the report, but I am just saying what Londoners want to hear. They have been waiting decades for that institutional, systemic racism in the MPS to be seen and to be addressed. I wonder if you have reflected since all the comment and conversation yesterday on this on whether you could use the words “institutional”, “systemic” racism.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Yes. I have used the word “systemic”. Just to be very clear on this, there is zero defensiveness here. I completely accept the diagnosis that Louise and her team have put on the table, and I completely accept the four bullet points she talked you through earlier on. From last September [2022], I have talked about systemic failings, and I have been really clear that whilst we have racists, misogynists and homophobes, this is not just about individuals. This is about systemic failings that create bias. It is about management failings and about cultural failings.

An analogy for me is that this is about the body of the MPS. It is not about a few bacteria that have got into a system. It is about the immune system not having been strong enough. They are not the majority of cells, but they have got more of a foothold, and they are having more influence than they ought to have done. This is about us systemically getting stronger to repel that from our system. I completely agree with that diagnosis.

As a police officer, I am most focused on the practicalities of action and the things we are doing. I do recognise though that words are important. The reason I chose not to use that word myself - and I am not disputing other people’s right to use it and I am not trying to undermine that in any way - is simply two things though. One is that it is an ambiguous term and in wider debates it gets used very differently. A journalist yesterday picked a random definition out of the dictionary about “institutional”, which is nothing to do with the Casey definition or the Macpherson definition. Macpherson has one definition; Louise rephrases it with four bullet points. I just need to be practical. For me, talking credibly as a leader, I get that it is systemic, I get that it is management, I get that it is cultural, and we are going after it. That is why I have come to that. Also, besides being ambiguous, it has been a concept which left and right have kicked around about its validity or not as well and that does not make it any easier either.

If I think something is the right thing to say, I could not care less whether Labour or Liberal Democrats or the Tories like it. I will say it if it is the right thing to say. If it is also confusing, I cannot go there. I know a lot of people who do not take part in these sorts of ethereal discussions that we have. A lot of people out there instinctively think, “Well, that probably means most people are racist”. I know that is not what it means, but that is the danger of it. It is simply --

Caroline Russell AM: Yes, I totally, totally hear what you are saying. What is important --

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Is action.

Caroline Russell AM: No, what is important is that Londoners hear you say that, those Londoners that have been waiting for decades for the racism – the systemic racism – to be seen and to be acknowledged. Those Londoners need to hear that. The reason I have asked this question is because I am worried that there are Londoners out there and MPS officers who really need to hear that loud and clear. However, because of time, I am going to move on to my --

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Can I just say? You have just used the word “systemic”. I am absolutely accepting “systemic” and then what we are doing about it is we are looking at how we deploy stop and search differently and we are looking again at promotion processes. We are doing all the sort of things you would be expecting us to do to dig underneath this and try to work out what we need to do differently. Over the last 20 years since Macpherson, whatever progress the MPS has made and whether it is accepted labels or not labels, what we have done on the ground has not been enough. It needs to be on my watch and that is what I am focused on.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. Deputy Mayor, I want to go back to stop and search and this comes back again to this relationship with Londoners, particularly Londoners who have been over-policed and under-protected. The Commissioner has said to me previously that stop and search is a power that has been over-used and misused. I was really shocked to read about the work that MOPAC was trying to do with the MPS to look into stop and search and review body-worn video and to see that there this is a project that has been trying to go on for a little while, a couple of years, I think. There was meant to be a meeting in February [2023] that did not happen, and this was to do with a problem of coding of stop and search encounters and disparity in terms of how that was working.

I have had the experience of waiting for months. I put in a question back last July [2022] about the locations of more intimate searches of children and I am still waiting for a response. It still says, “Officer is drafting a response”. This is information about a power that is a huge power of the police that has a very strong impact on trust and confidence and on the way Londoners experience being policed. Do you feel that you have confidence now that you are going to be able to get that information that you need and then we will be able to get the information that we have been asking for?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Thanks a lot. It is very clearly set out in Baroness Casey’s report of the history of that study on body-worn video and it shows the oversight that we were attempting to provide. Discussions first started in 2018 within the Mayor’s Action Plan in 2020 because we heard from communities, again as we have discussed many times at the Police and Crime Committee, around the Mayor’s Action Plan on trust and confidence. Again, a lot of the information in here has come from MOPAC surveys such as the Public Attitude Survey and the Victim Satisfaction Survey.

In terms of confidence going forward around the change, we do not want to just focus on data, although data is incredibly important and the transparency and accountability that that brings. I have absolute confidence that there has already been a change in terms of the relationship between MOPAC and the MPS. It is not that I have confidence going forward; it has already changed. The new leadership is much, much more open and transparent to the oversight and accountability mechanisms of MOPAC and I know that we are working with [Sir] Mark to deal with some of the data.

There are some technical issues around data that we do need to overcome because of the legalities of privacy and making sure that identifiable information is not handed over to us because that would be inappropriate.

There are some technical issues, but I have absolute confidence that there is a sea change, as Baroness Casey has talked about, a reset, a refresh. That is already happening in terms of that relationship.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you very much.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): I am sorry. Everybody wants to ask you lots of questions. I did hear Sir Mark use the word “systemic” several times yesterday.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you very much. I have so many questions, but clearly, I am not going to get through them all today. I am listening very carefully to what you are saying, Sir Mark, and some of your answers - which would be my default as well - are initiatives that are going to happen, which are criticised in this report.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I agree with you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: On practical examples, with the body language between the two of you when you started listing lots of examples, Sophie [Linden] crossed her arms as if to say, “Here we go again”. What I want to understand is this report talks absolutely about the culture, the way supervisors and managers have turned a blind eye to absolutely unacceptable behaviour throughout the organisation. This is ingrained behaviour. How are you thinking about tackling that? That is much more. It cannot just be “Right, we’ve reorganised those things there. We’ve put another person there”. What is your thinking? How are you approaching that, which is going to be the thing that shows whether you succeed or not in this space?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Yes, and you are right to challenge me. At the moment, I am stuck in that middle ground of not wanting to say, “I am not doing anything at the moment. I am just going to think for the next few months” because that would sound a bit wet, frankly. That is not what is happening; there is lots that we are doing. Likewise, I do not want to imply a list of six things that is going to fix everything. That is the conundrum, that comes out in this conversation and that is perfectly fair feedback.

The issue for me about culture is that at the moment I look at it in two parts. There is the enforcement piece and then there is the prevention and strengthening. It is much easier to see what you do with the enforcement piece and we are getting tougher on that. We have talked about that before and I am not going to labour it. We are looking for power so that we can be faster and be sharper in that. It may only be hundreds compared to the tens of thousands of good people, but the sooner you can move out the most toxic elements, the better. That is a part of it and that is important, but it is not the whole thing.

What is the more preventative, positive side of developing culture? We are looking at leadership development and training. In the police service across the country and in London, it has degraded quite significantly over many years. I have made a commitment that we are going to try to build the capability to do at least one week - so five days - of leadership development per leader in the organisation each year. We are not going to get to that in one bound. We are working with the College of Policing and the team is looking at London leadership and business schools. We are looking at community organisations in terms of how we help leaders improve their skillset both in terms of setting the right culture, and also in setting standards when things get tougher and sharper. That is one big and difficult example that cannot deliver overnight but is a part of it.

I might have said this here before. I make comparisons to looking at leadership development and how under invested we are. If you look at the military, a Colonel is a decent comparison to a Chief Superintendent in the sense of they are maybe responsible for 1,000 or 2,000 people under their leadership. After the [Royal Military Academy] Sandhurst, a Colonel will have had 72 weeks of leadership development. My Chief Superintendents since being Inspectors have been lucky if they have had five weeks. That is just indicative of the different weight and investment and that is talking over 15 to 20 years of a career to go across those ranks. Those things are absolutely important.

We are also rethinking our values and how we inculcate and assess them. Our values at the moment talk to integrity, professionalism, courage and compassion. Of course, they are all good words, but they are quite a long way up here and none of them capture the idea about listening to communities and that idea about policing by consent. We do not yet have written down "So if I'm doing those or not doing those, what's the difference and is that in my performance development review every year?" We are an organisation where one in six people are having a career review in a year, which is about both how you set expectations in terms of performance and culture and how it also plays out in staff surveys. It goes to the morale of "You're not interested in my career if you are not prepared for my Sergeant or Inspector to have a conversation with me at least once a year about 'You're really good at this, you're not so good at that. If we can work on this, what would you like to do next?'" Those are the sorts of things we all want in our careers.

There are multiple strands of things we are looking at and that work is progress. What we have to do is take Louise's thinking, which is really very powerful, and make sure we have captured all of that. Some of her recommendations go to specific points on this, but some of her findings ask us to be far more ambitious. I think Louise herself would be honest and say she has not found the whole prescription. She has got a series of findings and ideas which are good, but there is not the whole prescription there and the onus is on us to find that and to work with you as you scrutinise us. It is quite a range of things. I can do some heavy lifting on the enforcement very quickly; the prevention and development is going to take time.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: You probably need to get some experts in --

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Absolutely right.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: -- who have worked at other organisations and who absolutely understand what a proper culture looks like. When I read the examples in here, I think, "How can anyone survive working in this place?" How can anyone with the constant obsession with sex? Quite frankly, when I have read through this report, there is sexualisation, constantly asking officers about their sex lives. How can this go on in a modern workplace? I have no understanding of that.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Just to give an example, this has been in the papers, a couple of years ago a senior officer decided not to dismiss somebody who had a criminal conviction for masturbating on the train on the way home from work. What does --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: What message does that send out?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): What is that licence? What is the message that sends? It is appalling. I have got some legacy to clear up, but some of this is that the

Commissioner just sets a very different tone and we have to be ruthless on this. The vast majority of my people have nothing to fear, they know that, and they are as embarrassed and angered by this as I am.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Then there are some very practical specifics in here, very critical about the closure of police stations. Can you commit that you will not be closing any more police stations in London?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): The estate is big and complicated. We need to be closer to communities and one part of that is, as you have heard me speaking, about strengthening neighbourhood policing. That is partly about a number of people, it is partly about making sure they are not abstracted, but it is also about a philosophy of policing that is that community matters. It is not just about a bunch of people over there; it is about everybody. Part of that is that your local policing team ought to be able to walk to their patch.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Completely.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): At the moment, our estate does not allow - maybe around 10% cannot walk within 20 minutes to their patch. That is a very rough number so do not take me as gospel that that is exact. Clearly, we have got to sort that out within our current estate plan and that is why I asked for the developing Estates Strategy to put some new criteria in it.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: You are rewriting it completely?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): We are working on that, that is coming forward and Sophie [Linden] and the Mayor's Office are supportive of that work we are doing. Also, we are eager to get the Estates Strategy on the table.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: In terms of one specific --

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Briefly, Assembly Member.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes. Some specifics in this report: the specialist units clearly acting - and you have already talked about some of that, but this bit,

"We were told of officers ... [making] multiple, frequent expense claims just below the limit that would require formal sign off, travelling overseas for training courses, and ordering iPads and personalised jackets on expenses."

This reminds me of my time on the [Metropolitan] Police Authority (MPA) when there was a huge scandal of credit card fraud in the MPS. We put in tough, tough measures through the MPA monthly committees I sat on to make sure we got that fraud down. What are you doing to tackle things like that? That is not just the sexual misconduct, whatever. That is just corrupt. What are you doing to tackle that sort of issue within the specialist units?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): We are looking at the finances of relevant units. Just going down a slight tangent, there are lots of worrying case studies in Louise's report. She took them from people on the basis that they were going to stay anonymous. We have asked Louise for the evidence on those because we want to follow them all up. If they stand up as they present, then there are lots

of people who should not have a job, but that needs proper investigation and we have asked Louise for the starting point to be able to do those investigations. For some of them, like the finances, we can do the audits based on the records and we can get to the bottom of it quite quickly. If it presents as it presents in the report, then obviously it is very, very serious both in terms of individuals and then looking again at systems in terms of why the systems have allowed this to happen.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Duvall?

Len Duvall AM: The systems should really stop it, should they not? On one of the issues, the purchase of tomahawks, I cannot think of any policing circumstances were that would be appropriate, and I hope that is on your radar in terms of that.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Absolutely.

Len Duvall AM: Whether it is true or not, someone needs to do it very quickly. Let us come to priorities because some of this is going to take time and some of this is going to be in your gift to do certain things. You said one of the most important things is setting the tone and no mixed messages. One of the things that worries me is, whilst I welcome the report, the messages that go outside to people that "You are all rotten. Actually, we don't trust you completely". You still have to do the day job; you have got to reform yourselves and you have got to do this change agenda. There are no ifs or buts about it because this change agenda represents good policing, and it should be there as a matter of course. You are right. You have acknowledged it and you are now in that pause. You have started the work, but you are now in a pause situation again, and you do not have long to pause and reflect because of Louise's report about where we are.

How do we avoid some of the mixed messages around those issues of what you are sending, not just to your people internally in the organisation because you rightly have to concentrate on that, but also messages to the public? They have got to be honest, have they not? What is the strategy for that and how are you going to prioritise some of the actions that you have got to take? Also, you are waiting on others. We need the Government to change the system to make it easier for people to exit the organisation where they have done wrong. Due process: I am a great believer in that, but where they have done wrong there should be no place for people in our organisation of the MPS.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): You identify very shrewdly the tension in this, which goes to the "Get on with stuff" - "Think"; "Get on with stuff" - "Think". I will just pick one of the strands of work in our current Turnaround Plan, strengthening neighbourhood policing and the thinking on the detail of that. How would you employ the extra Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) and the new superintendents on boroughs? What does that mean for training and powers? How do people operate? How do we connect better with local authorities? That thinking is still developing.

I am not going to hold up that thinking; that would be foolish. Louise's report does not dispute that, I do not think, but then she has got some other ideas in there about "You need to think harder about how you inculcate policing by consent. You think harder about what your conversation is with Londoners that deals with this tension, this frustration, this lack of trust and this desire for a different way that policing works with communities. How are you going to have that conversation with Londoners?"

On the one hand, I do not want to slow down doing some of the basic, obvious things in terms of improving neighbourhood policing. Parallel with that, we have to start to work out how we have a wider conversation, involve other people, and set up a framework that does have that wider conversation with London that acts as a constructive force to create a different way that police and communities work together. Across all of our current thinking and the additional insight that Louise brings in, we have got to do that. I could sit back for three or six months and say, "I'm just thinking. Don't ask me any questions". I do not think I would last very long if I tried that to be honest and I know you are not suggesting that. On the other hand, I can crack on, do things and ignore Louise's report; that is equally dim. I have got to try to get a blend between the two of doing sensible things.

The tone I am trying to convey to the people in the MPS and publicly is that we are on this. We are on this in terms of we are on the need for reform, we are on the idea of renewing policing by consent, and I was saying that on my first appearance here six months ago. We are on this, and on top of our own thinking Louise Casey has added a whole load of extra insight. She has found some things that we have not found, she has thrown some new ideas in it, and we have to mix that in. However, we have to mix that in and then have to add those new components into the car whilst driving the car. I cannot stop the car for six months. That is the messiness of what I am doing, and I do not apologise for that.

One last thing that is relevant to the whole conversation: I have done a lot of thinking and speaking to people from outside policing around big organisations that get into a bit of a corner where things are going wrong and they start to go in the wrong direction. That is why I was using the word "turnaround" and what is the way out of that, what succeeds and what fails. I have spoken to people who have led that sort of thing, I have spoken to experts who have studied it, I have read articles and books on it, and you have to set the right path out. You have to have a sense of "OK, here are the things to do", but it does come down to just relentless delivery. Step by step, you work out whether it is about culture, whether it is about improving service to Londoners, whether it is about better equipping the front line to do a good job. You work out the steps, you take one step at a time, and it is about relentless delivery. There is not one Hail Mary solution here. There is not one idea that is going to do it. What I need to give that sense of is that, step by step, we are going to tackle all these issues and we are absolutely serious, but the plan and the steps will be evolving as we are doing it and that is the tension.

Len Duvall AM: With that plan, are we going to have a little bit of a timescale, a realistic timetable that does not say you have to deliver it by tomorrow but realistically says when? We have already heard there is a review timetable that Louise has said, and that may flex in some ways, but we need to have some timescales, do we not?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Yes, completely.

Len Duvall AM: We need some issues. Will there be a reissue of the Turnaround Plan, too?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Yes.

Len Duvall AM: With some sense of when we expect to see some results or when we expect to implement it? Can I just take one of your strands very quickly because time is pressing?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Of course.

Len Duvall AM: On neighbourhood policing/ward policing - we used to call it ward policing, whatever you call it this week - which I have some history with. In doing that, one of the missions is about mixed messages. A number of senior officers in the MPS described it as "community engagement". I described it as "operational policing". There were police officers who went out and arrested people who were causing bad things in our communities. Has the MPS really solved that issue? They are the starting points of some of the issues, the problems in the specialised units, and some of these issues, and we still have a view from senior officers that it is not real policing as such. Of course, it is real policing. People sitting behind desks is real policing. The frontline exists in many forms. Have we really got the philosophy about what we are trying to do, which is to protect people in society, deter crime and capture people who are breaking the rules? Have we really got clear about different aspects of the MPS and its role within those situations?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I am very clear. There are some mixed views in the organisation, but we are confronting those. Neighbourhood policing is not about kissing babies and holding hands. It is about fighting crime, but it is about fighting crime through the lens of how local communities see it, which is not always the same as the statisticians see it. It is about fighting crime with local communities and with partners, but it is still about fighting crime and it is that listening, it is that collaboration and it is that joint action that is going to be the cornerstone of building trust. It is still fighting crime; it is not kissing babies.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Devenish?

Tony Devenish AM: Good afternoon, Commissioner and Deputy Mayor. Deputy Mayor, Baroness Casey says, and I quote,

"The Met have in the past avoided scrutiny, holding MOPAC at arms-length, and not sharing information and data. MOPAC in turn have not been able to provide the strategic oversight function that the Met needs."

What are you going to do differently?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Thank you very much. I totally accept Baroness Casey's findings in terms of the relationship around governance, accountability and transparency. We have already set out what is going to be very different. I listened to Baroness Casey while she was in front of you this morning. She was very clear that the really significant problem in that relationship was the way in which the MPS was defensive, was not open, was not transparent, and was holding us at arm's length.

In terms of what is going to happen differently, I have already talked about the absolute step change and difference in the new leadership of the MPS with Sir Mark and Dame Lynne in terms of that relationship. It is open, transparent and accountable, and we will continue to do that. I have talked about data. We have got a few issues to overcome in terms of technicalities of some of the data that we ask for, but I am really confident that that will happen. That will change. You know in terms of Baroness Casey's report as well in relation to how we conduct oversight that we of course are thinking about "What should we do differently in the future? What can we do differently?" The Mayor will chair the London Policing Board and again that is in order to be able to talk about that fresh start in terms of the governance and accountability of the MPS. We will be working very quickly to put that Board in place, ensuring that there are outside people on that Board, outside experts on the Board who can support as well as challenge the MPS to change.

Tony Devenish AM: You also have to acknowledge that you in the past must have been fobbed off. The MPS may have been obstructive – absolutely – but you guys were asking questions and then not getting proper answers. Do you accept that you were fobbed off during much of the last six and a half years?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No, I do not accept that over the last six and a half years we have not done robust oversight. I have already named some of the actions that we have taken. The Gangs [Violence] Matrix was a difficult piece of work that we undertook from Evidence and Insight. We did not take no for an answer in terms of the data around that, and you know that over 1,000 people have been taken off the Gangs Matrix. The reason we wanted to review the Gangs Matrix was because of the issues within this report around disproportionality of those who were on it. In terms of some of the answers that we did not get, we never gave up and we never stopped, but we did not get all the answers that we wanted.

Tony Devenish AM: Baroness Casey also spoke this morning about doers in government, rather than just consultants. Do you think MOPAC needs to have more doers and fewer consultants in its approach to get what it needs to get at in terms of working with the MPS?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): We are looking at our oversight and the capacity of oversight. I noticed earlier you talked about the fact that MOPAC was too big and that some of our resources should go over to the MPS, but you seem to be now suggesting we have more resources. Of course, the more resources we have, the more oversight we can do. You have to prioritise in terms of the capacity that you have and that is what we have done so far. Of course, we are looking, and I take the humility that Baroness Casey has asked for us all to look at her report, the humility that we need to look and review our capacity and how we prioritise the work that we are doing within MOPAC.

Tony Devenish AM: Very briefly, Commissioner, the one thing you said this morning which again disappointed me, is you talked about probably having at least 1,000 fewer officers than you are entitled to have, even in 12 months' time. Baroness Casey also said, "The Police Uplift Programme has been a missed opportunity to improve the diversity and skills base of its workforce". Surely amongst eight/ten million Londoners you can find another 1,000 coppers from – I do not like using the word BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) community, but from the wider London community so we do not have 1,000 short next year?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): We are doing everything we possibly can do in terms of our recruitment and retention. We are looking very hard at it, but the London employment market is enormously hot. You look at all industries and all sectors are struggling. The comparable pay points of the police pay of a frontline officer over a decade has gone down by 17% in real terms and now on top of that we have got the cost of living surge of the last six or 12 months. Then you have got the challenges in terms of the reputation of the organisation. Those are the factors which weigh heavily on people. You add all that together and that is a very difficult mix. Some of that is for me to fix and some of that politicians can help with.

Tony Devenish AM: As I think I said at the last meeting, it would be great to have a separate session on that because it is key. We cannot sit here and talk about resources and money if you cannot even get the resources on the frontline. I appreciate the point you are making about the jobs market being great under a Conservative Government and I am sure my Labour colleagues would agree with that. Thank you, Chairman.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Just one of the points on that in terms of resources, if I had complete flexibility, I might choose a slightly different mix of police officers and

police staff. I am not talking about back-office roles. Other police forces have a different mix of police officers and police staff in operational roles like in Public Protection, dealing with rape victims, child abuse victims, etc. The current funding arrangements restrict me from picking the operational mix that I think is the most effective because of the levers around different recruitment targets.

Tony Devenish AM: Thanks, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Hopefully, if you talk to [The Rt Hon] Chris Philp [MP, Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire] you can see what can be done. Assembly Member Ahmad?

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you, Chairman. Good afternoon, panel. Commissioner, the Turnaround Plan is very welcome. However, in the light of the review conclusions, do you think in its present form it goes far enough to address the crisis the Casey Review has outlined?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I have been very clear it needs to come out with another version. If you look at the foreword in it in January [2023], it says this is a first version because we want to crack on with things. We want to seek Londoners' views and we want to start building plans. There will be another version that will take account of what we learnt from that feedback and from what Baroness Casey said. That has always been our intent and there are some very strong and thoughtful proposals. There is some very deep analysis there and that needs to feature, as we have discussed.

Marina Ahmad AM: If you accept the recommendations, we have talked about review deadlines. The first review that Baroness Casey talks about is in two years' time and I am going to ask you the question that I asked her. In two years' time, what changes will you expect to have seen within the MPS?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): There will be particular ways you will see service to Londoners having improved. That has to be the most important piece. The strength of neighbourhood policing and the local communities' reaction to that, the quality of our response to calls, the success rate in our investigation of public protection offences - rape, indecent exposure, sexual assault, etc. We will improve upon some of those key things, which are in the Turnaround Plan and come out very strongly in Casey's report. Although it is a much more finely balanced thing, I would hope in that time that we can start to see some of those starting to register on trust and confidence measures. Those do not turn around overnight, but those practical steps should begin to affect that over forthcoming years.

Then behind that and of less interest to the public, but critical to delivery, I will be able evidence and will start to evidence that in the next few weeks; how we have got much tougher and clearer in standards and who is in the police and who is not. We have got much better at developing our people and training and developing leaders, as I said earlier. We have repaired some of the foundations that Louise Casey finds are damaged in terms of Human Resources (HR) support for the frontline and in terms of technology, other logistics issues. She calls out the fridges issue in her report. All of those practical issues which we might be interested in here are important because they stand underneath the quality of that service that we see changing to Londoners. It all starts from Londoners, but we have to look at the layers underneath it.

Marina Ahmad AM: With the trust and confidence issue, in two years' time what do you want to be able to say and be absolutely clear has happened to restore Londoners' trust and confidence or go a long way to restoring Londoners' trust and confidence of the MPS?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I would expect and hope that Londoners will have noticed that community policing looks more real and stronger; that the response to calls and response to key incidents like reports of rape is better; and that they have increased confidence that we are serious about our own integrity and have been ruthless about sorting out those who have let us down. Those are the things I can deliver and I would expect, depending on how it is reported, how it is discussed, how it is presented and how we communicate it, that start to filter into London's psyche to think, "Actually, the Met's gone through a bad period. Maybe it is coming out of it". That does not happen overnight. You are politicians. You look at polls probably more than I do, and they are quite hard to move, are they not, once there is a sense that you are going in the wrong direction? All I can do is make those critical steps and show that we are succeeding, and I am sure over time that will start to penetrate Londoners' views that actually this is now going in the right direction.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Prince?

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Chairman. Deputy Mayor, as Baroness Casey said, we are all in this together so I do not want to reflect on what could, should or may have been done. Two things really. The London Policing Board: you said the Mayor may well adopt that and run with that. With these quarterly meetings, is there going to be any sort of political representation on that? Is there going to be an attempt to have a balance of political view on that Board, do you know?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): We have accepted all the recommendations within the report and that includes the London Policing Board, so it will happen. It is not "may well"; it will happen. We are looking at the moment as to how that Board will function. The key criterion around that is "What does the MPS need in order to be able to really drive for that Board to support and challenge and drive change". That will be the key criterion as to who needs to sit on it.

Keith Prince AM: All right, I will let you get away with that one. Then the other criticism in the summary - and again I do not want to go into the criticism - is that MOPAC's relationship with the MPS was "tactical rather than strategic". I do not know if you saw that, it is page 217. You have not obviously had a lot of time to think about it, but how do you think that MOPAC going forward can be more strategic? Ultimately, I have always looked at MOPAC as being the strategic body, with the police delivering the tactics and the day-to-day running, but the strategy being set by MOPAC. What do you think you, your colleagues and the Mayor can do to make MOPAC more strategic in its approach and what changes do you think need to be made?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): That description in the report, the example of body-worn video and the barriers that we have faced in terms of our very strategic view, saying strategically what is going wrong with stop and search? What are communities saying to us about stop and search? Strategically, what is happening? We need to look at the body-worn video to really understand is there discrimination, is there racial bias within stop and search. The tactical element that had to come out was "How are we actually going to get hold of that body-worn video?" I have every confidence that will be unlocked and unlocked now, but that example shows you a strategic view, strategic oversight and how you then have to go down into practical tactics to be able to do that.

In terms of going forward, we have set out very clearly in the Police and Crime Plan what our strategic views and our strategic objectives are. We were really clear around, of course, tackling violence, including violence against women and girls, protecting victims, supporting victims, which again is within this report, and also within the Engage process, but also trust and confidence being a key strategic view. We have been very clear about what we are doing going forward. If you look on the MOPAC dashboard, you will see the oversight that we are undertaking, and you will also see how we are tracking progress against those strategic objectives.

Keith Prince AM: Can I just flick that back to you, Sir Mark? Clearly, there was this dysfunctional relationship. What are you going to put in place to allow MOPAC to work more closely with the MPS and to have a better relationship and to be more strategic?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I have been very clear with my team that we should not be hiding anything from MOPAC. That is governance. We are professional police officers; we are accountable to politicians and that is how it works. There are almost no bounds on that. There is a practicality boundary. If the questions were just of consuming too many resources, which is not a problem at the moment, and secondly there is just a personal data issue that it is right that MOPAC can look at everything we do, but it is not right that it can look at who we are investigating for what crime. They should know what the crimes are and where they are, and MOPAC has no issue on that. There is one little practicality barrier there, but other than that we have got nothing to hide and frankly, I need their support and involvement. When we have conversations in the future about budgets, or procurement decisions, or strategies, they will be a better conversation if we understand each other. If I am only showing Sophie [Linden] 1% of the hand I hold, then the conversation ends up being a second-rate conversation. It is in my interests to be transparent with those very minor boundaries set on it.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Moema?

Sem Moema AM: Thank you, Chairman. I am going to try to wrap up a number of things in a question and you may want to answer some of them or all of them. Just to say, I completely echo - in the spirit of gentleness, that Baroness Casey talked about this morning to allow space for the MPS to do what it needs to do. Nevertheless, whilst I can understand the rationale behind it, I do not have the words. It is not disappointing. It is just deflating to see some of that work around moving from Macpherson to a point if there are other words to be used to make sure that it happens, then that might be something that might be better, more forcefully expressed over the next few months. I just wanted to put that on record.

The substantive question that I have is about the things which are not maybe the headline issues but are really, really important and maybe speak to the way that we work here in the Committee to more fully scrutinise. They do relate to neighbourhood policing and the way that that has been. It is the one bit of the police that has been defunded, from the looks of things. There are figures which say that neighbourhood policing/frontline policing has lost 80% of civilian staff. If I am getting my terminologies wrong --

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): That is probably about right.

Sem Moema AM: Yes, but the overall cut in civilian staff is about 25% across the MPS.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): That is right.

Sem Moema AM: That means that there are vast swathes of the MPS that have seen no cuts in their civilian support. Given that the BCUs, the PCSOs, all of those people are the bits that Londoners touch and rely on to keep us safe and to keep us calm, away from us, it is the most under-resourced, unloved part of policing. You have at the other extreme - extreme is the wrong word - the boys' toys command where the people have got guns and weapons and access to alternative ways of policing. They are a little bit more present in neighbourhoods and communities like the one that I represent at a time where you would rather be seeing neighbourhood policing than, for example, the Territorial Support Group (TSG) rolling down the Kingsland Road on a Saturday afternoon. It would be far better to see beat policing, but we know that they are not available so we take what we can get.

In turning around and flipping that pyramid on its head around priorities, that seems like an obvious place to do it, but in terms of asking and including communities what they actually want from policing. Do you think there is an opportunity here to make the future plan a lot stronger if those views are sought from as granular a level as is possible? The police coming up with something and imposing it yet again on a community and your solutions, though well intentioned, does not resolve any issues on the ground. Black Londoners, like other Londoners, want to be protected and not to be over-policed themselves. That is something which requires a reset and requires a different level of engagement from a BCU in that circumstance compared to one which may be less ethnically diverse, but both are good policing for their communities. That is the first part of my question. The second part was around --

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Assembly Member --

Sem Moema AM: I will get to it, I promise. The [London] Fire Brigade, also a blue light service which has some serious issues, talks about the training that it gets from the same provider that was mentioned in Dame Louise Casey's report, Babcock. There are also examples of consultancy that have not particularly generated much by way of output for the police to then go and use. I just want to have a think at a future date about the actual cost controls and the way in which money is spent for a positive outcome within the MPS and where that sits and where that is signed off.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): It is quite a long question, thank you. I think I have three things to pull out, but I probably missed something. Firstly, on the police staff point, overall Baroness Casey is critical of a lot of the decisions that were made during austerity in terms of cuts and various other decisions. People obviously wrestled with it then and tried to protect the front line and one of her conclusions is "You were too tough on staff". She makes the point we were too tough on staff across the board so things like HR and other areas have been stripped back and those foundations are damaged. We do not have enough analysts so that plays into our ability to be focused. She talks about those, but you are right; she talks about neighbourhoods. We are 1,600 PCSOs fewer today than we were a decade ago and I have been discussing with the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor about trying to rebuild that. In this year's budget, I am pleased that we have got 500 extra PCSOs we will be recruiting during the course of the year, and that is a step back in that direction. The police officers we have in neighbourhoods are, on paper, a comparable number to we had a decade ago between the neighbourhood teams and the town centre teams. The reality is, with the abstractions and the way the resources are managed at the moment, the presence that is felt is not where it needs to be and there are issues with the estate and other areas. I absolutely get the theme about neighbourhoods, you are right, and about PCSOs. You are right and I am keen to go there.

People made decisions based on shrinking budgets. I was part of some of those decisions, not other ones. They were all made with the best intent of trying to protect services the best they could. The community reset

- I wrote down here - in terms of that conversation with the community, the PCSOs and the Neighbourhood Model is an indicator of how you have that conversation. The steer I have given to my team, and I am open to other suggestions on this, is we need to come up with a rough idea about how broadly across 32 boroughs this is how you might put the resources out there, and broadly this is how you might divide them between wards. You cannot start with a conversation, "Here is all the resources in the middle, fight over them". We think this makes sense, looking at confidence data and crime data. However, before we completely put a stamp on it, you have conversations with local authorities and communities and reflect on what they say. To illustrate, I was talking to one of the BCU Commanders, he was saying to me that one of the reasons we need to have these conversations is that crime data does not show it all. He would say on his BCU there are some wards where they are very insular, very untrusting of the police. If you look at crime data, because they are reporting so low it might not put them as high on the radar in terms of resources as he and the local authority would say. I want the BCU Commander and the local authority to say, "I know the data says allocate them that way, but we need to tip them a bit back". I agree with that principle, and we need to get that balance right.

Lastly, going outside. As part of partly financial saving and partly looking for their expertise, there was a decision to go outside in terms of outsourcing, partnering with other organisations. Probably some bits of those have worked and some have not. The Babcock suppliers you mentioned co-ordinates the work done with the four universities in terms of training any recruits. I visited one of those universities, some of the things I found are not good enough and I have had a stiff conversation with the people involved. We need to look at that and how we do it.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Garratt.

Neil Garratt AM: Reflecting on the conversations and the reading of the report, it is a very emotional moment and I think for a lot of people it is a moment of vindication and perhaps a moment of catharsis. However, there is only so long you can maintain that tone. What I am concerned about is the more nuts and bolts stuff, the process stuff, the mechanisms that solve these problems happen and not just a great outpouring of emotion and then back to business as usual.

Two things in particular have struck me from the report that have been touched on a bit but have not quite been covered. One, she [Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB] talks about Sergeants and Inspectors who are the line managers of people who may be raising concerns - officers who are concerned about poor behaviour of their fellow officers - and says they are so overworked they do not have the capacity to deal with it, it is easier for them to turn a blind eye. You can do as much cultural change as you like, but if people do not have the capacity to do the actual nuts and bolts stuff of dealing with miscreants then they will not be dealt with. That is my first question, what is the process to make sure those team leader level people, Sergeants and Inspectors, have the capacity to do the work we would like to see them do?

Secondly, with BCUs we have heard how borough leadership has been cut out of the process of scrutinising and understanding what is going on with policing in their borough. I was a bit concerned as well - Baroness Casey was particularly talking about this earlier - how BCU Commanders themselves within the MPS get cut out of the process. If things happen in their "patch" it is not really their patch - they are secondary to what is going on and other things are going on - so they themselves are not even in a position, even if they were actively dealing with their borough leadership, to have the answers, they may not be in control.

Those are two things. One is how do you make sure Sergeants and Inspectors are in a position to do the thing we are all asking them to do and, secondly, what are we doing about BCU Commanders so they are able to liaise properly with borough leadership and also are taken seriously within the organisation?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): Both good questions, thank you. They both come to flipping a mind-set, from the community inwards rather than from the centre outwards.

Frontline leadership is critical to this. I say that in a constructive sense, not in a blame sense. There is a ratios point. We have more of our experience in the specialist commands and less on BCUs, particularly with the burst of recruitment recently. Yet we have much lower supervisory ratios in the specialist commands than we do on the BCUs. That is clearly wrong and it has become a more acute problem, because if you are a sergeant supervising 12 people that is pretty hard. If eight of them are experienced and four are new it might make it more manageable or at least less unmanageable. If it flips the other way and ten are inexperienced and two have experience, then that is too much ground to cover. We have to look, as part of our rebalancing of resources across the organisation, at a rebalancing of supervisory experience.

There is also the point I made earlier about skills. If we have not given enough leadership and management training to those individuals, then that is hard on them. Lots of good people but stretched too far and who have not always been invested in, in terms of their skill set. We have to help them with that, so, my language, about a lot of it is down to them, is about our failure to help them rather than blaming them for not sorting it out.

The BCU point is again that outside-in perspective and the need to give them more centrality. One of the pieces of operational change we are looking at internally is the balance of resources. On our proactive teams we have Violent Crime Task Force, TSG and others that are MPS-wide resources. On a BCU level they have a range of different teams that they can task and deploy. There are probably too many teams and the balance of where those resources are probably needs to tip more towards the local. The Deputy [Mayor for Policing and Crime] has been overseeing a piece of review work on that which I expect to report in a couple of weeks, which I would expect to produce fewer teams with a different balance, tipped towards the local.

My third point on that is the work I mentioned earlier about a fresh look at stop and search. Picking up Louise's point, there are three things that interest me about stop and search. Is it effective in dealing with crime? Are we lawful? Does it build or damage trust? We have looked hard at the first two historically. As Louise points out, we have not looked so hard at the third one. That is what we need to do. That goes to how we deploy it. It should not just be deployed, whether that is by Scotland Yard or by a BCU Commander, based on dots on a map of crime. If there is a need for intense delivery of stop and search in an area potentially, let us start from, "What's the problem?" The problem is there has been a surge in knife crime, say, actually there should be a conversation with the community, if necessary, in fast time, about, "We're really worried about this. We're thinking of doing this. What do you think? Can you support us? Can you help us? What else can happen? What can the local authority do? Can you move some cameras around?" Thinking about a joint approach to it rather than us parachuting in a tactic that comes as bit of a surprise to the community. Stop and search is critical, but we need to be cannier and more thoughtful about how we deploy it. That thinking is all part of that, listening more to communities and involving BCU Commanders in those conversations. It all reflects, as you say, that bottom-up rather than top-down.

Neil Garratt AM: I am conscious of what Baroness Casey told me about the 'bear pit' that we can create here. I am conscious that it is a very specific question I am asking, and I am concerned you have not quite answered the question.

If I am an inspector and somebody comes to me and says, "Here's a PC on my team who is making a complaint about misogynist or racist behaviour" of his or her colleagues and that inspector has 100 things on their plate and this is number 101 - she [Baroness Casey] highlights this in here - there needs to be a mechanism. It is all well and good saying this is an important thing for us as an organisation, it is an important cultural issue. However, at the end of the day people have 24 hours in a day. How do you make sure there is the capacity for those things to be dealt with because that seems to be a serious criticism, everyone agrees but it is how does it actually happen?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): That goes to the ratios point, if you have the time and capacity or not. That is why I made that point about supervisory ratios.

I am confident if the vast, vast majority of the leaders brought something really awful to their table they will deal with it formally and they will put it onto the specialist people. That is not the test I am most worried about. It is more the 'broken windows' approach to this. It is nipping things in the bud, "John is just a bit across the line in how he should behave. None of it has got to formal misconduct but I need to send a signal to the whole team that that is the line of behaviour and John is putting his toe across it." If you do not draw the line there, then that individual becomes emboldened and it gets worse. It is those more subtle leadership skills and those interventions that can take much more time. If you are not confident about how you do it then you might hesitate on them and that is the point of success or failure. Reporting the most serious things and Professional Standards to do a better investigation will happen and we are strengthening Professional Standards, so they do a better job. It is more those boundary issues. If you have more time with your people, if you are only supervising six rather than 12, you stand more chance of getting that right.

Neil Garratt AM: I appreciate that. Your setting of the tone, I appreciate that. That is a rational way of saying it is about changing priorities. Finally, can I say --

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Very, very briefly.

Neil Garratt AM: -- what is the mechanism for checking that is happening?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): You check on the formal. It is very hard to check on the informal, is it not? The informal you get from staff surveys; you get from other data. We are trying to look at how you can spot healthy and unhealthy teams.

Neil Garratt AM: I am very conscious of the Chairman glaring at me so let me say it is about actively going looking and not waiting for someone to knock on your door. That is the point I am trying to make. How are we actively going looking?

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): It is about the radar point I was making earlier; it is about conversations; it is about data; it is about a staff survey. It is a whole range of different things where you say, "That team looks healthy, that team doesn't, we need to dive in and look why".

Neil Garratt AM: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): I will just ask you, Deputy Mayor, in light of everything you heard about what has been said about BCUs, would you consider doing a review into their effectiveness, whether the construct is fit for purpose? This is a criticism that comes from leaders in my part of London. We are all Labour leaders, by the way.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Very briefly. That does not make any difference, we are not bringing politics into this.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): No, I am just saying that is in my part of London.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Very briefly, the Police and Crime Plan did have already a commitment to a review of the impact of the BCU restructure, starting with public protection and child protection. What we have to consider is how much of a review we need to undertake given the analysis that is already in there and we will be discussing that with the leadership. Absolutely, there is already that commitment in the Police and Crime Plan that was published last March [2022].

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): I strongly agree with what I thought Baroness Casey said, which was a structural change is more likely to get in the way of getting to the culture than it is to have the effect that we want.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Structural is a way to solve issues as well.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): Thank you. I think you have heard that we are not happy with BCUs and it was interesting for me to see it in the report.

Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis): It needs to work better.

Susan Hall AM (Chairman): I think I can say on behalf of the whole Committee that we really wish you well with this because it is essential that we have a trusted and respected police force in London for everybody's sake, and we do understand the morale issues that it is going to cause with the rest of your staff. We are completely behind you in sorting this out. I would like to thank our guests for attending the meeting today and answering the Committee's questions.

Subject: Summary List of Actions

Report to:	Police and Crime Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat
Date:	24 May 2023
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on the progress made on actions arising from previous meetings of the Police and Crime Committee.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the completed, outstanding and closed actions arising from its previous meetings, and the additional correspondence sent.**

3. Summary List of Actions

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 22 March 2023

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
6	Independent Review into the Standards of Behaviour and Internal Culture of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)	Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB	During the course of the discussion, Baroness Casey agreed to provide the Committee with the Ipsos MORI survey of MPS officers and staff.	Ongoing. Followed-up on 4 May 2023.
6	Independent Review into the Standards of Behaviour and Internal Culture of the MPS	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Closed. Delegation not used.

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 8 March 2023

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
6	Independent Review of Prevent	MPS	During the course of the discussion, the MPS offered to arrange for Committee Members to visit the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre where further discussions on Prevent could take place.	Completed. This visit took place on 6 April 2023.
6	Independent Review of Prevent	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Completed. See Agenda Item 8.
9	Any Other Business the Chairman Considers Urgent	Senior Committee Officer	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to respond to the Monitoring Officer's draft paper on the complaints received against the Mayor of London in connection with the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM.	Completed. This action taken was reported to the Committee's meeting on 22 March 2023.

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 22 February 2023

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
7	Q&A Session with MOPAC and the MPS	Deputy Commissioner, MPS	<p>The Committee requested the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the training package being developed for Sergeants. • Details of the progress being made in increasing the diversity at a senior level in the MPS, including specific figures on the diversity at a senior level; and • Confirmation of the arrangements for officers who leave the MPS and wish to re-join at a later date. 	Completed. Attached at Appendix 1 .
7	Q&A Session with the MOPAC and the MPS	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Closed. Delegation not used.
8	Police and Crime Committee Work Programme	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the informal discussion on missing children in London.	Completed. See Agenda Item 8 .
8	Police and Crime Committee Work Programme	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree the Committee's response to the MPS's Turnaround Plan 2023-2025.	Completed. See Agenda Item 8 .

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 25 January 2023

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
7	Q&A Session with the MOPAC and the MPS	Commissioner, MPS	The Committee requested the following further information on the sanction detection rates for rape offences and data on the outcomes of these cases that resulted in a court sanction.	Ongoing. Followed-up on 12 April 2023.
7	Q&A Session with the MOPAC and the MPS	Chief Executive Officer, MOPAC	The Committee requested the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further information on the work MOPAC is doing to support victims of domestic abuse, including how victims are able to stay in their homes and the levels of investment from MOPAC; and • A list of actions that MOPAC is taking to support the MPS in the delivery of its Turnaround Plan. 	Completed. Attached at Appendix 2 .

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 11 January 2023

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
6	Counter-terrorism and Radicalisation	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Completed. See Agenda Item 8 .

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 13 December 2022

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
5	Resignation of the Former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM	Mayor of London and Occupant of MOPAC	<p>The Committee requested the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further information on the press pack about Sir Thomas Winsor sent by the Mayor's Office on the date of the Winsor report publication; • MOPAC's response to the Independent Office for Police following receipt of the draft findings and recommendations related to Operation Hotton; • Further information on why the Baby P case may have been discussed during the meeting on 2 February 2022; and • Further information on the improvements made during the appointment process of the current Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley QPM. 	Ongoing. Followed-up on 12 April 2023.
5	Resignation of the Former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM	Sir Thomas Winsor	<p>The Committee requested the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sequence of events in March 2022, specifically dates relating to the launch of the Commission by the Home Secretary, and the date of the dinner with the former Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis; and • Further information on the term "have regard" in relation to the Policing Protocol Order 2011. 	Ongoing. Followed-up on 12 April 2023.
5	Resignation of the Former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Ongoing.

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 30 November 2022

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
7	Counter-Terrorism and Radicalisation	Co-Founder, Survivors Against Terror	To provide the Committee with a copy of their report on the impact of media coverage on survivors of terror attacks	Completed. This report was circulated to Assembly Members separately.
7	Counter-Terrorism and Radicalisation	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Completed. See Agenda Item 8.

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 16 November 2022

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
5	Resignation of the Former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Ongoing.

Actions Arising from the Meeting Held on 29 September 2022

Item No.:	Item Title	Responsible Person	Action(s)	Status
6	Missing Children in London	Senior Policy Adviser	That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.	Completed. See Agenda Item 8.

Complaints about the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

Subject and Action Required	Status	Responsible Person	Deadline, if applicable
<p>Complaints about the Mayor’s Office for Police and Crime and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime</p> <p>The Committee agreed, inter alia, to delegate to the Monitoring Officer all of the powers and functions conferred on it by the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations, with the exception of the functions set out at Part 4 of the Regulations which may not be delegated; and guidance on the handling of complaints which requires the Monitoring Officer to report, on a regular basis, the summary details (such as can be reported in public), on the exercise of any and all of these functions to the Committee for monitoring purposes.</p>	<p>The Monitoring Officer has received a complaint by a member of the public concerning the Metropolitan Police Commissioner. As the complaint is not relating to the conduct of a relevant office holder, the Monitoring Officer has decided that no action should be taken and that the complaint will not be recorded. In accordance with the Regulations, the Monitoring Officer has written to the complainant to confirm that he is not acting on their complaint and will not be recording it, together with the reasons why. A copy of the complaint has been passed to MOPAC Professional Services for their consideration.</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Transparency Procedure</p> <p>The Committee agreed Members disclose to the Executive Director of Secretariat or their nominated representative (within 28 days of the contact) details of any significant contact with the MPS and/or MOPAC which they consider to be relevant to the work of the Committee; and such disclosures be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.</p>	<p>No disclosures to report for the period from 9 March to 9 May 2023.</p>	<p>Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat</p>	<p>N/A</p>

4. Additional Correspondence

- 4.1 On 24 March 2023, the former Chairman of the Committee invited the Mayor of London to attend the meeting of the Police and Crime Committee on 24 May 2023, a copy of the letter is attached at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.2 The Committee is asked to note the correspondence sent.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 – Responses from the MPS, received 2 & 9 May 2023

Appendix 2 – Correspondence from Chief Executive, MOPAC, dated 4 May 2023

Appendix 3 – Correspondence to the Mayor, dated 24 March 2023

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers:

None

Contact Information

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Responses from the Metropolitan Police Service

Police and Crime Committee 22 February 2023

Details of the progress being made in increasing the diversity at a senior level in the MPS

The MPS is committed to increasing diversity at all levels however the highest direct entry fast track scheme is for Superintendent thus not directly targeting diversity at Chief Officer rank.

The majority of programmes to assist in improving diversity operate at the PC to Inspector level, a percentage of whom will of course be senior leaders of the future:

Lead On and **Inspiring Leader** – Both are positive action leadership development programmes specifically designed for the MPS and build key skills and behaviours to support career development and open up leadership potential. Lead On is for Sergeants and Inspectors and their Police Staff equivalents from underrepresented ethnic groups, and women. Inspiring Leader is open to Constables who identify as black or black heritage.

Aspire – A College of Policing programme open to Chief Inspectors and Superintendents (and staff equivalents) who identify as being from a group currently underrepresented in the service to develop knowledge, tools, confidence and skills for senior leaders.

There is a further initiative in the **Career Development Service**, an online resource to help underrepresented groups with career development. We also have a well-established network of peer support – the **Network of Women**, which offers annual events, development workshops, and mentoring/coaching programmes for female officers.

With regards directly looking at the senior levels – Commander and above – the MPS has made the following Chief Officer Group commitments to Female and Minority Ethnic senior leaders:

1. Appoint a Chief Officer who will be accountable for senior career management processes
2. Ensure that each individual in the group has a career development plan and access to two career conversations a year with their first line manager
3. Meet twice a year to review career plans for the group ensuring visibility and facilitation of development needs
4. Raise the profile and visibility of members of the group with senior leaders and COGs, through informal development opportunities and networking events.

The following table shows the percentage of female/male/BAME Chief Officers (Commander and above) for the past 10 years:

FY	Female	Male	BAME	Non-BAME
2013-2014	22%	78%	7%	93%
2015-2016	28%	72%	7%	93%
2016-2017	24%	76%	10%	90%
2017-2018	25%	75%	10%	90%
2018-2019	17%	83%	5%	95%
2019-2020	21%	79%	6%	94%
2020-2021	29%	71%	8%	92%
2021-2022	30%	70%	9%	91%
2022-2023	26%	74%	9%	91%

For comparison the current total percentage of MPS officers is:

Female: 30.6%, Male: 69.4%, BAMEH: 17%, non-BAMEH: 83%

Confirmation of the arrangements for officers who leave the MPS and wish to re-join at a later date

There are three main ways in which an officer returns to the MPS: re-joining after having resigned, returning after retirement, and returning from a career break. These routes are set out below:

Re-Joiners

Eligibility:

- Applicants must have left a Home Office force within the last five years
- Were originally recruited by a HO force and passed their probationary period with a Home Office Force before having left.
- Completed public and personal safety refresher training (PPST, previously known as OST) within the last four and a half years.
- Candidates do not need to move to within Greater London in order to join us.

Application Process:

- Candidates submits an application form, we will review this to understand the candidate's expertise, experience and if they have previously worked in a specialist role.
- Interview based on the Competencies and Values Framework and the Met's values.
- Fitness
- Medical
- Vetting

Training

Officer re-joining the force, will undertake a 3 week induction course before starting in their posting.

Details of the training package being developed for Sergeants

The First Line Leaders Programme is based on the national leadership standards for First Line Leaders and associated curriculum and specification set by the College, noting that individual Forces are required to develop their own programme in accordance with these core requirements. In the Met, we have augmented to reflect a London context / what London communities need. This training will be used to ensure all newly promoted officers and staff have the training they need to perform their new leadership roles and to 're-accredit' our existing First Line Leaders in support of driving cultural change across the Met. The Programme delivers five days of leadership training for existing leaders and eight days training for newly promoted leaders.

The Met will provide this enhanced leadership training to all First Line Leaders (newly promoted and substantive, c7,500 in total) by April 2024. The Programme has been through a robust and iterative design process to ensure new high quality content that meets the needs of those completing the training and is as effective as possible in building wider workforce capability. This has involved extensive stakeholder engagement and external expert input.

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Susan Hall AM

Chair of the Police and Crime Committee
London Assembly
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London, E16 1ZE
lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MOPAC090223- C4495**4 May 2023**

Dear Susan,

Thank you for your letters thanking me and Kenny Bowie for attending the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee meeting on 25th January 2023.

During the course of the discussion, I agreed to provide the Committee with the following additional information:

Further information on the work MOPAC is doing to support victims of domestic abuse, including how victims are able to stay in their homes and the levels of investment from MOPAC.

The Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Framework was established in 2021/22 to provide the mechanism through which Domestic Abuse Duty funding for London is distributed. This funding is received from the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities, and totals c. £20m for London. The Framework and commissioned services have been centred around the core principles of equality, diversity and inclusion, evidence-based commissioning, and valuing partners.

The framework has allowed us to successfully embed an intersectional approach across all our commissioning processes. It acknowledges and protects the importance of led 'by and for' organisations. We have also been able to use our evidence base to identify emerging and unmet needs, ensuring that services are survivor informed and co-designed with expert providers. These inclusive commissioning processes have been recognised by central Government as good practice in the DLUHC annual report.

We have a total of 52 unique providers successfully added onto the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Framework and 67 providers across three procurement lots (some providers are on more than one lot). A total of 70 services are provided through this first phase (referred to as Call Off 1), as well as the continuation of grant provision. This has resulted in £3.6m being awarded for services dedicated to support BME survivors and just under £3m for specialist 'by and for' led organisations supporting a broad range of survivors including LGBT+, those with learning disabilities, and male victims.

Lot 2 comprises £11.5m of new money to directly support c. 7,000 survivors including children in their own right – just under 6,000 of these through specialist support in safe

accommodation (the remainder through helpline support). Lot 3 meanwhile provides a much-needed funding stream for infrastructure and coordination.

In addition, the London Community Foundation has been commissioned to manage grants from the Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) Programme Fund, a £750,000 fund open to local authorities and domestic abuse organisations to improve the physical environment and social spaces of existing safe accommodation. Applicants can apply for between £10,000 and £100,000 to support projects for a 12-month period, which will result in improved safe accommodation quality and provision.

A list of actions that MOPAC is taking to support the MPS in the delivery of its Turnaround Plan.

The Mayor has provided funding uplifts to help support reform of the Metropolitan Police and deliver the Turnaround Plan. The total amounts of these uplifts are set out below. This is in addition to money already in the MPS budget which will be repurposed to focus on reform and the details of which will be established over the period to come.

<u>Description</u>	2023-24	2024-25
	£m	£m
500 additional PCSOs	21.8	26.8
Reform of Met Command and Control	2.5	2.5
Strengthening the MPS’s public protection work by increasing staff capacity	5	5
Raising Standards within the MPS (supporting managers and leaders)	15	15
Total turn around funding	44.3	49.3

It is also possible that the expenditure allocations towards reform may increase in future. For example, the MPS are currently reviewing their earmarked reserves to establish if any further funding can be released and, if realised, it is likely that any 2022-23 underspend will also be applied to reform.

MOPAC is working closely with the MPS to ensure they have the tools they need to implement the Turnaround Plan and improve the service the MPS provides to all Londoners. We provided extensive feedback on the draft Turnaround Plan and as a result of MOPAC’s input there is now a more explicit focus on improving the service provided to victims within the plan. We will do the same for the next iteration, which will also reflect feedback from wider engagement and the findings of the Casey Review.

We continue to provide robust oversight of all MPS activity, adjusted to reflect the priorities within the Turnaround Plan. MOPAC staff, including the DMPC and I, attend the Commissioner's Turnaround Board, which has been set up to support the delivery of this work, to drive sustainable improvements in response to HMICFRS' concerns, and to achieve the Commissioner's wider mission of More Trust, Less Crime, and High Standards. We have agreed with the MPS that MOPAC will be closely involved in each strand of the plan, working with the lead on each, and will pull all these strands together at Oversight Board to monitor delivery.

The low levels of trust and confidence that Londoners have in the MPS is one of the key challenges that we currently face. The Mayor commissioned Baroness Casey's Review to look into the standards and culture within the MPS, in recognition of the impact that incidences of serious police misconduct have had on levels of public trust in the police. The findings and recommendations of the recently published review will now inform the MPS' final Turnaround Plan. MOPAC is working with the MPS to influence further changes to the Plan to ensure strategic alignment and we are also collaborating with partners across City Hall to ensure their views are reflected in MOPAC's work in response to the Casey Review.

Relating to transparency, the review recommended that a new quarterly board, chaired by the Mayor of London, should be created to drive forward the changes called for. We are in the process of setting up the London Policing Board (LPB) which will convene a diverse range of experts, reflective of London's diverse population, to provide specialist advice to further support us holding the MPS to account for delivering on policing reforms as part of our wider strategic oversight framework.

MOPAC continues to assist the MPS in raising levels of trust and confidence in the police, and our Evidence and Insight team have been providing direct support to the MPS to apply learning from their analysis and research findings to achieve this. For example, the team recently held two-day long events with BCU staff and several mentoring sessions with officers in local BCUs to help officers and staff understand the evidence base on drivers of trust and confidence and how to apply this in practice as part of their day-to-day interactions with the public.

MOPAC also developed and continues to deliver improvements through the Mayor's Action Plan to improve transparency, accountability and trust in policing. This has introduced new community involvement in the training for new police recruits, ensuring they engage with diverse voices & perspectives from the communities they will be policing.

MOPAC continues to work with the London Policing Ethics Panel (LPEP), which is an independent panel set up by the Mayor of London to provide ethical advice on policing issues that may impact on public confidence. LPEP complements the existing structures in place in the capital to oversee the way London is police and provides in-depth consideration of ethical issues around current and future policing practice in London. The LPEP's Openness and Transparency Report is currently being finalised and we foresee this contributing towards the MPS' cultural and general policing reforms going forward.

We have also encouraged the MPS to seek external advice to support them in their work in delivering upon the Turnaround Plan and addressing the issues highlighted by the HMICFRS.

I hope this information is useful to the committee.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Diana Luchford." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Diana Luchford CB
Chief Executive
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime

LONDON ASSEMBLY



Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

24 March 2023

Dear Mr Mayor,

Police and Crime Committee Meeting – 24 May 2023 at 10.00am

I am writing to you on behalf of the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee to formally invite you to the Committee's meeting on 24 May 2023 between 10am-1pm in the Chamber, City Hall.

This meeting will give the Committee the opportunity to follow up on its previous investigation into MOPAC, ten years on; the progress of commitments in the Police and Crime Plan; and issues arising from Baroness Casey's review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service.

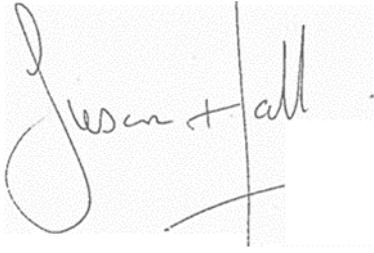
The Committee has also invited Diana Luchford CB, Chief Executive of MOPAC, to attend this meeting.

The meeting will be held in public and is webcast live. A transcript of the meeting will be produced after the meeting and will be sent to you for review. The meeting will also be promoted to the media and may result in associated media activity.

Please contact Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer, at lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk if you have any questions about the meeting.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Susan Hall AM

Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

How to find City Hall



Where we are:

Our address: City Hall, Kamal Chunchie Way, London, E16 1ZE

[\[Link to Map\]](#)

By tube, DLR or national rail:

Nearest stations:

- Royal Victoria, DLR – *approx. walking distance 6 minutes*
- West Silvertown, DLR – *approx. walking distance 10 minutes*
- Custom House (for ExCel), DLR and Elizabeth line – *approx. walking distance 15 minutes*
- Canning Town, Jubilee line – *approx. walking distance 15 minutes*

By bus:

Buses that stop near City Hall:

- 474
- 147
- 241
- 325
- 678

By bicycle:

Covered bike racks are available behind City Hall on Kamal Chunchie way. Cyclists can travel free of charge on the nearby cable car with a bike before 9.30am, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

By river:

Nearest piers:

- North Greenwich Pier

By cable car:

Emirates Air Line runs between the Greenwich Peninsula (by the O2) and the Royal Docks (by City Hall).

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Subject: Action Taken Under Delegated Authority

Report to:	Police and Crime Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat
Date:	24 May 2023
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines recent actions taken by the former Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee in accordance with the delegated authority granted by the Police and Crime Committee.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the recent actions taken by the former Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee under delegated authority, following consultation with party Group Lead Members, namely to agree:**
- (a) The Committee's response to the Metropolitan Police Service's Draft Turnaround Plan for 2023-2025, as attached at Appendix 1;**
 - (b) The Committee's report on counter-terrorism and radicalisation, as attached at Appendix 2;**
 - (c) The Committee's report on missing children in London, as attached at Appendix 3; and**
 - (d) The Committee's letters to the Mayor and Home Secretary following Sir Thomas Winsor's report on the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, as attached at Appendices 4 and 5.**

3. Background

3.1 Under Standing Orders and the Assembly's Scheme of Delegation, certain decisions by Members can be taken under delegated authority. This report details those actions taken by the former Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee.

3.2 At its meeting on 22 February 2023, the Committee agreed the following delegation of authority:

That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree the Committee's response to the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) Turnaround Plan 2023-2025.

3.3 This delegation of authority was exercised on 17 March 2023.

3.4 At its meetings on 30 November 2022, 11 January and 8 March 2023, the Committee discussed counter-terrorism and radicalisation in London, and the Independent Review of Prevent, and agreed the following delegation of authority at each meeting:

That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.

3.5 These delegations of authority were exercised on 24 April 2023.

3.6 At its meetings on 29 September 2022 and 22 February 2023, the agreed the following delegation of authority as part of the Committee's investigation into missing children in London:

That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.

3.7 These delegations of authority were exercised on 25 April 2023.

3.8 At its meetings on 16 November and 13 December 2022, the Committee discussed the report of Sir Thomas Winsor following the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM, and agreed the following delegation of authority at each meeting:

That authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.

3.9 These delegations of authority were exercised on 4 May 2023.

4. Issues for Consideration

4.1 Following consultation with the party Group Lead Members, the former Chairman approved:

- The Committee's letter to the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis, as attached at **Appendix 1**;
- The Committee's report on counter-terrorism and radicalisation in London, as attached at **Appendix 2**;
- The Committee's report on missing children in London as attached at **Appendix 3**; and

- The Committee’s letters to the Mayor and Home Secretary following Sir Thomas Winsor’s report on the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, as attached at **Appendices 4 and 5**.

4.2 The Committee is asked to note the actions taken by the former Chairman under delegated authority.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in the report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications to the Greater London Authority arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 – Letter to Commissioner of MPS, dated 17 March 2023

Appendix 2 – *Counter-terrorism and Radicalisation in London* report, dated 24 April 2023

Appendix 3 – *Missing Children in London* report, dated 25 April 2023

Appendix 4 – Letter to the Mayor, dated 4 May 2023

Appendix 5 – Letter to the Home Secretary, dated 4 May 2023

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers:

MDA Form 1486 [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025]

MDA Form 1460 [Counter-terrorism and Radicalisation in London]

MDA Form 1485 [Missing Children in London]

MDA Form 1459 [Sir Thomas Winsor Report – Resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner]

Contact Information

Contact Officer:	Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer
E-mail:	lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

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LONDON ASSEMBLY



Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

Sir Mark Rowley
Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis

(Sent by email)

CC: Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime; Diana Luchford, CEO, MOPAC

17 March 2023

Dear Sir Mark,

Police and Crime Committee Response to the Metropolitan Police draft Turnaround Plan

I am writing to you on behalf of the Police and Crime Committee following the publication of the Met's draft Turnaround Plan. The Committee welcomes the draft Plan and the opportunity to provide feedback on its proposals to deliver your mission of "More Trust, Less Crime and High Standards".

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your engagement with the Police and Crime Committee, and keeping Assembly Members informed of key developments, since taking up your position last September. The Committee has welcomed your determination and the action you have taken to begin to address the urgent change needed across the Met. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the vast number of highly skilled and hardworking officers and staff in the Met that are dedicated to keeping Londoners safe.

Delivering the mission

The Committee is pleased to see that the draft Turnaround Plan acknowledges the importance of performance delivery and that the Met has "developed a robust new performance framework to

measure how successful [it is] at delivering More Trust, Less Crime and High Standards”.¹ You have made a bold commitment to reform the Met and give Londoners confidence in their police service. You have also said that the Turnaround Plan sets out how you will do this. While the Committee welcomes this commitment, it believes **further detail on timescales and how the Met will report on these measures of success is needed to allow for effective monitoring and scrutiny of the Met’s reform.**

Core policing activities

The Met’s plan to “rebalance [its] activity, to give more emphasis to [its] proactive capabilities to prevent more crime”² is welcomed by the Committee. The draft Plan states that demand for public protection and safeguarding, including mental health, is “increasing sharply”. The Committee has previously heard that officers can spend entire shifts at A&E while waiting for the right care for those in mental health crisis. The Committee is concerned that these officers cannot serve local communities while sitting in a hospital waiting room and that many of the commitments in the Turnaround Plan will be hard to achieve until this issue is resolved. The Committee welcomes the Met’s commitment to “Strive for those in mental health crisis to receive the right care from the right service by working with the NHS and other partners”. However, **further information on how the Met will increase collaboration with partners, including youth services, mental health and communities, to achieve this is needed in the final Plan.**

As I am sure you are aware, the Committee has been investigating counter-terrorism and radicalisation in London. In November 2022,³ we heard from Lord Harris following his review of London’s preparedness to respond to a terrorist incident and were pleased to see that progress has been made by MOPAC and the Met to implement the review’s recommendations. We were also encouraged to hear how the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre will further enhance London and the UK’s counter-terror operation.

During our investigation, we heard that the Met faces significant challenges in recruiting and retaining digital specialists into counter-terror policing.⁴ The Committee recommends that the **Met will need to establish new partnerships and strengthen work with MOPAC to speed up vetting in order to ensure it has the expertise it needs to meet the threats of the future.** We would like to see a specific **commitment and further information in the final Turnaround Plan on how the Met will work collaboratively with key partners and London’s communities to prepare for, and prevent, terrorism, including online.**

Neighbourhood policing

The draft Turnaround Plan states that the Met “will have the strongest ever neighbourhood policing”.⁵ The Committee welcomes the commitments and key interventions set out in the draft Plan in order to achieve the proposed outcomes.

¹ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](https://www.met.police.uk/turnaround-plan-2023-2025)

² [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](https://www.met.police.uk/turnaround-plan-2023-2025)

³ Police and Crime Committee, [30 November 2022](#) and [11 January 2023](#)

⁴ Police and Crime Committee, 11 January 2023 – [transcript](#)

⁵ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](https://www.met.police.uk/turnaround-plan-2023-2025)

At the Committee's meeting in October 2022, you highlighted the need for "precise community crime fighting" and for police and communities to be "tackling crime together".⁶ You said "That is how we succeed. Policing should not be imposed. It should be done jointly, and we have not always got that tone right".⁷ You also said that you were "trying to capture that spirit of [Sir Robert] Peel that policing is best done when we are fighting crime alongside communities. It is not about imposing solutions, it is about how we work with people, whether that is about violence in communities or whether that is about violence against women and girls. Its heart is community and neighbourhood policing. Our neighbourhood policing model is not as strong as it was ten years ago and there are lots of reasons for that, many of them good, some of them less good".⁸ The Committee agrees and very much welcomes your commitment in the draft Turnaround Plan to "overhaul the current neighbourhood policing model [...] investing in more local officers and additional PCSOs to create stronger, more capable teams".⁹

At the meeting in October 2022, you also told Members that your "ambition is that we have the biggest force we ever had". **The Committee seeks reassurance that in order to meet recruitment targets, the Met does not lower its recruitment standards.**

You also told the Committee in October 2022 that you "would like [the Met] to get back to the strongest neighbourhood policing that [it has] ever had. Those local police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who really know the patch and know communities are critical to how we operate in the future. It is not the only part of community crimefighting because everyone should be looking to work with communities, but that is absolutely essential. That goes to the number of resources and it goes to how they are deployed. It goes to making sure that abstractions are not too high, which is not the case at the moment".¹⁰ **The Committee would welcome further information in the final Turnaround Plan on the Met's plans to strengthen neighbourhood policing resources, the deployment of officers and how it will manage abstractions.**

The Committee would also like to see further detail in the final Turnaround Plan that outlines what the Met will be doing differently to identify and resolve neighbourhood priorities and the action it will take to strengthen the way the Met works with neighbourhoods and communities to tackle crime together. The final Turnaround Plan should include a specific commitment to increase community engagement across the capital to provide Londoners with more opportunities to work with the Met to help solve the problems that matter to them.

The Committee recommends that the final Plan includes further detail on how you plan to go about building "strong and trusted partnerships to fix local problems"¹¹ and how this will differ from the structures currently in place. Alongside this, the final Plan should include consideration of how the Met will measure and demonstrate improvement in respect of community engagement.

⁶ Police and Crime Committee, 12 October 2022 – [transcript](#)

⁷ Police and Crime Committee, 12 October 2022 – [transcript](#)

⁸ Police and Crime Committee, 12 October 2022 – [transcript](#)

⁹ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

¹⁰ Police and Crime Committee, 12 October 2022 – [transcript](#)

¹¹ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

You have also told the Committee that the Met is “looking at the role of PCSOs and police officers in neighbourhoods, the work they do, how they have the most impact on crime and how to improve engagement. We are looking at new technologies to get a better, more granular understanding of different communities’ concerns. Alongside that, we are going to be looking at how the rest of the MPS connects into community policing and connects into neighbourhoods to support their activity”.¹² **To assure Londoners, specific detail on how the Met will achieve this is needed in the final Turnaround Plan.**

Safer Neighbourhood Boards (SNBs) are a key example of local partnership working to improve policing and crime outcomes for Londoners. However, we are concerned that they are not mentioned in the draft Turnaround Plan. The Committee is supportive of work to ensure SNBs are fit for purpose and that they, and wider community engagement structures, fully represent the voice of all Londoners. We hope that **the Met will use the final Turnaround Plan as an opportunity to help support and strengthen the role of SNBs. We would welcome further information on how SNBs fit into the Met’s outcome for “Better, more visible relationships with communities who tell us that our partnerships are solving problems that matter”.**¹³

Public protection and safeguarding

The Committee welcomes the Met’s commitment to prioritise improvements in public protection and safeguarding and recognises the pressures on police resource and the impact that this has on performance in this area. When we met with you in October 2022, you spoke about the challenges in relation to experience and new recruits going into this area. As you said, this “is not a problem if the ratios are right”.¹⁴ We therefore **urge you to progress the work you are doing with the College of Policing and national leads as swiftly as possible to ensure the Met is well equipped with specialist expertise to better protect victims and bring more perpetrators to justice.**

The issue of violence against women and girls (VAWG) has attracted national attention over recent years, following the murders of Sarah Everard, Nicole Smallman, Bibaa Henry and Sabina Nessa, and many other women in the capital. In 2021, the Committee launched an investigation in response to the renewed focus on VAWG following a number of high-profile murders of women and the increase in reports of domestic abuse, sexual violence and rape. We examined the detail behind the rise in reports of VAWG, support for victims, and the way in which partner organisations are working to prevent it. We also explored what more is needed from the Mayor, the Met and other criminal justice partners to effectively tackle VAWG.¹⁵

The Committee also considered the work taking place to rebuild trust in the police and spoke to organisations working with victims and survivors to understand what more could be done to improve the way VAWG is tackled and how victims can be better supported. The Committee recommended that the Met must listen to and learn from the conversation now taking place on VAWG and that it should actively seek and respond to feedback from partners and communities on its VAWG action plan, particularly Black and minority ethnic women and organisations, to ensure it implements what London’s women and girls want to see from their police. **The Committee would welcome further**

¹² Police and Crime Committee, 25 January 2023 – [transcript](#)

¹³ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

¹⁴ Police and Crime Committee, 12 October 2022 – [transcript](#)

¹⁵ Police and Crime Committee, [Violence against women and girls](#), March 2022

information in the final Turnaround Plan on how the Met will work with women and girls in London, including those from Black and ethnic minority communities, to reduce VAWG and rebuild trust and confidence in the police.

The key interventions in the draft Turnaround Plan to strengthen work in public protection and safeguarding, including the victims of rape and serious sexual violence, child safeguarding and those in mental health crisis are welcome.

When we met with you in January 2023, you told the Committee that the Met was putting more resources into the public protection environment and was trying to strengthen that area as it was overstretched. You also highlighted that the Met has been proactive in working with women across London to identify and patrol vulnerable locations, has made “very powerful” arrests and is making a lot of progress on these cases, including an increase in detection rates. However, you also mentioned that “there is so much more to do”.¹⁶

The Committee believes the final Turnaround Plan should be much more explicit about the action the Met will take to work with partners and communities to better protect all Londoners.

In its 2021–22 PEEL Inspection, HMICFRS found that the Met’s public protection teams had the least experienced staff of all in the Met. It stated that the Met “appears to see public protection as a role anyone can perform, and one everyone should gain experience of early in their investigative career [...]. Roles in public protection aren’t valued for their high level of risk management or for the nuances of dealing with the most vulnerable victims. Experienced staff are generally quick to leave them. And public protection leaders are powerless to stop them leaving, despite the overwhelming demand they face”.¹⁷

The Committee spoke to you about the recruitment challenges in public protection at its meeting in October 2022. We were pleased to hear you say that many staff in public protection stay there a long time. However, the Met currently has a lot of new officers in public protection as part of recruitment and detective training. You said: “The challenge at the moment is that sort of fluidity created by this big surge in recruitment”.¹⁸ The draft Turnaround Plan rightly says that the Met “will seek to ensure our resources and skills best meet the demand and complexity of public protection investigations [...] increase the specialist expertise available to our officers [and] use the most modern data science techniques to catch the perpetrators of these crime and better protect victims and target our efforts more effectively”.¹⁹ However, the Committee believes **the final Turnaround Plan would benefit from further information on the action the Met will take to demonstrate to Londoners how these promises will deliver less crime and provide a better service to victims.**

Over the past few months, the Committee has been exploring the issue of missing children in London. During our investigation we have found that the number of children missing is probably

¹⁶ Police and Crime Committee, 25 January 2023 – [transcript](#)

¹⁷ HMICFRS, [PEEL 2021/22: Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy – An inspection of the Metropolitan Police Service](#), September 2022

¹⁸ Police and Crime Committee, 12 October 2022 – [transcript](#)

¹⁹ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

much higher than those reported to the police. In addition, the Committee recognises that some missing children are exploited into criminal activity. **We recommend that children in these cases must be seen first and foremost as victims.** While the draft Turnaround Plan mentions missing people, we believe that it should also explicitly **acknowledge how the Met is working with partners to ensure all officers are fully trained to be able to recognise risk factors for missing children and are able to deliver an effective safeguarding response to children at-risk.**

The Committee has had a long-standing interest in the work the Met is doing to support people with poor mental health. At the Committee's meeting in February 2023, the Deputy Commissioner told us that Humberside Police has managed to reduce the demand mental health is placing on its service, while ensuring the right level of support from health services. Dame Lynne said that she is meeting with health representatives in London and is looking to implement a London version of the Humberside model.²⁰ While recognising the structures in London make this more complicated, the Committee welcomes this work and will watch with interest. In addition, **the Committee would like to see more detailed information in the final Turnaround Plan on how the Met will work in partnership with London's health services to better support people it comes into contact with poor mental health.**

Effective service to victims and other members of the public

It is right that the draft Turnaround Plan prioritises a "more victim-centred approach"²¹ and the Committee welcomes the work already underway to better serve victims of crime in London. However, the Committee believes that **more detail should be provided in the final Plan that sets out how, and when, the Met will deliver these key interventions.** In addition, recognising the increasing demand for skilled officers across the Met, **the Committee would welcome further information on how the Met will enhance officer capability and capacity in this area, balancing this with competing demands from other business areas.**

The Committee has repeatedly raised concern with the Met's IT systems over a number of years. It is pleased to see that the draft Turnaround Plan refers to the launch of CONNECT – "the modernisation of multiple legacy IT systems – which will improve how investigations and cases are progressed and, will improve crime recording". The Plan also commits to "quickly increasing call-handling capacity and response through the Met Command and Control Improvement Programme".²² In October 2022, you told the Committee that the Met's Command and Control Improvement Programme has slipped "a few times" and is now due to "come to fruition in 2024". **The Committee would welcome further information on the specific steps the Met is taking to ensure this programme of work remains on track.**

Victim satisfaction has been declining over recent years, despite the Met's efforts to improve support provided to victims. At the Committee's meeting in October 2022, you spoke about the importance of prompt Met attendance, response times, providing people with the right information and follow-up. You added that you "like the idea of us finding a way to jointly bring together the police responsibilities in victim care and the Victims' Commissioner, MOPAC, third sector

²⁰ Police and Crime Committee, 22 February 2023 – [transcript](#)

²¹ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

²² [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

organisations and others. Finding a way to scale that up and join that up would be really powerful”.²³ **The Committee believes that providing further information on how the Met is jointly working with MOPAC and London’s Victims’ Commissioner to develop the Met’s approach to victim care, as stated in the draft Turnaround Plan, would help Londoners better understand how the Met is improving its service to victims moving forward.** In turn, the Committee trusts this will also have a positive impact on levels of trust and confidence in the Met across London’s communities.

Reducing crime

The Committee has recently explored the issue of online crime and fraud. It is pleased to see an outcome in the draft Turnaround Plan for “new capabilities that reduce online crime and fraud”.²⁴ As mentioned in its response²⁵ to the Mayor’s draft Police and Crime Plan 2022-25, the Committee was encouraged to see commitments in the Mayor’s draft Plan to “continue to target those engaged in fraud, cyber-related fraud and criminal finance” and to strengthen the response to crime on the “dark web”.²⁶ However, we did not believe that the draft Plan went far enough in tackling this issue.²⁷ Just a few months prior to the Mayor’s draft Plan’s publication, HMICFRS found that many fraud victims still receive a “poor service” from police services across the country.²⁸ We are acutely aware that, in parallel, Action Fraud will be replaced with “an improved national fraud and cybercrime reporting system”, which is welcome, but it is not clear when this will happen or how it will improve outcomes for fraud victims.²⁹ Whilst we accept that the new system will be owned and operated within the National Crime Agency (NCA), we have recommended that there is an urgent need to work closely with the NCA in both the creation and ongoing development of the new arrangements.

The Committee asks that the Met ensures the final Turnaround Plan provides sufficient focus on online crimes, including fraud. In addition, as recommended in the Committee’s response to the Mayor’s draft Police and Crime Plan, **we recommend that the final Turnaround Plan includes a commitment to work with the NCA to improve reporting and the provision of support to victims of fraud in London. This should make specific references to efforts to tackle cybercrime and improve Londoners’ awareness of this type of crime. The Committee would also like to see support in the final Turnaround Plan for innovative tactics like the taking down of iSpooof.**

Raising standards

The Met has been beset by a series of scandals. Too many of these scandals involve unacceptable behaviour committed by serving Met officers. Londoners will be distressed that this behaviour has been allowed to continue, as will the thousands of dedicated officers in the Met. The Committee welcomes the work that Baroness Casey has done to review the culture and standards in the Met and acknowledges that the final report will no doubt impact plans and commitments in this space.

²³ Police and Crime Committee, 12 October 2022 – [transcript](#)

²⁴ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

²⁵ Police and Crime Committee, [Response to the Mayor’s draft Police and Crime Plan](#), February 2022

²⁶ Mayor of London, [Police and Crime Plan 2021-25](#)

²⁷ Police and Crime Committee, Response to the Mayor’s draft Police and Crime Plan

²⁸ *Evening Standard*, [No justice for fraud victims who receive poor service from police, says watchdog](#), 5 August 2021

²⁹ *The Times*, [Action Fraud scrapped after Times expose](#), 28 July 2021

The Committee believes that the final Turnaround Plan must take account of Baroness Casey's findings and clearly set out where action will be taken to address these findings.

In 2022, the Committee examined the role of the police conduct and complaints system. Our investigation focussed primarily on the role of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), which has a duty to secure and maintain public confidence in the police complaints system. The minimum that the public expects is that complaints and allegations of misconduct against police officers are thoroughly and independently investigated, and that action is taken to remove any officer found guilty of serious wrongdoing. However, we found that this is too often not the case. During our investigation we encountered a system of lengthy investigations causing real pain for victims, complainants and officers.³⁰

At the Committee's meeting in January 2023, in response to the charging of David Carrick, you told us that the Met has "not applied the same sense of ruthlessness to guarding our own integrity that we routinely apply to confronting criminals and I am deeply sorry for that". You said that the Met had "failed as investigators" and "should have been more intrusive and joined the dots over his repeated misogyny over decades. As leaders, our mindset should have been more determined to spot and root out such a misogynist".³¹

In response to these failings, you told us that the Met has significantly increased resources in its Department of Professional Standards, established an Anti-corruption and Abuse Command and launched the first ever public appeal line through the Crimestoppers Police Integrity Hotline.³² The Committee welcomes the action you have already taken and the focus in the draft Turnaround Plan on rooting out corrupt officers. We support you in your efforts to better the equip the Met to deal with misconduct fairly and promptly. We also **urge you to ensure the Met removes corrupt officers at pace and takes every opportunity to tell Londoners about this work.**

The Committee welcomes the commitment in the draft Turnaround Plan for a "more diverse Met recruiting people with the right value's which reflect London's communities".³³ We were pleased to hear from the Deputy Commissioner in February 2023 that recruitment levels for women are "relatively good" and they are "very slowly improving for BAME heritage people". However, Dame Lynne also told us that it is harder for the Met to demonstrate how it is doing in recruiting more officers from London's LGBTQ+ communities.³⁴ We are disappointed that the draft Turnaround Plan does not mention the work the Met is doing to reach out to London's communities, including Black and LGBTQ+ communities, and would **recommend the final Turnaround Plan outlines the specific steps the Met will take to ensure its people reflect London's communities.**

Data driven and evidence based delivery

Since your appointment, you have often mentioned the need for the Met to be "driven by data and facts" and how it will "use world-class data and analysis assisted by best practice from around the

³⁰ Police and Crime Committee, [Police Conduct and Complaints](#), December 2022

³¹ Police and Crime Committee, 25 January 2023 – [transcript](#)

³² Police and Crime Committee, 25 January 2023 – [transcript](#)

³³ [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025 \(met.police.uk\)](#)

³⁴ Police and Crime Committee, 22 February 2023 – [transcript](#)

world to help us make the best use of public money and develop new ways of working that benefits the public and our officers the most”.³⁵

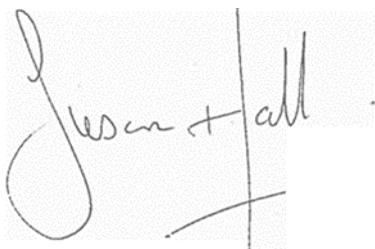
The Committee welcomes the appointment of the Met’s first Chief Scientific Officer, Professor Laurence Sherman, to better support the work of the Met. We look forward to receiving further information on how this new role is working to support stronger decision-making, the targeting of resources where they can have the most effect, managing workloads, preventing and solving crime and measuring success and performance improvement.

In January 2023, you told the Committee how the Turnaround Board is helping the Met improve the quality of the draft Turnaround Plan – through criticism and challenge.³⁶ We are pleased that London’s communities are represented on the Board, alongside key partners, such as HMICFRS, London boroughs, MOPAC and the College of Policing. The Committee **asks that the Met ensures the Board is open and transparent and publishes regular updates on its work.**

The Committee acknowledges the challenges outlined in the draft Turnaround Plan and that there will be more challenges to come. Reform is needed across the Met. We welcome this draft Turnaround Plan as a first step towards delivering the change Met urgently needs.

The Committee trusts the information in this letter is helpful. Please do let Janette Roker, janette.roker@london.gov.uk, know if you would like to discuss in more detail. We look forward to seeing the final version of the plan in April 2023 with further detail on the outcomes the Met is seeking to achieve.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

³⁵ Sir Mark Rowley, Letter to Chairman of PCC, 13 September 2022

³⁶ Police and Crime Committee, 25 January 2023 – [transcript](#)

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Counter-terrorism and radicalisation

Police and Crime Committee

LONDONASSEMBLY

Police and Crime Committee



The London Assembly Police and Crime Committee is responsible for examining the work of the Mayor and his Office for Policing and Crime, to make sure that he is delivering on his promises to Londoners. It also investigates other issues relating to policing and crime in the capital, and routinely publishes the findings and recommendations from its investigations.

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Foreword



Susan Hall AM

Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

It is testimony to the huge efforts made by people across London that we have not experienced a terrorist attack since two people were seriously injured in Streatham in February 2020. However, the threat of terrorism remains, and London bears the highest risk in England.

To explore the ever-changing threats from terrorism, the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee launched an investigation last year into counter-terrorism and radicalisation in London. The investigation has sought to assess London's preparedness for a terrorist attack, and efforts to prevent and tackle radicalisation.

The biggest threat in the UK remains that posed by Islamist terrorism but we also heard about the increased risk from extreme right-wing terrorism. We also saw the disconnect between Prevent referrals and Investigations – nationally, 80 per cent of live counter terror investigations are related to extremist Islamists, while only 22 per cent of Prevent referrals related to extremist Islamist concerns in 2020-21.

Most of us will be completely unaware of the immense work delivered each day to keep us safe from the threat of terrorism and I am confident that the Metropolitan Police Service (the Met) takes its responsibilities to counter terrorism incredibly seriously.

The Met will be further emboldened by the new Counter Terrorism Operations Centre, on course to be fully implemented by 2025. However, it does face significant challenges in recruiting and retaining the specialist officers and staff it needs to meet the threats of the future.

In the awful event that another terror attack does happen in London, we need all of our services to be prepared to respond rapidly and effectively. The failures identified in the emergency services response to the Manchester Arena attack have reinforced just how important this is.

One-year on from Lord Harris of Haringey's second major review into London's preparedness for a terror attack, the Committee is reassured that the Met, London Fire Brigade (LFB) and the London Ambulance Service are working hard to ensure they are ready

to respond to any major incident in London. However, with both the Met and LFB placed in a form of special measures, and all frontline services facing capacity pressures, it is crucial that all services continue to prioritise this vital work.

The Committee heard much about the increasingly diffuse and complex way in which people are being radicalised and accessing extremist content. We are concerned about how this makes it harder to identify those most at risk of radicalisation.

We also examined the Shawcross Independent Review into Prevent. Prevent plays an important role in addressing radicalisation, with its overarching objective to stop individuals from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The Committee was told the programme is still subject to much opposition. Work needs to be done to address the issues underlying such negative perceptions of Prevent and ensure much wider support for efforts to stop people from becoming terrorists in the first place.

I welcome that the Government will be fully implementing the recommendations from the Shawcross review. This should go a long way to help prevent terrorism across the UK.

The Committee is grateful to all those that gave evidence to the Committee. Their insights will help make London a safer place to live and work.

This report makes several constructive recommendations, aimed largely at the Mayor, the Met and emergency services. I want Londoners to feel confident that everything is being done to keep them safe from harm. However, it is all our duty to remain aware, vigilant and prepared in our continual fight against terrorism. We can never be complacent.

Executive Summary

In November 2022, the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee launched an investigation into counter-terrorism and radicalisation. The investigation has sought to assess the changing nature of terror in London, and to explore London's preparedness for a terrorist attack and how people are being safeguarded from radicalisation.

The investigation has consisted of two formal Committee meetings, held on 30 November 2022¹ and 11 January 2023.² It has also been informed by a meeting held on 8 March 2023 to discuss the findings of the Independent Review of Prevent.³ The Committee is grateful to all those who gave their time to provide evidence.

The Committee's findings are set out in detail in the report. In summary, these include the following:

- One year on from the publication of Lord Harris' second review into London's preparedness for a major terrorist incident, the Committee is pleased to see that progress has been made by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Metropolitan Police Service (the Met) to implement the review's recommendations.
- Once fully established, the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre will further enhance London and the UK's counter-terror operation.
- The Committee is disappointed that MOPAC has not reviewed whether the original aims of the Met's Basic Command Unit structure have been realised, as recommended by Lord Harris one year ago.
- The Met faces significant challenges in recruiting and retaining digital specialists into counter-terror policing. It will need to establish new partnerships and improve vetting processes in order to ensure it has the expertise it needs to meet the threats of the future.
- Progress has been made since Lord Harris' review to further improve how blue-light services work together to prepare for and respond to a terror attack. The London

¹ See transcript for the meeting on 30 November 2022 [here](#), with guests: Lord Harris of Haringey; Brendan Cox, Survivors Against Terror; Charlotte Dixon-Sutcliffe, Survivors Against Terror; Robin Simcox, Commission of Countering Extremism; and Dr Shiraz Maher, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation.

² See transcript for the meeting on 11 January 2023 [here](#), with guests: Commander Richard Smith, Metropolitan Police Service; Chief Superintendent Helen Williams, Metropolitan Police Service; Kenny Bowie, MOPAC; Oliver Levinson, MOPAC; Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith, LFB.

³ See transcript for the meeting on 8 March 2023 [here](#), with guests: Commander Dom Murphy QPM, Metropolitan Police Service; Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan, Metropolitan Police Service; Kenny Bowie, MOPAC; Oliver Levinson, MOPAC.

Ambulance Service and London Fire Brigade are, however, facing significant pressures that could impede an effective response to a major incident.

- Staffing pressures faced by prisons and the London Probation Service risk undermining efforts to manage the risk posed by terrorist offenders to the public, staff and others in contact with the criminal justice system.
- Beyond emergency services, an effective response to tackling radicalisation and ensuring preparedness for a terror attack requires joint working with local authorities, community groups, private businesses and others. Counter-terrorism is a city-wide endeavour.
- Prevent is negatively perceived by many, and civil society opposition to the Independent Review of Prevent has risked further entrenching these views. More needs to be done to increase awareness of, and confidence in, Prevent as a key anti-radicalisation programme.
- With extremist ideologies becoming increasingly diversified and complex, it is important to better understand which people are most at risk of radicalisation.
- More people are becoming radicalised solely online; and it is becoming harder to track the way in which terrorists share extremist content online, and to remove this content. MOPAC needs a better strategic approach to tackling online harms, beyond the measures outlined in the Online Safety Bill.

The Committee makes the following 12 recommendations:

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

MOPAC should continue to provide the Committee with regular updates on its progress against Lord Harris' recommendations, until all recommendations are completed.

Recommendation 2

By the end of 2023, MOPAC should conduct a review to assess whether the expected benefits of Basic Command Units have been realised, as recommended by Lord Harris. The findings of the review must inform any future reforms to neighbourhood policing.

Recommendation 3

The Met should develop new partnerships with London universities and private-sector technology firms to establish secondment programmes for individuals with the digital skills required by a modern counter-terrorism operational response.

Recommendation 4

MOPAC should work with the Met to channel additional resource into specialist vetting teams to ensure safe and efficient recruitment of specialist counter-terror officers and staff.

Recommendation 5

By September 2023, the London Ambulance Service and the London Fire Brigade should provide a report to the London Assembly on the progress they have made in implementing Lord Harris' recommendations.

Recommendation 6

The Mayor should seek assurance from the London Ambulance Service that its contingency plans to treat casualties in the context of a major terrorist attack are realistic and deliverable.

Recommendation 7

MOPAC should convene the Met, London boroughs, the London Probation Service and London prisons to agree actions to improve how key information is shared between agencies, when terrorist risk offenders are released into the community.

Recommendation 8

The Met and MOPAC should develop a joint publicity and community engagement programme to work with grassroots groups to address the issues causing negative perceptions of Prevent in London.

Recommendation 9

MOPAC should assess the outputs of groups in London that have received funding from Prevent to ensure that there is not duplication with its own work and that its successes can be benchmarked.

Recommendation 10

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime should make representations at the London Contest Board that Prevent in London should continue to be led by evidence based demand to uphold its safeguarding responsibilities and prevent people from becoming involved in terrorism.

Recommendation 11

MOPAC should work with the Met to conduct a review of the key risk factors for young people becoming radicalised. This could include a review of case files of successful Prevent referrals and young people arrested for terrorist offences over the past five years.

Recommendation 12

Once the Online Safety Bill is passed, MOPAC should renew the terms of reference for its Online Harms Working Group, to enable it to provide strategic leadership on efforts to address online harms in London.

Chapter one: counter-terror policing

London and the risk of terrorism

No terrorist attacks have taken place in London since February 2020, when convicted terrorist Sudesh Amman stabbed and seriously injured two people in Streatham. However, the threat level for the UK from international terrorism is set to “substantial”.⁴ London “bears the highest risk of terrorism in the UK” and also has the “largest number of high-profile targets and the greatest concentration of subjects of interest”.⁵

In 2016, the Mayor appointed Lord Harris of Haringey to conduct a “full and independent review to ensure London is as prepared as possible to respond to a major terrorist incident”.⁶ The final report of the review was published in October 2016.⁷ Lord Harris concluded, “The quality and effectiveness of the work done by the intelligence services and the counter-terrorist police is amongst the best in the world”.⁸ He made 127 recommendations for improvement to a range of organisations, including the Home Office, the Metropolitan Police Service (the Met), the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Mayor. In 2022, Lord Harris said that “virtually all” of the recommendations he made in 2016 have been implemented.⁹

In July 2021, the Mayor commissioned Lord Harris to undertake a second review of London’s preparedness for a terrorist attack in the context of the changing nature of the threat of terrorism – including rises in online extremism, extreme right-wing radicalisation and self-radicalisation, and an increased possibility of hostile state-sponsored acts against London.¹⁰ Lord Harris made 294 recommendations focussing on several key areas, such as funding and resource for emergency services, and improving information sharing across those with a role to play in keeping London safe.¹¹

⁴ Threat levels are set by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre and are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack. There are five levels: ‘low’ means an attack is highly unlikely; ‘moderate’ means an attack is possible, but not likely; ‘substantial’ means an attack is likely; ‘severe’ means an attack is highly likely; and ‘critical’ means an attack is highly likely in the near future – see MI5, [Threat Levels](#).

⁵ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.3

⁶ Mayor of London, [Mayor of London appoints security expert Lord Harris to lead full terror preparedness review](#), 27 May 2016

⁷ Lord Toby Harris, [London’s preparedness to respond to a major terrorist incident](#), 28 October 2016

⁸ Lord Toby Harris, [London’s preparedness to respond to a major terrorist incident](#), 28 October 2016, p.3

⁹ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.5

¹⁰ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022

¹¹ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022

In November 2022, Lord Harris gave evidence to the Committee in relation to his findings and the implementation of his recommendations.¹² He told the Committee that MOPAC had appointed a former senior police officer to help progress the recommendations.¹³ He said that the Committee should request a report on the progress made to deliver his recommendations, 12 months on from the publication of his review.¹⁴ Oliver Levinson, Head of Countering Violent Extremism, MOPAC, confirmed that MOPAC aimed to deliver a report to the London Assembly on the progress of implementing Lord Harris' recommendations by April 2023.¹⁵

Commander Richard Smith, former Head of Counter Terrorism Command at the Met, said he welcomed Lord Harris' two reviews into London's preparedness for a terror attack. He told the Committee there is "dedicated governance within the Met to drive through those actions as quickly and effectively as we can", and that the Met's leadership fully understands the importance of counter-terror policing.¹⁶ He welcomed the Committee's investigation and said that public forums were important to keep terrorism "high on people's agendas".¹⁷

The Committee applauds the two comprehensive reviews conducted by Lord Harris and fully supports his recommendations. The Committee acknowledges the implementation of such a high number of recommendations may take some time. It will therefore continue to scrutinise the Met and MOPAC on their respective delivery of recommendations until they have been completed.

Recommendation 1: MOPAC should continue to provide the Committee with regular updates on its progress against Lord Harris' recommendations, until all recommendations are completed.

Delivery of counter-terror policing in London

Counter Terrorism Policing is the national collaboration of police forces in the UK. The Met hosts the largest regional counter-terror unit in the UK, SO15. SO15 sits alongside Counter Terrorism Policing headquarters, which also houses the senior command functions and a number of the national counter-terrorism capabilities.¹⁸

In March 2018, the Mayor announced £412 million investment to create a new counter-terrorism and organised crime hub in the capital – the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre (CTOC).¹⁹ CTOC enables co-location of the London-based Counter Terrorism Policing, intelligence agencies and the criminal justice system. CTOC is housed in the Empress State

¹² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript – panel 1](#), 30 November 2022

¹³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript – panel 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.6

¹⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript – panel 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.3

¹⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.15

¹⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.7

¹⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.7

¹⁸ Counter Terrorism Policing, [Our network](#)

¹⁹ Mayor of London, [Mayor confirms £412m investment in new counter-terror hub](#), 26 March 2018

Building, West Brompton, bringing London into line with national standards as the last region to have a consolidated collaborative facility.²⁰ Lord Harris said in his 2022 review that co-location of respective agencies in CTOC is “already driving synergies and efficiencies, resulting in substantial operational benefits”.²¹

CTOC is due to be completed in 2024-25, with different functions, teams and organisations gradually moving in with a phased approach.²² Commander Richard Smith confirmed to the Committee that CTOC is on schedule to be completed by 2025; and that, once completed, CTOC would provide the UK with a more effective and integrated counter-terror operation.²³ Lord Harris recommended that “requirements should be kept under review so operational improvements within CTOC can continue to be realised beyond 2025, and equipment kept up to date”.²⁴

“CTOC gives London – and the UK as being that central hub – the next step on that journey in terms of a really integrated approach to some of the highest threats that we are facing.”²⁵

Commander Richard Smith, Metropolitan Police Service

At the national and London-wide levels, the Committee is confident CTOC will enable a more effective and integrated counter-terror operation. However, the Committee has concerns about the delivery of counter-terror operations at the local level. In 2018, the Met replaced its 32 Borough Command Units with 12 Basic Command Units (BCUs). Each BCU contains a counter-terrorism Protect officer and other counter-terrorism functions, including Prevent officers. The boundaries of each BCU now incorporate up to four individual boroughs.²⁶

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris said that these changes had “diluted” relationships between local police units and borough leadership teams. He said BCU commanders “are spread thinly and from the perspective of some local authorities, are struggling to remain in touch with communities and keep leaders up to date”.²⁷ Giving evidence to the Committee, Lord Harris reiterated his view that large BCUs made effective joint working harder to achieve.

²⁰ DMPC Decision – PCD 335, [Central Estate Programme – Counter Terrorism and Organised Crime \(CTOC\) Hub – Full Business Case](#), March 2018

²¹ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.144

²² Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.144

²³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023

²⁴ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.144

²⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript – panel 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.11

²⁶ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.67

²⁷ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.67

“I stress in the report the importance of good engagement between the police and emergency services and local authorities [...] That engagement is harder, it is not impossible, but it is harder if you have a BCU commander responsible for three boroughs, therefore three borough leaders, three sets of Councillors, all of that, it is just more remote, there is more to deal with.”²⁸

Lord Harris of Haringey

In Baroness Casey’s review into standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Met, she criticised the changes to neighbourhood policing structures, including the move to 12 BCUs.²⁹ She told the Committee such changes were “financially driven” and had led to the Met becoming more disconnected from London boroughs and Londoners.³⁰

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris recommended that MOPAC should “assess whether the expected benefits [of the BCU model] as set out in the business case have been realised”.³¹ Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy and Met Oversight, MOPAC, did not say whether MOPAC would do this. He said that the Commissioners’ new priorities on neighbourhood policing might “slightly supersede where some of this goes”.³²

The Committee is disappointed that MOPAC has not committed to a review of BCU structures, as recommended by Lord Harris. The Committee welcomes the Met’s recent commitment to appoint a Superintendent into each London borough, and hopes this will help to address some of the concerns raised about the current BCU structure.³³ However, a wider review of BCUs is still needed to ensure that any future changes to neighbourhood policing, delivered as part of the Met’s reform agenda, are informed by a strong understanding of the impact of the current model.

Commander Richard Smith told the Committee he did not think the change to BCU boundaries had made the Met more removed from local community tensions.³⁴ He is leading the implementation of Lord Harris’ recommendations aimed at improving how information is shared between counter-terror policing, BCUs and London boroughs at the Met. He said the Met is having discussions with local authorities and BCU commanders to increase confidence between parties that relevant information can be shared to address local counter-terrorism concerns.³⁵

Recommendation 2: By the end of 2023, MOPAC should conduct a review to assess whether the expected benefits of Basic Command Units have been realised, as

²⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript – panel 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.14

²⁹ MPS, [Baroness Casey Review](#), March 2023

³⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript – panel 1](#), 22 March 2023

³¹ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.67

³² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.12

³³ Met, [Every London borough to get a senior officer to lead local policing](#), 31 January 2023

³⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.12

³⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.13

recommended by Lord Harris. The findings of the review must inform any future reforms to neighbourhood policing.

Counter-terrorism staffing

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris expressed concerns over counter-terror policing staffing. Although he welcomed the Met's recent uplift in police officers, he said it would take time to train newly recruited officers into specialist counter-terrorism roles.³⁶ His review recommended that the Met "should consider how to bolster officer retention" and conduct "research to better understand the drivers of departure among those who leave after only a few years".³⁷ Speaking to the Committee, Lord Harris said the Met may need to adapt its expectations to the modern job market, and how long police officers may want to serve.

*"The days when people went into policing with a view that it was a 30-year career and that they would then retire with a comparatively generous pension, I think those have gone. It may be that the police have to look at new ways of retaining and bringing people back into policing if they have perhaps gone away and done something else for a period. It is an area where more effort needs to be made."*³⁸

Lord Harris of Haringey

Commander Richard Smith also told the Committee said that there are vacancies in counter-terror policing; and highlighted the specific challenge of recruitment and retention of specialist cyber staff and officers.³⁹

*"It is fair to say that we have vacancies at the moment, and we are recruiting from the wider MPS and elsewhere to fill those gaps. It is also fair to say that there is a long-term challenge in being able to ensure across the whole of the counter-terror machine that we have particularly very technical skills available to us."*⁴⁰

Commander Richard Smith, Metropolitan Police Service

Commander Richard Smith said, "The high-end technical skills around data and digital analytics and technology are in huge demand, not just in our industry but across all of the private sector and public sector as well".⁴¹ Similarly, Lord Harris said the Met faces stiff competition from the private sector for securing and retaining staff with specialist digital skills.⁴²

³⁶ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.3

³⁷ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.61

³⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee- transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.12

³⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.13

⁴⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.13

⁴¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.13

⁴² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023; London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022

“You have somebody who has the skills in this area, they are a valuable commodity. Inevitably, the public sector, whether it is the police or whether it is the security agencies, or whatever else it might be, they do not pay as much as the private sector.”⁴³

Lord Harris of Haringey

The Committee agrees that, due to market competition for some technical skills required by counter-terror policing, the Met needs to think innovatively about different ways of attracting specialist staff, to ensure it has the pipeline of digital specialists it needs to maintain its counter-terrorism capability into the future. This should include exploring partnerships with universities and private-sector technology firms. Any partnerships with the private sector, including the development of secondments or fixed-term placement opportunities, must include safeguards to ensure they are delivered solely for the purpose of public benefit.

Recommendation 3: The Met should develop new partnerships with London universities and private-sector technology firms to establish secondment programmes for individuals with the digital skills required by a modern counter-terrorism operational response.

Commander Richard Smith told the Committee that officers and staff required specialist vetting to be able to move into counter-terror policing, but delays to vetting processes were slowing down recruitment.⁴⁴

“Vetting is complex, it is lengthy and there is increasing pressure in terms of volumes coming through the vetting system, in terms of both recruiting generally and the specialist vetting that we require, which is slowing that down. That is a very active issue for us at the moment, to look at what we can do to reduce vetting times and make sure that when we have a vacancy, we are able to fill it quickly.”⁴⁵

Commander Richard Smith, Metropolitan Police Service

He said challenges with vetting had existed for some time, but additional resource for specialist vetting would be “certainly very welcome”. He also said improvements could be made to existing vetting processes to eliminate some of these issues.⁴⁶

Several recent examples of serving officers committing serious crimes have increased scrutiny on the Met’s approach to vetting across the organisation. The Committee supports the Commissioners decision to instigate re-vetting of currently serving officers and staff where concerning behaviour has been identified.⁴⁷ Important findings in relation to vetting are also expected to emerge from the Angiolini Inquiry.⁴⁸ The Committee believes it is right

⁴³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee- transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.8

⁴⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.14

⁴⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.14

⁴⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.14

⁴⁷ Met, [The Met vows action on misconduct through re-vetting to rebuild trust and confidence](#), 13 March 2023

⁴⁸ The Angiolini Inquiry was set up to examine Wayne Couzens’ career and previous behaviour to identify whether opportunities were missed to remove him from the Met. In February 2023, the Home Office

that attention is focussed on strengthening the Met’s vetting procedures. It hopes such a focus can also lead to increased resourcing across the vetting system, including into specialist vetting teams, so specialist counter-terror staff can be recruited safely and efficiently.

Recommendation 4: MOPAC should work with the Met to channel additional resource into specialist vetting teams to ensure safe and efficient recruitment of specialist counter-terror officers and staff.

announced that the criminal behaviour of David Carrick, and decisions related to his police vetting, would also be looked at by the Angiolini Inquiry. See more information about the Angiolini Inquiry [here](#).

Chapter two: emergency services and other key partners

London Fire Brigade preparedness

The London Fire Brigade (LFB) is the busiest fire and rescue service in the UK and describes itself as “one of the largest firefighting and rescue organisations in the world”.⁴⁹ In its 2021-22 recent inspection report, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) graded LFB as “requires improvement”.^{50,51}

Despite the several areas for concern highlighted by the inspection, HMICFRS found that LFB is well prepared for major incidents in London and praised how it worked alongside other emergency services. Lord Harris echoed this in his findings: “Resources available to the LFB to respond to a major terrorist incident, including one perpetrated across multiple locations, are adequate”.⁵²

However, LFB often has several appliances unavailable for deployment, due in part to staffing shortages and the way in which LFB manages its training.⁵³ This leads to LFB having significantly reduced capacity. For example, on 29 July 2022, when LFB faced its busiest day since World War II due to heat-related fires, it had 39 of its 142 appliances unavailable for deployment.⁵⁴ Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith, LFB, told the Committee that LFB faces competing threats and challenges that have never been more complicated. He said LFB is conducting strategic planning on how to respond to multiple challenges (for example, a climate event and a simultaneous terror attack).⁵⁵

“In terms of the competing threats and challenges that we face as an emergency service [...] they are probably more complex and nuanced than they have ever been before in terms of the types of incidents that we may face and we may face concurrently. That is very much part of our strategic thinking in making sure we have got the right resource in the right place at the right time to be able to be flex.”⁵⁶

Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith, London Fire Brigade

⁴⁹ LFB, [About us](#)

⁵⁰ HMICFRS, [Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2021-22 – London Fire Brigade](#), 27 July 2022. NB: this is based on a four-tier grading system: outstanding; good; requires improvement; and inadequate.

⁵¹ After an Independent Culture Review commissioned by LFB found evidence of discrimination and bullying across the brigade, LFB was also placed into Engage by HMICFRS – a form of enhanced monitoring of its performance. See: HMICFRS, [London Fire Brigade moved into enhanced monitoring](#), 14 December 2022

⁵² Lord Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.87

⁵³ London Assembly, [FREP Committee – transcript](#), 22 September 2022

⁵⁴ London Assembly, [FREP Committee – transcript](#), 22 September 2022

⁵⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.19

⁵⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.19

HMICFRS also found, in its inspection, that LFB had not trained all its frontline staff to respond to a marauding terrorist attack, due to an ongoing dispute with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).⁵⁷ Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith told the Committee that, following an agreement with the FBU, LFB now had a clear path to ensure that all firefighters are trained to respond to a marauding terrorist attack.⁵⁸ He said only 20 per cent of staff are currently trained to the required standard, but that all staff should be trained by the end of March 2024.⁵⁹ The Committee is pleased to see progress in addressing this training gap and hopes that all firefighters are trained as soon as possible.

London Ambulance Service preparedness

London Ambulance Service (LAS) is the largest and busiest ambulance service in the UK, and is central to the emergency response to major incidents and terrorist threats in the capital.⁶⁰ In its most recent inspection from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), in January 2019, the LAS received a rating of ‘good’.⁶¹

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris said he was “extremely concerned about the current capacity of the LAS and the NHS in London to respond to a major terror attack”.⁶² He also told the Committee that he was concerned about “the state of the LAS in responding to anything, let alone a major emergency”.⁶³ The Committee also notes the additional pressures faced by LAS since Lord Harris’ review, including strike action that prevented the LAS from giving evidence to the Committee in person.

Lord Harris found in his review that “the totality of LAS funding is clearly inadequate for the pressures on the service” and recommended that NHS England should award the LAS a funding uplift.⁶⁴ In written evidence to the Committee, the LAS said it agreed with Lord Harris’ recommendation that it needs a funding uplift, and said: “[The] LAS should receive additional funding to reflect the heightened costs inherent in providing an emergency ambulance service to a capital city alongside an uplift which reflects the additional threats of terrorism”.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ HMICFRS, [Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2021-22 – London Fire Brigade](#), 27 July 2022

⁵⁸ LFB/FBU, [Collective Agreement: Marauding Terrorist Attack](#), December 2021; London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.19

⁵⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.19

⁶⁰ CQC, [London Ambulance Service NHS Trust](#), 3 January 2019

⁶¹ CQC, [London Ambulance Service NHS Trust](#), 3 January 2019. The CQC uses the following inspection ratings: Outstanding; Good; Requires Improvement; and Inadequate. See [here](#).

⁶² Lord Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.74

⁶³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee- transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.20

⁶⁴ Lord Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, 078

⁶⁵ LAS, Written evidence, 15 February 2023

In his review, Lord Harris also expressed a specific concern about delays to ambulance handovers, the process of moving a patient from an ambulance to an accident and emergency department upon arriving at hospital. Ambulance handover delays reached unprecedented levels nationally in October 2022, when 71 per cent of all handovers exceeded 15 minutes and 18 per cent exceeded 60 minutes.⁶⁶ The mean handover time in October 2022 was over 42 minutes (double what it was in October 2020).

Lord Harris warned that handover delays lead to ambulances queuing up outside hospitals and could have a major impact on the LAS' ability to respond to a major incident. He also warned that queuing ambulances presented a possible target for a terrorist attack in itself. In written evidence to the Committee, the LAS said it has a robust Incident Response Plan, which "includes an agreed 'Rapid Offload' at hospitals across London to ensure our ambulance response is met".⁶⁷

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris recommended: "The Mayor may wish to seek assurance from the Department for Health and Social Care that should a major terrorist attack be carried out in London, the contingency measures in place to treat casualties in the context of current nationwide demands on the NHS, including across acute care capabilities, are realistic".⁶⁸

The Committee agrees that assurances should be sought by the Mayor from the NHS that realistic LAS contingency plans are currently in place.

Recommendation 5: By September 2023, the LAS and LFB should provide a one-year-on report to the London Assembly on the progress they have made in implementing Lord Harris' recommendations.

Recommendation 6: The Mayor should seek assurance from the LAS that its contingency plans to treat casualties in the context of a major terrorist attack are realistic and deliverable.

Emergency service interoperability

An independent public inquiry on the 2017 Manchester Arena terror attack found inadequacies in the planning, preparation and response by emergency services.⁶⁹ It highlighted how the failure to follow Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP) guidance contributed to significant delays in ambulance and fire crews attending the

⁶⁶ Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, [National Ambulance Data](#), 25 November 2022

⁶⁷ LAS, Written evidence, 15 February 2023

⁶⁸ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.75

⁶⁹ Manchester Arena Inquiry, [Volume 2: Emergency Response](#), November 2022 (please note this is published in two reports: Volume 2-I and Volume 2-II).

scene of the attack.⁷⁰ It concluded, “Looked at overall, and objectively, the performance of the emergency services was far below the standard it should have been”.⁷¹

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris said he was “assured that cross-agency relationships are more firmly entrenched” in London compared to Manchester. He said: “I am confident that in responding to a future terrorist attack, the challenges witnessed with, for example, the emergency services response to the attack at Manchester Arena would not present themselves in London”.⁷²

Giving evidence to the Committee, he said “some of the issues about the relationships between the different emergency services” that occurred during the Manchester Arena incident would have been “handled better” in London.⁷³

Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith, Commander Richard Smith and Kenny Bowie all welcomed Lord Harris’ recognition of the close joint working conducted by emergency services in London. The Committee heard several examples of how joint working had been further improved since Lord Harris’ review:

- Commander Richard Smith and Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith said improvements had been made to how operational information is shared between each service control room during a major incident.⁷⁴
- Chief Superintendent Helen Williams, Commander for Protective Security Operations for the Met, said the Met and LFB co-chair a new multi-agency Prepare board which feeds into the London board of CONTEST, the Government’s counter-terrorism strategy.⁷⁵
- Chief Superintendent Helen Williams shared with the Committee examples of major multi-agency exercises in London to test operational response to a major incident. She said each exercise is evaluated and the learning from each is fed into the next one.⁷⁶
- Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith said the three heads of LFB, the LAS and the Met now meet formally each quarter, addressing a recommendation by Lord Harris for such a forum to be established.⁷⁷

The Committee welcomes the positive progress that has been made since Lord Harris’ review to further improve how blue-light services work together to prepare for a terror attack.

⁷⁰ [JESIP models](#) provide the national standard for interoperability, including in response to a major incident.

⁷¹ Manchester Arena Inquiry, [Volume 2-I: Emergency Response](#), November 2022, p.iv

⁷² Lord Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.76

⁷³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.1

⁷⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.17

⁷⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.17

⁷⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.17

⁷⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.15

Criminal justice system

Data published by the Home Office shows that there were 239 people in custody for terrorism-connected offences as of 30 September 2022.⁷⁸ Of those in custody, the majority (65 per cent) were categorised as holding Islamist extremist views, and 28 per cent were categorised as holding extreme right-wing ideologies. In the year to 30 June 2022, a total of 29 prisoners held for terrorism-related or terrorism-connected offences were released from custody in Britain.⁷⁹

In written evidence to the Committee, His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) said the decision to end automatic early release, and the introduction of longer prison sentences, for the most dangerous terrorist offenders may result in an increase of up to 150 additional people in custody for terrorism-connected offences at any given time.⁸⁰

There is a risk that those convicted of extremism-related offences could radicalise others in prison who previously did not hold extremist views. In 2021-22, 6.6 per cent of all Prevent duty referrals in London came through HMPPS, which was higher than the national average of 4.5 per cent.⁸¹ Robin Simcox, Commissioner for Countering Extremism, told the Committee that prison was seen by convicted terrorists as a continuation of their struggle. He said that counter-terror was only a small part of the many responsibilities held by prison staff.⁸² The threat posed by terrorist offenders in contact with the criminal justice system was starkly displayed by appalling attacks at Fishmongers' Hall in 2019 and in Streatham in 2020. Both attacks were perpetrated by convicted terrorists.

In written evidence, HMPPS said it is vigilant to the threat of radicalisation in prisons, and described several measures to both restrict interactions between terrorists and the wider prison population, and rehabilitate people whilst in custody. This includes the provision of separation centres – spaces in the prison estate where influential terrorists can be moved to be completely apart from the main prison population, to stop the spread of radicalisation amongst prisoners. Two of the three centres at HMP Frankland and HMP Full Sutton are currently operational. HMPPS said if all three separation centres are operational, it has a total capacity for 28 places. It would not disclose the current number of prisoners held in separation centres as it is operationally sensitive information.⁸³

Lord Harris told the Committee that information about high-risk-of-harm terrorist offenders being released into the community is not always shared properly between HMPPS, the Met and London boroughs.⁸⁴ He said London boroughs needed to know who was being released

⁷⁸ Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 statistics](#), 8 December 2022

⁷⁹ Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 statistics](#), 8 December 2022

⁸⁰ HMPPS, Written evidence, 20 February 2023

⁸¹ Home Office, [Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2021 to March 2022](#), 26 January 2023

⁸² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.14

⁸³ HMPPS, Written evidence, 20 February 2023

⁸⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.17

back into their area in order to put proper measures in place. He also said information sharing could be improved by having more people outside of counter-terror police vetted to a high level, so they can receive sensitive information; and by counter-terror police being more prepared to share information in a way that is useful to London boroughs but does not betray sensitive intelligence.⁸⁵

In January 2023, the Committee published the findings of its investigation into probation services in London.⁸⁶ The report raised serious concerns over staffing levels at the London Probation Service, impacting every aspect of its work, including resettlement activity for people entering the community from prison.

Commander Richard Smith said that collaboration between the Met and HMPPS had improved.⁸⁷ He said a specialist team in London Probation Service was now subject to higher vetting requirements in order that sensitive information can be exchanged between police and probation to manage those that pose greatest risk of harm. In written evidence, HMPPS described its arrangements for sharing information with partner agencies for offenders subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).⁸⁸ It said changes to MAPPA in 2022 have ensured local authority Prevent leads are now made aware of individuals posing terrorist risk in their communities.⁸⁹

Recommendation 7: MOPAC should convene the Met, London boroughs, the London Probation Service and London prisons to agree actions to improve how key information is shared between agencies, when terrorist risk offenders are released into the community.

A city-wide endeavour

Beyond emergency services, Lord Harris told the Committee that preparedness for a major incident was a city-wide endeavour and required joint working with partners across local authorities, civil society and business.⁹⁰

“It is about maintaining the focus and also maintaining the focus on joint working. That is not just joint working within the Mayor’s family; it is joint working with local government; it is joint working with the voluntary and community sector; it is joint working with business. [...] it seems to me that if you are to be effective in preparing for terrorism or preventing terrorism, that is something that the whole of society needs to be involved in.”⁹¹

Lord Harris of Haringey

⁸⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.17

⁸⁶ London Assembly, [Probation Services in London](#), 20 January 2023

⁸⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.38

⁸⁸ Some people under probation supervision deemed to be of high risk of harm to others are subjected to MAPPA, which require the police and probation service to work collaboratively to coordinate sentence management.

⁸⁹ HMPPS, Written evidence, 20 February 2023

⁹⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022

⁹¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.5

He told the Committee that the management of large-scale public events continued to be a challenge, and that it was important all agencies involved in putting on such an event understand their respective responsibilities for keeping people safe. He expressed some concern that: “the skills acquired by security, hospitality and retail staff to spot suspicious behaviour will have been lost during COVID-19, due to people changing roles or being furloughed and therefore having less exposure to busy public spaces”. He said that hospitality must maintain its focus on security and protecting people.⁹²

Commander Richard Smith told the Committee that it was a challenge to keep counter-terrorism high up on the agenda of the public, as: “the more successful we are in keeping people safe, the greater the risk that other stakeholders become complacent, and that the public cease to be vigilant because they think that this problem has gone away”.⁹³ He said a terror threat has always existed and people need to stay vigilant.

“London’s history back through the centuries shows this problem has never gone away. It changes, it morphs, it manifests itself in different ways. Last year nobody in the UK died as a result of a terrorist act and I am hugely proud of that fact. But that is as a result of a huge amount of effort that is largely unseen, and it is that risk of complacency that concerns me.”⁹⁴

Commander Richard Smith, Metropolitan Police Service

He said public forums to discuss terrorism threats, such as the Committee meetings, give the Met an opportunity to keep terrorism in public consciousness. He said they also help to: “reinforce the fact that huge amounts of effort, not just by blue-light services and our partners, but also the wider public and the whole of the counter-terrorism machine, which includes everyone, and is international, is required in order to keep people safe”.⁹⁵

He stressed, however, that London was “one of the safest global cities in the world, if not the safest” and “there is a balance to be struck in ensuring the public remain alert but not alarmed”.⁹⁶

Lord Harris said “some local authorities are better than others” at engaging with communities as part of its counter-terrorism response.⁹⁷ He said both London boroughs and the Met risk missing “that granularity and that level of understanding and relationship” with local communities.⁹⁸ He also said people are more likely to share concerns with the police if they believe that the police “are genuinely trying to be mutually supportive”.⁹⁹ He said that

⁹² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.3

⁹³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.7

⁹⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.7

⁹⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.7

⁹⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.10

⁹⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.7

⁹⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.7

⁹⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.15

low levels of trust and confidence in the police will “inevitably” have a consequence on people’s willingness to disclose concerns from their communities, and that rebuilding confidence at the local level takes time and requires officers who are engaging regularly and are known by local communities.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 1](#), 30 November 2022, p.16

Chapter three: countering radicalisation

Prevent

Prevent is one of the four key themes of the Government’s counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.¹⁰¹ The provisions under Prevent aim to safeguard people from radicalisation and prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.¹⁰²

Prevent is a national programme, delivered by a range of multi-agency partners at the local level. In London, the Met takes a lead role, alongside London boroughs, in the delivery and coordination of Prevent across the city. The Met has over 1,500 Prevent champions based in BCUs to promote and support the programme; and the Met has responsibility for assessing people who are referred into Prevent and directing the response from relevant services.¹⁰³

The Mayor’s London CONTEST Board provides a strategic lead for overseeing the delivery of Prevent in London. The Board is made up of representatives from MOPAC, the Met, the Home Office, NHS England, the City of London, the National Probation Service, Transport for London, the Department for Education and London Councils.¹⁰⁴ MOPAC publishes agenda summaries of its CONTEST meetings.¹⁰⁵

Since 2011, the London Prevent Board has also brought together key partners with responsibility for the delivery of Prevent in London. Its membership is largely made up of Chief Executives of London boroughs, alongside representatives from Met, Home Office and MOPAC. The London Prevent Board reports into the London CONTEST Board.¹⁰⁶

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris said: “The views of Prevent put to me have largely been positive, with widespread recognition that in the face of increasing levels of extremism and polarising narratives within mainstream society it represents a crucial part of identifying and managing risk and offers a welcome focus on the need to safeguard vulnerable individuals”.¹⁰⁷

However, he identified several areas for attention to enhance the impact of Prevent in London, including for long-term funding to be allocated to London boroughs and to the NHS

¹⁰¹ The Government conducted a major review of Prevent in 2011 and published a [Prevent Strategy](#). This has now been superseded by the updated [Counter-terrorism strategy \(CONTEST\)](#) in 2018. The Government [has committed to publishing a revised CONTEST strategy in 2023](#).

¹⁰² Home Office, [CONTEST countering terrorism strategy](#), June 2018, p.35

¹⁰³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁰⁴ MOPAC, [London CONTEST board meeting note](#), 14 June 2021

¹⁰⁵ City Hall, [London CONTEST Board](#)

¹⁰⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023, p.5

¹⁰⁷ Lord Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.95

to maintain dedicated Prevent function; and to ensure staff across health, education and London boroughs are able to spot signs of radicalisation and take necessary action.¹⁰⁸

In January 2021, the Government appointed William Shawcross as the Independent Reviewer of Prevent.¹⁰⁹ William Shawcross delivered his recommendations to the Home Office in April 2022¹¹⁰ and the final review was published on 8 February 2023.¹¹¹ The Government has accepted all 34 recommendations made by Shawcross and has published a full response to the review.¹¹² The Government has said it will consider the review as it updates its CONTEST strategy later in 2023.¹¹³

Commander Dom Murphy QPM, Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15 at the Met, told the Committee that he welcomed the opportunity presented by the Independent Review of Prevent to consider improvements to the delivery of Prevent in London.¹¹⁴ Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan, Head of SO15 Local Operations and Prevent lead at the Met, said, “It is helpful if you put a spotlight on Prevent; it is good because it gets people talking”.¹¹⁵ MOPAC welcomed aspects of the review but said it did not agree with all recommendations made.

“The Independent Review has offered some recommendations that will improve the systems within Prevent and that should be welcomed. There are a number of recommendations that we are pleased to see. [...] There are some recommendations that we do not necessarily agree with, and I do not think that will be a surprise to anybody.”¹¹⁶

Oliver Levinson, MOPAC

Prevent duty

People can be referred to Prevent where a risk of someone being drawn into terrorism has been identified. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced the Prevent Duty on specified authorities such as local authorities, education institutions, health bodies and criminal justice services to safeguard people from being drawn into terrorism.¹¹⁷

Where risks are identified, staff working in these specified authorities are expected to make a referral to the relevant Prevent lead in their area. This then goes through a process of assessment by the police; and, for cases where genuine vulnerabilities related to terrorism

¹⁰⁸ Lord Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022

¹⁰⁹ Home Office, [William Shawcross to lead independent review of Prevent](#), 26 January 2021

¹¹⁰ The Guardian, [Leaked Prevent review attacks ‘double standards’ on far right and Islamists](#), 16 May 2022

¹¹¹ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹¹² Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹¹³ Home Office, [Review of government counter-terror strategy to tackle threats](#), 30 October 2022

¹¹⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023, p.2

¹¹⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹¹⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹¹⁷ Home Office, [CONTEST: the United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering Terrorism](#), June 2018, p.35

are identified, referrals are further assessed by a multi-agency Channel panel, who can offer various types of support addressing educational, vocational, mental health and other vulnerabilities.¹¹⁸

Commander Dom Murphy QPM told the Committee that the “Prevent Duty is a good thing, it is something we need”. He said, however, Prevent needs to be “socialised more” so that people with relevant responsibilities are able to make referrals.¹¹⁹ The Independent Review of Prevent described the Prevent Duty as “one of the most important aspects of Prevent”.¹²⁰ It recommended exploring “extending the Prevent Duty to immigration and asylum (through UK Border Force, Immigration and Protection Directorate) and to job centres via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)”.¹²¹ In response, the Government has said it would consider extending the Prevent Duty to these agencies as part of the refresh of the CONTEST strategy.¹²²

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan told the Committee that she welcomed the recommendation by the Independent Review of Prevent to extend the Prevent Duty to new agencies.¹²³ Oliver Levinson said this would be needed to be managed carefully, to avoid the risk of “potentially creating fuel for the people who are in the anti-Prevent lobby”, who could present the extension of Prevent Duty to immigration or the DWP as a stigmatisation of migrants or people suffering from economic disadvantage.¹²⁴

Community support for Prevent

The Committee heard from guests that Prevent enjoys broad support across most communities, but that there is a significant number of people who hold negative perceptions of the programme. Dr Shiraz Maher, Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, King’s College London, said that “overzealous” Prevent referrals had damaged trust in the programme in its early years, and had been “used to undermine and spread this perception that in fact Prevent is there as a pernicious tool of the state to undermine legitimate activism, legitimate dissent, legitimate alternative views”.¹²⁵ Brendan Cox from Survivors Against Terror told the Committee that “in most communities, in most places, at most times, it [Prevent] is trusted”.¹²⁶ However, he acknowledged that there were still people who were suspicious of the programme.

The Independent Review of Prevent noted, “Prevent has been the subject of vociferous criticism”.¹²⁷ It said that, while “an increasing number of studies have found majority

¹¹⁸ Home Office, [Making a referral to Prevent](#), 24 October 2022

¹¹⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023, p.17

¹²⁰ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.80

¹²¹ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.159

¹²² Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹²³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹²⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹²⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.12

¹²⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.9

¹²⁷ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.126

support for the programme or the principles which underpin it”, there are still many concerns related to Prevent, including perceptions that it is “discriminatory and leading to unfair targeting of certain ethnic or religious communities”, unfairly targets Muslims and that Prevent spies on people.¹²⁸

The review also reported that there has been a “concerted campaign by some, including a number of Islamist groups, to undermine and delegitimise Prevent” and that “certain criticisms of Prevent are being made by those naturally hostile to it”.¹²⁹ It recommended that the Homeland Security Group should set up a dedicated unit to “rapidly rebut misinformation about Prevent and challenge inaccuracies via traditional and social media” and “coordinate with government departments to produce national resources for civil society organisations and Prevent delivery partners in local communities”.¹³⁰

Oliver Levinson praised the Independent Review of Prevent for highlighting the prevalence of misinformation related to Prevent and welcomed the recommendation to tackle these myths in a more transparent way.

“There are good recommendations in the Shawcross review about rebutting – more transparently and openly – criticisms of Prevent. I think that is really good. Because they can become somewhat urban legend and urban myth, which it does not matter if they are true or not because the perception creates a disengagement with the strategy.”¹³¹

Oliver Levinson, MOPAC

Recommendation 8: The Met and MOPAC should develop a joint publicity and community engagement programme to work with grassroots groups to address the issues causing negative perceptions of Prevent in London.

The Independent Review of Prevent took some time to deliver its findings. Lord Carlile QC was initially appointed to lead the review in August 2019 but was forced to step down after a legal challenge over his appointment.¹³² In January 2021, the Government appointed William Shawcross to lead the review,¹³³ but his appointment was again met with opposition due to a perception that Shawcross held an anti-Muslim bias.¹³⁴ Several human rights organisations committed to boycott the review.¹³⁵

¹²⁸ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.125-128

¹²⁹ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.8

¹³⁰ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.162

¹³¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹³² Leigh Day, [Rights Watch \(UK\) to Challenge Appointment of Independent Reviewer of Prevent](#), 19 August 2019

¹³³ Home Office, [William Shawcross to lead independent review of Prevent](#), 26 January 2021

¹³⁴ Liberty, [Rights groups boycott Prevent review](#), 16 February 2021

¹³⁵ Liberty, [Rights groups boycott Prevent review](#), 16 February 2021

Kenny Bowie said some of the organisations who boycotted the review were the “usual suspects” who would not have engaged with the review “regardless of who the reviewer had been, regardless of what the terms of reference had been”.¹³⁶ However, he said it was a missed opportunity that other organisations, such as Amnesty International, also boycotted the review. Oliver Levinson said he didn’t think the review would help increase support for Prevent amongst those who were already sceptical.¹³⁷

Threats from different ideologies

In his 2022 review, Lord Harris said that the “biggest threat in the UK remains that posed by Islamist terrorism”.¹³⁸ Similarly, Robin Simcox told the Committee that “Islamism remains the most pressing ideology that the security services and police are having to deal with”. He also said that Islamist terrorism is the “urgent threat” in its “desire and ability to conduct mass casualty attacks”.¹³⁹

In his review, Lord Harris noted the increased threat from extreme right-wing terrorism, highlighting the proscription of several groups associated with extreme right-wing narratives in the past five years, including National Action.¹⁴⁰ He cited the 2021 annual update provided by MI5 Director General Ken McCallum, which highlighted extreme-right-wing cases comprise around one in five counter-terrorist investigations.¹⁴¹

The Independent Review of Prevent found that Prevent does not give sufficient attention to Islamism. The report found that 80 per cent of live counter-terror investigations are related to extremist Islamists, while only 22 per cent of Prevent referrals for 2020-21 nationally related to extremist Islamist concerns.¹⁴² The review said this suggests Prevent has become “out of kilter with the rest of the counter-terrorism system”.¹⁴³ Robin Simcox told the Committee, “The fact that Islamism is a relatively small part of the Prevent referrals but a very large part of work going on by the police and intelligence services suggests to me something has gone slightly askew.”¹⁴⁴

Commander Dom Murphy QPM said London does not follow the national trend, and in fact Prevent referrals related to Islamist views far outnumber referrals related to extreme right-wing views.¹⁴⁵ In 2021-22, national referrals to Prevent related to concerns over extreme

¹³⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹³⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹³⁸ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.17

¹³⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.4

¹⁴⁰ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.17

¹⁴¹ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.17

¹⁴² Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.7

¹⁴³ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.7

¹⁴⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.8

¹⁴⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

right-wing radicalisation (1,309) outnumbered those related to concerns over extreme Islamist radicalisation (1,027). However, this is not the case in London where over three times as many referrals to Prevent were driven by concerns over extreme Islamist radicalisation (384) compared to extreme right-wing radicalisation (122).¹⁴⁶

The Independent Review of Prevent also suggested that Prevent used an overly broad definition of extreme right-wing ideology that included “mildly controversial or provocative forms of mainstream, right-wing leaning commentary that have no meaningful connection to terrorism or radicalisation”. It said this compared to a much narrower approach to Islamism, that centred around proscribed organisations rather than non-violent Islamist narratives.¹⁴⁷ The review also expressed concern “that a culture of timidity exists among practitioners in the round when it comes to tackling Islamism”.¹⁴⁸

Kenny Bowie told the Committee that he agreed with the Independent Review of Prevent that “thresholds should be set at the same level regardless of what ideology you are talking about” but he said the concerns highlighted in the report do not reflect his experience of Prevent delivery in London. Both Commander Dom Murphy QPM and Kenny Bowie said that the work done by Prevent partners in London follows the level of threat and responses are applied evenly regardless of ideology.¹⁴⁹

“Where we see that threat and harm to the public, or where we see that threat and harm to individuals who may be being drawn into an ideology as a result of a vulnerability of some kind, or an intention, then we respond to that threat. We are less driven by an ideology, but driven by the threat, which is a point that the review brings out quite strongly and is something that we in London particularly – but for the whole Prevent network – are involved in.”¹⁵⁰

Commander Dom Murphy QPM, Metropolitan Police Service

Prevent funding and the Shared Endeavour Fund

In 2020–21, the Home Office distributed Prevent funding to 79 community organisations to deliver projects across 44 local authorities in England and Wales.¹⁵¹ Projects are funded to help meet Prevent’s first objective to “tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism”, but the Independent Review of Prevent review found that funding “too often goes towards generic projects dealing with community cohesion and hate crime” rather than publicly contesting extremist discourse.¹⁵² In response to the

¹⁴⁶ Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent Programme 2021/2022](#), 26 January 2023

¹⁴⁷ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.7

¹⁴⁸ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.8

¹⁴⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁵⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁵¹ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹⁵² Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

review, the Government has said it will refocus its Prevent funding on projects that “explicitly counter radicalisation and challenge extremist and terrorist ideology”.¹⁵³

The Independent Review of Prevent also found that there were “inadequate mechanisms to evaluate individual projects” and to assess the impact that Prevent funding has had. It also expressed concern that some organisations funded through Prevent have actively promoted extremist narratives.¹⁵⁴ In response, the Government said it would strengthen its due diligence to ensure “Prevent funding does not reach those linked to extremism”, and that it would implement a new evaluation strategy for Prevent projects.¹⁵⁵

MOPAC distributes funding to “community projects tackling extremism, hate, intolerance and radicalisation across London”, through its Shared Endeavour Fund.^{156,157} Though a separate fund, it shares similar aims with the Home Office-led Prevent funding programme. Oliver Levinson told the Committee the Shared Endeavour Fund only distributed money to projects with “some connectivity to extremism and radicalisation”. However, he said there are a wide range of projects that can be effective to achieving these aims, including psychosocial interventions aimed at increasing someone’s sense of purpose, belonging or empathy towards others. He said it was important have a “rounded portfolio to counter extremism and safeguard people who are vulnerable to radicalisation”.¹⁵⁸

Kenny Bowie told the Committee that MOPAC conducts due diligence on organisations funded through the Shared Endeavour Fund and he was “confident that no money has gone to people whom the police would describe as extremist”. He also said the Government’s evaluation of Prevent funding compared unfavourably to MOPAC, which publishes independent evaluations of each funding round.¹⁵⁹

Recommendation 9: MOPAC should assess the outputs of groups in London that have received funding from Prevent to ensure that there is not duplication with its own work and that its successes can be benchmarked.

Lord Harris highlighted in his 2022 review that the 44 local authorities deemed to have the highest risk of radicalisation receive additional Prevent funding from the Home Office to help manage that risk, and that 23 London boroughs received this priority funding in the last allocation. He recommended that the “Home Office should ensure every London Borough receives some degree of direct funding for their Prevent work and it would not be sensible

¹⁵³ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹⁵⁴ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent](#), 8 February 2023

¹⁵⁵ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹⁵⁶ GLA, [Mayor announces new £875,000 funding to help London’s communities tackle hate and extremism](#), 12 April 2023.

¹⁵⁷ MOPAC have delivered three rounds of Shared Endeavour Funding: (1) £800,000 in 2020-21 (£400,000 each from Mayor and Google); (2) £600,000 (Mayor funds only) in 2021-22; (3) £725,000 (Mayor funds only) in 2022-23. Applications for the fourth round of funding close on 22 May 2023. [More information here.](#)

¹⁵⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁵⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023; access evaluations of calls one and two of the Shared Endeavour Fund [here](#).

for the Home Office to reduce the support it provides to London in future funding rounds".¹⁶⁰

In February 2023, the Home Office announced it "will move to a regional Prevent delivery model directly overseen by the Home Office and significantly reduce the number of local authority areas of highest threat that we fund".¹⁶¹ The Independent Review of Prevent supported the move to a regionalised model for funding but said the plans would "need to address specific and unique requirements in London, where there are a high number of priority areas in close proximity to one another and where individuals may be particularly likely to move and interact across priority and non-priority areas within the Greater London area".¹⁶²

Jane Corrigan told the Committee that she was concerned that the move to a regionalised model of funding would mean "London will move from having 22 prioritised areas down to having seven, and that may even reduce further to five. That obviously causes some concern because what we do not have is that dedicated resource in those areas".¹⁶³ Oliver Levinson said he would be "disappointed" if funding for Prevent delivery in London decreased.¹⁶⁴ The Committee believes that the move to a regionalised model for Prevent should not reduce the overall allocation of funding for Prevent in London.

Safeguarding and vulnerability

The Committee heard different views on whether Prevent should be focussed on meeting the safeguarding needs of people referred into the programme. Charlotte Dixon-Sutcliffe MBE said that people associated Prevent with the police, which creates suspicion amongst certain communities about the aims of the programme.¹⁶⁵ Brendan Cox said if the Prevent programme was more associated with safeguarding, more people would be willing to engage with it.¹⁶⁶

"What we see is this kind of stigmatisation of Prevent because it is associated with the police and where people are perhaps suspicious of that and that state intervention. It ends up leading to greater suspicion and just undermining something that really should be of benefit to individuals and that should be incredibly helpful in working with people who are vulnerable because, ultimately, it is about safeguarding. When the police are stepping in, then it is becoming maybe more associated with criminality

¹⁶⁰ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022

¹⁶¹ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent's report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹⁶² Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent's report and government response](#), 8 February 2023

¹⁶³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁶⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁶⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.7

¹⁶⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.9

and at its heart in those early stages it is about vulnerability and about safeguarding.”¹⁶⁷

Charlotte Dixon-Sutcliffe MBE, Survivors Against Terror

Commander Richard Smith said that prevention of radicalisation required all parts of the system – services, families and organisations – to work collaboratively. However, he thought it was right for Prevent to be a police-led programme, to ensure it is joined up with the Pursue, Protect and Prepare elements of the CONTEST strategy.¹⁶⁸ Oliver Levinson said, “There are many, many reasons why the Met should be at the forefront of looking after a safeguarding for radicalisation programme”.¹⁶⁹

The Independent Review of Prevent said, “Prevent must return to its overarching objective: to stop individuals from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism”. It said Prevent “has increasingly come to be seen as synonymous with safeguarding”¹⁷⁰ but that it should focus primarily on protecting the public from extremists. It said, “Prevent too often bestows a status of victimhood on all who come into contact with it, confusing practitioners and officials as to Prevent’s fundamental purpose”.¹⁷¹

Robin Simcox told the Committee that approaching Prevent through a safeguarding model was appropriate for children at risk but certain adults such as Ali Harbi Ali, who murdered Sir David Amess (former MP for Southend West), could not be “classified as vulnerable in any meaningful sense of the word”.¹⁷²

Oliver Levinson said Prevent has a broad remit, from working with young and vulnerable people to prevent radicalisation, to working to de-radicalise “hard-core terrorists” in prison. He said for the latter group, safeguarding may be a less appropriate term; but that “for much of what Prevent does, safeguarding is critical”.¹⁷³

Commander Dom Murphy QPM said: “We are, in effect, using the ability to safeguard somebody as an extension of managing the threat and potential harm to the public or that individual”.¹⁷⁴ Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan said, “Safeguarding still has a big place in Prevent”.¹⁷⁵ She said many people referred into Prevent will have a safeguarding concern and it was important for the Prevent programme to be able to respond effectively to safeguarding concerns as a means to intervene early and prevent radicalisation.

“In terms of the cohort of individuals that we deal with within the Prevent Programme, there are a lot of safeguarding needs. About 40 per cent have some form

¹⁶⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.7

¹⁶⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023

¹⁶⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.23

¹⁷⁰ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.6

¹⁷¹ Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.6

¹⁷² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.8

¹⁷³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁷⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁷⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

of mental ill health and we also see a large range of other complex needs, whether it be adverse childhood experience. We see a range of domestic abuse within our casework and just individuals who are looking for a sense of belonging. [...] It would be a loss for us to move away from that and to just look at terrorism risk. I would much prefer to intervene early and identify an early indication that somebody is not going on to be managed under Prevent because they have not gone so far down that radicalisation journey.”¹⁷⁶

Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan, Metropolitan Police Service

The Independent Review of Prevent also said, “The term ‘vulnerable’ should be reserved for those who, because of circumstances beyond their control, are at particular risk of falling prey to exploitation or abuse”. It said, “That is not the case for most of those likely to be radicalised”. The review recommended that Prevent moves away from language of “vulnerability” and towards “susceptibility”, wherever accurate. It suggested that the Vulnerability Assessment Framework should be renamed the Prevent Assessment Framework.¹⁷⁷ Commander Dom Murphy QPM and Kenny Bowie did not agree that a change in language from vulnerability to susceptibility was useful or needed.¹⁷⁸

Recommendation 10: The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime should make representations at the London Contest Board that Prevent in London should continue to be led by evidence based demand to uphold its safeguarding responsibilities and prevent people from becoming involved in terrorism.

Changing ideologies and patterns of radicalisation

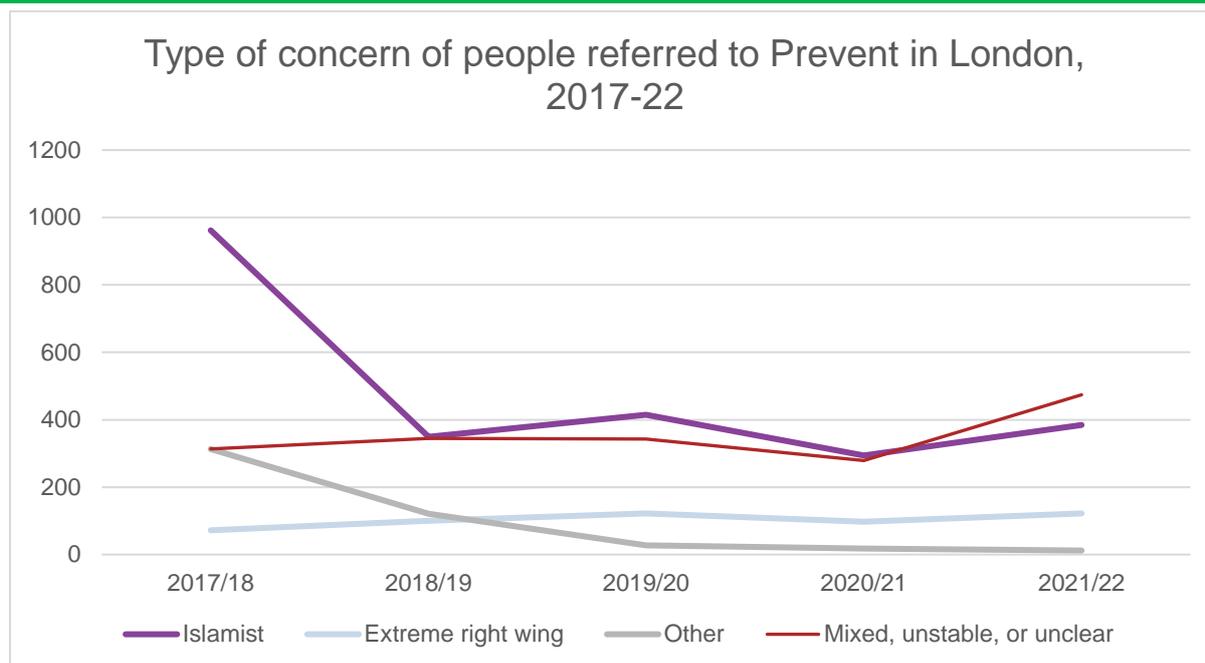
Between 2017-18 and 2021-22, London saw an increase in the number of “mixed, unstable or unclear” referrals made to Prevent. The Government has published disaggregated figures for 2021-22 – the first time such figures have been published – providing more granular detail. It shows that 13 people in London were referred to Prevent due to concerns of incel (involuntary celibate) ideology, and 11 people were referred due to concerns related to school massacre.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁷⁷ The Vulnerability Assessment Framework is used, as part of the Channel Process, to assess an individual’s engagement with a group, cause or ideology; their internet to cause harm; and their capability to cause harm. See: Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent’s report and government response](#), 8 February 2023, p.45.

¹⁷⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 8 March 2023

¹⁷⁹ Home Office, [Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme](#), 26 January 2023



The Committee heard evidence that the ideologies driving extremists are becoming more diffused and complex. Brendan Cox said there has been a “fracturing of the threats”. He said alongside the recent rise in extreme right-wing ideology, there has been a rise in incel ideology and cases of people with no apparent coherent ideology.¹⁸⁰

“We have seen in some cases recently, where terror attacks have happened where, over the period of their radicalisation, they have experimented with different radicalisations. They might have been far right, they might have then dipped into Islamism and they might have dipped into incel culture. As well as keeping an eye on those ideologies that are driving it, what we have to do is also really think about those susceptibilities.”¹⁸¹

Brendan Cox, Survivors Against Terror

Dr Shiraz Maher also said Islamism remains the biggest threat in terms of “its desire and ability to conduct mass casualty threats”, but added: “We have seen a rise and an uptick in referrals being made under what might be called far-right violent extremism or unclear and mixed ideological affiliations”.¹⁸² Commander Richard Smith said the ideologies of people radicalising online was not always straightforward:

“Some of them have very clear ideological beliefs and are pursuing them and seeking out material online that reinforces them and takes them further. Some of them have what we described as mixed, unclear or unstable ideologies and they are looking at a range of hate-filled ideologies. Some of that perhaps is difficult to reconcile and

¹⁸⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.4

¹⁸¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.4

¹⁸² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.4

understand why that might be, but it is certainly quite a significant part of our Prevent casework.”¹⁸³

Commander Richard Smith, Metropolitan Police Service

The Committee was told by Dr Shiraz Maher that there “is no single pathway and there is no single profile of an individual who becomes radicalised into violent extremist movements”.¹⁸⁴ Commander Richard Smith said there may be complex drivers that lead people to become vulnerable to radicalisation, including experiences of “domestic abuse, drug abuse in the household or mental illness in the household”.¹⁸⁵ Robin Simcox said recent examples of terrorist acts have shown how profiles of perpetrators can vary significantly.

“There are a broad range of ideologies of concern and really the radicalisation process occurs when ideology meets and grievances meet and susceptibilities and people are taken down a dangerous path. If you look in terms of profile, one of the 7/7 bombers was 18 years old, and the man who firebombed a migrant centre in Dover recently was 66; completely different backgrounds, profiles, age, ideology and motivation, but both willing to carry out acts of violence.”¹⁸⁶

Robin Simcox, Commissioner for Countering Extremism

Charlotte Dixon-Sutcliffe MBE said people who have a grievance or are disenfranchised find it very easy to find a group that will support and encourage those feelings.¹⁸⁷ Brendan Cox said it was important for Prevent to look at the common susceptibilities that draw people into dangerous ideologies.¹⁸⁸

“We certainly know from our research that domestic abuse is a significant factor in the background of quite a number of our terrorist cohort, growing up with domestic abuse and also being perpetrators of domestic abuse, and that appears to be to an extent statistically significant but, again, our understanding of that is probably not as comprehensive as we would want it to be.”¹⁸⁹

Commander Richard Smith, Metropolitan Police Service

Commander Richard Smith said the Met is “seeing a steady increase in the numbers of younger people, both in the Prevent cohort and more specifically in our investigation casework”. He said responding to “young people with complex needs who nonetheless [are] posing a very significant threat to public safety or indeed to themselves, or sometimes both at once, can be really quite challenging”.¹⁹⁰ Chief Superintendent Helen Williams said acute

¹⁸³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.27

¹⁸⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.4

¹⁸⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.30

¹⁸⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.4

¹⁸⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.3

¹⁸⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022

¹⁸⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.31

¹⁹⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.30

childhood experiences, such as experience of domestic abuse, appeared to be a significant risk factor for radicalisation. She said there was academic research taking place to better understand these links, and to consider how intervention can take place earlier.¹⁹¹

The Committee is concerned that there is only limited evidence available on what makes young people more susceptible to radicalisation. With extremist ideologies becoming increasingly diversified and complex, it is important to better understand which young people are most at risk of radicalisation.

Recommendation 11: MOPAC should work with the Met to conduct a review of the key risk factors for young people becoming radicalised. This could include a review of case files of successful Prevent referrals and young people arrested for terrorist offences over the past five years.

Radicalisation online

The Committee also heard evidence on patterns and trends related to radicalisation taking place online. Dr Shiraz Maher told the Committee that terrorist groups were “embracing new technologies and embracing them in disruptive ways”, including the way they organise and share extremist content online through peer-to-peer social networks.¹⁹² He said research has shown that far-right actors have been looking to adopt some of the technological innovations made by jihadists.¹⁹³

The issue of online radicalisation was highlighted by Lord Harris in his 2022 review. In particular, he expressed concern that COVID-19 may have increased the risk of people self-radicalising, as more people spent more time online.¹⁹⁴ This concern was not shared by all guests. Robin Simcox told the Committee that the “idea that COVID-19 fundamentally changed the landscape is unproven at best” and is “built on a series of assumptions that I just think are either questionable or need further testing”. He said that people also “spend significant amounts of time online when they are out and about as opposed to being stuck at home”.¹⁹⁵

Robin Simcox also told the Committee that the number of cases of people being radicalised entirely online is “perhaps rarer than we sometimes think” as the line between our online and offline lives is becoming “increasingly blurred”. He said radicalisation often takes place where people access extremist content online then build physical relationships with on-the-ground activists.¹⁹⁶ Similarly, Dr Shiraz Maher said an “offline component” can be “one of the most decisive factors in distinguishing between those who are either mere recipients or

¹⁹¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.31

¹⁹² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.7

¹⁹³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.2-3

¹⁹⁴ Lord Toby Harris, [London Prepared: a city-wide endeavour – An Independent Review of London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), March 2022, p.4

¹⁹⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.4

¹⁹⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.1

consumers of extremist content online versus those who mobilise into conducting an attack in that way”.¹⁹⁷

“The human dimension matters and networks and physical relationships also still matter as much in 2022 as they did a couple of decades ago. It is often on-the-ground activism and recruitment that can make the difference in these cases and where radicalisation takes place.”¹⁹⁸

Robin Simcox, Commissioner for Countering Extremism

However, Commander Richard Smith warned that there is an increasing pattern of people becoming entirely self-radicalised online, without having any communication with active extremist groups. He also said he was concerned about the availability of online content that can radicalise people: “At the heart of it, that availability of horrific – and some of it is really horrendous – material online is a massive concern”.¹⁹⁹

Commander Richard Smith said a range of approaches was needed to tackle it, including the legislative and regulatory mechanisms brought by the Online Safety Bill. The Bill, currently passing through Parliament,²⁰⁰ will introduce new rules for companies that host search engines or user-generated content to better protect its users from harmful content. Ofcom will be given new powers as a regulator and companies will be able to be fined for failure to adhere to rules. The Government says its Bill will “make the UK the safest place in the world to be online while defending free expression”.²⁰¹

Robin Simcox said he broadly supported the approach taken by the Government but said there was a challenge in how Government legislated to protect people from harmful content without censoring “content that falls within perfectly acceptable realms of free speech”. He said there should be an approach that protects children from accessing certain content online, while ensuring adults can “essentially access whatever they like, providing it is within the law”.²⁰²

Kenny Bowie and Commander Richard Smith both said the Bill would need to find the right balance in regulating “legal but harmful” content. Kenny Bowie suggested the current draft of the Bill does not go far enough to force tech companies to regulate harmful content they host.

An Online Harms Working Group exists to coordinate work across MOPAC and the GLA in relation to online harms, including work related to the Online Safety Bill. The Mayor has said the working group will continue to monitor the passage of the Online Safety Bill through

¹⁹⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.2

¹⁹⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022, p.1

¹⁹⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 11 January 2023, p.27

²⁰⁰ UK Parliament, [Online Safety Bill](#), accessed 13 December 2022

²⁰¹ DCMS, [Online safety Bill: factsheet](#), 19 April 2022

²⁰² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript 2](#), 30 November 2022

parliament.²⁰³ However, there is a need for a strategic group on online harms to exist beyond the passage of the Bill to keep pace with changes in the online landscape. This should include, within its scope, a specific focus on protecting people from online radicalisation and terrorist content.

Recommendation 12: Once the Online Safety Bill is passed, MOPAC should renew the terms of reference for its Online Harms Working Group, to enable it to provide strategic leadership on efforts to address online harms in London.

²⁰³ London Assembly, [MQT Working group on online harms](#), 19 May 2022

Committee Activity

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee (formal meeting) – 30 November 2022

- Lord Harris of Haringey
- Robin Simcox, Commissioner for the Commission for Countering Extremism
- Charlotte Dixon-Sutcliffe MBE, Chair, Survivors Against Terror
- Brendan Cox, Co-Founder of Survivors Against Terror
- Dr Shiraz Maher, Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, King's College London.

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee (formal meeting) – 11 January 2023

- Oliver Levinson, Head of Countering Violent Extremism, MOPAC
- Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy and Metropolitan Police Service Oversight, MOPAC
- Chief Superintendent Helen Williams, Commander for Protective Security Operations, Metropolitan Police Service
- Commander Richard Smith, Head of Countering Extremism, Metropolitan Police Service
- Deputy Commissioner Jonathan Smith, London Fire Brigade.

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee (formal meeting) – 8 March 2023

- Oliver Levinson, Head of Countering Violent Extremism, MOPAC
- Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy and Metropolitan Police Service Oversight, MOPAC
- Commander Dom Murphy QPM, Head of Counter Terrorism Command SO15, Metropolitan Police Service
- Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan, Head of SO15 Local Operations and Prevent lead, Metropolitan Police Service.

Other formats and languages

If you, or someone you know needs this report in large print or braille, or a copy of the summary and main findings in another language, then please call us on: 020 7983 4100 or email assembly.translations@london.gov.uk

Chinese

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Vietnamese

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Greek

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Hindi

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज का सारांश अपनी भाषा में चाहिए तो उपर दिये हुए नंबर पर फोन करें या उपर दिये गये डाक पते या ई मेल पते पर हम से संपर्क करें।

Bengali

আপনি যদি এই দলিলের একটা সারাংশ নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে ফো করবেন অথবা উল্লেখিত ডাক ঠিকানায় বা ই-মেইল ঠিকানায় আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

Urdu

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Arabic

الوصول على ملخص لهذا المستند بلغة،
فجراء الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو الاتصال على
العنوان البريدي العادي أو عنوان البريدي
الالكتروني أعلاه.

Gujarati

જો તમારે આ દસ્તાવેજનો સાર તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતો હોય તો ઉપર આપેલ નંબર પર ફોન કરો અથવા ઉપર આપેલ ટપાલ અથવા ઈ-મેઈલ સરનામા પર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

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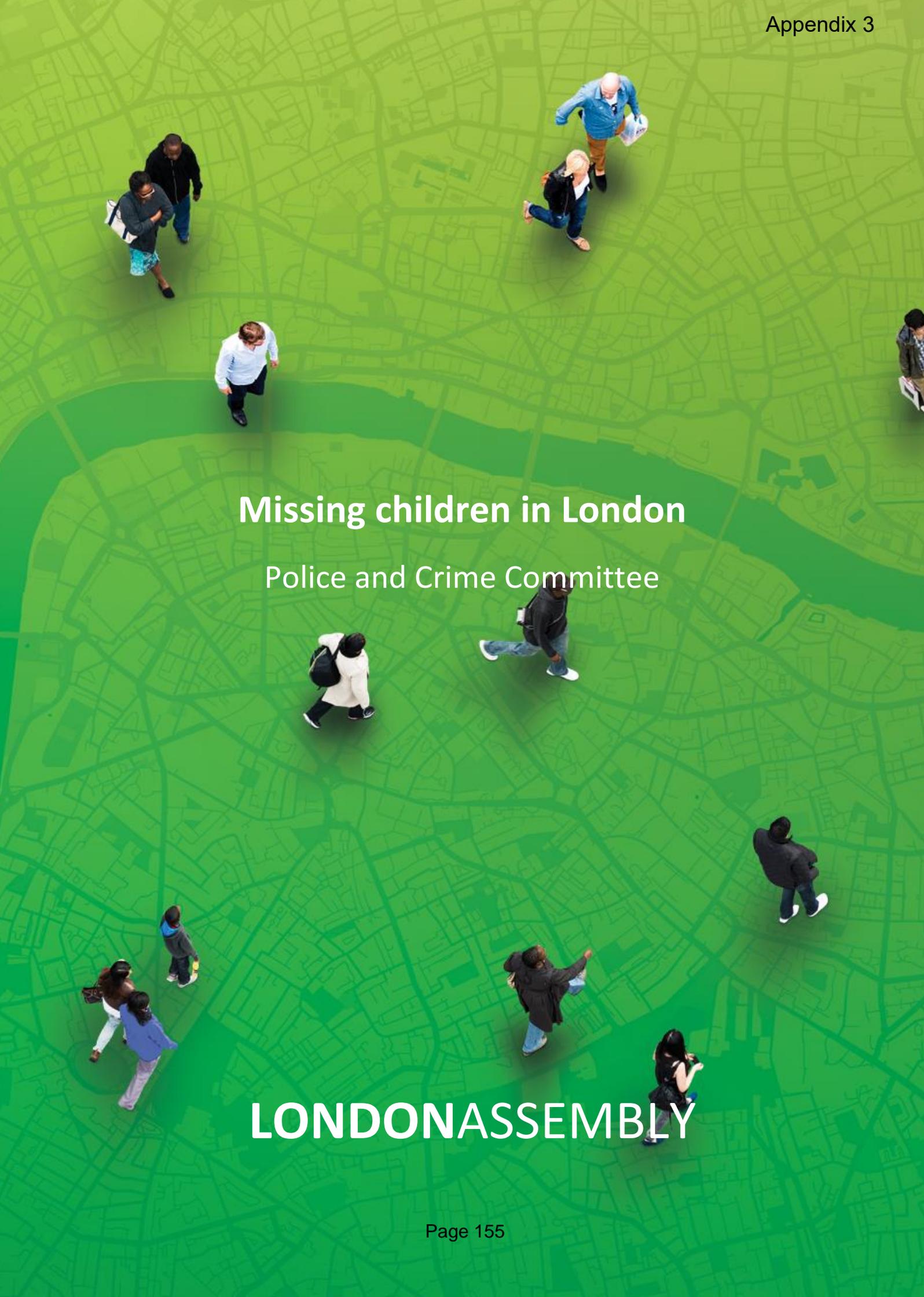
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An aerial view of a city map, rendered in shades of green. The map shows a dense network of streets and buildings. Overlaid on the map are several people walking in various directions, some in small groups and some alone. The people are dressed in casual to business-casual attire. The overall scene suggests a busy urban environment.

Missing children in London

Police and Crime Committee

LONDONASSEMBLY

Police and Crime Committee



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(Chairman)
Conservatives



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(Deputy Chair)
Labour



Marina Ahmad AM
Labour



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Dr Onkar Sahota AM
Labour

The London Assembly Police and Crime Committee is responsible for examining the work of the Mayor and his Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), to make sure that he is delivering on his promises to Londoners. It also investigates other issues relating to policing and crime in the capital, and routinely publishes the findings and recommendations from its investigations.

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Foreword



Susan Hall AM

Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

Thousands of children go missing in London each year, and many go missing more than once. However, the true scale of the problem is unknown as many incidents of missing children – perhaps even the majority – are not reported to the police.

The London Assembly Police and Crime Committee launched an investigation to better understand the reasons why children go missing, and how services can better prevent children from going missing and find and protect those that do.

Throughout this investigation, the Committee heard troubling details on the level of hardship facing many children in London. It is those children with experience of poverty, conflict in the home, trauma and the care system that are also the most at risk of going missing.

When a child does go missing, they are exposed to the most appalling harms, including criminal and sexual exploitation. While over 90 per cent of missing child incidents are resolved within two days in London, the Committee heard evidence of how children can experience harm in missing incidents that last only a few hours.

Every incident of a missing child requires a full safeguarding response, but the Committee is concerned that this is not currently being delivered. We heard how families and carers face frustrating delays when reporting missing children and sometimes receive inaccurate information from police call handlers. We also heard how assessments and responses to missing children are inconsistent across the Met's Basic Command Units and that police respond in a disjointed way when a child goes missing across police service boundaries.

We were also concerned to hear that when a child returns home after a missing incident, opportunities to understand what happened and to prevent future missing incidents are often missed.

Throughout the investigation, we have noted issues with the quality and availability of data. The lack of London-wide data that can tell us why children go missing is particularly concerning, including what drives the overrepresentation of Black children in missing child

figures. If we do not fully understand the drivers, services cannot target effective interventions to prevent children from going missing.

The Committee is grateful to all those that contributed evidence to the investigation both through attending Committee meetings and sending written submissions. I am especially thankful for the five young people from the GLA Peer Outreach Team who shared their expertise and personal stories.

This report makes several recommendations, directed largely at the Mayor, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Metropolitan Police Service. These are constructive recommendations for how we can better protect children in London at risk of going missing and I hope they are taken forward positively. Throughout this report, I have been reminded how the issue of missing children is all our responsibility. I hope this report offers a timely reminder to us all about the need to protect children from harm.

When it comes to missing children, we should all have the aspiration of 'vision zero'. The more we work towards this goal, the fewer children will go missing.

Executive summary

In 2022-23, 9,370 children went missing in London.¹ Many of these children went missing more than once, resulting in 29,455 separate missing incidents being recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service (the Met).² The figure is probably much higher, as many incidents of missing children are not reported to the police.

In September 2022, the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee launched an investigation into missing children in London. The aims of the investigation were to better understand the reasons children go missing, and how the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Met are working to prevent and respond to incidents of children going missing.

To inform this investigation, the Committee held a public meeting with guests from the Met, MOPAC, the London Borough of Haringey and three voluntary organisations. The Committee also held a private meeting with five Peer Outreach Workers between the ages of 17 and 25.³ Peer Outreach Workers comprise a group of young Londoners, commissioned by the Mayor to help shape policy, strategy and services. The Committee also received 18 written responses to its call for evidence.⁴ The Committee is grateful to all those who gave their time and expertise to this investigation.

The findings of the Committee's investigation are set out in detail in this report, and include the following as a summary:

- The collection of data on the underlying reasons children go missing is poor. There is also little understanding of what drives the overrepresentation of Black children in missing-child figures.
- The reasons children go missing are varied and complex, and efforts to prevent children from going missing must therefore be far-reaching. A safe home environment is the biggest protective factor to stop a child going missing, but safeguarding is everyone's business and requires a city-wide response.
- The Committee is concerned that the provision of the Met's Safer Schools Officers is inconsistent; and that they do not always work effectively enough with partners to safeguard children at risk.
- Families face frustrating delays and inaccurate information when reporting missing incidents to the Met. Low trust and confidence in the police may make parents and

¹ Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See the data here.](#)

² Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See the data here.](#)

³ Meeting information and transcript for the public meeting [can be found here](#). No transcript of the private meeting has been published to protect the privacy of young people. Four of the five participants were under 21.

⁴ All written responses are published [here](#).

carers reluctant to report children missing, and encourage them to search for their children themselves.

- The Met's response to missing children is inconsistent across its Basic Command Units (BCUs), including communication with parents; attendance at multi-agency meetings; and how it determines when a child does and does not require an urgent police response. The Committee is concerned that not every child is receiving an effective and proportionate police response when they go missing.
- Children who are missing and have been exploited into criminal activity should be seen first and foremost as victims, and everything should be done to avoid the criminalisation of a child. Evidence received by the Committee suggests this is not always happening in practice.
- Children in care are at heightened risk of going missing, and many will go missing frequently. Improvements have been made to how the Met and social care providers respond to missing incidents involving care-experienced children. However, further improvements are needed to ensure all missing incidents are being logged, recorded and responded to effectively.
- Children often go missing across BCUs or police service boundaries, especially children in care who are placed outside their home borough. Responses to these children can become fractious between different missing-persons' teams, hindering effective responses to highly vulnerable children.
- Not all children who return home after a missing episode receive an effective response from services. Information gathered from the return-home process is not effectively used to inform long-term safeguarding plans.

The Committee makes 17 recommendations, which are set out below.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

MOPAC should work with the Met and London boroughs to agree a standardised process for reporting data from each missing-child report, and from Police Prevention Interviews and Return Home Interviews conducted in London, with the aim of publishing a 'missing children in London' dataset by the end of 2023, and annually thereafter. The dataset will improve understanding of the causes of children going missing and help services to better allocate resources towards prevention.

Recommendation 2

By December 2023, MOPAC should conduct research to understand the overrepresentation of Black children in reported missing-children figures. The review should inform targeted interventions to reduce the number of Black children going missing.

Recommendation 3

The Mayor should explore the opportunity to declare City Hall a safe haven for all children who feel at risk, threatened or in danger.

Recommendation 4

As part of its review into Safer Schools Officers, MOPAC should assess whether all Safer Schools Officers are fully trained to recognise risk factors for missing children; and are able to deliver an effective safeguarding response to at-risk children in partnership with children's services.

Recommendation 5

The Mayor, government and relevant partners should work to minimise the use of hotels to accommodate unaccompanied children seeking asylum, in a way that protects them from exploitation.

Recommendation 6

By December 2023, MOPAC should conduct a review of the experiences of parents, carers and staff in reporting children missing in London. The results of this review should be used to shape a joint MOPAC-Met strategy to improve the process for reporting missing children, including how it will upskill 999 and 101 call handlers to provide appropriate and accurate advice.

Recommendation 7

The Met should attend all multi-agency strategy meetings for children who are missing or at risk of going missing, or who have a history of missing incidents.

Recommendation 8

By December 2023, MOPAC should develop comprehensive guidance on how BCUs can work with voluntary sector services to enhance responses to missing children, including more active use of the text-safe service.

Recommendation 9

By December 2023, the Met should review how it assesses risk in missing child cases and how different thresholds trigger different police responses. This review should be conducted with London boroughs, care providers and relevant voluntary organisations, with the aim of producing a jointly agreed risk assessment that is made available to all relevant services.

Recommendation 10

The Met should write to all London boroughs, children's care services and relevant voluntary organisations to clarify its policies that inform safeguarding and operational responses to children who are both missing and wanted.

Recommendation 11

By December 2023, MOPAC and the Met should review the implementation of the Philomena Protocol to assess whether it is having its desired impact and whether any improvements can be made.

Recommendation 12

For children in care who are placed within London, but outside their home area, the Met should establish clear processes between the home BCU and the destination BCU, or neighbouring police service, to facilitate effective information exchange and joint attendance at strategy meetings; and to ensure that, in the event of any future missing incident, there is an effective joint response.

Recommendation 13

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) should maintain a national directory of phone numbers and emails for missing-children's teams in each police service across England and Wales. MOPAC should write to the NPCC to request this.

Recommendation 14

By December 2023, the Met should conduct a review of Police Prevention Interviews delivered in 2022-23, to include:

- the number of children who received an interview
- whether they were conducted face-to-face or over the phone
- whether they were conducted with the young person, or the parent or guardian
- whether a child willingly engaged
- whether a child made a significant disclosure
- the outcome of the interview.

The Met should share its findings with the Police and Crime Committee.

Recommendation 15

By December 2023, the Met should establish standardised principles for effective delivery of Police Prevention Interviews. This should include:

- specialist, trained officers in plain clothes to conduct each interview
- a child who goes missing on multiple occasions to receive an interview with the same officer, wherever possible
- interviews conducted alongside a child's social worker/support worker where appropriate
- improved sharing of information with borough safeguarding teams and social care partners.

Recommendation 16

In 2023, MOPAC should work with the Met, London boroughs and organisations involved in the delivery of Return Home Interviews in London to establish a standardised approach to this delivery, to ensure every returning child is guaranteed a consistent experience that is based on best practice.

Recommendation 17

To fulfil commitments in the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan, MOPAC should fund projects designed to provide longer-term support for children who have returned from a missing incident.

Chapter one: missing children in London

The scale of missing children in London

During this investigation, whilst reviewing responses given as part of Mayor's Questions in June 2022 and January 2023⁵, the Committee raised concerns with the Met on the quality of the data it had provided. This was due to the sum of figures for 'individuals' not matching the totals given, and differences between the datasets as well as data published on the National Crime Agency (NCA) website.⁶ The Met confirmed that the data previously provided in response to Mayor's Questions were incorrect and provided updated data to the Committee on 5 April 2023.⁷ This report has relied on this refreshed data. The Committee has asked the Met when responses to Mayor's Questions and data provided to the NCA will be corrected for accuracy. Additionally, the Committee notes concern that while the total number of individual children going missing per year is clear, recording of ethnicity in incidents of children going missing multiple times has led to unclear data for individuals by demographic group.

In 2022-23, 9,370 children went missing in London.⁸ Many of these children went missing more than once, resulting in 29,455 separate missing incidents being recorded by the Met. In written evidence provided to the Committee, Missing People said the true number of missing children is probably much higher, as up to two in three missing incidents are not reported to the police.⁹

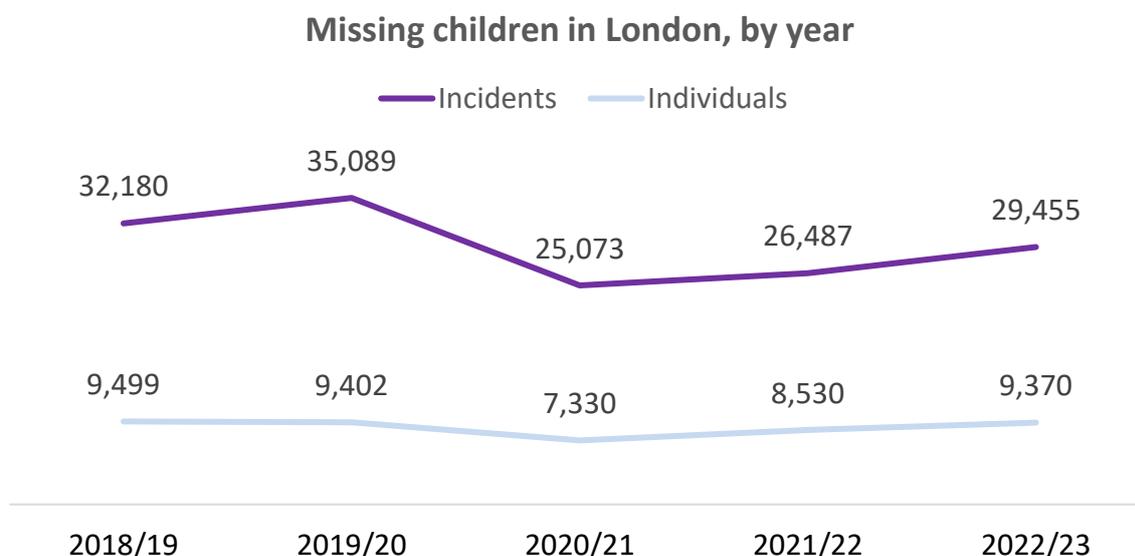
⁵ London Assembly, [Question – missing children, 25 January 2023](#); London Assembly, [Question – missing children](#), 22 June 2023.

⁶ NCA, [Statistical Tables for UK Missing Persons Unit Data Report 2020-21](#), August 2022

⁷ This data is taken from Merlin, the Met's database for recording the details of children and young people aged 17 and under. The Met has informed the Committee that: "The MERLIN system allows officers to enter multiple ethnicities against the same person. Doing so would result in the same individual being counted separately within different ethnicity categories. However, that person would still only be counted as one individual in the total overall. It is also possible for an individual to go missing more than once and have a different ethnicity entered on each occasion. Hence, totals for each ethnicity group being more than the overall total." Because of these discrepancies, this report largely focuses on incidents data.

⁸ Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See the data here.](#)

⁹ Missing People, [written evidence](#), February 2023



Source: data provided to the Committee by the Met.

Commander Kevin Southworth, Met Police, told the Committee that over 90 per cent of missing child cases in London are now resolved within 48 hours.¹⁰ In written evidence sent to the Committee in January 2023, the Met said it currently had 104 child missing cases recorded on its Merlin system that were open beyond seven days and subject to investigation.¹¹ It said 65 of these cases had remained open for between seven days and three months.¹²

While longer missing incidents are highly concerning, Sarah Parker, Catch22, said children can face significant harm even in incidents that are resolved very quickly.¹³ For example, she told the Committee that children who are missing for only a very short period may still “have witnessed some really horrific things and experienced some terrible things”. In written evidence, The Children’s Society said:

“Exploiters continue to change the way in which they groom and exploit young people and understand that young people missing for an extended amount of time may result in an investigation. As such, they are more wary of the length of time young people are missing and [it] may only be a few hours where they are absent from school/home/care, yet they are still at significant risk and harm.”¹⁴

The Children’s Society

¹⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.4

¹¹ Police and Crime Committee, [Response from Met to London Assembly meeting](#), January 2023

¹² The Met explained: “There are a number of further cases which are historic and which present in an alternative context; such as homicides where the body has not been located and parental child abductions where a child has been taken outside of the UK. The figure quoted therefore gives a far more realistic count of cases of missing children in London remaining open beyond seven days.”

¹³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.6

¹⁴ The Children’s Society, [written evidence](#), February 2023

On 9 June 2022, the London Assembly agreed a motion that the Mayor and MOPAC should implement a vision zero strategy for missing children.¹⁵ In response to the motion, the Mayor said: “We should have aspirations of zero children going missing, just like we have an aspiration for zero homicides as well and I am really keen to work with partners to make sure we can fulfil that aspiration”.¹⁶

Why children in London go missing

The Committee was told that the children most at risk of going missing are those who face significant instability or challenges in their lives, such as poverty, conflict in the home or experience of the care system.

The majority of respondents to the written call for evidence said challenges at home were a reason for a child to go missing.¹⁷ Susannah Drury, Missing People, told the Committee that the most common reason for a child to go missing is that they have experienced conflict, abuse or neglect at home.

Several respondents to the written call for evidence cited a desire to make money as a reason for a child to go missing.¹⁸ Beverley Hendricks, London Borough of Haringey, said that children from impoverished and poor backgrounds are most at risk of going missing.¹⁹ Sarah Parker added that the cost-of-living crisis made poor children vulnerable to missing incidents and exploitation, as they were more likely to want to earn money to support their family.²⁰

Almost all respondents to the written call for evidence discussed the overrepresentation of care experienced children in missing figures, and several cited a breakdown of a care placement as a reason for a child to go missing.²¹

Several respondents to the written call for evidence cited poor mental health as a main reason for a child to missing.²² Sarah Parker, Catch 22, said early childhood trauma and poor mental health put children at greater risk of going missing.²³

The Committee was also told some missing incidents may simply be a result of a child breaking a curfew to see friends or attend a party.²⁴

¹⁵ London Assembly, [Implement a vision zero strategy for London’s missing children](#), 9 June 2022

¹⁶ MQT, [Missing Children](#), 6 July 2022

¹⁷ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹⁸ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

²⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

²¹ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

²² [Written evidence](#), February 2023

²³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

²⁴ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

All children who go missing are highly vulnerable to exploitation. For example, missing children can be exploited by gangs and organised crime groups to carry drugs and weapons from one area to another as part of drug-supply chains; steal cars or alcohol; cultivate cannabis; and carry out forced begging.²⁵ Many respondents to the Committee's call for evidence also highlighted the threat of criminal exploitation for children at risk of going missing. Missing People said that nearly one in ten children who completed its Return Home Interviews had been a victim of criminal exploitation.²⁶

In written evidence, the London Safeguarding Children Partnership said young people don't always understand the risks they face when they go missing. A Peer Outreach Worker reflected on their own experience of going missing:

"You meet some really crazy, really lovely but sometimes quite dangerous people when out. And it's just sometimes being so vulnerable and just sitting in a café somewhere and just talking to a stranger and then finding out these things. And then they offer you something and you're like, 'Yes, that's great. I don't have anywhere to stay tonight,' or, 'I don't have money to buy food. If you can offer that to me, that's great.' But what they really want is something in exchange for those services, right? You make those little connections, whether they be really good or really harmful for you."

Peer Outreach Worker

They also explained that children face peer pressure from others who have become victims of exploitation.

"I think peer pressure is definitely very real, especially when you are transitioning between secondary [school] and college or wherever you may be in life. You will come across people who might be influenced in drugs and gangs and all sorts and county lines and everything. And I think that's part of, as well, why a lot of children go missing, potentially with criminal exploitation."

Peer Outreach Worker

Several respondents to the Committee's call for evidence discussed the risks of child sexual exploitation amongst missing children.²⁷ In written evidence, Barnardo's said, "Girls in particular are being sexually exploited for money, including getting money in exchange for

²⁵ Barnardo's, [written evidence](#), February 2023. See also this [briefing](#) for the APPG on Runaway and Missing Children and Adults, reporting on children who go missing and are criminally exploited by gangs.

²⁶ Missing People, [written evidence](#), February 2023

²⁷ The Committee uses [the Met's definition of child sexual exploitation](#): "Child sexual exploitation involves situations, contexts or relationships in which a person under 18 is given something, such as food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts or money in return for performing sexual activities or having sexual activities performed on them. It can also involve violence, coercion and intimidation, with threats of physical harm or humiliation."

sex acts and for sharing self-generated indecent imagery”. It said children who are sexually exploited can “often can go missing multiple times a day”.²⁸

There is no central data source on the reasons children in London go missing. In written evidence, Missing People said it was difficult for the Met to fully capture the reasons children go missing, as children themselves may be reluctant to disclose those reasons to the police in Police Prevention Interviews.²⁹ It said the Met’s statistics therefore show an “under-representation of different risks and harms that children are experiencing”.³⁰ Missing People said London boroughs were likely to have fuller records on the reasons children go missing, as they are often able to collect more data through Return Home Interviews.³¹

Other respondents also said that data collection could be improved in this area. Commander Kevin Southworth told the Committee that the Met is working with MOPAC’s Evidence and Insight Unit to jointly produce a “problem profile for missing children” which will: “look at all the data in the round and get a really accurate analysis, not just of the numbers, but of things like the diagnostics, everything from Return Home Interviews, outcomes, where intervention has made a difference, where it has not”.³²

The Committee welcomes this work, but suggests there is a need for a comprehensive new approach to data collection across agencies to improve understanding of the driving factors behind missing-child incidents; and to help services adapt, in the long term, towards delivering effective preventive interventions.

Recommendation 1: MOPAC should work with the Met and London boroughs to agree a standardised process for reporting data from each missing-child report, and from Police Prevention Interviews and Return Home Interviews conducted in London, with the aim of publishing a ‘missing children in London’ dataset by the end of 2023, and annually thereafter. The dataset will improve understanding of the causes of children going missing and help services to better allocate resources towards prevention.

Children most at risk of going missing

Older children have accounted for more missing incidents than younger children in London in recent years. Children aged 17 have consistently accounted for the most missing

²⁸ Barnardo’s, [written evidence](#), February 2023

²⁹ A Police Prevention Interview (formerly known as the Safe and Well Check) is conducted by the Met within 24 hours of a child’s return from a missing incident. It aims to establish whether the child has come to harm whilst missing, and what can be done to prevent future missing incidents.

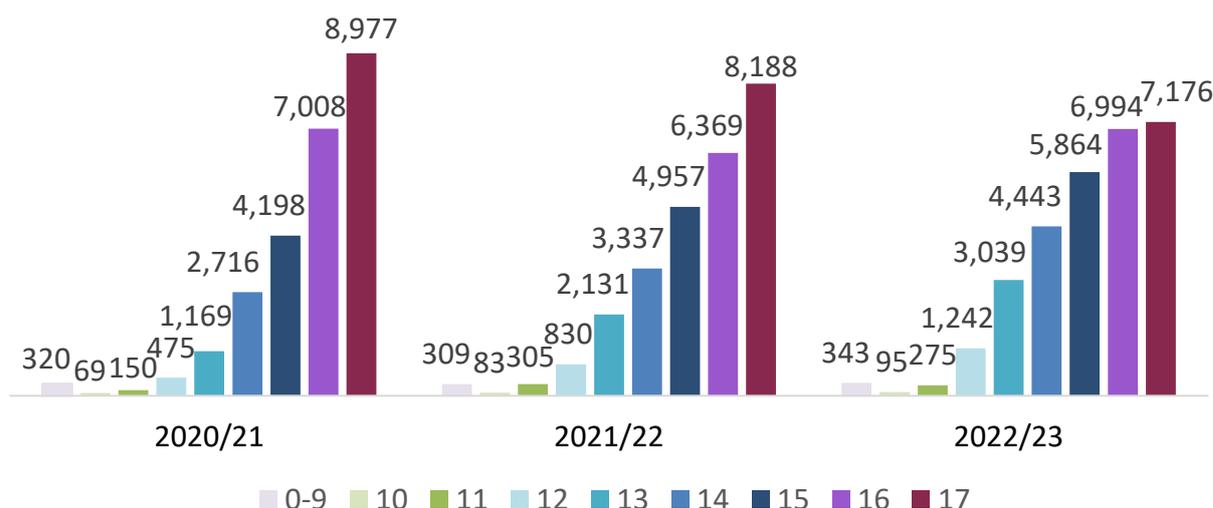
³⁰ Missing People, [written evidence](#), February 2023

³¹ A Return Home Interview is conducted by an agency independent of the Met within 72 hours of a child’s return. It aims to uncover information to protect the child from the risk of going missing again. It is the statutory responsibility of the local authority to ensure each child receives a Return Home Interview, but they are often delivered by a voluntary sector partner.

³² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.1

incidents, followed by those aged 16 and 15 respectively.³³ In 2022-23, 68 per cent of missing child incidents related to children 15-17; and only 2.4 per cent related to children aged 11 and under.³⁴ However, Sarah Parker told the Committee that “the average age of children going missing in our services is just slowly decreasing” and that younger children are being increasingly affected by exploitation.³⁵

Missing children in London, incidents by year and age



Source: data provided to the Committee by the Met³⁶

There were slightly more incidents of boys going missing in London compared to girls. In 2022-23, boys accounted for 14,655 of missing child incidents, and girls accounted for 14,581 incidents. There were also 200 incidents related to transgender children.³⁷

Black children are overrepresented amongst children who go missing in London compared to the proportion of Black children in the population. In 2022-23 there were more missing incidents related to Black children (12,618, 43 per cent of the total) than White children (10,891, 37 per cent of the total), despite Black children making up only 17 per cent of the child population of London.^{38, 39} In every financial year since 2016-17, Black children have consistently accounted for the highest number of missing incidents compared to other ethnic groups.⁴⁰

The Committee heard evidence to suggest there may be several contributing factors to the overrepresentation of Black children in missing cases. Susannah Drury said the higher

³³ Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See here.](#)

³⁴ Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See here.](#)

³⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

³⁶ Graph includes only three years of data for display purposes. Please see full data here.

³⁷ Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See here.](#)

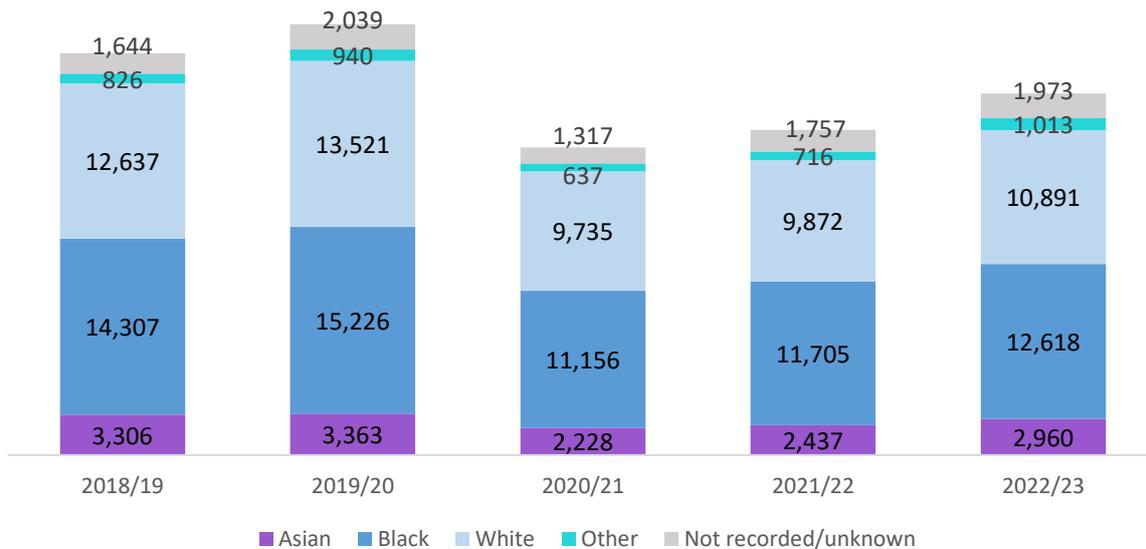
³⁸ Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See here.](#)

³⁹ [Data combining multiple variables, England and Wales: Census 2021](#), Ethnic group by age and sex

⁴⁰ Data provided by the Met to the Committee. [See here.](#)

proportion of school exclusions amongst Black children may be placing them at greater risk of exploitation.⁴¹ A Peer Outreach Worker said that Black children are disproportionately exposed to poverty, and are therefore more likely to be exposed to risks that could cause them to go missing.

Missing children in London, incidents by year and ethnicity



Source: data provided to the Committee by the Met.

The Committee was also concerned to hear from a Peer Outreach Worker that Black children are less likely to reach out for support as they don’t believe they will be taken seriously by services. Another Peer Outreach Worker said that the adultification of Black children, especially girls, means that some Black children are not always seen to be in need of protection in the way that non-Black children are.

“I think that the real big issue when it comes to race and racism is that a lot of people in the world, in life, don’t see Black people as human beings. So, because they don’t see Black people as human beings, it’s OK to do all of these things and get away with it. And then the system helps them by not persecuting and, when we do ask for help, not taking us seriously because, to them, our voice doesn’t matter.”

Peer Outreach Worker

Recommendation 2: By December 2023, MOPAC should conduct research to understand the overrepresentation of Black children in reported missing-children figures. The review should inform targeted interventions to reduce the number of Black children going missing.

⁴¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

Chapter two: preventing children from going missing

City-wide safeguarding

On 9 June 2022, the London Assembly agreed a motion that the Mayor and MOPAC should implement a vision-zero strategy for missing children.⁴² In response to the motion, the Mayor said: “We should have aspirations of zero children going missing, just like we have an aspiration for zero homicides as well and I am really keen to work with partners to make sure we can fulfil that aspiration”.⁴³

The Committee heard different views on the value of a vision zero strategy for missing children. Sherry Peck, Safer London, told the Committee: “I endorse the fact that we should all be aspiring that no child goes missing [...] although I realise we have a very long road to travel”.⁴⁴ Susannah Drury said that while she supported the aspiration for zero missing children, it was also important to recognise that: “Sometimes going missing is the right response from a child because they are in danger in the situation they are in and going missing can actually make them safer”. She warned that any target or ambition towards zero missing children needs to take this into account.⁴⁵

The varied reasons children go missing means efforts to prevent missing children must be wide-ranging. Sherry Peck said the “biggest protective factor” from risks of a child going missing was in the family.⁴⁶ She said there was a need for greater investment in services to support families as a preventative measure. Beverley Hendricks told the Committee that prevention for missing children: “must start pre-birth with parents, and our parenting programmes across the local authorities really need to not be shy about putting these types of risk prevention conversations in the parenting programmes”.⁴⁷

The Committee was told by a Peer Outreach Worker: “Going missing is usually a result of frustration, hopelessness, desperation, fear, anger, a feeling of being left out or not being worthy, or a mixture of these thoughts felt by the child”.

The Committee was also told by a Peer Outreach Worker that children often go missing because they do not have a support system around them to help them when they are struggling.

⁴² London Assembly, [Missing children motion](#), 9 June 2022

⁴³ MQT, [Missing Children](#), 6 July 2022

⁴⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.24

⁴⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.26

⁴⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

⁴⁷ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

"Young people and children do go missing because they do not have the sufficient support systems around them [...] In cases where children go missing, obviously the structures are failing to support the young person and that speaks to the fact that young people and children are not being listened to as much as they should."

Peer Outreach Worker

Another Peer Outreach Worker said it was important to consider all aspects of a child's life when preventing children from going missing; and that a child needed peace and security, both within and outside the home, to manage the pressures they may be facing.

Will Balakrishnan, Sarah Parker and Sherry Peck told the Committee that services should take a contextual safeguarding approach to children at risk of going missing.⁴⁸ Developed by Professor Carlene Firmin, contextual safeguarding aims to support practitioners to identify the full range of social influences, risks and pressures children face in their daily lives. The approach advocates for professionals to target a child's social conditions in the round; and use effective partnerships between children's services, young people, parents, wider communities and agencies to reduce the level of harm children are exposed to.⁴⁹

In written evidence, Catch22, the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership and the London Safeguarding Children Partnership supported the need for services to take a contextual safeguarding approach.⁵⁰ A Peer Outreach Worker said a contextual safeguarding approach should be embedded across all sectors that children have contact with.

"Safeguarding is everyone's business and, the vulnerable people that exist in our community, we have a right and a power to look out for them and be there for them. So I think a measure that could be in place across health, education and all the different sectors that a young person has access to should be having more than one approach and a contextual safeguarding one would be fantastic to understand a young person's life holistically."

Peer Outreach Worker

A Peer Outreach Worker suggested there should be more places in London for children to go when they are in trouble, where they can receive support or just spend time in a safe space.

"When you go missing, that's a massive thing, so how do we create safe havens where children feel that they can be safe and supported in a way which isn't directly like, 'What are your problems? Why did you go missing? Where did you go?', all of these interrogations, but rather, 'Would you like to have a meal? Here are some toiletries. Here is some self-care. Let us watch a movie,' or something like that, somewhere where young people can go without it having to be so hostile."

⁴⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

⁴⁹ NSPCC Learning, [Contextual safeguarding: what is it and why does it matter?](#), 21 October 2019

⁵⁰ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

Peer Outreach Worker

Citizens UK previously ran a CitySafe scheme, which encouraged organisations and businesses to become safe havens for anyone who felt at risk, threatened or in danger. Many organisations registered as safe havens under the scheme, including the former City Hall. Several London boroughs now run their own safe haven schemes. Rebecca Palmer, Senior Children and Young People Participation Officer at the GLA, said that the current City Hall should be made into a safe haven to provide a place of safety for children who feel at risk.

Recommendation 3: The Mayor should explore the opportunity to declare City Hall a safe haven for all children who feel at risk, threatened or in danger.

Prevention in schools

The Committee received evidence that stressed the importance of schools in preventing missing children. Beverley Hendricks said London boroughs understand the critical importance of schools to protect vulnerable children, and Sarah Parker told the Committee that prevention and early intervention work in schools should be prioritised.⁵¹ Ten respondents to the call for evidence discussed the importance of schools in preventing children from going missing.

The Committee heard examples of excellent support offered by teachers and school staff to children at risk of going missing. A Peer Outreach Worker told the Committee that it was important for schools to focus not just on education but also on providing a supportive and safe environment for young people.

One Peer Outreach Worker said they had truanted a lot from school, but were well supported by teachers when they returned to school and were able to complete their education. Another Peer Outreach Worker said “fantastic practitioners” in schools can help protect children from harm.

“I’m sure we can all remember a teacher in school whom we really loved, who really did their job very well and who changed our lives for today just in the way how they saw and the way how they looked after us in school. We need more people like that in these positions because they really are like gold dust. They can really prevent thousands of children going missing.”

Peer Outreach Worker

They also said each school should have a good pastoral team staffed by people children feel comfortable approaching and that it was important for schools to employ Black teachers, and teachers from the area, so children and young people can have confidence that teachers understand the challenges they are facing.

⁵¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

“Why are there barely any Black teachers in school or teachers of different ethnicities? I do not understand why when we live in one of the most diverse places ever, London. I feel that really will help simply because it’s somebody children can relate to.”

Peer Outreach Worker

The Committee heard differing views on the roles of the Met’s Safer Schools Officers in safeguarding children at risk of going missing. Safer Schools Officers are police officers located in secondary schools. Each school in London is offered a Safer Schools Officer whose role is agreed with the local borough and school leadership.

At the end of September 2022, there were 373 Safer Schools Officers across the Met, primarily supporting secondary schools.⁵² The Runnymede Trust, a race equality think tank, has recommended that all police services should withdraw Safer Schools Officers as they are failing to support a safer school environment, particularly for Black and ethnic minority children.⁵³ MOPAC has said that 91 per cent of Londoners support the use of Safer School Officers, but recognises that support falls to 87 per cent amongst Black respondents.⁵⁴

There were mixed views among Peer Outreach Workers in relation to Safer Schools Officers, although one Peer Outreach Worker said that they had had an excellent relationship with the officer in their school:

“I had a police officer in my secondary school [...] He not only had a safeguarding role but he was a person. He was a human. He was someone you could talk to and, if you didn’t have anyone at the home or have anyone in the community, I knew that I could go to him. So I know that that’s very positive and I’m very grateful and lucky to have had that and I know a lot of young people don’t.”

Peer Outreach Worker

However, another Peer Outreach Worker told the Committee that the officer in their school was shared across three schools and was rarely seen.

The Committee similarly received mixed views among respondents to the written call for evidence. The London Safeguarding Children Partnership, the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Hammersmith and Fulham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership all said that Safer Schools Officers needed to work more closely with other partners, including multi-agency missing-children forums and youth offending services.⁵⁵

⁵² MQT, [Safer Schools Officers](#), 16 November 2022

⁵³ Runnymede Trust, [Over-policed and under-protected: the road to Safer Schools](#), January 2023

⁵⁴ MOPAC, [Mayor’s Action Plan for Improving Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing update](#), June 2022

⁵⁵ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

The Committee is concerned that the provision of Safer Schools Officers is inconsistent across London and they do not always work effectively with partners to safeguard children at risk of going missing. In February 2023, the Committee discussed Safer Schools Officers with the Met and MOPAC.⁵⁶ The Committee was told that the Met has prepared a report reviewing the role of Safer Schools Officers, and MOPAC is currently considering the recommendations. As part of this ongoing review, MOPAC should ensure that Safer Schools Officers are equipped to respond to children at risk of going missing.

Recommendation 4: As part of its review into Safer Schools Officers, MOPAC should assess whether all Safer Schools Officers are fully trained to recognise risk factors for missing children; and are able to deliver an effective safeguarding response to at-risk children in partnership with children’s services.

Trafficked and unaccompanied children

In 2018, Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT) UK (a children’s rights organisation working to protect children from trafficking and transnational exploitation) and Missing People reported that trafficked and unaccompanied⁵⁷ children are 30 times more likely to go missing than other children their age. It also reported that trafficked and unaccompanied children went missing from care on average seven times.⁵⁸

In January 2023, the Home Office confirmed that over 4,600 unaccompanied children have been accommodated in hotels since July 2021. During that time there had been 440 missing episodes, and 200 children were still recorded as missing.⁵⁹ According to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, the Home Office has used six hotels to accommodate unaccompanied asylum-seeking children since July 2021, including one in London.⁶⁰

Sarah Parker told the Committee that “it is completely inappropriate that any unaccompanied child should be placed in hotel accommodation” and that doing so made them more vulnerable to exploitation.⁶¹ Both Barnardo’s and The Children’s Society said, in written evidence, that not enough is being done to protect unaccompanied asylum-seeker children from exploitation.⁶²

⁵⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 22 February 2023

⁵⁷ Child trafficking is defined in the United Nations Palermo Protocol as the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt” of a child for the purpose of exploitation. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines an unaccompanied child as a “child who has been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so” (see: ECPAT, [definitions](#)).

⁵⁸ ECPAT, [Still in Harm’s way](#), December 2018, p.5

⁵⁹ Hansard – Lord’s debate, [Children seeking asylum: safeguarding](#), 23 January 2023

⁶⁰ Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, [An inspection of the use of hotels for housing unaccompanied asylum-seeking children – March-May 2022](#), October 2022

⁶¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

⁶² [Written evidence](#), February 2023

The Committee also heard that services faced specific challenges in preventing trafficked and unaccompanied children from going missing. Susannah Drury said traffickers tell children not to trust professionals when they arrive, making it harder for services to build rapport with children. She praised “independent child-trafficking guardians”, currently delivered by Barnardo’s in London, that “help build up that trust with a young person as soon as they arrive because we know often they go missing really quickly”. She also said it was important to make sure that young people get information in their own language when they arrive, “to explain to them what is going to happen to them and why, what support is available and what will happen if they access that support”.⁶³

Sherry Peck told the Committee that trafficked and unaccompanied children are fearful about what will happen to their immigration status at the point of transitioning into adulthood. She said this could be a trigger for young people to go missing or be exploited into criminal activity.⁶⁴

Recommendation 5: The Mayor, government and relevant partners should work to minimise the use of hotels to accommodate unaccompanied children seeking asylum, in a way that protects them from exploitation.

⁶³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

⁶⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

Chapter three: responding to children going missing

Reporting a child missing

A joint written response from Specialist Safeguarding Team Sutton and Jigsaw4u (voluntary-sector provider of Return Home Interviews in Sutton) said that “parents and foster carers have shared experiencing long wait times when they are calling to report their child missing”.⁶⁵ Sarah Parker told the Committee that some parents experience long waits on telephone lines to the Met when trying to report a child missing, but added that there had been recent improvements.⁶⁶

In written evidence, Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board also said there were long waits through 101 to report a child missing. It said that some parents faced language and translation difficulties when trying to report a child missing, and the Met needed to make missing-child reports easier for families in which English is not the first language.⁶⁷

The Committee also heard how low trust and confidence in the Met led to some parents and carers deciding not to report their child missing. Sherry Peck told the Committee: “For many people within London, the fact that parts of the Met have issues around misogyny and racism will impact on a community’s engagement with the police at all sorts of times”.⁶⁸ In written evidence, Catch22 said: “Anecdotally, some communities lack confidence in the police and are more likely to involve relatives and friends in the search for a missing child, especially if they have concerns that their child will get into trouble”.⁶⁹

A Peer Outreach Worker said that low levels of trust in the Met amongst certain communities made some people less likely to report a missing child.

“If there are certain communities that do not feel trusted or do not feel trust associated with the police, does that make it more or less likely that – if a child goes missing, how quickly are the parents likely to report them to the police, which then has a direct impact on the likelihood that the child is able to be found.”

Peer Outreach Worker

The Committee was also told by a Peer Outreach Worker that there was a “recurring cycle” between some people “not trusting the police, and police not showing that they can be trusted”. They suggested that the Met could demonstrate to people that it can be trusted by

⁶⁵ London Borough of Sutton and Jigsaw4u, [written evidence](#), February 2023

⁶⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.28

⁶⁷ Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board, [written evidence](#), February 2023

⁶⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.27

⁶⁹ Catch22, [written evidence](#), February 2023

responding in an appropriate way to each child that goes missing and ensuring “that every case has that equal reaction and is dealt with dignity and care and respect”.

In written evidence, Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board said parents often do not feel listened to when reporting a child missing:

“Parents report that they do not feel listened to and are regularly told, if they have had contact with their child, they are not missing. We know that having contact with a child does not mean it is known where they are or that they are safe. We know that children who are missing and being exploited are likely to be told what to say and do by someone they are missing with.”

Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board

In November 2020, the Mayor published his Action Plan to improve trust and confidence in the Met, and to address community concerns about disproportionality in the use of certain police powers affecting Black Londoners.⁷⁰ The plan highlighted the safeguarding of Black children, and that Black parents were worried about protecting their children from both crime and the Met. However, the plan does not address specific concerns over how a lack of trust might reduce the number of missing child reports made, or the impact this has on the response received by different children who go missing.

Recommendation 6: By December 2023, MOPAC should conduct a review of the experiences of parents, carers and staff in reporting children missing in London. The results of this review should be used to shape a joint MOPAC-Met strategy to improve the process for reporting missing children, including how it will upskill 999 and 101 call handlers to provide appropriate and accurate advice.

The Met’s response to a missing child

Susannah Drury told the Committee that the Met’s response to missing children is “perhaps harder than any other force because of the scale and because of the number of partners that they have to liaise with”.⁷¹ The Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership said that the Met had insufficient resource to develop an effective partnership response to missing children.⁷²

In September 2021, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its findings from its 2021 assessment of the progress made by the Met against recommendations and findings from its 2016, 2017 and 2018 child protection inspections.⁷³ While it found some improvements had been made, it also highlighted continued challenges, including in relation to the investigative response to missing children.

⁷⁰ Mayor of London, [Action Plan: Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing](#), November 2020

⁷¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.29

⁷² [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁷³ HMICFRS, [National Child Protection Inspection – assessment of progress: Metropolitan Police Service 11 January–12 February 2021](#), September 2021

In her 2023 review into standards of behaviour and culture of the Met, Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB said the Met “has not listened and it has not learned” to HMICFRS in relation to child protection. She said, “Six years on, the force themselves know they are still not gripping child protection”.⁷⁴

In written evidence, the London Children Safeguarding Partnership said some BCUs had improved how they work with partners to safeguard missing children. It also said (as did Bromley Healthcare and Barnardo’s) that the Met had improved its attendance and engagement with multi-agency meetings to discuss high-risk young people. Hackney Children and Families Service said daily meetings between police leads for missing children and children’s social care were working well in Hackney.⁷⁵

However, several respondents to the written call for evidence said the police needed to increase its attendance at multi-agency meetings to support missing children.⁷⁶ The Children’s Society said officers fail to confirm attendance for strategy meetings, and don’t always turn up. The London Safeguarding Children Partnership summarised the challenges reported by safeguarding partnerships across London:⁷⁷

“There are ongoing issues with lack of attendance of police officers at strategy meetings which hinders developing a multi-agency approach to missing children in a local area [...] There appears to be a lack of staff and a regular change of staff which means keeping up to date and maintaining regular communication is a challenge. This can lead to inconsistent responses across missing police teams. As a statutory safeguarding partner it is vital that there is a police presence at every missing child strategy meeting.”

The London Safeguarding Children Partnership

In addition, Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board said police officers had attended missing strategy meetings less frequently since the creation of the North East BCU. It said this had resulted in “meetings being cancelled, and at times not being convened because of the lack of confidence with police attendance”.⁷⁸

The Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership said police officers do not have sufficient capacity to commit to strategy meetings. The Committee recognises that resource constraints are likely to be impacting attendance at multi-agency meetings, including causing short-notice cancellations and no-shows. However, the Committee thinks such meetings should be prioritised. They offer an important opportunity to address underlying

⁷⁴ Met, [Baroness Casey review final report](#), 21 March 2023, p.140

⁷⁵ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁷⁶ [Written evidence](#), February 2023; The Children’s Society, Bexley Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People, Hammersmith and Fulham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership, Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Partnership, Specialist Safeguarding Team Sutton and Jigsaw4u, London Children Safeguarding Partnership, Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership and Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership.

⁷⁷ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁷⁸ Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board, [written evidence](#), February 2023

drivers of missing incidents and to prevent future incidents, potentially reducing police resource demands further down the line.

Recommendation 7: The Met should attend all multi-agency strategy meetings for children who are missing or at risk of missing, or who have a history of missing incidents.

Susannah Drury told the Committee that some families “feel that not much is done to find the missing person in those first 48 hours”. She suggested this was partly a problem with how the Met communicated to families.⁷⁹

“They [parents] are, obviously, wracked with worry and concern about a missing loved one and sometimes it can be really challenging to find out what is happening from the police [...] Sometimes that family member might have new information that they cannot pass on or just need an update and reassurance even if there is no update to give, but just to know that there is still a focus on finding that missing child.”

Susannah Drury, Missing People

Sherry Peck said “the simple act of contacting the police officer that you are trying to work with due to shift patterns and sometimes lack of mobile phone numbers” could be difficult. She also highlighted challenges related to staffing including “a reduced number of officers”, officers being “desperately overstretched” and the “turnover of young, inexperienced officers”.⁸⁰ Sarah Parker said each area of the Met works differently in response to missing children, and that “achieving consistency of practice across such a large and complex organisation is really difficult”.⁸¹

The London Children Safeguarding Partnership said the Met “work[s] well with local authorities on missing children on the whole” but that “health and education services do not regularly receive information on missing children, which needs to be reviewed as they are key safeguarding partners who can help prevent children going missing”. It also said, as did the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, that the Met could do more to collaborate with other external partners, including charities.⁸²

Susannah Drury told the Committee that Missing People offers a range of free services to help the police find and safeguard missing children. This includes providing support to a family and a “text-safe service” which lets a missing child know they can contact Missing People for independent and confidential support “because often children are not ready to be back in touch with the family and not ready to reach out to the police but will reach out to a third-sector agency”.⁸³ A police officer needs to request a text-safe message, but

⁷⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.27

⁸⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.27

⁸¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.28

⁸² [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁸³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.25

Susannah Drury said currently only 10 per cent of missing children in London receive a text-safe message.

Recommendation 8: By December 2023, MOPAC should develop comprehensive guidance on how BCUs can work with voluntary sector services to enhance responses to missing children, including more active use of the text-safe service.

Assessing risk of missing children

The Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership said the Met can refuse to open missing reports, sometimes on an incorrect assumption that the child was not at risk. It gave several examples, including:⁸⁴

- care placements reporting a child missing, only for the 101 call handler to refuse to log a missing report and instead advise that the child is likely to be at an address included on their “grab pack”,⁸⁵ without requiring evidence that a child is indeed in a safe place
- 101 call handlers giving “dismissive” responses to staff, carers and parents when trying to report teenagers missing
- parents attempting to report teenagers missing, and being told by 101 call handlers that they should go out and look for their children or that they are not missing
- the Met failing to communicate to social workers and care placements that it has decided not to open a missing child case following a missing report being made.

Sarah Parker told the Committee, “There have been cases where we believe a child has clearly met the definition of missing, but the police still would not accept the report”. She said the police can refuse missing reports for children who frequently go missing, despite the fact that frequent missing incidents may be a sign of exploitation and grooming.⁸⁶

Hackney Children and Families Service said the Met has refused missing-children reports in cases where a child has said they are with friends, despite no checks being made to ensure that child is actually where they say they are.⁸⁷

Commander Kevin Southworth said he was not aware of the Met refusing missing-children reports. He said: “This concept of refusing a report of a missing child I need to look into more closely, perhaps with partners offline [...] in that I am not aware of that being a practice of ours. If we have a child reported to us as missing, we will report them as missing. We comply with the authorised professional practice of the National Police Chiefs’ Council [...] We do not treat a child who is simply absent from care as being anything other than a missing child”.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁸⁵ A grab pack is formally known as the Looked After Child Information Sharing form. It should contain relevant information to assist the Police in locating and returning the child. A copy of the form can be accessed [here](#).

⁸⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.29

⁸⁷ Hackney Children and Families Service, [written evidence](#), February 2023

⁸⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.29

The Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership said the Met should contact social workers when missing reports are made, regardless of whether the report results in a case being opened or not. It said without this intelligence, social workers may never know that a child has been reported missing, which makes it hard for them to ensure the child is safeguarded and to ensure care placements are suitable. It said this would also help the borough to better understand the prevalence of missing-children reports and which reports are most likely not to result in cases being opened.⁸⁹

Written evidence from the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board, the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership and the London Borough of Havering suggested that a rapid response from the Met was dependent on the child being deemed ‘high risk’. Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board said: “There is a view that police will only investigate missing cases that are deemed high risk. Some local officers have advised that for medium or low-risk cases, attempts to find these children won’t be made”.⁹⁰

Several respondents to the call for evidence said the Met’s assessment of risk differed to that of other agencies, meaning that children at risk of harm were not receiving a sufficient response from the Met to their missing incident. The London Safeguarding Children Partnership said: “Some partnerships are concerned that the threshold determined by the Met to achieve high risk status is higher than for local authorities and they are concerned that some children categorised as medium risk are not being supported as effectively as they should be”.⁹¹

The London Safeguarding Children Partnership said, “It would be helpful if the Met shared their scoring system for prioritisation of children with partners and developed a better shared understanding of the risk factors”. The Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership also said it would be useful for the Met to share its risk thresholds; and that it would help children’s services to challenge cases where they think a child is particularly vulnerable, but is not considered as such by the Met.⁹²

Recommendation 9: By December 2023, the Met should review how it assesses risk in missing child cases and how different thresholds trigger different police responses. This review should be conducted with London boroughs, care providers and relevant voluntary organisations, with the aim of producing a jointly agreed risk assessment that is made available to all relevant services.

⁸⁹ Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁹⁰ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁹¹ London Safeguarding Children Partnership, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁹² Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

Responding to victims of criminal exploitation

Susannah Drury told the Committee that an initial missing episode may be the first sign that a child is being exploited. She said the response to the first missing incident was therefore vital in preventing the exploitation from becoming further entrenched.⁹³

“The biggest challenge in preventing those young people going missing is that we know that they have been groomed incredibly deeply and over a long time. The draw, the pull of the exploiter is so strong because of the threat that they know that they and their family face [...] The most important thing is to see a first missing episode as perhaps the first sign of exploitation.”

Susannah Drury, Missing People

Commander Kevin Southworth told the Committee that the Met has stopped prosecuting children who have been victims of criminal exploitation into county lines work, unless there is evidence of “wilful criminality”. He said the Met now recognises children in county lines as being “vulnerable rather than criminals”; and seeks to divert children away from county lines work and into a safer lifestyle, without them being criminalised.⁹⁴

Since 2018, MOPAC has also funded efforts to safeguard young victims of criminal exploitation through the Rescue and Response service. Rescue and Response supports vulnerable young people up to the age of 25, who are victims of criminal exploitation, particularly related to county lines drug-distribution networks. Since its creation, Rescue and Response has engaged 454 young people. MOPAC reported that, after engaging with the project, young people experienced a 77 per cent reduction in missing episodes, amongst other positive outcomes.⁹⁵

Commander Kevin Southworth said Rescue and Response was “fundamental” in the move away from criminalising children involved in county lines. However, he said he has discussed with MOPAC about the need for the Met to increase its referrals into Rescue and Response.⁹⁶

The Committee agrees that children who are missing and victims of criminal exploitation must be seen first and foremost as victims. However, evidence received by the Committee suggests that this is not always happening in practice. Hackney Children and Families Service said there should be “greater clarity about safeguarding procedures when children are being classed as ‘wanted’ by police rather than ‘missing’”.⁹⁷ Similarly in written evidence, both Catch22 and the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership said there were

⁹³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.11

⁹⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.9

⁹⁵ MOPAC, [Rescue and response county lines project: supporting young Londoners affected by county lines exploitation](#), December 2021

⁹⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.4

⁹⁷ Hackney Children and Families Service, [written evidence](#), February 2023

cases where a missing child is also ‘wanted’ by the police as a suspect for a criminal offence, and the Met has closed the missing case. Catch22 said it was concerned this might have an impact on the resources deployed to locate the vulnerable child.⁹⁸

Recommendation 10: The Met should write to all London boroughs, children’s care services and relevant voluntary organisations to clarify its policies that inform safeguarding and operational responses to children who are both missing and wanted.

Improving responses to looked-after children

Evidence received by the Committee suggests some improvements have been made in the way the Met manages children who go missing from care settings.

The Philomena Protocol is a police-led scheme that asks carers to identify children and young people who are at risk of going missing; and to record vital information about them that can be used to help find them quickly and safely, and improve information-sharing between partner organisations.⁹⁹ It was rolled out to all BCUs in October 2020 and is designed to ensure a proportionate response to missing child incidents from all agencies. The Met has Philomena Protocol agreements in place with just under 400 care homes across London.¹⁰⁰ In July 2022, the Mayor said that the protocol had led to a “50 per cent reduction in missing incidents in some care placements and an average of a 29 per cent reduction across all targeted placements”.¹⁰¹

Commander Kevin Southworth said that the Philomena Protocol has helped the Met and carers to better manage children who frequently go missing, and to: “take a problem-solving approach and have a strategy meeting with other statutory partners and non-governmental organisations to see if we can divert that young person away from that frequent missing person behaviour”.¹⁰²

In addition, Commander Kevin Southworth, Will Balakrishnan and Beverley Hendricks all praised the impact of the Philomena Protocol in supporting better joint responses between the Met and care homes.¹⁰³

Will Balakrishnan told the Committee that the implementation of the Philomena Protocol was an example of “brilliant joint working”.¹⁰⁴ Beverley Hendricks also praised the Philomena Protocol: “Where we have seen it working, it works really well. It does not just

⁹⁸ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

⁹⁹ The Met, [MPS Missing Persons Process & Partnership: Local Policing & Children’s’ Care Home – Joint Responsibility Agreement](#)

¹⁰⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.15

¹⁰¹ MQT, [Missing Children](#), 6 July 2022

¹⁰² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.15

¹⁰³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

¹⁰⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.24

address the trigger assessments of the children who may be at risk in particular homes but also reinforces the confidence of the keyworkers and the way that they work with some of the most vulnerable children.”¹⁰⁵

In written evidence, Missing People also praised the Philomena Protocol. It said it helped to ensure children in care are not over-reported to the police and that unnecessary reports to the police can be harmful for relationships between children and carers. However, it also warned that the protocol could have unintended consequences if used in the wrong way.¹⁰⁶

“When the focus in their implementation is on reducing the number of care experienced child missing reports, rather than a child-centred response focused on risk and harm, then there is a clear risk of children falling through the safeguarding net, from under-reporting and under-recording of missing children.”

Missing People

The Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership also said in written evidence that the protocol can be used by the Met to push back on missing reports, which made multi-agency responses to missing children more difficult.

The Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership said this issue had become more acute since the Met stopped using the term “absent” for certain children who didn’t meet the risk threshold for being recorded as “missing”.¹⁰⁷ A record of an absent incident would have previously triggered a notification to children’s services. Now however, if a missing-child report is not accepted, or does not meet the threshold, no absent incident is recorded and no notification is made. The Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership said this has created a “gap in our intel”, since “if the social worker does not know that the placement tried to report them missing, they are not able to follow up and quality assure the placements follow up actions”.¹⁰⁸

Both Missing People and the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership recommended that the Met should review the implementation of the Philomena Protocol.¹⁰⁹ The Philomena Protocol provides an excellent example of how strong partnership working and data sharing can improve outcomes for children. However, the protocol should be subject to a review to ensure it is working as intended and to identify practical areas for further improvement.

¹⁰⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.17

¹⁰⁶ Missing People, [written evidence](#), February 2023

¹⁰⁷ Previously, if a child was reported missing the Met would either determine them as ‘missing’ (when the child’s whereabouts can’t be established and there is concern for their safety) or ‘absent’ (when the child is not at the place they are expected or required to be). According to Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership, the use of the term ‘absent’ is no longer used, and Children are recorded only as absent or missing. See more [here \(section 4\)](#).

¹⁰⁸ Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹⁰⁹ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

Recommendation 11: By December 2023, MOPAC and the Met should review the implementation of the Philomena Protocol to assess whether it is having its desired impact and whether any improvements can be made.

Working across boundaries

Many children in London are placed in care outside of their home area. Sarah Parker and Commander Kevin Southworth said this was partly due to the fact that high property prices in London meant a significant volume of care placements are in areas where property was cheaper.¹¹⁰

Commander Kevin Southworth said that moving children to a different local authority adds to “those diagnostic drivers behind which we see young people going missing from care settings because they have been displaced out of their area, detached from their friends”.¹¹¹ Barnardo’s said:¹¹²

“Children placed out of area can feel lonely and isolated and miss friends and family in their home community which can act as a significant push factor to run away. Out of area placements have grown significantly in recent years. The number of looked after children placed outside their home local authority increased by around 17,800 (28 per cent) between the years ending March 2010 and March 2020, rising from 23,000 (37 per cent of all placements) to 32,850 (41 per cent of all placements).”
Barnardo’s

The Committee received evidence that suggested the Met’s response to missing children who have been placed in care settings outside their home borough could be improved. Beverley Hendricks identified several challenges over how information about children at risk of going missing is shared by the police between different boroughs.¹¹³ The Children’s Society said information is not shared between BCUs when children are moved to a new area. Sarah Parker said there were challenges with police sharing data across police service boundaries.¹¹⁴ The London Borough of Tower Hamlets said missing-children protocols between BCUs are inconsistent – for example, whether police officers are expected to attend strategy meetings in cases where the child has returned.¹¹⁵

Commander Kevin Southworth said that the Met needed to work more closely with children’s services to improve coordination between BCUs when children are moved out of their own local authority area.¹¹⁶ In written evidence, the Hammersmith and Fulham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership said BCUs from both the home and destination areas

¹¹⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

¹¹¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.15

¹¹² Barnardo’s, [written evidence](#), February 2023

¹¹³ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.17

¹¹⁴ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.18

¹¹⁵ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹¹⁶ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.22

should maintain close working relationships. The London Safeguarding Children Partnership and Bromley Healthcare said police officers from both the home and placing BCUs should attend strategy meetings to ensure a joined-up understanding of the levels of risk and responsibilities.¹¹⁷

Recommendation 12: For children in care who are placed within London, but outside their home area, the Met should establish clear processes between the home BCU and the destination BCU, or neighbouring police service, to facilitate effective information exchange and joint attendance at strategy meetings; and to ensure that, in the event of any future missing incident, there is an effective joint response.

In written evidence, The Children’s Society, the Bexley Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People, and the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board all said there are additional challenges when a child is moved outside of London completely. Catch22 said there have been cases where a child has gone missing from one police service area and is suspected to be in another, but both police services have refused to lead the missing case.¹¹⁸

Sarah Parker told the Committee: “If a child goes missing across a local authority or a police service border, there are then issues about whose responsibility that child is and who picks that up”. She said there have been incidents where: “the local police force in the area from which the child went missing will not accept the missing report because they say, ‘They are now missing in another area,’ whereas the other area’s police force will not accept the report because they say, ‘The child is not one of our children but is from somewhere else’”.¹¹⁹

In written evidence, the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership, and Hackney Children and Families Service both said that social care teams find it hard to find contact details for missing-children’s teams in services outside of London. The Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership said there should be a clear phone and email list for missing units across the country.¹²⁰

Recommendation 13: The National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) should maintain a national directory of phone numbers and emails for missing-children’s teams in each police service across England and Wales. MOPAC should write to the NPCC to request this.

¹¹⁷ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹¹⁸ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹¹⁹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022

¹²⁰ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

Chapter four: supporting returning children

Police Prevention Interviews

The process for supporting a child who returns after going missing can be vital to prevent future missing incidents. The Met's London Child Exploitation Operating Protocol 2021 sets out two stages to the process: the Police Prevention Interview (formerly known as the Safe and Well Check); and the Return Home Interview, which is the statutory responsibility of the local authority responsible for the care of the child.¹²¹

The purpose of a Police Prevention Interview is to establish whether the child has come to harm whilst missing, and what can be done to prevent future missing incidents. The London Child Exploitation Operating Protocol states that the Met should conduct interviews within 24 hours from the time a child is located or returned home. Interviews can be conducted by speaking to the relevant care professional or the child on the phone or speaking to the child face-to-face. The outcome of the prevention interview is recorded on the Met's Merlin investigation report and automatically shared to the relevant local authorities.¹²²

In 2021, HMICFRS found that the preventative interviews conducted by the Met generally focused on "checking that the child has returned and establishing where they have been".¹²³ It said the Met "should also explore more widely any particular factors that led to the child going missing and any ongoing risk".¹²⁴ Hackney Children and Families Service said in written evidence that interviews consist of "formulaic questions leading to simple feedback" that were not useful to understand "why a child went missing and what might help them to not go missing in the future". The Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership said that a child "usually responds that they are fine as they are not prompted any further" and that the Met should be "more proactive to identify any signs of distress or injury".¹²⁵

In 2021, HMICFRS said the Met conducted the interviews over the phone, "which means officers can't see a child's demeanour or physical state".¹²⁶ In written evidence, Hackney Children and Families Service said too many Police Prevention Interviews are conducted over the phone; and the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership said they are conducted on the phone "more often than not". Specialist Safeguarding Team

¹²¹ The Met, [The London Child Exploitation Operating Protocol 2021](#), p.43

¹²² The Met, [The London Child Exploitation Operating Protocol 2021](#), p.44

¹²³ HMICFRS, [National Child Protection Inspection – assessment of progress: Metropolitan Police Service 11 January–12 February 2021](#), September 2021, p.7

¹²⁴ HMICFRS, [National Child Protection Inspection – assessment of progress: Metropolitan Police Service 11 January–12 February 2021](#), September 2021, p.7

¹²⁵ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹²⁶ HMICFRS, [National Child Protection Inspection – assessment of progress: Metropolitan Police Service 11 January–12 February 2021](#), September 2021

Sutton and Jigsaw4u said they are sometimes conducted with a parent or carer only, rather than the child themselves. The prevailing view across these responses was that Police Prevention Interviews are more effective when delivered face-to-face and directly with the child.¹²⁷

Commander Kevin Southworth suggested to the Committee that the Met was looking at the effectiveness of its Police Prevention Interviews: “I do not think we have empirical evidence to say how successful it has been [...] Part of the work I think we will be doing with Evidence and Insight going forward, and internally looking at our mechanisms, is to gather exactly that data and how we can prove it is actually working”.¹²⁸

In written evidence, Catch22 said the Met should review how Police Prevention Interviews are being delivered, including looking at the number of interviews conducted face-to-face versus by phone.¹²⁹

Recommendation 13: By December 2023, the Met should conduct a review of Police Prevention Interviews delivered in 2022-23, to include:

- the number of children who received an interview
- whether they were conducted face-to-face or over the phone
- whether they were conducted with the young person, or the parent or guardian
- whether a child willingly engaged
- whether a child made a significant disclosure
- the outcome of the interview.

The Met should share its findings with the Police and Crime Committee.

Respondents to the Committee’s call for evidence acknowledged the challenges for the Met in conducting Police Prevention Interviews. In written evidence, both Barnardo’s and the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership said children can be reluctant to engage in Police Prevention Interviews, especially when they have been victims of child criminal and/or sexual exploitation. Barnardo’s said child victims of exploitation “do not want to disclose details of where they have been, who they have been with, and what they were doing”. The Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership said victims of exploitation do not want to be known as a “snitch”.¹³⁰

The Children’s Society said children don’t want to speak to the police “as they haven’t got a trusted/positive relationship with them and may fear they’re in trouble for going missing, as opposed to viewing it as a safeguarding mechanism”.¹³¹ Despite these challenges, evidence

¹²⁷ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹²⁸ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.36

¹²⁹ Catch22, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹³⁰ [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹³¹ The Children’s Society, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

received by the Committee also suggested several improvements could be made to the delivery of prevention interviews to maximise the likelihood of a child engaging.¹³²

- The Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership and Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership said officers delivering Police Prevention Interviews should be in plain clothes rather than in uniform.
- Hackney Children and Families Service said a consistent officer should conduct interviews for children with repeated missing episodes, so a relationship can form between officers and a child over time.
- The London Borough of Tower Hamlets said officers conducting Police Prevention Interviews needed to be more joined-up with social care professionals, so they are better able to identify the underlying causes of the missing episode.
- The London Safeguarding Children Partnership said all interviews with missing children should be delivered by specialist and skilled officers.
- The London Safeguarding Children Partnership also said that the Met should consider conducting the interviews jointly with social workers where it would be helpful to the young person involved.

Recommendation 14: By December 2023, the Met should establish standardised principles for effective delivery of Police Prevention Interviews. This should include:

- **specialist, trained officers in plain clothes to conduct each interview**
- **a child who goes missing on multiple occasions to receive an interview with the same officer, wherever possible**
- **interviews conducted alongside a child’s social worker/support worker where appropriate**
- **improved sharing of information with borough safeguarding teams and social care partners.**

Return Home Interviews

Following a Police Prevention Interview, statutory guidance states that all children who return from a missing episode should have access to a Return Home Interview.¹³³ These provide an “opportunity to uncover information that can help protect children from the risk of going missing again, from risks they may have been exposed to while missing or from risk factors in their home”.¹³⁴ The interview should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting.

It is the responsibility of London boroughs to offer Return Home Interviews, and they often partner with voluntary organisations to deliver them. Sarah Parker told the Committee that there are several delivery partners across London; and that there is neither “uniformity of practice” nor “a nationally recognised package or even a London-wide package of training” for Return Home Interviews.¹³⁵

¹³² [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹³³ DFE, [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care](#), January 2014

¹³⁴ DFE, [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care](#), January 2014, p.14

¹³⁵ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.39

In written evidence, the London Safeguarding Children Partnership said, “The quality of reports differs, possibly depending on the cooperation of young people and their families as well as the training and understanding of the officers involved”.¹³⁶ Catch22 said there needs to be more consistency in the delivery of Return Home Interviews and better understanding of effective delivery. Catch22 also said the term ‘interview’ was too “formal and heavy-duty”, and that the process was fundamentally about identifying what happened and how they can support the child to prevent it happening again.¹³⁷

Sarah Parker told the Committee that it is important that children who repeatedly go missing are offered Return Home Interviews with the same professional, in order to help build trust that can lead to significant disclosures.¹³⁸

“I would really advocate for the continuity of a worker working with a child. Sometimes then on the sixth Return Home Interview, they make a massive disclosure about exploitation that may have been going on for some time. They might talk about people/places and they might give really important police intelligence, but crucially that is the opportunity then at which the child can be safeguarded. It might look like some Return Home Interviews are not doing very much, but what they are doing is building relationship, building trust.”

Sarah Parker, Catch22

A Peer Outreach Worker told the Committee that when a child returns, it is necessary to gain an understanding of: “how that young person ended up in that situation and listening to their needs to make sure that they never have to go through that ever again, and also continuously checking up on them to see if they’re OK”.

Based on the evidence received by the Committee, existing processes do not appear to be achieving this.

Recommendation 15: In 2023, MOPAC should work with the Met, London boroughs and organisations involved in the delivery of Return Home Interviews in London to establish a standardised approach to this delivery, to ensure every returning child is guaranteed a consistent experience that is based on best practice.

Long-term support

Several respondents to the call for evidence stressed the importance of information from Police Prevention Interviews and Return Home Interviews being shared across relevant

¹³⁶ London Safeguarding Children Partnership, [written evidence](#), February 2023

¹³⁷ Catch22, [written evidence](#), February 2023

¹³⁸ GLA, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.40

agencies, to inform the delivery of long-term support for children to prevent future incidents of going missing.¹³⁹

Susannah Drury told the Committee that Return Home Interviews “can be a really incredible way of finding out that there is something seriously wrong in that child’s life” but are only useful if they lead to “follow-on support specifically for a returned child or referrals into other services that the child is then able to access”.¹⁴⁰ Sherry Peck said that Return Home Interviews should lead directly to the implementation of a support plan to prevent future incidents, but that this was not always happening due to a lack of resources in the system.¹⁴¹ Sarah Parker said it was “crucial” that information gathered through a Return Home Interview was acted upon.¹⁴²

In written evidence provided to the Committee, The Children’s Society said that when information is shared and not acted upon, it “reinforces the feeling that people don’t care and therefore may not help reduce further missing episodes”.¹⁴³ Missing People said children could further lose trust in services if they didn’t receive meaningful support on their return.¹⁴⁴

“Children often make significant disclosures following their return from being missing. If action is not taken following these disclosures children are likely to lose faith in the professionals around them, and may be less likely to share information in the future. The response at the point of return should be seen as of equal importance to the response while young people are missing.”

Missing People

A Peer Outreach Worker told the Committee that a returning child needs to have a relationship with a trusted person offering consistent support, who understands the reasons for them going missing.

“Having somebody there whom you see as a safe person is so important in making sure that it never happens again and so important in making sure that the person goes on to use this experience as a pivot to a better life, check-ins and really having a good understanding of why the person ended up going missing and listening to them and making sure that there are precautions in place.”

Peer Outreach Worker

¹³⁹ [Written evidence](#), February 2023: the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Hackney Children and Families Service referred to good examples of information from Return Home Interviews being used by police and social care teams effectively. London Safeguarding Children Partnership, Catch22, Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership, Specialist Safeguarding Team Sutton and Jigsaw4u and Missing People all highlighted challenges with how information is shared between Return Home Interview providers, London boroughs, social care teams and the Met.

¹⁴⁰ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.37

¹⁴¹ London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.37

¹⁴² London Assembly, [Police and Crime Committee – transcript](#), 29 September 2022, p.40

¹⁴³ The Children’s Society, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

¹⁴⁴ Missing People, [Written evidence](#), February 2023

The Committee was also told by a Peer Outreach Worker that there should be opportunities for returning children to engage in positive activities that don't focus on them as missing children, but that provide them with something interesting and fulfilling to engage with.

“When I returned home and back into education [...] out of the blue there was an opportunity for the Jack Petchey Speak Out competition and they were doing it on that day. I came into school feeling like I did not want to be there, but [...] I think it speaks to wider opportunities that young people have. If there is something that a young person can get engaged with without it centring on the fact that they have just gone missing, whilst developing their personal skills and care and stuff like that [...] could be a really great thing.”

Peer Outreach Worker

The Mayor's Police and Crime Plan states: “The Met will work with partners to increase even further the speed with which missing children and adults are located, taking account of an individual's specific circumstances and risks to shape the response and contributing to wider safeguarding planning for their longer-term safety”.¹⁴⁵

The Committee believes further focus must be placed by MOPAC on the final part of this commitment to ensure that returning children have access to support and services that can prevent repeat missing incidents and protect them from harm.

Recommendation 16: To fulfil commitments in the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan, MOPAC should fund projects designed to provide longer-term support for children who have returned from a missing incident.

¹⁴⁵ MOPAC, [Police and Crime Plan 2022-25](#), 24 March 2022

Committee activity

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee (formal meeting) – Wednesday 29 September 2022¹⁴⁶

- Commander Kevin Southworth, Head of Profession, Safeguarding, Metropolitan Police Service
- Will Balakrishnan, Director of Commissioning and Partnerships, MOPAC
- Susannah Drury, Director of Policy and Development, Missing People
- Sarah Parker, Research and Development Officer, Catch22; and Co-Chair, the English Coalition for Runaway Children
- Marc Stevens, Senior Service Manager, Catch22
- Beverley Hendricks, Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care, London Borough of Haringey
- Sherry Peck, Chief Executive, Safer London

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee (informal meeting) – Wednesday 8 February 2023¹⁴⁷

- Five Peer Outreach Workers, GLA
- Mark Mouna, Children and Young People Participation Co-ordinator, GLA
- Rebecca Palmer, Senior Children and Young People Participation Officer, GLA

Respondents to written call for evidence, February 2023¹⁴⁸

- Barnardo's
- Bexley Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People
- Bromley Healthcare
- Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Catch22
- Central London Community Healthcare Trust
- Hackney Children and Families Service
- Hammersmith and Fulham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership
- London Borough of Havering
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Missing People
- Specialist Safeguarding Team Sutton and Jigsaw4u (joint submission)
- The Children's Society
- Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board

¹⁴⁶ Meeting information and transcript can be found [here](#).

¹⁴⁷ No transcript of this meeting has been published, to protect the privacy of young people.

¹⁴⁸ [All written responses are published here](#).

Other formats and languages

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Greek

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Bu belgenin kendi dilinize çevrilmiş bir özetini okumak isterseniz, lütfen yukarıdaki telefon numarasını arayın, veya posta ya da e-posta adresi aracılığıyla bizimle temasa geçin.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਡਾਕ ਜਾਂ ਈਮੇਲ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Hindi

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज का सारांश अपनी भाषा में चाहिए तो उपर दिये हुए नंबर पर फोन करें या उपर दिये गये डाक पते या ई मेल पते पर हम से संपर्क करें।

Bengali

আপনি যদি এই দলিলের একটা সারাংশ নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে ফো করবেন অথবা উল্লেখিত ডাক ঠিকানায় বা ই-মেইল ঠিকানায় আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کا خلاصہ اپنی زبان میں درکار ہو تو، براہ کرم نمبر پر فون کریں یا مذکورہ بالا ڈاک کے پتے یا ای میل پتے پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

Arabic

الوصول على ملخص لهذا المستند بلغةك،
فجراء الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو الاتصال على
العنوان البريدي العادي أو عنوان البريدي
الالكتروني أعلاه.

Gujarati

જો તમારે આ દસ્તાવેજનો સાર તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતો હોય તો ઉપર આપેલ નંબર પર ફોન કરો અથવા ઉપર આપેલ ટપાલ અથવા ઈ-મેઈલ સરનામા પર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

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Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

CC: Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime; Diana Luchford, CEO, MOPAC

4 May 2023

Dear Sadiq

Resignation of the former Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis

I am writing to you regarding the Committee's investigation following Sir Thomas Winsor's review of the resignation of Dame Cressida Dick as Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.¹ This follows Committee meetings held with yourself and Sir Tom – the former HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary – on 16 November 2022 and 13 December 2022.

The Committee's investigation set out to consider the matters and actions in relation to Dame Cressida's resignation and the findings of Sir Tom's review. The Committee appreciated the time that you, and Sir Tom, took to attend the Committee's meetings and respond to Member's questions. In this letter I share the Committee's key findings.

The Committee believes that it is right that any allegations of inappropriate behaviour be dealt with under the GLA ethical standards regime for assessing complaints alleging a breach of the GLA's Code of Conduct for Elected Members. However, the Committee also believes that it was right and proper that you faced public scrutiny on the matter given the seriousness of the issues presented.

¹ Sir Thomas Winsor, [Special commission on the resignation of the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis](#), August 2022

We were concerned about the lack of engagement with the Winsor Review from the start of the process by both yourself and MOPAC and believe the report would have benefitted from your active engagement at an earlier stage, shaping the report rather than reacting to it.

We were also concerned to read about the role the Chief of Staff appeared to play on 10 February 2022 in trying to negotiate an exit for the former Met Commissioner. We are concerned that this may not have been in line with proper process.

In his report, Sir Tom put forward nine options and recommendations for reform. The Committee explored these at its meeting with you and Sir Tom on 13 December 2022.

Having carefully considered the options put forward in Sir Tom's report, the Committee believes "Option 5 – London Assembly" is the best option for reform presented. The Committee believes that this option strengthens local democracy. Requiring the approval of the London Assembly (elected by Londoners) in order for the holder of your office (also elected by Londoners) to begin the statutory removal procedure for a Met Commissioner makes sense and seems like a good check and balance. As Sir Tom highlighted, the London Assembly and the Committee "are well-established and, adequately informed and resourced, [and] can work well".²

Therefore, I as Committee Chair have written to the Home Secretary endorsing this recommendation (ENC).

The Committee also recognises the issues identified by Baroness Casey in her review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Met. Baroness Casey reported that: "The Met have in the past avoided scrutiny, holding MOPAC at arms-length, and not sharing information and data. MOPAC in turn have not been able to provide the strategic oversight function that the Met needs. Holding the Met to account has become more tactical. More robust and strategic oversight, based on support, challenge and mutual respect for their respective roles, is needed".³ This is a real concern. The Committee trusts that you will take swift action to address this.

The Committee agrees with Baroness Casey that "the system is not working as well as it should [...] and the system as a whole does not hold or deliver real consequences where failures persist. Better and more open accountability is needed to restore public trust".⁴

The Committee recognises the challenges that lie ahead to rebuild trust and confidence in the Met. The Committee would like to see MOPAC strengthen its oversight of policing in London and the role you play in holding the Met to account. The Committee urges you to use both Sir Tom's and Baroness Casey's reviews as an opportunity to reflect on how you carry out this function and, moving forward, support Sir Mark in his mission to turnaround the Met and deliver the change it urgently needs.

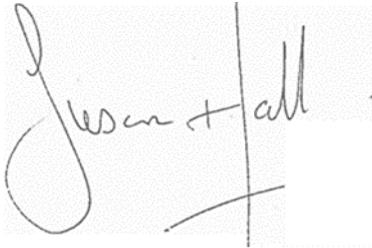
² Sir Thomas Winsor, [Special commission on the resignation of the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis](#), August 2022, p. 91

³ Baroness Casey of Blackstock, [An independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service – final report](#), March 2023, p.16

⁴ Baroness Casey of Blackstock, [An independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service – final report](#), March 2023, p. 217

The Committee trusts the information in this letter is helpful and looks forward to seeing you at future Police and Crime Committee meetings. Please do let Janette Roker, janette.roker@london.gov.uk, know if you would like to discuss in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

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LONDON ASSEMBLY



Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

The Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department

4 May 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

Sir Thomas Winsor's review of the resignation of Dame Cressida Dick as Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis

I am writing to you on behalf of the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee in relation to Sir Thomas Winsor's review of the resignation of Dame Cressida Dick as Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.¹ This follows Committee meetings held with the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan and Sir Tom – the former HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary – on 16 November 2022 and 13 December 2022.

The Committee's investigation set out to consider the matters and actions in relation to the resignation of Dame Cressida as set out in Sir Tom's review. The Committee also considered Sir Tom's conclusions on "the strengthening of accountability and due process in respect of the role, appointment and removal of the Commissioner" and "the terms of service established between the Commissioner and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, and the interplay between those terms and the appointment to the office of Commissioner by Royal Warrant and the tenure of the Commissioner at [His] Majesty's pleasure".²

¹ Sir Thomas Winsor, [Special commission on the resignation of the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis](#), August 2022

² Sir Thomas Winsor, [Special commission on the resignation of the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis](#), August 2022

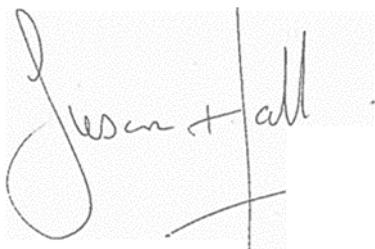
In his report, Sir Tom put forward nine options and recommendations for reform. The Committee explored these at its meeting with the Mayor and Sir Tom on 13 December 2022.

Having carefully considered the options put forward in Sir Tom’s report, the Committee believes “Option 5 – London Assembly” is the best option for reform presented. The Committee believes that this option strengthens local democracy. Requiring the approval of the London Assembly (elected by Londoners) in order for the Mayor (also elected by Londoners) to begin the statutory removal procedure for a Met Commissioner makes sense and seems like a good check and balance. As Sir Tom highlighted, the London Assembly and the Committee “are well-established and, adequately informed and resourced, [and] can work well”.³

The Committee looks forward to hearing your plans to reform, strengthen accountability and due process in respect of the role, appointment and removal of the Commissioner of the Met. We are ready to engage on these issues and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to any work on these plans, as appropriate.

The Committee trusts the information in this letter is helpful. Please do let Janette Roker, janette.roker@london.gov.uk, know if you would like to discuss in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Susan Hall AM
Chairman of the Police and Crime Committee

³ Sir Thomas Winsor, [Special commission on the resignation of the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis](#), August 2022

Subject: Responses to Committee Output

Report to:	Police and Crime Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat
Date:	24 May 2023
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the responses received to Police and Crime Committee outputs.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the responses to the Committee's report on Probation Services in London from the following:**
- (a) His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service, as attached at Appendix 1;**
 - (b) The Magistrates Association, as attached at Appendix 2; and**
 - (c) His Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service, as attached at Appendix 3.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Police and Crime Committee used its meetings on 22 June and 20 July 2022 to discuss probation services in London with invited guests. Following those meetings, the Committee prepared a report making the following recommendations:
- The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) should meet with the London Probation Service before the end of March 2023 to discuss how it can support a large-scale recruitment campaign for probation staff in London.

- The Mayor should work with the Regional Probation Director for London and regional representatives of Napo to deliver a proposal to His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) for the payment of either: (a) market forces supplements to all people working in roles within the London Probation Service that are subject to high vacancy levels or low retention rates; or (b) an uplift in London weighting for all roles within the London Probation Service.
- His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, the Magistrates Association and the London Probation Service should establish a joint mechanism to record and report on the quality of pre-sentence reports provided to sentencers in London Magistrates' Courts. This information should be used by the London Probation Service to drive improvements in the advice it provides to courts.
- MOPAC should update the London Blueprint for a Whole System Approach to Women in Contact with the Criminal Justice System to include substantive commitments on how statutory agencies will work together operationally to reduce haps between services.
- MOPAC should establish a London Blueprint for Black men and boys in contact with the criminal justice system, which brings together prisons, the London Probation Service and Black-led organisations to agree a set of actions to improve the support provided to Black men and boys under probation supervision.
- The London Probation Service should publish an annual review of its work to support the His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service Race Action Plan.
- Recognising the staffing crisis in probation, including the chronic shortage of resettlement staff, the London Probation Service should work with the London Prisons Group Director to empower key workers in prisons to make referrals to contracted probation providers prior to someone's release.
- The London Probation Service should work with prisons, MOPAC, local National Health Service providers and London Councils to establish improved referral pathways for prison leavers into community mental health services.
- MOPAC should work with the London Probation Service, the London Prison Group Director and London Councils to ensure all London boroughs make it possible for people to submit housing applications from prison, rather than only after release. This should include providing people in prison with better access to computers and telephones to contact London boroughs prior to release.
- MOPAC should work with the London Probation Service and London Councils to ensure all contracted providers of probation services are able to make referrals to local authorities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- MOPAC should coordinate a new joint protocol which will set out how to maximise the opportunities presented by Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 (CAS3) to secure long-term sustainable accommodation for people on probation. This work should involve: the successful CAS3 provider, the London Probation Service, the London Prisons Group, London Councils, all 32 London boroughs, the contracted provider of accommodation services to people on probation (currently St Mungo's), and G15 Housing Associations.

- The London Probation Service should work alongside MOPAC to lead a programme of engagement with probation staff, people on probation, and voluntary and community groups, to identify gaps and needs in each London borough. This should inform how the London Probation Service allocates grant funding through the Regional Outcomes and Innovation Fund, and future grant-making decisions.
- MOPAC and the London Probation Service should conduct a review of local voluntary and community sector services in London that work with people on probation. This joint mapping exercise should result in a London Services for People on Probation database. The London Probation Service should host and maintain this database, and make it available to all probation staff via its intranet.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The Committee has received the following responses from:
- His Majesty’s Prison & Probation Service, dated 17 March 2023, as attached at **Appendix 1**;
 - The Magistrates Association, dated 13 April 2023, as attached at **Appendix 2**; and
 - His Majesty’s Courts & Tribunals Service, dated 24 April 2023, as attached at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.2 The Committee is asked to note the responses received.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in the report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications to the Greater London Authority arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 – Correspondence from His Majesty’s Prison & Probation Service, dated 17 March 2023

Appendix 2 – Correspondence from the Magistrates Association, dated 13 April 2023

Appendix 3 – Correspondence from His Majesty’s Courts & Tribunals Service, dated 24 April 2023

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers:

None.

Contact Information

Contact Officer:	Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer
E-mail:	lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk

OFFICIAL



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Probation
Service



London

Susan Hall AM
Police and Crime Committee Chair
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London
E16 1ZE

Kilvinder Vigurs
Regional Probation Director, London
Mitre House
223 – 227 Borough High Street
London
SE1 1JD

Email: kilvinder.vigurs@justice.gov.uk

17 March 2023

Dear Susan,

Re: Probation Services in London Report by the London Assembly

Thank you for sending your report on Probation Services in London based on the evidence given by several parties and individuals, including myself in June 2022. It has taken a little longer to respond than expected, please accept my apologies.

It is encouraging to read your support for reunification and partnerships. We have a shared ambition to make London safer and reduce reoffending within our communities. As one of the most diverse cities, it is essential that we do that in partnership with third sector organisations reflective of our communities. To achieve this, I am pleased to say that we work closely with MOPAC, GLA and London Councils on a strategic level to achieve this in addition to organisations like Clinks, who have supported us in reaching out to smaller third sector organisations in boroughs.

Additionally, we recognise some of the challenges identified in the report, especially on recruitment and retention of staff and although we have made some positive strides in this area of work, we welcome further collaboration to improve our staffing.

You will, no doubt, be aware that since providing evidence to the committee we have published an action plan for London that targets several of the areas that your report identified.

[London Probation Service HMIP Action Plan December 2022.pdf](#)
(publishing.service.gov.uk)

Regarding the specific recommendations given in the report, I am able to give the following detail in response:

Recruitment and Retention: (Recommendations 1, 2, 7)

Since giving evidence, we have made considerable progress in these areas. We have welcomed a considerable number of new colleagues and value the breadth of skills and experience they have brought. We recognise that integration at such scale takes time and we have put in place training plans to support individuals and continue in our efforts to embed a shared culture, where we are open to learn and seek continuous improvement in everything we do.

We recognise that shortages of probation staff in pre-release teams in prisons and in the community have had an impact on the delivery of sentence management. The Ministry of Justice has supported us in national recruitment campaigns aimed at recruiting roles across the service, with some initiatives being focused on front line practitioners including Probation Service Officers and ongoing new intakes of Professional Qualification in Probation (PQUiPs). You may have recently heard some of the campaigns on the local radio. We anticipate that the overall staffing position will improve steadily.

National resettlement teams are working closely with colleagues in London to explore ways in which the current sentence management model can be made more flexible to ensure immediate release and resettlement needs are met. Whilst it is not the role of prison officers to refer individuals to contracted probation services, there may be scope to expand the group of staff who are able to make referrals for a limited period.

Where we have pre-release teams, they will continue to support prisoners with immediate resettlement and pre-release needs, making referrals to support services in custody (prison employment leads, DWP/Universal Credit, ID Banking/opening bank accounts) and supporting community probation practitioners where possible.

Members of my immediate team and I, work very closely with MOPAC. As a member of both the London Crime Reduction Board (chaired by the Mayor) and London Criminal Justice Board (chaired by the deputy Mayor), I am able to assure you that they have offered Probation support in our recruitment campaigns and promote the service. This is in addition to the Local Authorities and Health Service.

I discuss Probation performance and wider issues routinely when I meet with the Deputy Mayor, Sophie Linden and I will discuss any further opportunities, MOPAC may be able to support us with.

Prison Leavers (Recommendations 8, 9, 10,11)

Prison Strategic Housing Specialists (SHS) and a Probation Homelessness Prevention Team (HPT) are now in place in the London Region. They are implementing Resettlement Panels with the London Boroughs with the aim of identifying, at the earliest stage, individuals who are likely to be released from prison without accommodation.

The London Probation service is governed by the national HMPPS policy position which currently requires probation practitioners either in the community or in prisons to complete 'Duty to Refer' referrals under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. At this time of writing, the national Duty to Refer Policy Framework is actively being reviewed, which includes recent legal clarification that the duty can in principle be outsourced, although provision for this arrangement is not yet within the remit of the current Accommodation Commissioned Rehabilitative Service (CRS).

Female Offenders (Recommendation 4)

London Probation continues to work with regional partners MOPAC, NHS England and Lambeth Council who have co-commissioned a new Women's CRS, which went live on 1st December 2022. This is an innovative 'whole system' service, which draws together health, probation, and local authority service delivery, including service provision for 'unsentenced' women on remand. A key driver for this new partnership arrangement was to improve joined up delivery across different service pathways.

Ethnic Disparities: (Recommendations 5,6)

Diversity and Inclusion has been noted by HM Inspectorate of Probation as particular strengths in London Probation. Overall, the profile of London's probation staff is 52 per cent identifying as Black, Asian or minority ethnic. Our 'golden thread' campaign focuses on ensuring the quality and accuracy of data relating to the diversity of people on probation and supporting appropriate specialist services via commissioned contracts for those who are disproportionately represented.

London Probation was instrumental in influencing the development of the first national Probation Grants programme to provide specialist services to People on Probation from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is aligned with our strategic 'Golden Thread' campaign, which aims to enhance service delivery for minority and priority cohorts. As part of this London Probation has led strong market engagement activity with the elements of the London voluntary and community sector, including smaller and lived experience minority ethnic organisations who specialise in this specific cohort service delivery. Consequently, the London grant programme received a very healthy level of applications to provide new services to Black and other minority people on probation, however the programme is yet to complete.

An annual review of our work to support the HMPPS Race Action Plan will be presented to the Equalities Board by April 2023. Additionally, I am pleased to say that the profile of London's management and leadership teams demonstrates good representation of the communities they serve,

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector: (Recommendations 12, 13)

London Probation has engaged with a range of regional partners and staff to understand the needs of people on probation and to identify gaps in service delivery across London, this includes via local Community Safety Partnerships. We continue to refine our approach and welcome the contribution of regional and borough-based partners. The Regional Outcomes and Innovation Fund budget has yet to be finalised beyond the current financial year and therefore the extent of future grant-based opportunities is yet unknown.

London has an extensive network of VCSE providers who offer service delivery to people on probation and the wider criminal justice system. There are due diligence and data sharing issues linked with the 'promotion' of VCSE providers via an HMPPS platform, for example, completion of Data Protection Impact Assessments and development data sharing agreements to support referral pathways. London will continue to work with Clinks who provide us a gateway to third sector organisations.

Pre-Sentencing Reports (PSRs) (Recommendation 3)

We are working in partnership with all Criminal Justice agencies, through the London Criminal Justice Board, to focus on the reduction of backlogs of work in the Crown Courts. Our focus in this respect is on the reduction of adjournment times requested for the preparation of pre-sentence reports to enable improved delivery times for sentencing.

A review of our approach to PSRs is being completed by the HMPPS internal assurance function, which is independent of London Probation. The findings of this will inform our future plans to improve the quality of reports and timely performance. The HMPPS assurance team provides additional support to regions by providing audits for services delivered by Probation.

I hope that this response makes clear how seriously we take the issues identified in your report, and that work is ongoing to improve the outcomes for people on probation in London. I welcome the interest the London Assembly have shown on this important public service, and I look forward to working together to make London safer

Yours sincerely



Kilvinder Vigurs
Regional Probation Director, London



Magistrates Association

13 April 2023

Susan Hall AM
Chair, Police and Crime Committee
London Assembly

Dear Susan,

We were pleased to read the recent report of the committee, "*Probation Services in London*". It is a timely and impactful report, and we were grateful to have been invited to contribute our members' experiences and expertise to the report.

I write specifically regarding Recommendation 3, which asks criminal justice partners and the MA to work together to monitor the use and effectiveness of pre-sentence reports (PSRs). We welcome and support the aims of the recommendation - continuous monitoring and evaluation of PSRs in London can only serve to enhance their effectiveness.

However, we wish to point out that the MA does not itself have access to the high-level data needed to monitor the use of PSRs, and that this data is held by others.

We think that local leaders from HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) would be better suited to provide a data-led comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of PSRs and to lead on this recommendation. As a membership organisation, we do not have access to, or collect, any data on PSRs, and we are generally not involved with operational discussions within HMCTS.

We are always happy to continue to offer the insights and perspectives of magistrates, based on their experiences in court; with over 12,000 magistrate members, we are well-placed to do so.

Thank you again for inviting us to contribute to this important report. We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on future investigations that are relevant to our areas of expertise. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if we can be of further help.

With all best wishes,

Tom Franklin
Chief executive
Magistrates' Association

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HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Nick Goodwin
Chief Executive
HM Courts & Tribunals Service
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 102 Petty France
 London SW1H 9AJ

E Nick.Goodwin2@justice.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/moj

Susan Hall
 Chair of the Police and Crime Committee
 City Hall
 London
 SE1 2AA

Sent by email

24 April 2023

Dear Susan

Probation Services in London

Thank you for your letter of 20th January together with your committee's report, *Probation Services in London*. I believe that it was initially sent to the wrong email address – hence the delay in this response.

Although the report is most welcome, and relevant to the work of HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and our wider criminal justice partners, the recommendations in the report are largely beyond the scope of my remit as CEO of HMCTS. The exception is recommendation 3, which is directed to HMCTS and others. I set it out below for convenience.

His Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service, the Magistrates Association and the London Probation Service should establish a joint mechanism to record and report on the quality of pre-sentence reports provided to sentencers in London Magistrates' Courts. This information should be used by the London Probation Service to drive improvements in the advice it provides to courts.

As you would expect, HMCTS would be happy to support any mechanism by which the judiciary in the magistrates' courts provide feedback to the probation service on pre-sentence reports. The important pre-condition for this is judicial approval.

A pre-sentence report is written at the direction of the judiciary, and for the judiciary. The judiciary is independent of HMCTS which is why the implementation of this recommendation is not entirely in our gift. I note that the recommendation is also addressed to the Magistrates Association, and I have no doubt that the MA will be interested. However, the MA is an independent charity rather than a formal judicial governance group.

I would suggest that the first step would be for the probation service to obtain judicial approval, in principle, for the overall proposition. On the assumption that this is agreed, it is likely that the judiciary will want to have a substantial input into the development of the mechanism proposed, and ultimately judicial approval at a senior level will be required for whatever is agreed.

I know that the HMCTS Head of Crime and Head of Legal Operations for London works closely with the London Probation Service. I will ask Stephen McAllister, the Head of Legal Operations, to contact his colleagues in probation about facilitating the route to judicial engagement.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N Goodwin', with a stylized initial 'N'.

Nick Goodwin
Chief Executive, HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Subject: Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime – Strengthening Oversight of the Metropolitan Police Service

Report to:	Police and Crime Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat
Date:	24 May 2023
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report acts as a background paper to a discussion with invited guests on the work of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and its oversight of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to putting questions to invited guests and notes the subsequent discussion.**
- 2.2 **That the Committee delegates authority to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Mayor is responsible for holding the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis to account for policing in London. In this capacity, the Mayor is the Head of MOPAC. He has delegated his responsibilities to Sophie Linden, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.

- 3.2 MOPAC’s core remit is set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which states that MOPAC must “secure the maintenance of the metropolitan police force”, and “secure that the metropolitan police force is efficient and effective”. It also states that MOPAC must hold the Commissioner to account and issue a Police and Crime Plan. The current London Police and Crime Plan 2022-25 was published in March 2022.
- 3.3 MOPAC has no operational powers in respect of policing, such as decisions about specific investigations or police staffing. These remain the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. Its powers also do not extend further than policing, for example to prisons, offender management services or the courts. MOPAC does, however, seek to influence partners in those areas to meet the Mayor’s priorities.
- 3.4 MOPAC delivers its oversight function through the MOPAC-MPS Oversight Board. It also sits on His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Policing Performance Oversight Group; the MPS’s Turnaround Board; and is in the process of establishing a new Policing Board for London, to be chaired by the Mayor of London.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 This meeting will be used to discuss the effectiveness of MOPAC’s oversight of the MPS. Members will have an opportunity to assess how well MOPAC is delivering its oversight functions and how it is supporting the Met to implement reforms recommended by HMICFRS and Baroness Casey.
- 4.2 The Committee’s investigation aims to:
- Assess the effectiveness of MOPAC’s oversight of the MPS;
 - Examine MOPAC’s role in the implementation of Baroness Casey’s recommendations and the implementation of new governance structures; and
 - Examine how MOPAC is supporting the MPS’s progression through the HMICFRS Engage monitoring process.
- 4.3 The following guests have been invited to attend:
- Diana Luchford CB, Chief Executive Officer, MOPAC; and
 - Additional guests will be confirmed in due course.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications to the GLA arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers:

None

Contact Information

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Subject: Police and Crime Committee Work Programme

Report to:	Police and Crime Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat
Date:	24 May 2023
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out information regarding the Police and Crime Committee work programme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes its work programme, and its meeting dates agreed by the London Assembly at its Annual Meeting on 4 May 2023.**
- 2.2 **That the Committee notes the informal activity undertaken since its last meeting, namely a visit to the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Committee's work programme is intended to enable the Committee to effectively fulfil its roles of holding the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to account and investigating issues of importance to policing and crime reduction in London. The Committee's work involves a range of activities, including formal meetings with MOPAC, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and other stakeholders, site visits, written consultations and round table meetings.

- 3.2 The Committee will usually meet twice a month. One of the monthly meetings is usually to hold a question and answer (Q&A) session with the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. The MPS has also been invited to these meetings. The Committee will primarily use Q&A meetings to investigate topical issues and review MPS performance, including consideration of MOPAC's approach to holding the MPS to account.
- 3.3 The Committee's other monthly meeting is used to consider a particular topic or aspect of policing and crime in greater detail.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The work programme has been designed to proactively examine issues of interest but also allows for flexibility to respond to topical issues and for the Committee to react to MOPAC's work programme. Topics will be added to the timetable for Q&A meetings as they arise. The Committee may choose to use its thematic meeting slot for roundtables, briefings and site visits as well as formal committee meetings.
- 4.2 On 6 April 2023, the Committee visited the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre to receive an update on the MPS's work to prevent, deter and investigate terrorist related activity.
- 4.3 The Committee's 2023/24 meeting dates were formally approved by the London Assembly at its Annual Meeting on 4 May 2023.
- 4.4 The Committee's programme includes the meeting slots set out in the table below:

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
24 May 2023	MOPAC
7 June 2023	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
21 June 2023	To be determined
5 July 2023	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
19 July 2023	To be determined
6 September 2023	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
20 September 2023	To be determined
5 October 2023	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
31 October 2023	To be determined
8 November 2023	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
22 November 2023	To be determined

14 December 2023	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
10 January 2024	To be determined
24 January 2024	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
7 February 2024	To be determined
21 February 2024	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS
6 March 2024	To be determined
20 March 2024	Q&A with MOPAC and the MPS

4.5 The topics for the first few meetings were agreed by the former Chairman, following consultation with party Group Lead Members, so that scoping and research work could begin.

4.6 The future work programme meeting topics will be confirmed by the Committee in due course.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications to the GLA arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers:

None

Contact Information

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