

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.