

GLA Oversight Committee - Wednesday 12 July 2023**Transcript of Agenda Items 4 and 5 - GLA Workforce Report and GLA Workforce Report 2022-23**

Emma Best AM (Chairman): We now move on to items 4 and 5, a question and answer session with Greater London Authority (GLA) officers on the GLA Workforce Report and the findings from the Equal Group independent review into experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff.

We would like to welcome our guests. Here today we have Mary Harpley, Chief Officer for the GLA, Shakira Keddo, Assistant Director for People, GLA, and we have Tim Steer, who is the Executive Director for Housing and Land. I am going to take it as read that everybody has read the report and go straight into questions. Shakira, coming to you first, please, when did the People function first identify the workforce data reporting issues and what actions have you taken to address those issues?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We discovered those data issues as the transfer was occurring. The transfer took place to Transport for London (TfL) systems from October 2022, and from that time we discovered that there were various reporting issues, and that the data that was required to support us in producing the Workforce Report was calculated, in some ways, in different ways, in different kinds of calculations. From one system to another, we were trying to translate the data and to make the data consistent in the way it is presented.

From that, we realised that we should put in a way of understanding and interpreting data better in terms of industry standards, and we should look at the data on the SAP system in comparison to how TfL do that, and across the GLA family, so that we have some consistency in that space. Equally, we need to understand further and better our data, what the data is telling us, and how that is presented appropriately.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): You say this was discovered as it was happening. Why was it not something that was foreseen before that occurred?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We tried our best to mitigate this. Definitely, with my team and working with TfL, we knew the datasets that we required, and since we found out what was happening, we tried to put in some mitigation. We made the requests personally about the data required, the data needed for reporting, and we put in the mitigation to understand better what we require now. We knew the issue was happening and we recognised what we needed but, equally, as the transfer occurred, lots was happening in terms of our data. Now it is about rectifying it and making sure that we have the right data.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): You knew prior to the transfer there were going to be some issues with the data?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I did not know how many issues there would be. I did not know from the offset that there would definitely be issues with regards to the data, what I knew was that there might be, so we tried to mitigate that. As the transfer was happening, we realised that there were more issues with the data. I did not know at the time that there would be the level of issues that we have had but we were putting in mitigations anyway, just to try to make sure that there would

not be. As the transfer was happening, I then realised there were and put in mitigations to make sure that we had better data.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): OK. Do you want to delve into those mitigations a little bit more?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): There are performance meetings so that we make sure that we have all the information we need with TfL and to make sure that all the data we have is required. We have regular meetings with TfL around all the services, not just around data but around all the services and the performance around that. We are in regular dialogue all the time, we have a whole list of the data that is now required for reporting, and we are keeping up to date in a regular drumbeat with TfL to make sure that we get what we need from a GLA perspective.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. Mary [Harpley, Chief Officer, Greater London Authority], the Human Resources (HR) transition took place last year and the reporting period ended three months ago. Why are there still issues with the latest Workforce Report?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): There are a few issues. Most of the data that we need to present to you is here in this report; I think that is the first thing to make clear. Secondly, I think the reason that there are still issues is that the moment of transition was 30 October [2022], halfway through the financial year, so in this report we are drawing data for the first six months from the old system and data for the second six months through SAP. That is always going to present a challenge.

The other thing to recognise is that we made this move for a number of reasons, in the knowledge that we had a number of weaknesses in our previous arrangements and that included weaknesses in our data. As we have then asked our colleagues at TfL to provide the data for this report, they have also been flagging issues with the data that they are pulling from the first half of the year and the second half of the year. Shakira alluded to thinking again about some industry standards around data and that is also what we have done.

Yes, there is some data still missing; it is not very much. A huge amount of work has gone into getting this collated, as I said, from two different systems, one of which, the iTrent system, we knew was far from perfect, which was one of the reasons why we were moving.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thanks, Mary. The advice is to use different levels of caution in looking at certain elements of the data. Could that level of caution paint an inaccurate picture as we reflect on these figures today?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I have asked myself that question as we got ready to submit this report. I think that in all the core datasets that are complete here, we can be confident that they are right. I say that, Chairman, just because of the level of effort and care that I know has gone into the compilation of this data, with some real data experts both on the TfL side and we now have a new joiner in the People function dedicated to people data. He joined mid-April [2023] and he has been able to be a significant contributor to this. I am content that this is accurate data for me to use for the organisation, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) to use, and for you to scrutinise.

By the time we get to the next one, which will be for the first six months of this financial year [2023/24], we will need to have ironed out the remaining gaps. If, in doing that, we conclude that there are in fact changes we must make to this retrospectively, we will flag those to you in the six-monthly report. We will be very open and transparent about that, if that transpires.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): During that ironing out, do you think there are any historical comparisons that we will lose, that will not be able to be restored or fixed? Will we just be moving forward from this picture?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I do not know, you might need to ask Shakira that one.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): There is some historical data that we have used but I think moving forward we would like to use like for like, for the standards that we are trying to apply now. It is looking forward into the data that we have and the integrity of that data, moving forward to the new standards that we are trying to set.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): You do think there are some historical comparisons we will lose, and we will just move forward with the new datasets. OK. Assembly Member Fortune.

Peter Fortune AM: Thank you. We may have touched on some of these issues already but the cover note to the Workforce Report talks about the issues around capturing the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs). It says, "We have not been able to report with confidence the correct number of posts", and that is because there was a missing field in the FTEs. That is a pretty fundamental piece of data that we need. There has been some issue - and I think, Mary, you touched on this - with the iTrent system and converting that data over. With the nicest will in the world, it is a fundamental failing, so what has been done to address that? How are we confident that that and other issues have all been ironed out?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We do present you a figure in this report, even though we say that that field was not included in the original build. Again, a lot of data has been collected in a manual way to inform that figure. That is a figure that we believe to be right, based on a series of manual checks and based on our understanding, broadly, of how in this workforce headcount translates to FTE because of the part-time working we have and the rest of it. There are a number of calculations that we can use, plus data that we collected manually from Executive Directors and others, to inform what we believe to be an extremely accurate estimate. We could not not do that. Of course, the field is now instated.

Peter Fortune AM: That is the key element.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): That is the key.

Peter Fortune AM: OK. Thank you.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Assembly Member Pidgeon.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Obviously, hindsight is a wonderful thing, but did you consider any test runs with subsets of data or double running so that you could identify and fix any issues in advance of this big transfer?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I am probably best to answer that because Shakira came into some of this quite late. As you say, Assembly Member Pidgeon, hindsight is a wonderful thing. We certainly did not do any of that double running. Whether we considered it and decided not to, I do not know, but we did not do it.

Not to go over lots of old ground because I would like to look forward rather than backwards, as we know, there was huge breadth and depth to this transfer. We know it was about payroll, we know it was about recruitment, we know it was about casework and it was also about data. We knew already - and I have said this already today - that our data in the iTrent setup was far from fit for purpose. We were very clear that TfL have an infrastructure behind their data that, frankly, we could have only dreamt of before. A combination, I think, of that and us all being too busy on the other stuff meant that coming to the data and looking hard at some of those issues was left until at least after Christmas [2022], probably more like February [2023], by which time it was too late to do any parallel running.

Then we are in a position of pulling the data together. I was very clear with the team that I would want to present to you a Workforce Report that was very familiar to you. We did have a conversation about, "OK, maybe we can just do a new Workforce Report with new cuts of data", and I said, "Actually, coming out of transition, that is not going to be the right thing to do". Now, we might like a conversation with you all about what the Workforce Report might look like in the future because we think it could look different and some of you may think that too, but I thought that coming out of transition we needed to land a familiar-looking Workforce Report with as many of the historical links as possible. That proved something of a challenge.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: OK.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Assembly Member Sahota.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you. What have you done to standardise future reports so they are comparable, and what can we expect in the future? Your thoughts on that, please.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): A couple of sentences and then I will ask Shakira to carry on because at the moment, Assembly Member Sahota, we have not designed the next Workforce Report. We have had our time taken up producing this one. Also, I was anxious about suddenly presenting you with a brand-new report because I thought some of you might rightly say, "Well, hang on, Mary, where are my apples and apples to look at?" and the rest of it. That is the first thing.

The second thing is that we have this new colleague, who is a data analyst and a data specialist, who has now joined us in the People function, and frankly, many of the caveats are his because he is the data specialist. Either I am happy to take a recommendation from you all that Shakira and her team go away and present back to you a new-style report next meeting, or I am happy that Shakira and her team engage with you or some of you in the meantime to have a proper discussion about what type of data this Committee would like to see. I am anxious about suddenly presenting something that is not quite right for you all.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: From our point of view, standardisation and things that we can compare over the progress of time are important to us. Standardisation and agreement of that standardisation would be important, I think.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I will just add that I think there is something around what is it in terms of data that can be meaningful to us, to tell us a story about the health of the organisation from a people perspective. I would welcome a conversation with you all about that because there are different ways we can look at things and there are different types of data, qualitative and quantitative, that will tell us a story about where we are in terms of people and the organisation, which are beyond what we are presenting here in the Workforce Report. I would like a conversation to make sure that we

have some agreement in terms of what it is that you would like, what it is that we can get, and what can give us that indication through a report.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you very much.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. On that point, obviously it is not just what we want to see but I have asked the question of what the staff want to see. Is this report telling a story that they see in their day-to-day? With that in mind, we have asked staff to feed back into this before we draft our response and I think that part of it is very important.

Moving on to establishment, headcount and remuneration, Assembly Member Pidgeon.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you. Mary, do you anticipate the overall headcount to continue to grow? If so, what has the impact of that been on the estate and additional costs in accommodating more staff?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Headcount and establishment has been growing over the last few years, as we all know. The honest answer is - I am going to ask Tim [Steer Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority] to add in to this in a minute - that I do not know what is going to happen next, but the reason we have seen what looks like consistent growth over the last few years is largely new responsibilities asked of us by Government and the need to create posts funded by Government. We have had this conversation before; most of our growth in recent years has been externally funded. Quite a lot of that has been in Tim's area, through the Building Safety programme. Quite a lot of that has come through the Adult Education Budget programme as well. Housing and Land, and Communities and Skills in particular have seen significant growth. We do not often see it coming very far in advance, either.

As to what that will mean for our estate, we are managing at the moment with the footprint that we have. As you know, we keep a very close eye on occupancy. We have presented occupancy figures to this Committee before. I was in Union Street yesterday and Union Street was absolutely buzzing. I came across here to City Hall for the afternoon and City Hall was absolutely buzzing. At the moment, I feel that it is manageable and where we see pinch points, as a Corporate Management Team, we talk about how we smooth that week out again. If suddenly we were going to hire hundreds of extra people, that would be a different thing altogether. I do not think that is what we are looking at. We are looking at potentially a little bit of further incremental growth.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Just to finish before we bring Tim in, in any case, if it is a role coming from Government as you have described, the Government or whoever it is pay for the on-costs, am I correct?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): The costs are all paid by Government. Of course, remember, through some pressure from this Committee over a period of time we now have a significant overhead charge --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: "Overhead charge", that is the word.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): -- to cover estate costs, Information Technology (IT) costs and to contribute to the costs of other corporate services. From a cost point of view, we have removed the risk that we used to sit on there.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Tim, did you want to add anything on that or if you, in your area of work, which has been growing, anticipate any growth?

Tim Steer (Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): Absolutely, because Housing and Land is clearly one of those areas. I am just looking at the figures: 103 people in 2018, 216 in 2023; it is big growth. As Mary says, those are virtually all, if not all externally funded posts. Our core requirement in Housing and Land is very small and has remained consistent. Building Safety is a good example: we have one person three or four years ago, now it is 55 people. However, it is not just Building Safety, there are a number of other programmes where responsibilities, funding and headcount needs have grown: rough sleeping, specialist housing, infrastructure funding. It is across the board in many ways, which I feel we ought to see as a sign of a success in the fact that the GLA is being trusted to deliver these programmes on behalf of London.

In terms of looking forward, it is quite hard to predict. We are talking to Government at the moment about some potential changes to the Building Safety programme that may increase our level of decision-making. We have not made a decision on that but that might increase headcount by a further five or so in that team, but we will have to see where we get to in discussion with Government. There may be other incremental changes of that kind coming up but I would not have thought they would be the same kind of 'whole new team' situation that we had with Building Safety two or three years ago.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: There is nothing obvious on the horizon, then.

Tim Steer (Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): No.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Mary, do you have a breakdown of the anchor points, how many staff are anchored at the different buildings?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We could definitely provide one. We are clear which teams are anchored where and the anchor points people have, yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: It would be useful maybe to have that.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): That has not changed over time. That has stayed remarkably stable over the last 18 months.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Just looking in the detail of the report, there are 46 people now earning over £100,000 and 109 people earn more than £80,000. Does that feel the right number of staff at that sort of level? Have you done any benchmarking or will you consider that as part of next steps in the modernisation of - I do not know what you would call it - HR and the whole function, looking at the Civil Service and other devolved institutions to make sure that you have that balance right and it is not excessive?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): That is clearly right at the moment because it reflects posts at that level. When I see charts like that I am always thinking, "Who's that 46 then? Who's that?" That is quite easy to think through. As to benchmarking, I do not know if you want to come in on that, Shakira.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Our pay is benchmarked currently and we will continue to benchmark, particularly as we start to look at various professions and various

specialist skills. We do have to pay market rate for some of those roles and that attracts a certain level as well, particularly for what we are looking for. We continue to do that through my People Function in our pay and reward area, just to make sure that we are still an attractive organisation so that we can attract people. Are we paying the right salary for the skillset that we require? We do continue to do that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Do you benchmark with the Civil Service and others?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes, we do, and other public sector organisations.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes. I have to say, lots of people I know in the Home Office say, "Gosh, come work at the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), you get paid an awful lot more". There is obviously a perception we pay far better than others, whether that is reality.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: That does not include MOPAC, presumably? You are talking about the GLA.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): The GLA.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: MOPAC may be different. Maybe I should pick that up with them.

The Chief Officer Directorate has a much higher proportion of agency workers. What urgent, specific work are they working on at the moment, Mary?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): The Chief Officer's Directorate is essentially two teams. One is Shakira's team, the People Function, and we have the Executive Support Team that you might remember I put together a couple of years ago.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I remember it, yes.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): The People Function is by far the largest of the two. We have been running some agency staff in the Executive Support Team just to manage vacancies. The year that we are talking about (2022/2023), of course, has been the year that we have created the People Function and again we did speak to the Committee about this at the time. We staffed some of the roles in that function with agency and fixed-term staff initially, while we got the proper recruitment process underway. Do you want to say a little bit more about that?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes. As I brought in the People Function, we knew that while we were designing the function we still had to deliver. That meant that while I had the established posts, I had to then bring people into those spaces to be able to continue on with the delivery of the work, in order to at least deliver. Then, eventually, as we go through permanent recruitment, we put permanent people into those posts.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: OK. It was to help with the shift to this new function. Then in terms of agency staffing, Mary, to what extent do you think we have now reached the appropriate level for agency staffing? We have discussed this over so many years. Are you able to publish historic comparisons of agency figures, work figures, so that we can try to monitor trends?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I had a long conversation about agency staff with Assembly Member Prince last time, and I did say to him it will be lower in the next report and I am very pleased to say that it is lower. We are at 77 now, which is the lowest we have been at for some time. It is one of the historical graphs we have currently lost from the report, because we used to track that, and so that is one that we will have to make sure is reinstated.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I do not think there is 'the right number'. I do not think the right number is 60, 65, 70 --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Or a percentage or anything, yes.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): It does ebb and flow for the right reasons. The thing I have been most focused on is to make sure that we do not have people on agency contracts in effect filling permanent positions and doing them permanently, because that is not fair on those people. We have worked very hard on that. I suspect that fluctuating between about 55 and 80 is, roughly, probably where we would be. We did at one point go much higher than that and that was because we were managing some of the recruitment problems we were having. We have come back from all of those now, which is partly why this number is back down to a sensible number.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: In terms of temporary staff, we use - I think it is through TfL - Reed [Specialist Recruitment] as the agency. I have picked up from staff huge issues with their performance: staff being delayed taking up a post because of constant requirements to keep sending the same paperwork, temporary staff without pay for weeks on end, not able to claim pay for two months because the agency had not sent them the right forms to fill in each week and only getting some of that resolved by escalating it to very senior management in this building. What performance management measures do you have with Reed, or with TfL and Reed, and might you be looking at their performance and whether they are the right agency to be delivering our temporary staff?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We are contractually bound to Reed at the moment and we are aware of some of those issues, but we are trying to manage that contract appropriately so that we do not fall into those issues. There is also an audit about to take place as well. We are trying to understand some of those issues, what is happening, and dig a bit deeper into some of those areas. I know I have heard some of those stories too, but it is about how we manage that appropriately and have appropriate contract management with Reed to be able to get the best service. That is something that the team is definitely working on and making sure that agency workers are paid appropriately.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes, but it is serious. If you have people going for two months without being able to get any pay, that really is not good enough, so you need to review that. What is the audit? You said an audit is taking place. Who is carrying that out? What is that, please?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We are conducting an audit to make sure that the service is appropriate and the contract is working appropriately.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: It might be worth you speaking to existing temporary staff to get some real-life experience of what is going on because, for some people, unless you have, as it were, cash in the bank to smooth you out, it is almost impossible to continue. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. I am sure Assembly Member Prince will be excited to hear that and disappointed he has not heard it first-hand. Talking about the estate, I could not help thinking, Mary, I know a great building where you get a great buzz and everyone onsite together, if you are interested. Anyway, Assembly Member Fortune wants to come in here quickly.

Peter Fortune AM: Thank you. It is quite near Union Street as well, is it not? Anyway.

Léonie Cooper AM: Purpose-built.

Peter Fortune AM: Purpose-built. Sometimes agency staff get a bit of a hard time because they are needed to fill certain posts. I have a couple of questions, but starting with Tim, how are you doing for planners, how is that in terms of recruiting people?

Tim Steer (Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): Planning is not in my area, that is in Good Growth, so I cannot answer that, I am afraid.

Peter Fortune AM: Maybe you can shunt it over to Shakira.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We struggle. We struggle with planners.

Peter Fortune AM: Yes, OK. I wondered, because sometimes, when you look at overall agency numbers, what you find is it is a particular problem in a particular Directorate that is driving that number up. It would be interesting to get that number, if you could get that to me.

I had my tongue in my cheek earlier. We have staff here, we have staff over at Union Street, where else do we have GLA-specific staff? Are they spread across any other buildings? Palestra?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We do not have any GLA staff in Palestra.

Peter Fortune AM: No.

Tim Steer (Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): GLA Transport Team staff do spend some time in Palestra.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): OK, but they are not anchored there, are they?

Tim Steer (Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): They are not anchored there. They spend some time with TfL colleagues there and there is some space there with the Deputy Mayor for Transport in Palestra. Equally, the Royal Docks Team spends some time with [the London Borough of] Newham [staff] over in the Newham Dockside building down the dock.

Peter Fortune AM: OK, so there is perhaps a wider footprint than the two buildings we have. What is the culture like around home working? Are there any specific rules or are there any directions that people have to stick to?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): In the GLA?

Peter Fortune AM: Yes.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes, we have a very clear policy.

Peter Fortune AM: OK.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): The expectation is that everybody spends at least half the week in one or the other of our offices.

Peter Fortune AM: OK, but that does not have to be the anchored building?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): No.

Peter Fortune AM: Right, OK.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We encourage a bit of fluidity between the two.

Peter Fortune AM: Again, I have no problem with home working either, I am just establishing where the facts are. To finish off on the agency element of it, are all of our agency staff coming through Reed or are there other agencies? Do we have people outside of IR35 [Intermediaries Regulation 35 - off payroll working rules] working on independent contracts?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): All of our contractors do come through Reed. If they are IR35 then we make sure that they register as IR35 and we manage that appropriately, but we do tend to use Reed as the final to make sure that we manage that cleanly.

Peter Fortune AM: You mean outside of IR35?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes.

Peter Fortune AM: Yes, OK. We do have some staff working along those lines as well. The last one - and I know that my colleague, Assembly Member Pidgeon, touched on this - was some of the salaries, and people should, of course, be paid what they deserve. When we talked about benchmarking, it was interesting to see that nearly a third of the people in the Mayor's Office are on £100,000 or more. Who has responsibility for benchmarking those salary figures, or are they set by the Mayor's Office?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): There are two types of jobs in the Mayor's Office, are there not? There are the 13 appointments made directly by the Mayor, and my understanding is that that salary level is set. All the other roles are within our own grading structure and will be evaluated in the same way as all the other jobs.

Peter Fortune AM: They are graded as all other jobs in the GLA?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes.

Peter Fortune AM: The fact that it is a nearly a third of people in the Mayor's Office, is that the Deputy Mayors that might be driving that number up, do you think, 31%?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): The Deputy Mayors will be part of that, yes.

Peter Fortune AM: Yes, so that is probably why the 31% of people in the Mayor's Office are on £100,000 plus.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes, Deputy Mayors, Mayoral Directors and other very senior roles in the Mayor's Office.

Peter Fortune AM: Thank you.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. I am going to hand over to Assembly Member Cooper to finish off this section and take us on to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) after.

Léonie Cooper AM: Thank you. I wanted to ask a bit about the exit interviews. I am looking at the report on page 12, and it says staff are invited to complete an exit interview and it is optional, which obviously means that it is not 100%, although people are encouraged to do so. It then goes on to say,

"The move to the shared services model and associated pressures created a temporary pause in exit interviews. From next year onwards, we intend to report full-year data through TfL."

I wondered why that transition prevented the conduct of the exit interviews with staff between October 2022 and March 2023. Could you unpack that a bit?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Again, whilst we were trying to manage our transition to TfL, there were some areas whereby we were trying to make sure that things did go across and that requests were put through in terms of things like exit interviews and making sure that those were standardised. In the transfer, though, it did not happen, and so therefore we have had to put in a change to be able to start reporting back onto that data again. What we did do, though, in the meantime of that period is have a workaround of my HR Business Partners requesting, as soon as somebody had a resignation, to then complete an exit interview. Yes, it was not something that was automatic, but it was something that was asked for at the time, as soon as we knew someone was exiting and someone had handed in a resignation. Whilst there was a gap in terms of the actual system doing it, we then had a manual workaround of requesting someone to address it.

Léonie Cooper AM: To be clear, there were some exit interviews that were conducted during that period?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes, we had a workaround in that period.

Léonie Cooper AM: OK, so it is not that they all stopped and now they have been reinstated, that did not happen?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): No.

Léonie Cooper AM: Where you have the primary reason for leaving the GLA and the secondary reason, looking at the figures that we have, first of all, what percentage of staff have been doing the exit interviews? Is this 100% or 50%? What percentage of staff are represented by these figures that I am looking at? It does not say, it just gives me totals of numbers of people in various categories but it does not tell me what the overall number of people are that exited, so I cannot tell what percentage that figure is of the total number that left.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): No, I am not sure 100%, because I know that it was as people were coming through and as people were requesting it, so I would need to confirm that figure for you.

Léonie Cooper AM: Would you be able to?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I will do.

Léonie Cooper AM: OK, because it is quite important to know what percentage I am looking at. Looking at those figures, it looks as though the number of people citing the workplace as the secondary reason for leaving the GLA has increased each year since 2020. Obviously, that also spans over the pandemic. What issues have you identified from these findings, and do we dig into why people are citing the workplace as an issue? Is it because they do not like hot desking, or what is it about the workplace, and are we taking any action in response to that?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I have not delved into that reasoning at all. I look at mainly the primary reason, which is people looking for other career moves and that reasoning why. The secondary reason, whilst they cite the workplace it could be a variety of things, as we know. In terms of setting out whether it is around systems or whatever it may be, I have not delved into that level of detail. I have been mainly looking at the primary reasons, and due to the primary reasons of people looking at career reasoning as to moving on, that is the thing I have been looking at in terms of why that is and what is going on.

Léonie Cooper AM: With all due respect, I think it is important to look at the secondary reasons. I could choose, for example, some people who have worked at the GLA for a period of time, and the primary reason that they would give for leaving is that they have been offered another job. It might have been a promotional appointment. It is very good for people to move on after they have been somewhere perhaps for five or six years. The impetus might be the secondary reason that made them feel that they wanted to leave, and certainly I am aware of two or three people who might give their primary reason as being that they have taken a promotional appointment or something else, but the thing that spurred them to start looking was they were fed up with travelling all the way to E16 [Canning Town] or they did not like having to hot desk, or they did not like the new office altogether. I think it is really important, do you not, that we start to dig into the things that tip people over into wanting to look for other things?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I agree, and I look other data sources as well. There are things like the staff survey and we are recently now doing a pulse survey and those sorts of things, to give me a bit more detail before it gets to an exit interview to look at that data. I am looking at things before it gets to that to understand if that would be a reasoning for somebody to leave, and

to understand that a bit better. I personally like looking at different datasets to tell me a story of something. Absolutely, secondary reasons are important, but I would like to look at that in the round of other things as well as the primary reason.

Léonie Cooper AM: Yes, the contents of the staff survey were incredibly illuminating and, I thought, quite concerning in some areas. Do you collect data to check whether there is any higher turnover amongst specific groups of staff? Are there more exit interviews with people depending on their heritage, their ethnic backgrounds, disability, age, gender? Do we look at that at all?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I encourage them across all the board, whether it is a protected characteristic or not. I do not look at those specifically. Definitely, if I thought that there was a hike in the turnover numbers and that might be from a certain characteristic, absolutely I would then pinpoint that and encourage, but I encourage it right across the board to tell me the story. Until I see a bit more in terms of the turnover data and understanding that bit more, and looking at that in a bit more detail, I would not necessarily pinpoint for the exit interviews.

Léonie Cooper AM: OK, well, I think that might be helpful to us. Also, do we compare Directorates to see if there are any issues about more women leaving - I am going to pick on Tim because he is here - Housing and Land than leaving Good Growth or something like that? Do we look at those figures? Does Tim look at those figures? Do you look at those figures? Who would be looking at that?

Tim Steer (Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): The figures I have here are the whole Directorate figures, and they are interesting. Turnover is not something that I have personally focused on as yet in my role, and I certainly have not seen breakdown of turnover by different protected characteristics. It could be an interesting thing to look at. I do not think there is an issue with women leaving specifically in Housing and Land.

Léonie Cooper AM: That is encouraging to hear that that is the case, and I would hope not. What about the retention figures? Presumably we look when people are leaving at the length of time that they have been with us. Do we have access to all of that? I understand there have been some cost-saving exercises and that we may not have full access to the retention figures, is that definitely the case?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Listening to this, Assembly Member Cooper, we do not currently analyse our leavers' data in anything like the level of detail you are asking us, and so we need to reflect on that. We do check routinely at a higher level to make sure, for example, staff who are BAME groups as a percentage of overall leavers feels right, and is not running massively higher than the overall percentage of that group in the overall staffing body. We would do a regular check like that, but at anything more of the level that you are talking about, we do not.

As Shakira said, we are looking at the data that we need to give us the best possible picture of what is going on, and we have our new data analyst resource who will allow us to do things that we have not been able to think about doing before in HR. We should add that much more detailed analysis of our leavers at the various levels you have been talking about to our thinking about our ongoing reporting.

Léonie Cooper AM: Yes, because we often have conversations about recruitment and retention. If you talk to people why they are leaving, it can help you with retention of staff if there is something that starts to emerge. I want to move on to looking at the EDI area as well, which the Chairman mentioned that I would also start asking you some questions on. This is something that we have discussed in [GLA] Oversight

[Committee] and elsewhere as well. I will start with Mary and you may want to bring in Shakira as well. What do you consider the main factors driving the growth in terms of the numbers of staff who are BAME at the GLA, and what lessons are you learning from this increase? Obviously, this is a positive trend that we are seeing.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Thank you for recognising that. I have a very simple answer, which is that we have seen that growth as a direct result of some of the very focused action we promised we would take to make the workforce of this organisation more representative of the city that we serve, and also to make sure that this organisation is a place where people can have a very good experience as an employee, wherever they have come from, whatever their protected characteristic. I am really pleased.

We began to see it coming through the last six-month report, but again, in here we can see it coming through in appointments, we can see it still in the pipeline around the recruitment. We can see some significant internal progression of staff from BAME backgrounds. We can see representation at our most senior levels finally growing, and we know there is more to come because we know there are more positive things in the pipeline. My number one lesson from this is that if you get serious about this and you refuse to be distracted by other stuff, you can make changes like this.

Léonie Cooper AM: That is good to hear. We still are suffering from the snow-capped peak problem of finding that there are larger numbers of Black and Black British staff over-represented in the lower grades, so that is clearly something that we still need to do more to address the snowy white peaks of the organisation, if I can put it that way. Increasing the number of BAME staff across the whole organisation has to be a goal. I do not know why this has happened but the Assembly appears to have a very low number of [BAME] staff, it is not a very diverse staff who are working for the Assembly. Is there something specific we can do in terms of the recruitment processes that will address both making sure that we do not have people clustered into the lower grades, or missing out on being involved in certain parts of the workforce?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Having said that if you really focus on this you can make things happen, we still have an awful lot to do, so I just wanted to say that and say that I recognise that and we are doing all sorts of stuff. I was going to ask Tim to speak very briefly on what we are doing in the Resources Directorate where we have an awful lot of Black staff in particular at very low grades. Then, perhaps, Shakira, you could talk a little bit about some of the focused work you are doing with individual Directorates on recruitment. I know you are working with Helen [Ewen, Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat, GLA] as well on the Assembly side.

Tim Steer (Executive Director of Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): Yes, there is a very specific bit of work which I have been leading, along with colleagues in the Facility and Resources Team, to look at a specific cadre of staff, particularly in the Security Guard Team, where there is a much higher concentration of Black members of staff particularly than we would expect and we would see elsewhere in the organisation. We were both keen to understand what was going on there, but also support staff in that team, particularly around development and opening up opportunities more broadly within the GLA. A team of us did a significant bit of work with a consultant around coaching for those members of staff and looking at career planning and skills development. We had a significant number of people expressing interest in that and going through that programme, and I have not been so close to it recently but I believe there have been some real success stories from that and people moving to other parts of the GLA group or into other roles in other organisations too. It was a major focus area.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Myself and my team have been going and speaking directly to Directorates to look at what we can do about attraction, how do we sell the GLA and what kinds of hallmarks we can sell out across wider markets so that people understand the work that we do here. That is yielding some good results as well, and as Mary said, I am working with Helen [Ewen], to be able to do the same thing with the Assembly Directorate. I do believe there are some good things to come soon, because we are putting in some targeted work around that.

Léonie Cooper AM: OK, so some targets will be established. It was interesting, the example that Tim just gave. Are we giving support to managers where we have identified areas of good practice, and giving managers the time and space to develop the good habits of coaching and encouraging staff to apply for promotional and additional roles, where they are not necessarily displaying that to begin with? We referred to the staff survey, and there were some results in there that were quite shocking in terms of people's unwillingness to trust their managers. That was the particular area that stuck out for me. There is some work there that needs to be done in terms of really supporting staff, but you do need to have managers who are able to deliver that. Are we able to do that?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Able to deliver and committed to deliver. Shakira will have some other examples. As you know from before, one of the things that I have been doing is very explicitly holding my senior team to account for delivering progress. As he is here, we will use Tim as an example. That has included some very focused sessions on, for example: to what extent do the senior team of Housing and Land know their BAME staff in the directorate? To what extent do they understand what those staff members' aspirations are, and to what extent are they having those people in mind when we are looking for people to put themselves forward and make expressions of interest for jobs? That has been a very explicit challenge to every Executive Director. The next challenge round is going to pose that same challenge for our disabled staff, because we are running these two parallel priorities.

Léonie Cooper AM: Thank you very much, and I am sorry, Tim, for picking on you like this. You may never come back, of course. Thank you, Chairman.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. I wanted to ask quickly about the changes in reporting in this year from the previous report, and to what extent you are satisfied with the new approach in relation to BAME staff, because it has seen that go down from 32% to 31%.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): As part of the [HR] Shared Services move, we have focused on some of the issues that have come out of that move. One of the things that we learnt was how TfL do some of this and the measures that they use. They use the industry standard measure, which is to report the percentage of everyone who has declared, as opposed to reporting the percentage of everybody, including people who have declared nothing and their declaration is utterly blank. As we say throughout this report, we have some pretty high declaration rates now, bordering 80%. We have worked hard on declaration and we will continue to do so.

This shift that we have made now to be in complete line with industry standards, and indeed with TfL and the rest of the [GLA] group, is to report percentages of people who have declared, which does, in hindsight, feel rather more sensible. It has not made a major difference to our numbers at all, because our numbers have been growing for other reasons anyway; they have been growing because of the work that we have been doing. Your question, Chairman, I think, was about to what extent we are confident in that data and again, I will just repeat what I said before. I am privy to the time, the consideration and the integrity that has been

brought to that data, and I am sure that it is the right data. You could imagine I was particularly demanding on the integrity of data in areas such as representation.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Baker.

Elly Baker AM: Thank you, Chairman. Yes, I am going to come in on a couple of matters about disabled staff, firstly returning to the issue of the disability pay gap that Mary mentioned. Shakira, could you let us know what the main drivers have been for closing of the GLA's disability pay gap, and what learning you can apply to other pay gap areas?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): There is something around understanding from our disabled colleagues. We have done a lot of work in terms of working with the Disability Network and understanding what perceived barriers were. There was something around support, around people getting promotions, but when you started to look at some of the challenges that our disabled colleagues are facing, it was around perceptions around what they believed people thought was their disability. We have done a lot of work in trying to break that down; we have done a lot of sessions around upskilling our managers around some of this stuff and we have done a lot of wide awareness across the GLA. At one of our Senior Manager conferences we have had different people come and talk, and elevate and understand and share knowledge in this area. I believe that has yielded some results but not enough, as we know and can see, but there is definitely a laser focus right across the organisation around building awareness, mainly, but also providing opportunity where people did not feel there was an opportunity before.

Elly Baker AM: Thank you. Digging into the numbers, people have talked about issues with the data but with disabled people that is even more difficult because, of course, people's characteristics around disability change much more often than any other protected characteristics. Just to check, is it 87% of staff who have declared whether they are disabled or not? It says "ethnicity" but I assume it is a typo, that is fine. It did confuse me. Then that is only a 9% proportion of staff overall who are disabled compared to 17% of the working-age population, and we know that the working-age population is far lower than the general population because of the barriers for disabled people to get into work.

I want to concentrate on that declaration, because I do not want to say anything about the proportion without us being confident about that. How recent are those declarations that you have, bearing in mind that people's status might change there? I know you have done some work to encourage staff to declare, but do you believe that has gone up due to more people letting you know where things have changed, or are you just getting people as they come in the door? Does that make sense? Sorry, that was a very long point.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I think at the core of the question is: are we confident that people are updating their declarations as their conditions change?

Elly Baker AM: Yes. Go for that.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I guess we hope people will do that. We do, every so often, have quite a big push on declarations, as a result of which I updated mine not that long ago. However, we do rely on people to do it. Also, we know 87 percent of us have made a declaration on disability. It does not mean to say everybody with a disability has declared that. That must be going on in here as well, must it not? That is what you are pushing at, is it not, 87 percent is a really high declaration rate, why is our disability rate still only at nine percent?

Elly Baker AM: Perhaps. I do not want to read anything in. Yes, there are many reasons why that might be underreported, whether people do not feel comfortable in declaring. It would be concerning if they were not telling the truth. Also, awareness of it and changes and everything like that. Do you think there is more you can do to get a more accurate picture? It is a low figure and, to be honest, we should be looking at higher than the working age population. It should be a welcoming place for disabled people to come and work.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Myself and my team have also done a push at recruitment stage as well. As people are coming in, we have reworded questions that were already worded, but did not quite make sense or people felt uncomfortable to answer, so we could catch people as they come through the door to be able to declare as well. We are trying different methods to make sure that we do get the declarations right, but also that people feel comfortable as they come into the organisation, feeling this is a place where they can declare whether they have a disability or not. It is something that we know that we need to still do some work on, but we are trying different methods to make sure we capture it.

Elly Baker AM: Do you have information on how old all those declarations are?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I do not know. That is a good question. That would be worth looking at too, would it not? Again, then we have some data to push harder for some updates.

Elly Baker AM: OK, thanks very much.

Emma Best AM: Just to continue on that quickly, how many disabled parking bays are there for staff here?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Two or three. It is the number we must have. They are just out the back.

Emma Best AM: I think it is two and that is inclusive of visitors as well. Do you think that that is a good offer in terms of making it attractive for people to come here?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): I do not know I have not heard it raised once by the [Staff] Network for Disability and I am the Executive sponsor for that. There are a lot of things that colleagues in our Staff Network for Disability want us to do better. I have never heard a reference to the disabled parking. There are some adjustments, are there not, in terms of travel to work? Perhaps you would want to talk about those, which probably remove the need for the space, I do not know.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): My team support the organisation in managing workplace adjustments. If that came through as an adjustment, I am absolutely sure that we would look to expand that, if that was a requirement for somebody to come and attend work. We look at adjustments across the piece and look at how people come to work and whether there are further adjustments required outside of driving in and parking. We look at that across the range. If that was a requirement, we would absolutely note that.

Emma Best AM: Good, because I held an event and it was a big issue for the event. Mary, you mentioned there were other things that had been raised or things people have been more focused on, what sort of adjustments are those?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We have talked about workplace adjustments here before. We have done a lot of work to make sure that when people join and when people change teams they are asked about whether or not they need any adjustments to be able to do their job to the full. We have had some issues over a period of time with people who then explain they need an adjustment and getting that adjustment in place. However, we have a team now in Shakira's area focused on making sure that workplace adjustments are not only understood but are then delivered and are delivered in fairly short order. Some of them are very straightforward, like a particular chair, for example.

Some are a bit more complicated, because they are to do with particular software that we may not have or know how to support until we get it in and other people have quite a complex set. What we are trying to do - and what my commitment to the Disability Staff Network has been - is to accelerate the speed at which those workplace adjustments are put in place, which is why I was pretty sure we had not heard about the parking one, because we are focused on a range of workplace adjustments. We have a running total now; every fortnight we have a look at what adjustments are in train, where they appear to have got stuck, and what we are doing to release whatever the problem is.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Are there any big problems with the building or issues that are being raised consistently about things that should change or that look like barriers? Sometimes it is all well and good putting workplace adjustments in once you have come to a job and had it, but this is a public building and people might visit, and if you think it does not look very welcoming you may never put an application in. There is nothing like that that you think would put people off?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Not here in City Hall. We have one access issue which we are still grappling with in Union Street.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member Russell.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. Back into EDI, looking at gender. Shakira, in most directorates there are more women than men. It is running at about 62%, which seems marvellous. I am wondering why this is the case? Is it a problem? Are you doing anything to address it?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): There is something around having balance. Looking at recruitment is a starter and looking at how teams are comprised. Equally, there is something about our organisation that does draw women here, because we have quite a lot of family-friendly policies. There is something about a balance. Is it a problem? There is always something about how we make sure the balance is maintained. That is really important, as I said and it is something we have to keep a watchful eye on, particularly if we tip too far in one direction. We need to keep a watchful eye and keep people making sure that their teams are in a balanced space and place right across the organisation.

Caroline Russell AM: I welcome the statement in the report about gender not being binary, recognising that there will be some people who do not identify either as man or woman and that they will be in some kind of gender-diverse space. I understand why you do not report the numbers if the numbers are small, because of protecting people's identities. However, is there a percentage that you might get to that you would then feel that you could report? We have good policies around gender and understanding that gender may not be binary. Is there a percentage at which point you might feel able to report or is there any way that you can give an indication of whether the numbers are stable or gently increasing or decreasing, so that we can broadly keep track without breaching anyone's confidentiality?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes, for me, as you said, confidentiality is key here. That is something I would have to take away and speak with the person that is in my team now carrying out the data analytics to figure out what would be an appropriate number to report, without removing that confidentiality. I will take that away and ask the question.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes. I do not know whether in other workplaces there is good practice that we could copy, but it seems that if we are a workplace that is inclusive then some kind of reporting -- and I do recognise this little statement in the report is definitely a positive step, but that just might make this feel even more like an inclusive workplace. My next question is for Mary, which is about the Resources Directorate. It is the one directorate where women are under-represented; it is in the upper 30%, so it is well below 50%. Do you have any insight into why that is the case? Are there any initiatives that you are pursuing to increase the representation of women in that Directorate?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): You are right, that Directorate stands out. There are a couple of reasons for it in the profile. The first is that this includes Facilities Management. We know from our own experience that not all but most of our security staff and not all but most of our porters and other staff are male staff. In fact, as we have already said, predominantly Black male staff. We are hoping that some of that work that Tim has described, where we have seen people get new jobs elsewhere, that will open up vacancies in that team. Whether we see more women coming into those types of roles, we will see. We have some already and they are very good at those roles. For some reason, we have ended up with a highly male profile in that team. It is quite a big team, between security and portage.

The other main part of the team is Finance and IT, which fall in Resources, and again are perhaps traditionally more male-led professions, particularly Finance. We are seeing that changing and we have brought in a new set of Finance Business Partners and at least three of them are women. We have some women coming in at the senior level in the Finance Team. Probably, again, our IT Team is where we see very few women; not none, but very few. Part of this is that those are still areas of work that have been traditionally very male-dominated and in other places still remain quite male-dominated. Part of this is about making sure that as the profile of those younger people coming into those professions changes, we get our very good share of them. We also want to make it clear that you can be very successful as a woman in those professions here in the GLA. That will, however, come back to the recruitment.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): In some of those professions they are, in industry anyway, quite male-dominated. As we move through, looking at what the GLA is and how we operate in the wider context of the public sector and where we are in terms of some of those industries and how we stack up against that, that will change the demographic in those spaces. It will take some focus work for us to get there.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes, thank you. My final question is about the diversity of the GLA's senior staff. The graph in the pack is very positive, going up on disability, on whether people are BAME, and also going up on whether people are women or men and more women. I wonder, what do you think is impacting that increase in diversity within the GLA's senior staff? Mary, you said earlier that you had to get on and do it. Is that the answer?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): It is the same answer. We have been absolutely focusing on this. We have been focusing, in particular, at the senior level, on Grade Ten and above. This measure is Grade 12 and above. We have seen a lot of really good external recruitment in at that level. We have seen some really good internal progression at that level. It is changing the look and feel of that senior

group, literally changing it, is it not? It is all about the focus that we have had. You remember we said that people were not able to make appointments at this level without justifying that appointment to their Executive Director. We have insisted on diverse recruitment panels. We have not quite got there 100%, but it is making a difference. All of these things are coming together.

Tim Steer (Executive Director Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): It is hard to overstate the level of focus there has been on creating a more inclusive workplace. The breadth of the measures we have looked at has covered everything, from recruitment, to progression, and to culture. We are trying to think of it in a holistic way. I would say, this has been noticed within the organisation and I have had a couple of instances recently where I have been interviewing people and they have proactively said, "I have heard about what the GLA is doing and this is a place where I want to come and work, because it feels like it is really making efforts and taking this agenda very seriously".

Caroline Russell AM: That is very encouraging. Thank you very much. Thank you, Chairman.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): I want to ask quickly about the data we have here for faith and sexual orientation within the GLA staff. There is no comparison with previous years or with London's working-age population for either. Is that something we could have going forward?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. Did you want to say anything about the additional EDI budget investments for future years and if there are projects or anything, achievement-wise, we should be looking out for specifically?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): The ones we have not spoken about today at all are some of our plans around learning and development.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): We are going to come on to that.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): You are going to move on to that, OK. That is the one that I would look out for.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I would add that we have now put in project officers into each Directorate from the centralised EDI budget, whereby we had some narrative around some Directorates feeling the pressure to deliver their EDI plans and all that sort of stuff. We now have some really cool resource put in to be able to galvanise those plans, so that we can understand in a better way where the barriers are, where we need to do more, a holistic plan across the organisation around where we are in terms of EDI, and if there are core blockages across the piece or if it is a certain Directorate, so that we are able to have some of that intelligence. It would be a bit better, rather than just reading it off a plan, to hear that intelligence from people that we know are in there to be able to support the agenda. I would say that would be one of our best investments.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. We will move on to recruitment, learning and development. I will pass over to Assembly Member Bailey.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you, Chairman. Good afternoon, panel. If I could start with Shakira, please? What are the main reasons for the significant increase in the proportion of internal appointments from non-white ethnic minority backgrounds?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): What we do now in terms of good practice is to make sure that all our posts are open across the organisation internally first, to be able to provide different skillsets moving across the organisation. Then, as we have said, we have quite a focus around BAME appointments and those sorts of things. We are making sure that the internal appointments process works appropriately. It is probably working better than it has done before and we are making sure the process is working appropriately right across the piece.

Shaun Bailey AM: Do you have any verifiable evidence about what has driven this uplift in BAME appointments and applications? Is there something you have done significantly different? Is it just that? Is it amongst the staff? Are they saying, "People are trying to help, let's respond"? Do you have any verifiable evidence as to why this change has come about?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): There are a couple of things for me. One, the opportunity is transparent; that is a good thing that people can see where opportunities are now. We have done a lot of work around mentoring and getting people to have the confidence to be able to apply, where they thought they did not have a chance before. That is definitely something we are seeing an output from. Where we know we are focused, people are beginning to respond to all the things the organisation is doing around this agenda. There are things that we are doing and things going on that our employees are responding to at the same time to create that.

Shaun Bailey AM: You have had an increase in internal applications. Are you seeing the same increase in external applications?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We have done a lot of work, again, to drive out our opportunities and place them on specialist boards. There is a bit more profile in our roles in certain areas and certain boards to be able to showcase our roles in those different areas. There is an uptake in terms of the number of different types of people applying. As it comes through from attraction right the way through the process, we now have steps in place in the process to be able to verify those applications and appointments. That also has an output, as we see in the data, and a better output in terms of BAME appointments.

Shaun Bailey AM: OK. Why has there been a decrease in the proportion of external candidates appointed from non-white ethnic minority backgrounds despite the proportion of applications and shortlisting increasing?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Again, there is something around us making sure that people understand the process. There is something around how we make sure the process flows through and people understand what is required. We looked at our competency framework, as an example, and we have done so much work to look at that and to rectify it. It was very wordy and people were putting lots of different competencies, so people were deselecting themselves in some areas because they did not think they would make it through the process. We have done a lot of work around that to make sure we are consistent in our approach. In some areas they were not adopting quite the right processes.

We need to make sure the rigour remains around looking at shortlists, looking at our panels, making sure that they are all diverse, and making sure that all the things that we have set out to do as an organisation run through the organisation, to make sure that we then do have the appointments at the end.

Shaun Bailey AM: My next question is directed at Mary. Across the GLA group we have vacancies. There seems to be some areas where we struggle to fill the post, to provide the service to the wider GLA. Is this as a result of some of the changes we are seeing now or is it something else more fundamental?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Sorry, Assembly Member, across the GLA or the GLA group?

Shaun Bailey AM: The group. For example, we have conversations about having rapporteurships and people always say we do not have the capacity to do it, etc. To us, it is delivered as, "The staff are not there, etc, the capacity is not there". Is that a result of the changes that have been made in recruitment practices or is there something else?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): It depends on the particular example. Certainly, in terms of the Assembly Secretariat, as we know going through a period -- in fact, we did not talk about it but the Assembly headcount looks quite low in some of these earlier charts, and that was because there was a period where we were running a lot of vacancies in the Assembly Secretariat. Those are increasingly now being filled. Then we have turnover of 11%, which is a reasonable turnover level to have, but it does mean that people leave. We have had some recruitment delays, but not everywhere; there is probably a particular set of circumstances for every example. It is hard to generalise.

Shaun Bailey AM: OK. To go back to Shakira, it sounds to me that you are happy about the change that you have made and the impact it is having on the diversity of your staff, certainly internally. Is there something that you will be doing externally to make sure that pipeline continues, to make sure that you get new people in, of all shades, races, colours, sexuality, etc, but to keep that going? Particularly if you look at Black staff, for want of a better term, that seems to be fuelled by internal applications. At some point that capacity will go. What are you doing to get new people in the door?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes, there is something around our attraction piece we are spending some time looking at. GLA is an organisation and employer of choice from a diversity perspective and there is still some work to do there to generate connections. Across the GLA family, we are looking at starting to interchange talent. We are really looking at how we describe our roles in a way that makes sense to other industries. There is still a lot more to do and tapping into those certain markets, there is more we can do in that space. Absolutely the work is not done there at all, but we are just beginning to really see -- and now I have my team in place, who look at strategic resource, and they will be starting to look at workforce planning and characteristics. We can look at all those sorts of things now that we have some capacity to be able to do that in a very different way than we have before.

Shaun Bailey AM: All these changes you have made, how are they perceived by your white staff? Are they seen as a levelling of the playing field or are they seen as a disadvantage against them? How are they perceived? Where do you get the feedback for that?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): That was a good question about whether we ask directly for feedback. We have a lot of white staff who absolutely welcome all this work. We probably have a few who feel threatened and disadvantaged by it, but those are absolutely in the minority. I have been

clear that if you find yourself in this organisation with a set of values and a set of aspirations around inclusivity that you do not like, then it is the wrong place for you. I say that even at induction sessions when people arrive. There will be, will there not, some people who will see it as threatening, there may be one or two who wish we were not focusing on it. I can say, Assembly Member Bailey, that the majority of white staff here are wholly supportive of what we are doing.

That would be my view and that is anecdotal, because we have not asked and maybe we should do more to understand that. We have this inclusion survey, launched this week, which might help us understand that question, but if it does not, we might look at developing those questions in the future. That is what I would say to you on that. I do not know, Tim, if you have a different view.

Tim Steer (Executive Director Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): No, not a different view at all. This is not something which is happening right now, but the Equal Group report that was published a couple of years ago was a real watershed moment for the organisation. That report recognised that there were structural barriers for some members of staff and some groups of staff in the organisation. That is quite an important thing for the organisation and it is from where a lot of this work has flowed. I have never had an experience where a member of staff has questioned that conclusion, despite the fact that there are avenues for people to do that if they wanted to. We tried really hard to create ways for people to feed in views, whoever they are. I have never heard a challenge to the Equal Group report findings. And, equally, I have never heard sustained challenge to the measures that we are taking either.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you for that. Shakira, do you feel that you need to monitor it? As your policies become more and more successful this may – I hope not – become more of an issue.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I would also say that there is a lot of allyship in this organisation. We have an All-In network, which is fairly new, which is about allyship. Sometimes certain areas of data can become quite divisive and we would not want that for the organisation. I would not want to be in that place, given we have done so much work to improve the environment and the culture. As Mary says, and she makes it super clear, if this is not your agenda at all then this is not the organisation for you. There is something more about people learning and understanding different experiences that I have more encountered here than anything else. There is definitely a lot of allyship and we have a whole network now for allies to be able to understand and support the agenda than be against it.

Shaun Bailey AM: OK, thank you. Back to you, Chairman.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. Over to Assembly Member Baker.

Elly Baker AM: Thanks, Chair. Returning to issues of disabled staff and disabled candidates, the report acknowledges the GLA need to do more to attract disabled candidates. What work is in train to address this issue?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Similar to ethnicity, we are trying to look at the appropriate job boards. We are doing a lot with our Staff Network for Disability to understand how we would be an employer of choice. Again, there are lots of things in this space around word of mouth and how we strengthen our positioning in that space. There is still a lot more work to do, but we also need to figure out which methods work best and how we refine that, which I am still working through and I know I have not got there yet. There is still more to do. Where should we put our jobs so they are noticeable

and we are attractive? How do we sell the attraction to people who do classify themselves as disabled so that they would want to work here as an employer of choice?

Tim Steer (Executive Director Housing and Land, Greater London Authority): Could I add one point, Chairman? There is an interesting and important strategic conversation about the attractiveness of the GLA to disabled candidates and potentially the ability of disabled staff to progress in an organisation, which is around the intersection of hybrid working, part-time working, flexible working and all those issues, which could be really important in this space, not just for disabled staff but for other staff too, women and others with caring responsibilities. Particularly as we continue to refine our hybrid working thinking as we come out of lockdown, this is going to open up some opportunities for us. We should be ensuring that we are a real best practice employer in that regard.

Elly Baker AM: I agree, but it is really important not to make assumptions, because people with impairments vary hugely. Assuming that disabled candidates would prefer hybrid working is not wise, to be honest; we need to listen rather than make assumptions. Related to that, asking about workplace adjustment passports, you say that they have been introduced and they work here. I am very rusty on how these have been implemented. That then allows staff to take that through all parts of the GLA. Can those passports then be taken to other parts of the GLA family? Would you consider passports valid, say, from other parts of the Civil Service, or are we not at that stage yet? It is about not having to renegotiate, effectively, if you move organisations in the same industry.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): As you say, we are not there yet. It is an interesting development. The obviously next step would be within the group, would it not? We should add that to our list.

Elly Baker AM: I expect that list is very long.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): It is long, but --

Elly Baker AM: It would be a useful thing to look at.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes. As I have hinted at already, the fact that we now have a shared HR service with TfL has brought home some of the things that we do differently to them and some things that they do. We have learned good things from each other over the last six months and this is another one to take into that joint conversation.

Elly Baker AM: Thank you. Back to you, Chairman.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. I want to check, on page 34 of the report it states the GLA is still using Havas [People], the company brought in last year to do the recruitment to clear the backlog. Was this not supposed to be a temporary measure?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes, however we realised once we switched on to the TfL platform that there are some areas that are still up for negotiation that they service for us and some that they do not. In order for us to continue having service, we needed to make sure that the service was still running and therefore the usage of Havas [People]. We are now negotiating with TfL to make sure that all the services are encompassed as part of the platform.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Should that not have been done upfront, with the transition to TfL, to get that in the contract, to have those provisions?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes that would have been much better. Some of the recruitment that we do is not what TfL would consider to be standard recruitment. Yes, they were going to take on our recruitment, we were going to pass that over and that is all fine. Then you get to the fact that we run the recruitment, on behalf of the Mayor, for a number of Mayoral Boards, for example. That is not bog-standard staffing recruitment in the TfL world. That is one of the examples, and that is one of the areas where we are still using Havas [People].

It is the fine detail in what we call recruitment, 95% of which is absolutely standard for recruitment as TfL recognise it. We have this little bit on the end here where they are saying to us, "We don't do that stuff. We don't do that". The best thing to do was to keep Havas [People] on temporarily and to keep those streams of recruitment going. Then, as Shakira said, once everything else was passed across, we come back to that and get that slotted in. That is what we are doing.

I can see in hindsight, without that being explicitly spelled out somewhere, that the GLA team were thinking, "This is standard. We always do this", but it has been received on the other end and TfL are saying, "What is this bit here? We do not do this bit". It is those little bits that we are still having Havas [People] do. With more time, more run-up and all the rest of it, some of this stuff probably could have been ironed out before. However, we are doing that now.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): How long is the contract being renewed for?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): It has now been renewed until the end of the year [2023], so we can do the transition and make sure that all the stuff has been landed and that we can then let that go.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thanks. Do you know the cost of that?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Not currently off the top of my head, no.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Could you let the Committee know? Thank you. Assembly Member Russell.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. I want to touch on the bit of recruitment that relates to us moving here, the agreement with Newham Council to make jobs available to Newham residents as we go out to recruit. I wonder, Mary, has there been an increase in the proportion of Newham residents recruited to the GLA in the last six months?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Shakira has the exact number.

Caroline Russell AM: Marvellous.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): In the financial year, we received 481 applications from Newham residents, but it was not via Newham Works, we realise that the proportion was quite small from Newham Works and we received more from our GLA website. We are making sure that we can capture postcodes to understand where the applications are coming from. Are they from

Newham? We realised that the proportion from Newham Works was really small in comparison to when people came to our GLA website.

Caroline Russell AM: OK. You have had 481 applications. How many of those turned into recruitment?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): 30 .

Caroline Russell AM: 30 .

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): In the year that we are reporting on, from all our analysis, we think we have brought in 31 members of staff with Newham home addresses. One of those was through the scheme related to the planning condition, which is the Newham Work Scheme. As we have reflected before, moving here is likely to have made working here more attractive to people living in the east of London, so we have seen a further 30 appointments. There are 31 in total.

Caroline Russell AM: OK. In terms of reporting, I saw in the report that you were going to be providing a quarterly monitoring report to Newham, but that has been changed to an annual report. When does that annual report to Newham get made? We, presumably, need to keep track of that year on year.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Imminently is the answer. It has been drafted and I have seen the draft, so it is imminent.

Caroline Russell AM: OK. Thank you very much. I hope Newham are happy. Thank you.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): I want to come over to Assembly Member Fortune.

Peter Fortune AM: To follow up on what Caroline Russell was asking and tying back in to what we were taking about with salary and brackets, the mean salary at the GLA is £58,000 to £59,000. Of those 31 recruited from Newham, do we know what the spread is across the salary brackets?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We could find out. We were not asked to report on that.

Peter Fortune AM: I was just wondering if we were monitoring. We are recruiting people and that is great. What are we recruiting people to do? That would be quite interesting; maybe some feedback for another time. Moving to learning and development (L&D), we have transferred over to this new HR Shared Service scheme, so I was wondering if we had been able to share some of the L&D courses that perhaps TfL staff have with our GLA staff.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We have our own offering as well that is still going. We are also trying to deliver mandatory courses to make sure that we are legally compliant and all those sorts of things. We are definitely still delivering the same learning offer that we had before, but through the TfL platform. Equally, there are other things we are trying to do around career development and support. We have more focus around specific technical areas that require development. Equally, we are making sure we are having the basics covered, definitely induction and definitely the mandatory things that are required for people to do their roles.

Peter Fortune AM: We have the mandatory courses like Unconscious Bias and all those things, which I will come to in a second, but my understanding was that there are courses that are available to TfL staff that had not previously been available to our staff. Now we are on a shared system, do they have access to that? Also, because we have shifted over from one system to another system, have historical training records transferred across and how easy is it for managers to monitor and keep up to date with everything that has gone on?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We have transferred those records, so that people can monitor and manage and make sure that they can keep their Continuous Professional Development still going. We still have access to the options that TfL give to us and we are making sure that that is then combined with our own learning offer as well. All of those course that TfL have, we do have access to and equally, we still have the things that we still had. My Career Coach and all those other important things that we had here are still on option for us too.

Peter Fortune AM: OK. Just so I am clear, all of the courses that were completed on the old system can be seen on the new system? OK. Having a look at the mandatory courses that you were talking about, there are over 20 courses that are mandatory for staff to complete. It is quite a struggle. What support is given to managers, primarily through technology, to make sure these courses are being completed, that there are nudges, that flags are raised if courses have not been completed on time, etc?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): As part of the system, managers do get nudges and employees get nudges too. We are making sure that employees do take control and are responsible for their development and learning. Also, we are making sure that we can see the data around that as well, to make sure that people have completed what they should be completing. We have refreshed our induction package so that everything that is required and mandatory is coming as part of that, so we can catch people as they come through the door and it does not drift off as they go through the organisation and start their roles. We are trying to capture as much of that as part of onboarding, for individuals coming on board, to make sure that they have that time set from the offset, so that it minimises people not completing that.

Peter Fortune AM: We have all had it. When we are managing staff, we have all had emails coming in saying so and so has not completed the fire training, etc. Do you know if that is monitored in regular one-to-ones or team meetings? At what level of the organisation or how high up the organisation does monitoring of completion of training courses go? Mary, will that land on your desk, the completion rates, etc?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): For some courses, yes.

Peter Fortune AM: The mandatory courses?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): For some of the mandatory ones, yes, not the whole package. Although the other point I was going to make was that this: as you reflect Assembly Member Fortune, it is a very long list and it has grown over time. I am probably partly responsible as there was not a mandatory course before I arrived; no course was mandatory. Then I made a few mandatory and then others jumped on the bandwagon; that is what happened. We are keeping those going, as Shakira said, because we must. We are also having a bit of a rethink about what is mandatory for who and when, including, of course, that really important probation time and what would we expect people to complete in their probation period. There are not only the technical courses, but some of the ones related to our values and aspiration around EDI. If you are a manager, what do you need to do? We are thinking about that rather more smartly now. That is not in place yet, but that is coming.

Peter Fortune AM: OK. That is encouraging that that is being reflected upon, because 20-plus courses is bordering on unmanageable. Do you know what the Directorate completion rates for those mandatory courses are like now? We asked you about this previously.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): They differ.

Peter Fortune AM: Who is doing best and who needs to work harder?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Every so often we run the results off the system and they get sent to CMT . We probably do not do that for all 20, I have to say, reflecting that 20 is too many. For courses around cybersecurity, some of the basic manager courses, and our Let's Talk About Race course, we would routinely send around completion rates.

Peter Fortune AM: Do we know what the Directorate completion rates are like?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): For each of those courses, we break it down by Directorate, yes.

Peter Fortune AM: Do you have those?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): We do not have the whole suite with us today, but if you are interested in a selection --

Peter Fortune AM: It would be interested to know which -- again, it is reflective of culture, is it not?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): It is reflective of culture.

Peter Fortune AM: If you have some Directorates that are really pushing through and making sure those mandatory courses are completed and completed in time, that leads to follow-up meetings as well, does it not, one-to-ones, etc? The trouble sometimes with L&D is you are building these courses that just have to be done and people have an inbox full of, "This is not done. This is not completed. This is not completed". You lose the purpose of it because you are overwhelmed.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes, it is interest. For example, we have a new Disability Equality Course that is an in-person course, run by a disabled person. Tim and I, as it happened, were on it together the other day. That comes with some mandatory pre-course material that you must complete. The trainer and the supporting team will know who has and who has not completed that as you are walking into the course. Personally, I would like to tie our most important mandatory training into the probation period and say frankly, "If you have not completed these, your probation period is not going to get signed off". Again, we need the systems in place for that to happen. We are now almost there with those systems, while at the same time making sure that we only make mandatory what really must be mandatory.

Peter Fortune AM: I agree. Can we take a timestamp today then and have a look at the completion rates? Can you get them sent over? It would be interesting to see how it ties in with some of the other factors that we have measured about what the different directorates are doing, turnover and all that sort of stuff.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes, but could I suggest we do that for five or six of the absolutely key courses?

Peter Fortune AM: Sure.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): If there are particular ones you are interested in, let us know.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Can I come back on that? If they are mandatory at the moment, Mary, can we have them all? If we cannot, clearly we are not looking carefully at it. That informs the next question as to what is mandatory and what is not.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Fair enough, we can do that. It is not instant to pull them off, that was my only hesitation, but we will prepare that package, yes. They might not all be from today, but we can chunk them up over a period of a couple of weeks.

Peter Fortune AM: Can I apologise to any staff that get frantic emails tomorrow encouraging them to complete courses? Thank you.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. Assembly Member McCartney.

Joanne McCartney AM: Yes. I have done the Let's Talk About Race course, which I found very helpful, and the cybersecurity course, where I learned a lot that I should have known before. I am aware, as Assembly Members, that we are not regularly informed on what is there and we are judged as different. I found it very helpful and it would be useful to, every now and again, remind us about what is on there.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): OK, I will talk to Helen [Ewen], about that.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. I wanted to pick up on a similar point to my previous comment. For both age and faith recruitment, the report does not provide historical data or a comparison. Can we, again, have that included in future?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): OK. To Mary or Shakira, whoever wants to answer - and this is a question I have asked before - could you again give us the corporate definition that we are using for a "diverse panel for recruitment"?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): We say that anybody from a diverse background can be on the panel, to represent diversity on the panel. That is corporately what we have said. We have not deviated from that, it has been in our policy for a really long time. We have not changed the definition of that.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Could you explain what that means then?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Sorry? Sorry, can you repeat that? I am trying to understand your question and what you are meaning by that.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): OK. What does “a diverse panel” mean? When you say “from a diverse background”, what do you mean?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Someone who is from BAME minority representative, someone who is from a disabled background, someone who is from a diverse background.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Is that it? I am looking for a thoughtful answer on what characteristics we are using. Is it BAME, disabled and that is it?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Currently.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): OK. So it is not broken down by sexuality, gender identity or educational background, anything like that, it is simply those two categories?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): At the moment, given our focus currently, that is what we have said.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): OK, thanks. Assembly Member Bailey.

Shaun Bailey AM: Sorry, maybe I understood wrong but diversity is often a matter of opinion. You need to have a much more prescriptive or descriptive version of that. That makes no sense to me now, even with your clarification. If someone is going to challenge that, it is easy to challenge because it does not particularly make sense. Do you feel like something else could be done or said about that?

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Given where we are now in the organisation, given what we know our focus is and where we know we were looking for representation on panels of those two characteristics, that has been our focus. There is a further conversation around how we broaden that out. However, when we were looking at diverse panels and how that is looked at right across the board, we were realising that some of our employees were not even doing that. People were coming to the organisation having all-white panels or all-male panels. We were trying to make sure that there were some basic standards in place around what we considered diverse panels to demonstrate where we are now as an organisation, given the focus around disability and BAME. That has been our corporate line thus far.

Shaun Bailey AM: I understand it has been your corporate line thus far, but once you enter the word “diversity” you then have to be -- for instance, if I was from a Traveller background all of what you said means nothing to me. None of those people are diverse because I am a Traveller. My point is if you are going to do diversity, you are going to have to do diversity. What you have done, it appears to me - and I do not say this as a criticism - is pick diversity as you see it, as this corporate entity sees it. When you tread on this ground, you have to operate not only in the world that you are in, but the world that we are in. It can be 100 things to 100 different people. That current definition does not describe that in any way at all. I feel someone might need to have a look at that. Thank you, Chairman.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): I am looking at the statistics here, as someone who would fall into the 6% of those people that identify apparently as gay or lesbian in the organisation, I would not be sitting on a diversity panel though.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Well, you might be.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Well, you just said it is BAME or disabled.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): Yes, but that is not exclusively on our panels. Recruitment panels can be very small, and we cannot have every protected characteristic represented on a recruitment panel of possible three or four people. Shakira has explained it very well from our point of view at the moment. We are trying to make sure that people coming in to be interviewed at the GLA from the backgrounds that we are specifically focusing on at the moment in our Strategy, including disabled staff, come in and feel they are interviewed by people that represent the organisation they want to join. It is very targeted at the moment. The other option is to have massive panels, to try and get much more diversity through there. We do have white staff, for example, on panels. You do not exclusively have to be BAME or disabled to be --

Emma Best AM (Chairman): My point was I would not be included as a diverse member of that panel. I would not be diverse.

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): No, but you would be very welcome on a panel. You or somebody else would be very welcome on that panel as one of the panel members. This is about making sure that we are not presenting panels of four white men or four white women to candidates because that is what used to happen. That is what we are trying to move away from. We had a discussion at the time. It is a relatively clumsy way of thinking about it, but it is for a particular purpose. You have seen the impact it is having on our recruitment outcomes. We know we have more to do, and we are always open to refreshing and rethinking, but that is where we are at the moment and it has worked.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Can I clarify? The last time we did this, last year, we spoke to a member of staff and I cannot remember the figure he gave but it was something crazy, like almost 80 interviews he had sat on in three months or something like that. That is not happening anymore, is it?

Mary Harpley (Chief Officer, Greater London Authority): That was Solomon [Curtis, Joint Chair of the GLA Race Equity Staff Network], who has been fantastic in putting himself forward to sit on interviews. Shakira, you could talk more to that. We are working very hard to make sure that we do not put burdens on particular people to populate our panels. You have done some really good work on that, Shakira.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): Yes, absolutely. I agree, it can be burdensome, as a Black woman, having to sit on lots of panels and be representative in that space. What we have done across Directorates is make sure that even people who are not at the grade of the role they are going for, as a development opportunity, can go on to panels, because we know that we have a spread across grades of those from different ethnic minorities. It is making sure that people do come up and that it is not burdensome. We have made sure that we have people who have nominated themselves to be across Directorates, so it is not just a set Directorate, it is working right across the organisation with people understanding different roles. We are using being on panels as a development opportunity, and having it be not just static within their Directorate, so it is not burdensome for an individual.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Do you have any figures on that or any numbers? Is there any way we can be absolutely certain that that practice is not happening anymore? Like you said, from personal experience, that is my concern with this. If you are willing to stick your neck out and say, "This matters to me, I will help you out", then you then burdened with doing all this, which may affect you progressing in your day job.

Shakira Keddo (Assistant Director for People, Greater London Authority): I do not collate figures at all, but I do have my HR Business Partners embedded within the Directorates. They keep a running check of these sorts of things to make sure that it is not burdensome. Before we were narrowly focused across Directorates, but we have opened that up now. In Tim's area, he would look to Good Growth or different areas to be able to spread that and for it to become learning opportunity. It has changed the dynamics somewhat in this space.

Emma Best AM (Chairman): Thank you. I cannot see any more hands, so that concludes our discussion on the Workforce Report. I would like to thank all our guests for joining us today.