

## London Assembly Police and Crime Committee - 21 February 2024

### Transcript of Agenda Item 5 - Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Metropolitan Police Service

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** We now move on to our main item of business and I would like to welcome our guests, Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and Sir Mark Rowley QPM, who is Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. Welcome to both of you. Thank you for being here.

Our first questions are about the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) resources and the response to austerity. We are looking at many of the issues that were raised in the [Baroness] Casey [of Blackstock DBE CB] Review, in the second chapter of her review, and we are going to be starting off looking at the MPS's workforce. An opening question for the Commissioner, what is your ambition for the makeup of the MPS's workforce and what steps have you taken to meet the challenges in achieving that ambition?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Thank you. It is worth, in terms of how we deal with these questions, if it is OK, to reflect back on how we got to where we are, and therefore how we need to go forward. In terms of the workforce, there are three issues worth talking about in the budget going forward, about the balance between specialist and frontline, the balance between officers and staff, and the balance between money spent on people who are delivering versus the money spent on the support that they need, in terms of technology and training and leadership, etc.

The history of austerity is challenging for policing. I was reflecting in anticipation of this, there was a report in 2010 by Sir Denis O'Connor [CBE QPM], then Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who had some of his career in the MPS, and some of you may have come across him from time to time. As Chief Inspector, he looked at the start of austerity what could the police service bear. He published a report in 2010 which concluded that the police service could probably cope with a 12 per cent cut in resources - if it did some very imaginative and dramatic changes - without damaging service to the public, assuming demand did not change. That is a baseline to start from before there were much greater cuts than that and the challenges that the police service has faced.

During that time, in various different ways, particularly from the previous Mayor and the Government, there have been targets and incentives to spend as much money as possible on police officers in different ways, and that has meant that the weight of savings and cuts has been borne by the non-people spend, which is a small proportion in policing, and also by cutting staff, both staffing support functions and operational functions like Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

Therefore, we land in a situation where the balance of spend is completely out of kilter. For example, we have about 5,000 fewer staff than we had a decade ago, which is fairly evenly split between a reduction in PCSOs and reduction in other staff roles. That is a massive change from around 15,000 to around 10,000, using rough numbers. Also capital grants stopped in the first part of the last decade and with pressures as well to spend a smaller proportion of the budget on support functions that squeezed areas like technology, it led to a massive estate change programme, so you have that picture where you are cutting support resources, you are selling buildings, you are trying to move forward on technology, but in a squeezed environment, and that changes the shape of the organisation. That is where you get to today, and that is what I have to wrestle with, and that is what [Baroness] Louise [Casey] calls out very powerfully. She talks, does she not, about police

officers doing back-office roles; she talks about poor equipment and training for officers. She, in her vivid way, colours in the effect of an organisation that is out of balance.

Here we are today where, if we were spending per head of population in London on policing what we were a decade ago, and I am talking about the policing of London bit, taking out the national security parts around counter-terrorism and protective security grants, which are ringfenced. The policing London part of our budget, which is about two-thirds from Government and the third from the Mayor, if we were spending today in per head of population, in real terms, what we were a decade ago, we would need to be spending about 27 per cent more, £878 million, so that is a big amount on top of a £3.5 billion budget. So we are a lot smaller and we are out of shape because the balance is now towards police officers, which is great, but that is not so great if you cannot train, equip, support them, and provide the right facilities for them.

Then going forward, to answer your question, the challenges for us going forward is not simply about we need to have some more resources to do X or Y, we have to change that mix. We have to change it in those three ways. We have to strengthen the foundations of the organisation. You will see in the *A New Met for London* plan that point, giving officers the right technology, the right equipment, the right clothing. Being an organisation which buys the cheapest trousers and coats for officers is not great when it is cold and raining and you are cold and wet and miserable in February. Getting the best technology because every good organisation is now increasingly technology led. Investing more in training of officers and their leaders. Fixing those foundations is part of it.

Secondly, changing the mix of officers and staff, we have well in excess of 3,000 officers doing jobs that should be being done by police staff. Our developing strategic workforce plan, which is not as refined as I want it to be one day, but we have a developing plan, we would like to put those 3,000 officers back on to the streets over three years, if we had the money to hire 3,000 police staff to take on those jobs, which they would probably do it at lower cost because you are paying particular skills rather than generic skills of police officers and they do them better because they would be more specialists in human resources (HR) or training or whatever else it might be. We want to do that and where our budget is currently settled, pending any further conversations with the Home Office, we have the money to do about 300 of those so far, rather than the 1,000 we would like to this year.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** A tenth of the 3,000 that you need.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Nearly a third of what we want to do this year, but a tenth of what we want to do over three years in terms of bringing those people in to put people on the front line.

Then the last point is the balance between specialist and local. In terms of this year's budget, we started with about a £400 million gap, which was a combination of a bit more than half of that was financial pressures, inflation, and change in legislation, that sort of thing. A bit less than half of it was *A New Met for London* investment costs, such as the civilianisation and technology and other things I have spoken about. In terms of closing that, we have gone through a very tough - over the last two or three months - almost like a zero-based approach. Not as deep a dive as we need to do over the next few years, but a first attempt at that, and we have made 4.5 per cent, £161 million, of savings and cuts. I would distinguish with some are deliberately cutting that to be able to invest in that, some are savings and things we can do more efficiently. Then by some financial issues around treasury management and things, there was another £30 million. Then the Mayor has added significantly more on top of that. Between that we have managed to balance the books in terms of the pressures and start to cover some of the ground we wanted to in terms of our *A New Met for London*

investments, but not as much. That takes us into some of the things we will talk about. As we do that rebalancing, that is a long answer, but hopefully that sets the frame.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** It is a very helpful answer though, because it sets out the situation you are dealing with. Getting these 3,000 staff jobs sorted, because it kind of makes sense, rather than having police officers doing those back-office functions, it absolutely makes sense. Do you have a timescale for when you are hoping that will be fully resolved?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have set an ambition of three years, 1,000 a year for 2024/25, 2025/26, 2026/27. I would like to do it a lot more quickly, but the ability to recruit and generating the money from the Mayor or the Home Office or through trying to find other savings, is not something that is going to happen at that speed. Therefore, we have tried to be realistic and set it over three years.

It is doubly important that we start the journey this year because we do have a workforce and a police officer headcount that is going backwards. The challenges of recruiting, there is a strategic intent, but there is also a practical reality of the difficulty of recruiting in London. Our retention numbers are good in terms of police officers, our recruiting is not. While we control police staff pay, we do not control police officer pay, national pay arrangements, and we are going backwards and predict going back further next year. Therefore, at least if we can balance that going backwards by putting more officers on the front line, at least we are sustaining the strength of the front line, even if there is not too much net growth.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Deputy Mayor, could you just share any reflections on the composition of the MPS's workforce, and also how Londoners can have confidence in the model, given that we have heard that it is all a bit out of kilter at the moment?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes, thanks a lot. It is very clear from Baroness Casey's report, and especially in the chapters you are looking at today, about how the MPS has been pushed out of shape, as the Commissioner would talk about it. You can see in the figures, not only were police officer numbers coming down post-2016, but you could see in the figures from 2010 to 2018 that police staff were falling. That stopped in 2018 and started to reverse and go back up, but we have not got back to the same position that there was in 2010 in terms of police staff numbers. That is obviously a really challenging issue because you want police officers to be doing the jobs that they are trained to do and they have the expertise and skills to do, rather than doing jobs that police staff can do. You need the right experience and the right skills in the right places.

In terms of what we are doing from City Hall to support the Commissioner's right ambitions to make sure that police officers are maintained and police staff numbers rise, there is an additional over £150 million in the budget for this year and that is additional on top of the long-term funding since 2016 that the Mayor has put in. The Commissioner talks about the balance of funding, City Hall has increased from 19 per cent funding to the MPS in 2016 to 27 per cent in the budget that has been proposed for next year. Therefore, it shows you how the balance is changing. Then of course within that we have the problems around the National and International Capital City (NICC) grant, which is also pushing the MPS out of kilter.

We are working with and, as the Commissioner has talked about, there has been a huge amount of work between the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the MPS around the budget. As it is at the moment, and we still have work to do in the run up to signing off the final budget, in terms of looking at the prioritisation, looking at the delivery of some of the priorities that the Commissioner wants to deliver for London. That does mean looking at estates, it does mean looking at the data, and it does mean looking in

some ways that modernisation and how quickly that can take place. Really clear, the Mayor has put in extra funding for PCSOs as well, but we do have significant recruitment challenges, so it is about what budget there is, but also what is deliverable in terms of the recruitment of officer staff as well as police officers.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. I am going to bring in Assembly Member Hall very briefly for a follow-up.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** It is just a clarification, please. If warranted officers are doing staff members' jobs, do they still count as frontline officers, or are they then counted as a member of staff?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** There is not a measure of frontline officers. The measure, for example, in the national workforce targets that Government has is just a total officer headcount. It makes no judgment on what they are doing.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Right. Because, if they are warranted officers, we would say that there is 34,000 frontline staff and around 10,000 staff.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** That would be incorrect.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** That would be around about what it was last time. I know you are dropping numbers like a stone at the moment, which is worrying for all of us, but I am just thinking, if you were doing - well not you obviously - but if a police constable (PC) was doing the job of a staff member, would he be counted as - in your terms - as a staff member and go into that headcount?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** No.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** He would still go into what we always think of as a frontline?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, which is why I said, when you use the word "frontline", it is incorrect, because there are a lot of police officers in non-frontline roles. Of course, there are some police staff in frontline roles. Think of our call handlers, think of our PCSOs, they are directly serving the public. Think of our scenes of crime officers.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** No, no, I get it, I get all that, I was just concerned as to where the numbers are, and obviously the wages that are being paid is completely different then if they are doing a staff member's role and they are paid as a warranted officer.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** But you end up in this situation, it is clearly not the best way to run an organisation, I am not pretending it is. However, if you have workforce targets centred on the numbers of police officers and you lose money if you do not sustain those, you end up taking the majority of your cuts on the police staff side. If those cuts go too deep, the role ends up being backfilled by police officers and you end up with a workforce that is in completely the wrong shape. I had a number I was going to try to pull out in terms of, if you look across the country just as a benchmark, I will find the exact number in a moment, but we have a much higher percentage of officers in support functions than other police forces do. That indicates that we are more leaning in that direction than others, which is obviously unhealthy.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** For time I will leave it there, but it is the counting of it that is of concern, but thank you, I will leave it there.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** I would also like to point out that police can be women as well as men, just as we move on.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** I do know that.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Duvall, you wanted to come in briefly as well.

**Len Duvall AM:** Just going back to the recruitment and retention issue, it is very good news about the retention issue because that was a long-standing issue, but going back to recruitment, have we really bottomed out, evidence-based now, of what the recruitment problems are and why there is a reluctance to join? To be honest, in that sense, because your strategy is right about aiming to get people in back of office, off that front line, whatever the front line is, back on to the front line. But that is going to take time, as you said, recruitment still is an issue. So, what is it that stopping?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, I do not want a workforce going backwards. The majority of it is affordability in London. One of the questions that people have asked me regularly is, "Is your recruitment problem a reputation issue in terms of the things that hit the MPS?" and that is a perfectly proper question. If I do not ask it now myself, I am sure one of you will probably ask it. While we cannot rule out that being a factor, the prison service in London has massive vacancies and has to bus officers around the country; probation has record numbers of vacancies in London; education and health have by far the highest percentage of vacancies in London compared to its other regions. I know other parts of the public sector. There is something about public sector pay in London, as cost of living and house prices and things are moving in a certain direction, the current arrangements in terms of a national pay scale with a London allowance is not working across multiple public sector workers. Therefore, in terms of this year's pay negotiations, we put in our submission recently for police officers, and there are probably three things required, the national ask, which I agree with, is about a pay rise which keeps up with inflation. Changing the initial starting point pay, you lose the initial starting point because police pay is much less competitive in your first two or three years as an officer, so changing those pay scales in the early points. Then the third point for London is the London weighting needs a sizable change, and we have said that we think it needs at least £2,000 to get anywhere near property prices and affordability in London.

**Len Duvall AM:** OK. That is going to take some time to address, is it not, because that is going to be with you for a bit like the issue of moving staff around into the right places and the right spots in terms of tackling crime. If that is the case, then should we not try to jump ahead of the policy debate and then talk about the different mixed teams required for tackling crime in the future? Is that not some of the models and some of the work that has been done in the past about the shape of those teams? No doubt one of the other questions that comes to mind is the way that MPS policy of moving staff, prioritising issues, the firefighting, plugging the gaps, or not plugging the gaps in terms of performance issues that comes to light, are all those things being looked in together or are they being treated separately?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Our resource management is one of the things that comes out in this. Yes, our management resources have not been good enough, we are getting better at it and that is one of things we are strengthening because that is a foundational issue. That ranges from day-to-day deployment through to long-term planning. If we had complete freedom on workforce numbers, we would pick a very different balance of officers, staff, and other skills, in both operational and support functions, because in operational roles, ideally, we would have more PCSOs. We started last year 1,600 below the number of PCSOs we had historically in neighbourhoods and the Mayor putting money to

grow by 500. We are going to do over 100 of those this year and probably another over 100 next year. That is more limited by recruiting than it has been by money. That is the first point there.

Also, there is operational skills in things like cyber and fraud and technology that we would want. We would want to make that mix differently if we got rid of all those pressures. There is a balance point, which is yours, the point you are making. The second point is the size of the organisation. I made that strategically, I do not think it is big enough, but the mix is completely out.

In terms of our deployment, our deployment is too chaotic, and we are improving that, but there is some way to go. We have started, if you look at the recent protests which have been a big drain on frontline policing over the last three or four months, we have started changing the balance in terms of the officers we are using for that and taking more from non-community roles so that you are sharing that out differently. One of things we have in the budget going forward is we want to increase our number of public order trained officers to give us a way of sharing that load in a different way, so that it is not always those closest to communities who get drawn out.

**Len Duvall AM:** Thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Now, Assembly Member Lord Bailey.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** Good morning, Deputy Mayor and Commissioner. To the Commissioner, just to focus on this issue about why people are not joining. Of course, we all know the cost of living drives everything that goes on in London. However, many people who apply to the MPS will not even live in London, and I start there because what do you think your frontline officers are saying to members of the public who are saying they are thinking about joining the police?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are an organisation in the middle of change with lots of difficult issues that we are confronting, from changing the way the workforce is, changing training, confronting standards issues, therefore a lot of officers would be very positive, but some would not be entirely positive; I am absolutely sure about that. However, I do think that is another way of asking the reputation question. The fact that the whole public sector is struggling in London is the thing that tells me it is more about some base common issues like pay. However, that does not mean that we cannot work harder at different methods of recruiting.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** I asked the question in that way because it is more than that for the police. If you look at the pay scale of a police officer compared to jobs in particular it starts high, the police has a real attraction that you know for a fact it will improve, which many other jobs do not have that. Your issue is as much that, if not more, reputational. A lot of it is to do with morale and the way in which your officers are speaking about the experience they are having. You only have to look at what happened with your armed officers. I say this because I speak to a number of young people who are thinking of joining the force, and they are now beginning to seek out police officers to speak to, and every one of them that speaks to a police officer comes back in a worse condition than they left. Is somebody doing something about that internally?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** You hint towards a particular issue. There is a real fragility at the moment in officers' confidence to act. There has been a range of cases around officers making fast-time operational decisions where, as an operational officer, it is hard to fully understand why the response in terms of the accountability response from other bodies is as it is. That is one of the reasons I know that the previous Home Secretary ordered an accountability review in terms of how those issues are dealt with, and the current Home Secretary supports that. That is still being finalised. Getting the balance

right so officers feel supported when they are making difficult decisions to protect the public is absolutely critical and that is making officers' confidence quite precarious.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** Thank you. My question to the Deputy Mayor, you made a comment about the amount of funding, the proportion that has come over to the Greater London Authority (GLA), to the Mayor. Do you think that is a problem? Do you think that is correct?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The Mayor is always prioritising policing and safety is always going to be a real priority, the number one priority for him. However, yes, I do think that is an issue. In terms of the proportion of funding that comes directly from council tax, that is a problem because council tax is a regressive tax, and it should be from national taxation that policing is funded across the country. If the way that policing is funded is dependent on your council tax base, that is not fair and that is not equitable. Yes, I do think that is a problem because it means that, not only in London, that Londoners are bearing the burden of funding the MPS and that the MPS has NICC responsibilities. The Commissioner has already talked about protests. The council tax payers of London are paying for national protests in London. Therefore, there is a number of issues about how policing is being funded at the moment, and there really does need to be a look at the balance between what is council tax and some business rates that is going into the MPS, and what should be Government funding from a fair and equitable taxation base, but also fair and equitable when you look at the responsibilities and what the money is being spent on.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** We are all Londoners, and we have great sympathy for the cost of the police to police ourselves, as it were. What would you say to someone who says the Mayor currently has £630 million-odd, more than half a billion pounds extra, what would you say to those people who look at London and say, "London is the richest place possibly in Europe", they would suggest that we should pay for our own policing. Do you not think that is correct, that we should take on more of that?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I go back to what I said around, of course the Mayor is prioritising as far as he can, prioritising putting funding into the MPS, and he has done so. The MPS has had a billion pounds worth of real term cuts since 2010. The Mayor has doubled the funding that is going into the MPS since 2016. He has absolutely delivered on his promise to prioritise policing. However, we do need to look at what the burden on the MPS is, its NICC responsibilities. We know from previously that there was the independent evaluation of how much that cost. The MPS has refreshed that and brought it up to date. We know that there is a gap of £250 million from Government funding for those responsibilities for the protests, for example, there is a significant burden, not just financially, but a significant burden operationally on the MPS. Frontline officers being abstracted from local policing and local communities, as well as senior officers who have to take operational control of that. There is a significant burden on that. Therefore, it should be that the Government steps up and rebalances the way in which the MPS is being funded.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** We all would like to get money all the time from the magic money tree, but I am sure there is a lot of people who would say, at of £630 million extra, the Mayor should take some of that burden. That is what a lot of people would be thinking. I want to move on to the Casey report. Baroness Casey's report said that she saw no evidence that the MPS had an evidence-based approach to workforce planning. To what extent do you believe the Commissioner has improved workforce planning in the MPS? I will come to you, Commissioner, I am not going to speak about you like you are not here.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I hesitate to speak on behalf, or I will not speak on behalf of the Commissioner, he can very clearly outline everything he has done since taking control. Since taking control and his new leadership team taking control of the MPS in terms of really looking at what the

skills are, what the demands are, and where the workforce should be, and he has already touched on that, and we have had conversations already many times in Police and Crime Committee meetings around that.

Compared to the picture that is painted in Baroness Casey's report about a lack of planning, a lack of understanding, we are streets ahead now and we have seen that through this budget process in terms of right-sizing of budgets, really looking at where officers and staff are, where they need to be, how much it costs, and making sure that the budgets are right-sized. There is a lot more work to be done and that will be done in the next year around that. It really has changed in terms of that planning, there is a significant amount of work already being undertaken and will continue to be undertaken.

It is interesting when you read Baroness Casey's report and the particular chapter we are focusing on today, when you look at some of the things she talks about in terms of that lack of planning, the lack of understanding, 'initiativitis' as well, and you can see very clearly coming through with that the work of MOPAC and City Hall in the scrutiny and oversight. There are two examples in chapter 2 of where we have been asking and challenging the MPS under the previous leadership, "Where is your workforce planning? Where is your understanding of what is needed?" The Mayor is quoted in the report as asking the Commissioner, "What do you think is the police officer numbers that you need?" No answer. Then the quote from a senior leader about not having a crystal ball is in response to oversight board meetings asking, on a particular issue around detectives, "What is your understanding of the number of detectives you need, the impact that is needed, and what your plan is on that?" You can see it very clearly. I would not get the same answers to that now because I know that type of planning and understanding analysis is underway and there is more work to be done.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** Thank you for that. There are two questions I want to ask here, one is what is your comparator, because you are saying that you are doing better, the MPS is doing better than it was, but it was doing terribly beforehand, therefore that is a very low bar to clear. You may be at a higher bar, let us just test that, but doing better than it was is not satisfactory because the two examples you gave are pretty horrific. What are you doing in particular to make sure that this learning is retained? Because much of the conversations that we have with the MPS and with the London Fire Brigade, we have known these problems for years. The Mayor has been the Mayor for seven years and only now are you dealing with those things, even if you are dealing with them properly, what are you doing to make sure that we do not have to, in seven years, again reinvent the wheel?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Within the budget and within growth last year as well and the *A New Met for London* plan that the Commissioner has set out, there is very clearly a pillar about fixing the foundations. That fixing the foundations work is really about making sure that these structures, processes, and understanding and analysis of what is needed from the workforce and the demand and the skills that are needed is there. There has been funding from the Mayor for this budget around fixing the foundations and ensuring that happens. Of course, there is going to have to be ongoing oversight of that and that is absolutely right and proper. In response to the Casey Review we have set at the London Policing Board (LPB). That really is a significant - and we have talked about it before here as well - step forward in terms of the scrutiny and oversight and the public scrutiny and oversight and that will be ongoing. There is a committee on people and culture, and we expect that committee on people and culture to be, absolutely part of its remit will be to look at how has that workforce plan developed, is it fit for purpose, and how is it being implemented and what has the impact been, so that ongoing oversight will continue.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** My worry with both of those structures, one is very political, very public, this strikes me they are very highly professional activity to retain these learnings, to build the systems so we are not back here in 2, 3, 4, 7 years' time. I am not as confident in your response as I hoped that I would be. The question I would then ask you, one more time is, do you have the mechanisms? The last time you sat in



front of us and we talked about that part of the report, I was much happier with what you said, it felt like that you had ongoing procedures that would continue to solve those problems. I am not hearing key performance indicators about the workforce plan going into the future, how you make sure that we do not arrive at this point again.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Lord Bailey, can you get to a question? These are quite a lot of assertions.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** I will get to it. My point is, my assertions are based on the answer, I might add, Chair. What mechanisms do you have to make sure that the workforce planning continues? How will you scrutinise that process? Do you have a group of meetings going forward and agenda items somewhere? How do you know that you will continue to see this improvement because you at MOPAC will push for it?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** One of the things we have done since the Baroness Casey report, and we have discussed it as well, is we have looked, and rightly looked, at what does this mean for MOPAC, what does this mean for our oversight. Also, what does it mean in relation to setting up the LPB, how do we ensure that the LPB has impact, and how do we ensure that there is a workplan going forward which picks up the key elements of Baroness Casey's report and tracks it through to *A New Met for London* and tracks through the impact. Those structures and processes, the workplan is being developed, the oversight is there. There has not been a change to the processes that I talked about last time, so I do not really understand why you are now saying that you have a different view of it.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** Because you were answering a different question, then you were not talking about the workforce plan.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Well, in terms of the workforce plan, of course, the usual way in which I have described oversight previously in terms of the bilateral meetings that I have, the meetings that MOPAC officers and the boards that they sit on within the MPS, they sit on a people and workforce board, that is not the right title, but there is a board. They sit on the appropriate board so there is that oversight at officer level, which feeds up to the bilaterals and then feeds up to the LPB. The LPB is very clear, and the fact that it is held in public should give you confidence, you know what is happening, you can see what is happening, you can read the papers, and that shows you the processes and the oversight that is happening. I have confidence that will not only challenge but will support the MPS going forward because the people on the LPB have a significant experience and expertise in change, in demand, in workforce planning and in change.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** I am going to bring in Assembly Member Pidgeon because we have been looking at this section for quite a long time and we are ready to move to Assembly Member Pidgeon's questions.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** Well, I would like to ask the Commissioner something.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Very quickly.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** Commissioner, do you feel like, within your own team, you have the expertise to continue to deliver into the future as well? As the pressure of the Baroness Casey report goes away, do you still think it will be a priority for you and how will you make sure workforce planning is a priority?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are building it at the moment. We have done a lot better this year than we would have done previously, but there is more to do. Fundamentally, it goes back to some of the workforce questions at the start, if you removed most of your capability to do the boring things behind the scenes that make a big organisation work, like your business planning, your finances, your strategic planning, all that organising where you are looking at demand, looking at the future, and you are working out what resources do we need and you are feeding that into an intelligent budget process with choices, with City Hall and the Home Office, if you do not have that machinery, it takes some time to rebuild. This year's process has been the first go at that. We have made a reasonable attempt at it. Next year it will be better. One of the legacies I need to leave is an organisation where those foundations just work, so whatever the challenges of the MPS are, it can tackle and move to meet them. We are making a lot of progress.

The things I would highlight, for example, the deliberate choices in the plan we have going forward on the budget. Over last year and this year through these deliberate choices, we are putting 793 more people into public protection because the demand is in that area. Rape, domestic violence, child abuse, etc, has in the last decade tripled or quadrupled, depending which metric you look at, the resources have barely changed. It is not surprising the service is not what any of us would want it to be. The people in there care deeply and are stretched unreasonably so. We have done some planning and some of the investment this year in rape and serious sexual offence officers is calibrated to bring down from workloads per investigator from 30 cases each to 15 cases each, which is more in line with the national benchmark. There is one example. I could also talk about what we want to put on volume crime, on neighbourhood, so all of that we started to fit in. I cannot say I have the perfect process yet. We have a rough working version, it will get stronger over the next year.

**Lord Bailey of Paddington AM:** Thank you, Commissioner.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Pidgeon.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Commissioner, can I just pick up on the issue of Baroness Casey talked about you doing this full bottom-up budget review and you touched on this earlier, saying you have done a bit of zero-based budgeting, which I have to say is music to my ears and my former colleague on the Metropolitan Police Authority. Baroness Dee Doocey [OBE], was obsessed by this and the MPS just would not grasp it. Can you tell us a bit more around that, ensuring that your investment is aligned with priorities and demand rather than just historically how that has been. Has this review been completed or have you just done it in one particular area?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I might be stretching things to call what we have done as a full zero-based. We have, over the last few months, taken a rule across the whole organisation trying to work out where there are opportunities, where are the choices. Opportunities to make real savings or choices where we think we would rather make a cut there because there is less risk there than there is over here operationally. We have done that at a high level, and we have £161 million of savings in this year's budget as a result of that, which is about 4.5 per cent, which is a good first cut.

A proper zero-based approach, having done this in other leadership roles like in counter-terrorism before, it will take two or three years across the whole organisation, because you need to pick a function, so you pick forensics or you pick volume crime investigation, and you need to dive into that in lot of detail. You need to properly understand the processes, work out is it efficient, how is it working, how could it be more efficient, and also what are the demands and what would the right size be. Therefore, it is about efficiency and workloads. That level of detail takes quite a lot of research and the right expertise, so as part of our change programme and part of the money that we are spending this year as a result of our savings and the Mayor's investment, is to enable us to build a proper sustainable process where, over the next two or three years, we

work through the whole of the MPS slice by slice and do that really thoroughly, so that by the end of that you have given every piece of the organisation the efficiency it can get to and also got it the right size.

As part of that, one of things we look at is if it is savings or opportunities like automation. Some of our processes are very, very bureaucratic and with modern technology you could streamline that so the people are doing less manual functions because the technology does that for them and you are using your people to make high-quality decisions and doing the quality of work they would like to do rather than boring work. It is not going to happen overnight, but we are determined to do it. I need more investment in the MPS to be the size and the talent it needs to be going forward and some of what we talked about this year is a good start, but I have a duty to make sure I am making best use of what we have, and I do recognise that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Following from Baroness Casey's report, you are looking at this systematically, going through the MPS over two to three years to get those savings out, modernise, transform it. Alongside that, we were told yesterday at the Budget and Performance Committee, and the Mayor said to ask you today, because it was your bid, that you have a bid into the Home Office for funding. It sounded to me it was around funding staff rather than officers or something, but is it also linked to this, needing the resource for you to get underneath this to ultimately make it a more efficient service?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is linked to some of our technology and change initiatives, it is linked to that as well as the staff point, but obviously that is mid-conversation, therefore I am not going to talk about that in detail.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** No, but can you give us any more flavour what sort of thing you are asking for?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I have said as much as I need to, really. We are in conversations with the Home Office, it has been very constructive, and I do not feel it is right to go into that detail at the moment.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Is there any timescale at all for that?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Well, it is basically 1 April [2024].

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK, OK, so watch this space, we might hear something along that which would help with this. What is the size of the team that you have working through this review of your finances, or what is the size of the team you envisage it being?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are just building that team with partly internal resources and partly external expertise. I do not have a number to hand for you though.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK, will you be able to send us that?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I can let you know that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Lovely, OK, I will leave that there. Thank you, Chair.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. I am going to bring in Assembly Member Devenish.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Thank you, Chair. Good morning, both. PCSOs, Commissioner, how many of the MPS's new PCSOs are on the street right now please, and how is their impact being measured?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We started the year with 1,600 fewer PCSOs than there were a decade ago. At the start of last year, the Mayor put in funding potentially to grow by 500. We are going to get to around - I cannot remember exactly - 150-ish more this year, but we started 200 vacancies as well. We will have grown by over 300 this year, but the growth of our establishment will be about 100-150. Then we are projecting to do the same next year. They are going into our neighbourhood teams, our full new neighbourhood policing model will be launched over the summer [2024], but the effect of them is to be measured through things like the confidence of local communities in terms of the way we deal with antisocial behaviour and crime in their areas.

I guess we might come on to this at some point, but one of the things that has struck me that we have managed to achieve over this year is the trust and confidence type data in the MPS has stabilised, it stopped falling, which is where it was over the last four years. It is interesting when you benchmark it elsewhere and this is the sort of stuff that neighbourhood officers make a big difference on. If we look, for example, at the confidence of local people in the policing of their area, the percentage that says they are doing an excellent job, we are well above the national average and above the other big city forces. It has stabilised, and it has stabilised compared to others in a better position. That is not to be complacent, it has fallen a long way, we now need to build it back up again, but that is positive, and it is through things like that, through things like PCSOs, making a difference in communities that will move those numbers.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Perhaps you could just write to me on the specifics of the PCSOs, what the numbers are, that would be really helpful.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I can give you the precise numbers, yes.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Has the funding for the additional 1,100 PCSOs now been identified, please?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is in our ambition; it is not in the current budget.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Do you know when it will be in the current budget?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is part of our long-term workforce plan, just like I would like the 3,000 staff to put 3,000 more officers on the front line, I would like 1,600 PCSOs to build our neighbourhoods to the size that it needs to be. There is a financial limitation, but also a recruiting limitation at the moment, so that is where we are. Every year in the budget cycle, based on what is possible recruiting-wise and what is available financially, we will be looking at that.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Then, moving on, what discussions have you had with MOPAC and the Mayor regarding the required funding for *A New Met for London*, please?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Crikey, thousands of conversations over the last three months, it has been a very long and interactive process. As you would expect in the budget process, just to talk about it at a high level, we have been doing some proper budget planning, ideally, we would be doing it in the summer, but we are building the capability so it has been later than you would ideally like. We are doing proper budget planning in terms of this is where we are, here are the finances based on assumptions in terms of Mayor's grant and Home Office grant, this is the pressures it is going to leave in the system, which was a bit over £200 million, here is, regardless of the pressures, what we need to spend to start

to reform the organisation, which was nearly £200 million as well, then you get to around £400 million. We are then looking at what can we do to try to balance that because of our responsibilities and hence the £160 million savings. Then we are having iterative conversations with City Hall in terms of can they help beyond the council tax with further investment to help us make more progress. We have gone through the iterative process, and we have come to the numbers that the Mayor and ourselves have published in the last few days.

**Tony Devenish AM:** How much has *A New Met for London* cost to date and what impact has the uncertainty of funding for *A New Met for London* had on delivery of the programme, do you think?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I cannot produce a cost to date, there was investment last year and this year, which I do not have a ready reckoner. We have projected to meet the challenges in terms of total workforce and improving the quality to London over three to four years that we probably need to invest about £900 million in the policing of London, and we have started that journey over the last couple of years. We can lay all that out again after this if that is helpful.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Thank you. Can I just go back to the point that was briefly touched on earlier in terms of your - I will not say excuse - your rationale that the reason recruitment is a problem is because of the London job market and because of pay, etc, I do not disagree with any of that. However, the reality is you are 1,000 officers down on where you should be, correct?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** By the end of this financial year, it will be 1,400, roughly.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Yes, and you think it is going to get worse than that? I have heard some figures up to 2,000, is that true?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It will go beyond that over the next year probably.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Is there a plan? I appreciate all the excuses and the reasons, and they are all justified.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is very loaded to use the word "excuse". We are having a frank conversation; I am not sure that helps the debate.

**Tony Devenish AM:** So yes, OK, sorry, I will change my words, Commissioner. Do you have a plan to make up that very substantial shortfall in officer numbers?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are constantly doing everything we possibly can do to change that. As part of the national drive for police officer recruitment, the Home Office has a central team, we have been taking everything we can do from it, is there anything in our processes for recruitment that can be improved from best practice from around the country, making sure those are as good as they can be, and we have taken on all of those issues. We have also been looking again at a different advertising campaign and different ways of reaching out, and we are working on that at the moment and that will be launching in the next two or three months. I am excited by what I have seen so far on there.

We are doing everything we can do in terms of the best practice in recruiting, but if you were in most sectors, one of the things you would look at is whether that pay and reward package is the right package. That is not in my gift, hence my point earlier about submissions to the national pay negotiating. Also of course you do

benchmark, is this just about us or is it a wider problem, and hence the reason we have been looking at public sector employability and recruitment issues across London. It is pretty widespread across the whole public sector, which tells me it is a pattern.

We have also thought hard about the reputation and confidence issues, and one of the things that is reassuring in our numbers is that the applications from women and from Black, Asian and minority ethnic applicants has held well. There are a range of things, which keeps taking me back to this is, at its core, about a London employability issue. However, we are not shying away from can we tweak our processes, can we do advertising differently, but it is going to take a big movement that others have the levers for if we are going to turn it into the direction. However, falling back at the rate we are falling, what that means for the policing in London is really profound and concerning; I do not shrink away from that, and I am pulling every lever I have in my gift and asking others to pull the levers they have in their gift.

**Tony Devenish AM:** You are telling me you are going to be basically an entire Basic Command Unit (BCU) down in staffing. Do you think you need further outside help because, yes, I accept the points you have made, but do you think you need to go back to the Home Office or the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor, there has to be other things that we can do because we cannot just say it is going to go down, a whole BCU is disappearing?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** As I have said, in terms of recruiting, the employability issues for the public sector in London are really concerning and those levers do not sit in my gift, but we are making a very strong case for how those can be fixed through the national pay mechanisms. Secondly, in terms of mitigating the effect of this on the people of London, in terms of our workforce planning and the earlier conversation, the point about the investment in police staff that takes officers that we already have, that are doing back-office jobs, on to the front line, we can mitigate the effects for London in the shorter term by freeing those people up. That is why that is absolutely critical. For me, it is not a nice to have, it is a critical step to get every possible officer we could do on the front line serving London. The way to do that in the short term is with that investment in staff to take on those roles.

**Tony Devenish AM:** I will leave it there, Chair, but it would be good if the Commissioner could write to us with any more detail on that, because it is the biggest problem or one of the biggest problems clearly.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is critical and let me lay out the timeline and the numbers and the detail, we will do that for you.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** That would be very helpful, thank you very much. Assembly Member Hall, you wanted to come in briefly for point of clarification.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** This is very, very quick. How many warranted officers approximately are there in the MPS at the moment?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The police uplift programme target headcount number, and this is based on full-time equivalents, not on total headcount, the number is 35,415. That is the what the Home Office is prepared to fund. Where we anticipate being at the end of March is around 34,000, ie around 1,400 light, as I said. Our projection for the next year based on current application levels, recruiting levels, etc, unless we can make a sharp movement in that, is for that to drop by approximately another 1,250, so we would expect to be at 32,750 roughly at the end of March 2025.

Now that is deeply concerning to me, as I know it is to you, and I am saying it is good that we have spent this time on this subject, which is why I am pulling every lever I can and why I desperately need the support and investment to free up officers from jobs that they should not be doing, and that is a short-term mitigation while we hopefully - through this year's pay structure, which reports in the summer and that could start to have effect from the autumn - start to change the employability prospects for police officers joining the MPS in London.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Yes, we all get that. Out of those 32,750, are you also telling me out of that 3,000 of those are not doing frontline jobs?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is more than that. It is 3,000 we want to free up in that period of time that we think that is a realistic target.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** OK, how many warranted officers are doing staff jobs?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** More than 3,000.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Approximately how many more?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is more than 3,000.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** OK, are we talking 1,000 more than that or are we talking in the hundreds, or you do not know?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have the data; it is not one number I have committed to my brain because we have looked at what we can achieve over the next three years, and we think freeing up 3,000 is the ambition.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** OK, well I am sure you will write to us, but that takes us way under 30,000 officers. People keep saying to me, because I keep saying we should have 34,500 officers because that is the figures we have had over the time, and the constant response is, "Well, where are they?" which does not help any of us. I appreciate your problems, I completely do, but this is really serious.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The other factor that is relevant to this is it is worth reflecting on the separate funding streams to the MPS because the counter-terrorism and protective security funding, which is about £700 million of our £4.2 billion budget in the MPS, is obviously ringfenced to those functions as part of national security spending from Government. I have no problem at all with that ringfencing. But that has grown over the years, therefore the number of the officers that are in that part of the MPS has doubled in the last ten years roughly, and there are about 6,000 officers roughly in that area now. Those are doing national work, not policing London. The policing of London function is maybe 6,000 smaller than those numbers.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** OK, they are included within those numbers?

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

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** OK, all right. I am sure we will come back to this, thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. I am going to bring in Assembly Member Desai and we are moving on to look at governance, scrutiny, and accountability, chapter 8 of the Casey Review.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Thank you, Chair. Good morning. If I can ask you both a couple of questions about the relationship between the MPS and MOPAC. Baroness Casey described this relationship as dysfunctional. As far as the MPS was concerned it was defensive and had a tendency towards obfuscation. As for MOPAC, she said it lacked a systematic approach to supporting and challenging the delivery of agreed aims, objectives, or outcomes. How have you both worked together over the past 18 months to address these concerns, with what results, and where are we today? Do you want to start off, Sophie?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I feel like I am in marriage counselling.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Without a couch.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Hopefully no tissues. I completely recognise the picture that Baroness Casey painted in her report. I obviously gave evidence to Baroness Casey as well, and there are examples of where in the report itself we had previously found real difficulties with the MPS and the leadership of the MPS. A case in point was the body-worn video research that we wanted to do, which is now sorted. That is an example of the difference and the change in the leadership and the style of the leadership.

It takes time to change culture, it does take time, but overall - not overall - it is night and day, the difference between the relationship between MOPAC and the MPS in terms of day-to-day working at officer level, but also working myself with the Commissioner and his senior leadership team. You can see that, and it is not just warm words, you can see that in the way that the *A New Met for London* plan was developed, for example, really close collaborative working on that through *A New Met for London*. We have worked with the MPS on a child-first approach, on work around command and control, on the CONNECT programme, and around Right Care, Right Person (RCRP). All those things have been significant differences into the way that we have worked.

One of the issues that has been a problem before is on data sharing. While there is still work to be done on that, we have made significant progress. We have access to a tool called Met Insights, which is allowing us much more access to crime data without having to request it from the MPS, that is direct access, and for example, we are working on a drug problem profile with the MPS at the moment and that has showed how useful that access can be.

In terms of the picture that is painted in the Casey report, that is no longer the case. You can see this. We have also, as I have discussed before, thought about how do we make our oversight more strategic? One of the ways you make your oversight more strategic is not having to do the ground-level battles to get the data, to get the information, and to have that relationship right, which means that you can lift yourself up and be more strategic, which means you can make sure that, for example, the LPB has a worked-through work plan. It has worked-through performance indicators, which Lord Bailey was asking me about, worked-through performance indicators that have been agreed and signed off both by the MPS and MOPAC so that there is a shared version of where you are trying to get to.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Commissioner?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Thank you. The marriage guidance thing is still stuck with me. We are making good steps towards a more collaborative relationship. The law creates two separate organisations with different responsibilities that are supposed to work very, very closely



together. The scale of the challenges in terms of really transforming and changing the way a police service is resourced, organised, run, managed, to cuts across both of our responsibilities, and so that joint working is really, really important and I am absolutely committed to that and the transparency.

It is quite a big change and there is a lot to do there, and some of the issues we are discussing are things like performance. Sophie talked about data and how we are making progress on that, and there is more to do, and issues like performance management where we have separate teams doing performance data and we are looking at how we might have that more joined together so that we have a shared insight and reporting as far as possible that enables us to be having the right conversations rather than looking at two sets of graphs on the same data that say different things, which is not ideal. We are working towards that. Of course, then we have changes built around things like the LPB, which have added into other governance frameworks as well, which have added further scrutiny and different expertise to the table.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Coming back to you, Deputy Mayor, if asked now – and to some extent you have already answered this question, but I will still put it to you – how do you think that officers in MOPAC would describe the relationship between the two organisations?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** What they would say is that it has improved, but there is still work in progress in terms of making sure on a day-to-day level that access is as smooth as possible, but in terms of the strategic work that we are doing, there has been significant improvement and I touched on some of the examples of that where we have had that joint collaborative working. There is still some work, it takes time to change the culture, and the culture of the MPS that Baroness Casey outlines is not just around all the issues around personnel, misconduct, disproportionality, values, and principles. It is also about opening up and being more transparent and accountable. That does take time and I would hope that officers in MOPAC would be able to say they can see progress and that they can see a path to getting to the point that it really needs to be at.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Thank you. Commissioner, the other way around, how would you say that your officers would describe their relationship with MOPAC now, anything more that needs to be done?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have been working together for just over a year, it has made progress, but we would say the same, our people would say we have made progress in some respects, but there is more to do. As Sophie just talked about, for example, the planning and budget process this year, next year needs to be smoother, and some of that definitely sits on us, but it is probably a joint responsibility as well. It is work in progress to be really reshaping the MPS. The scale of what we need to do in terms of putting the resources where Londoners need them, meeting some of the massive strategic challenges such as the ones pulled out by the questions earlier about recruiting and workforce balance, to get to a very different way that the MPS serves London requires a lot of heavy lifting together. We have had our first year at building that new approach and it is going to take time to get it as good as it needs to be, but it is making progress.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Thank you. I will leave it there, Chair.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. I will now bring in Assembly Member Pidgeon.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Lovely. I want to talk about learning and challenge. Commissioner, since Baroness Casey's review, can you talk us through how the MPS has improved, or indeed has it improved, how it embeds learning and makes the changes needed?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** A key theme for me on this has been about how we bring outside voices and different perspectives into the MPS. I will give you a few examples of that. We have strengthened our non-executive directors (NEDs) on the management board with a range of different skills. We are more routinely using outside insight in our work, for example our operational NEDs work in professional standards looking at sex allegations against officers over the last ten years, we had a lot of external scrutiny and involvement in decision making at key points in that process. Also, our plan in terms of *A New Met for London*, I do not think we have ever consulted as much on anything at all. We produced a rough first stab in January last year [2023], which we called the turnaround plan. That was published with a view that we want everyone's views on that. There were an enormous number of events and consultation on that. We also make clear we were pending [Baroness] Louise Casey's report. That then all got crushed in the hopper and produced the *A New Met for London* plan in the summer [2023], and we have been out and did events in all 32 boroughs in eight weeks over the summer about how we go forward with this. There have been follow-on events locally run by BCU Commanders, and we will be continuing that cycle.

We reset our relationship with London councils. I am meeting all the Leaders twice a year, I was with them a couple of weeks ago, reflecting on how things are working locally. Louisa Rolfe [OBE, Assistant Commissioner for Met Operations, Metropolitan Police Service] and her team are meeting them more regularly and I was really encouraged by what I heard from them that they felt they were seeing a difference in terms of, as we shift the balance from everything driven from Scotland Yard to seeing to the local balance feeling different from their perspective, which was really good. Not finished but work in progress and getting there.

There are some interesting things going on across the across the MPS, Chief Superintendent Simon Crick on his BCU doing some work in Waltham Forest on a Citizens Assembly with the local authority is an example. All of our neighbourhood superintendents have established new mechanisms locally. Therefore, trying to be more outward reaching and listening, and it is not an accident that in the five operating principles, we have set in the *A New Met for London* plan, the first one is about putting communities first, the third one is about inclusivity, and the fourth one is about being collaborative. I am in the process of hard wiring that into appraisals and how we operate.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** It is great that you talked about the community engagement stuff, that is really great, but you have talked about bringing in external experts, which I had pushed you to many times, and the Mayor, and you have these new NEDs. Give me a practical example of a challenge at the board from one of those NEDs or an alternative view and what you have done that has changed as a result.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** For example, we are building a complex and challenging change programme, two of the NEDs have a lot of experience of doing that in different sectors and they challenged us on the quality of papers coming for board, how we are managing and leading it, and how the board works together on it. Therefore, we have had some substantive conversations on --

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Governance kind of challenges.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** On that, but likewise we have two of the NEDs looking at developing a programme on culture change, and they are involved in meetings at different tiers in the organisation and challenging what is in that and helping us develop our thinking on that. It is ranging from subject matter, one of the other NEDs has an amazing technology experience and he has been challenging and helping us with our CONNECT programme, for example, and some of our wider technology programmes to generate innovation like the automation that I mentioned earlier. I did not want

NEDs just as governance tick-boxing; I wanted them to bring skillsets where they could dive into particular important strands, and those are some examples.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** That is what I was trying to get at there, OK, but let us talk about embedding learning. Let us talk about a specific area, and you can probably guess what I am going to talk about – child protection. Let us look at that area. The MPS seems to have struggled to embed any learning in that area and make the required changes. We have had numerous reports since 2016, as I regularly talk about with the Deputy Mayor. In the autumn, as I raised with you at Plenary, we had two accelerated causes of concern, and then the recent, yet again, damning is the only word once again, report come out on how the MPS handles child protection. What are you doing to embed learning to turn around this area, which is clearly failing young Londoners?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Thank you. I would not necessarily come at it from the word “learning”. You have to look at what will make the change that is needed to make and make it stick. I made the point earlier about resources. If rape, domestic violence, child abuse, all those public protection areas, if the caseloads go to triple or quadruple in a decade, and you barely change the resources, then the consequences for victims are going to see a very stretched service, which is going to struggle to deliver for them. We are looking at the resourcing of that. We are looking at particular ways it is organised, the way we assess risk of some missing young people, we are looking at whether a more central model might help with a more standardised approach. So there is the how you manage the function and properly taking on the learning and not just issuing a new policy and pretending that will stick if the resources or training and things are not there. Doing it much more systematically.

The second part of that balances with the strategic function in the organisation in terms of do you have proper change capability, and do you have a way of tracking actions and managing that which is sustainable and resilient, because frankly we have not and that is part of that fixing the foundations we spoke about earlier. It is about basic good governance and how a big organisation, in our case policing, whether you identify them yourself or somebody else does, identify things that need to change and improve, looking properly hard at why is it not working, what are the causal factors, how do we change that, how do we make it stick, and how do we follow through. It is proper governance and change management. For example, I have seen we have new policies and learning logs that go around organisations, but those are never going to make the difference you need if you do not have training, skills, resources, and things right.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** That is far more fundamental, getting that, rather than, OK, here is the quick action plan, we tick it off, we show we have done that, move on to the next thing, and then you get another report you have to react to.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, exactly. You can see the effect of determined change. As we have started strengthening public protection, and there is a lot to do on child protection, I do not dispute that, but our work on rape has improved substantially from being among the bottom in the country for solving those cases to being the top, similar for child abuse investigation. We are starting to systematically change. The child protection side we have to do more, I accept that, and we have a plan that is already making progress.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Yes. You said earlier 793 extra officers into that area. Do they work across --

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are part way through; we are not all the way through, that is from 2023/24 investment, which we have managed to get around half the officers in from memory, and then we can try to put more in next year as well.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** How many of those are around child protection, or do they cover different areas?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I cannot remember, they cover different areas, but some are.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** You can write to us about perhaps.

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

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** You talked about training and we constantly talk about training here, but when there is clearly a victim-blaming attitude and we have seen that in report after report, a really negative view of young people, how and what are you doing to do that training differently, because clearly it has not worked over the years, you have tried different training models, what is different in that area that is going to make the change?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are still looking at how we are going to deliver that training and have that effect, so I do not have an answer for you now, but we will be able to update you in due course.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK, I only have a few weeks to be updated, so you are going to have to come back quite quickly on that. Let us look at in December another His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report, Care Quality Commission, and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation did a targeted inspection of a multiagency response to serious youth violence in Merton. In that report, it said, despite individual efforts of committed police officers, the absence of a child-centred policing strategy in London is contributing to a disjointed and inconsistent service to children affected by serious youth violence, and so on. Where are we with that child-centred approach? Where are you with your strategy to absolutely make sure that you are getting this right first time?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The team is still working on the strategy, the Deputy Mayor referenced it earlier, it is a very difficult balance for policing compared to other safeguarding agencies because we have two balancing duties, the law says that children over the age of ten have criminal responsibility and the law creates safeguarding duties in terms of it being child-centred. We have to operate in both of those areas. We are dealing with children who are taking machetes to each other on one hand and children who are vulnerable on the other hand. Finding the right balance on that is important. Partners in this space are much more focused on the diversion and the support, which is completely proper, but we have to find that right balance and we are still working on that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** What is the timescale for that? That was something that was in your *A New Met for London* as well, this new child-centred approach.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, the date is in the future; there are so many dates in that I cannot remember all the dates; it is in that plan.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** I am not sure there is a date; I have not seen one. I have been asking Mayor's Questions on it. I do not think there is.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** OK, I will come back to you with one.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** I do not think there is. I do not know if you have any further comments on that inspection into Merton, whether you have any other thoughts or comments on it.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It was quite wide-ranging; it was frankly more positive about the policing role in the partnership than some of the other partners. That was quite a wide-ranging inspection.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Yes, I thought it had been quite positive about everyone else other than the police, but we will see. That shows that getting this approach right, and that is part of your fundamentals, is the only way you are going to transform this area. OK, I will leave it there. Thank you, Chair.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Assembly Member Duvall.

**Len Duvall AM:** Look, there has been a number of positive steps forward, but equally in terms of child protection and some of the issues and just that last encounter just quoted that there is a vast gap between the reality of the service and when it comes to being inspected what is really going on. Do you not think that we need, you say we are halfway through the plans around child protection, but do you not think the nature of it requires probably a bit more of, not crisis management, but a bit more of the accelerators to get us to where we want to be in terms of this public protection issue, remembering that our delays, bureaucratic delays or inaction, creates more problems for the victim. This, in terms of where we are, and also in terms of how they sound, your plans sound all plausible, feasible, in the right direction of travel, but it has been going on for too long. The inconsistency, if I turn up, it is the same issues that we have had before and you rightly pointed to where we do not have it completely right, but we are on the right track about tackling violence against women and sexual crimes. But on children, I do not think we have really, we have started the journey, but the outcome is not good enough. It cannot be good enough. You cannot be satisfied as a professional, I cannot be satisfied as an oversight, and nor can, and we know the efforts that MOPAC and the Deputy Mayor has made at different times before you came on to taking responsibility on this. Do we not need, is it now not time to say we have these plans, but we really need to drive it much deeper, we need to accelerate it, we need a different approach, and we need the emphasis there, because we are not there and we are failing, we are failing young people in London, we are failing them.

That is the reality of all these reports over the years and when we have gone back and we think we have solved it, we have not quite solved it. I do not say that we do not have people working hard in these areas and there probably are in different outposts, but there is something that is not quite right. More of the same is not going to have the right impact here.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** A sense of urgency is absolutely what we have in the team. We have already changed our risk assessment process, which is one of the criticisms. This is all about the risk of child exploitation for sexual or criminal purposes, this inspection. It was less about child abuse investigations; it was more on that child exploitation theme. A key part of the issue was about risk assessment. We have changed our risk assessment process. That is creating other challenges. On one BCU the number of missing children graded high risk has gone up by 50 per cent overnight, so that is a massive surge in workload. There is an urgency in terms of improving the way we do things and there are moves I already see happening. It goes to that point about an organisation that is trying to improve on multiple fronts. We have had conversations about improving rape, improving child abuse investigations, putting more resources into neighbourhoods, putting more resources into professional standards, and dealing

with the challenges there, in an organisation that's frontline policing capability is shrinking. That is a really painful balance. There is not a fatalism or defeatism here at all, we are determined to succeed, and we try to move forward very quickly on multiple fronts. I am just not going to sit here and pretend that it is straightforward. You can be very ambitious and very determined in a complex environment where you cannot move as fast. In an ideal world, if this was the only thing we were trying to move the dial on in the MPS, you can move much quicker, but when you are trying to move it on multiple fronts, that is the challenge we face. When you start to move the dial and your workload goes up by 50 per cent that is a big challenge.

**Len Duvall AM:** But what I am arguing is I understand all those issues that you have said to me, and I do not think I am asking the impossible, but I am asking for different, like a slightly different approach to where you pick up on and let us go to child protection issues where you watch those case levels either going high, how do we support those people on the ground rather than watch those case levels go high and be left unattended, undealt with, even though you have a new risk model of where in the postcode lottery about leadership that you have some fantastic leadership and we have some pedestrian leadership that is not fit for doing what we need to do. Therefore, I need to know, is that supervision there, is the intervention there to be moving to those areas where you are helping to support, or going into areas and giving some extra resources even for a short while because you recognise something is going quite wrong? What we cannot have, and that is why I say more of the same, is letting things drift, of letting things drift and letting the bureaucracy manage it with a risk assessment issue, because the nature of these crimes and the consistency in terms of what we need to offer in terms of these victims of these crimes needs to be much higher. No one, and do you think there is an issue about young people and, not just young people, but issues around child protection, the voice for those victims, there is the advocacy is not always there. In some ways you have a job to do, and you have eloquently outlined the balance, but what I am asking for is a different type of intervention and maybe it is there and maybe when you come back to the Committee you can highlight where you think that is there, when you think that standards fall below certain areas, and maybe indicate to us when you think you have performed. I do not need the geographical details, but we would like to hear about those instances they will give us some reassurance that is taking place within the system that you have outlined.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** There is some extraordinary work going on day in and day out. One example would be some of the technology we have been using to focus on arresting the men of violence behind the drugs lines, we have flipped that, and we have been using it to spot and identify and get hold of - in a constructive way - the young people who have been coerced or threatened into running drugs for them. We have been using that technology to identify those missing children, those children at risk, and getting hold of them and getting them into the right support from youth services and others, as an example.

We have put a balance of uplifting public protection, we were talking about it earlier, some of that was extra resource going into the child exploitation area. I just cannot recall the exact number off the top of my head. We are already testing different ways of doing the risk assessments and trying to improve the focus in terms of identifying the most vulnerable children and the way we go after them. There is an awful lot going on there to move the dial as quickly as we possibly can do. Perhaps at one of your future scrutiny meetings, maybe with the Commander in that area, Kevin Southworth [Head of Public Protection, MPS], I know he has been a couple of times this year, I am sure there will be a case to dive into that and talk through some of the detail and the numbers and how it is moving in the right direction.

In terms of training, one of my commitments is about better leadership training. We are training all of our frontline leaders this year. That is a week's training for 7,000 sergeants and frontline supervisors on a range of issues, and public protection issues like domestic violence and this are part of that training. There is an awful lot in the plan that is trying to move the dial on these issues.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. You are hearing loud and clear that this Committee feels very strongly about protection of young people. The decrease in the use of strip search as a tactic in terms of policing young children is something that we have raised with you, we raised with you the problem of it, and we welcomed the decrease in that. But there are still issues around the presence of appropriate adults, disproportionality in policing of young people, and the use of force that sometimes leads to hospitalisation, which we learned about from Red Thread. These are issues that this Committee, all of the Committee, cares about and we will certainly take that up. Hopefully we can all suggest to the next Chair of this Committee for next year that we can follow through on the protection of young people.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** If I can come back, Chair, on that very briefly. The things you said there are true, but presents just one side of the issue. The challenge is, when you have several hundred children a year in London are stabbed, usually by other children, when you have many hundreds of children involved in drug supply, there will be occasions where more than a cursory search is required. There will be occasions where use of force is required. None of us want to be in a situation where police officers have to do that, but the reality is that they do, and they need our support that we will be confident in supporting them using their powers as much as we have expectations that they will think about the issues like, is it possible to get an appropriate adult present for a search, etc, which is happening in the vast majority of the time now. Therefore, we need to support people dealing with difficult issues and that is why I made the point about a child-first strategy in policing is a very hard balance to find because we have to recognise both that duty to enforce the law to protect people, both a young person and others from harm, and the fact the law says children over the age of ten are criminally responsible, balanced with the vulnerability and the complexity of issues often behind children in those situations. That is the tension and that is what we are wrestling with, and it is helpful if the Committee recognises those two sides of the challenge that we face.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Yes, absolutely. We are now taking a five-minute comfort break. We will be back at 11.37.

[The meeting adjourned at 11.32am, reconvening at 11.38am.]

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Welcome back to the Policing and Crime Committee. Over to Assembly Member Hall for questions on the LPB.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** My first question has been answered, but can I ask you, Commissioner, do you think that the Mayor was right to scrap the Crime Reduction Board?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The creation of the LPB, it was worth looking at wider governance, and the LPB for us is a lot more governance and oversight, and it is public, and balancing that off with does that make other boards largely redundant was a good conversation to have. I have no objections to it going at all.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** When you have the other one, OK, I hear what you say there. What resource implications has the LPB placed on the MPS and how does this differ from the level of resource previous MOPAC oversight demanded of the MPS?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is quite a substantial increase in workload for senior leaders and senior staff. We are going to be having ten public meetings a year: four main committees and six sub-committees; one that will meet four times a year and one that will meet twice a year publicly. They each require between one and three members of my senior team to attend to do them justice.

They normally have two or three papers each. It takes substantial preparation to put a paper on a complex set of issues out into the public domain. Over 2024, for example, we are anticipating maybe 30 separate items going to the LPB out of those meetings, which will have hundreds of hours of preparation.

Clearly, Baroness Casey said that she did not feel that the oversight of policing in London was working properly, and she recommended the creation of the Board. It is not for me to comment on the right way to be overseen. That was the recommendation, and we are doing everything we can to work with it. We are also keen that my leadership team has time to make the changes necessary in the MPS, as well as being scrutinised on delivering them. Hence, issues like the LPB, the London Crime Reduction Board (LCRB) going, and the conversations we are having about attendance here, which I am sure we will resolve once we get passed the election. All of those issues are being rebalanced because we have this new big formal government structure in the middle.

Legally it is the Mayor and MOPAC who hold me to account under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act of 2011, and I need to work within those structures.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Yes, I know. The Mayor can put in the LPB and the Mayor could take out the LPB, that is for sure. Hundreds of hours, you say? Hundreds of hours?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** In terms of preparing the work, yes.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Yes. OK, thank you. Are you measuring the resource and implications of that as to what else you cannot do or are you putting a financial costing on that to present to the Mayor on what it is costing?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are not doing that. The key issue that we are working on is to make this as constructive and as undisruptive as possible. We have a plan in terms of all the change in the work we are doing. The more that the LPB forward agenda is choreographed alongside that, so you can repurpose work you are already doing, the less of an extra demand it is. That is the key. As we bed down between us how it operates, we can make reduce the disruption as far as possible.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Yes. Many of us feel we would rather top-level police officers were doing what they are supposed to be doing. There are many of us here that feel - and this is not your fault at all - that we have been democratically elected to do this job and then to hear that hundreds of hours are going to duplicate some of the stuff we are doing, I am sure the public would regard that as pretty ridiculous.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Could I just say, I feel uncomfortable with some of these conversations as I am the one who is held to account.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** No, no, we all appreciate that.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I do not mind being sat here, but it is not for me to answer, I just do my job.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** That was not a question. It was a statement. It is what I do. The Mayor never likes it when I make a statement, but there we go. Commissioner, Baroness Casey has said that the MPS needs to be transparent to Londoners for its actions to earn their trust, confidence, and respect. Six months on from its first meeting, how has the LPB helped to increase the trust, confidence, and respect of



Londoners in the MPS? What evidence do you have to support it? If it is easier for the Deputy Mayor to answer, then that is fine.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes. You are asking me to say how good is the body that oversees me, which I do not think that is the right question for me to answer. I should pass it over to the Deputy Mayor.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Yes, defer it, I am quite happy with that.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Thanks a lot, I appreciate that. Going back to your previous questions about the LPB and whether it is an unnecessary burden, I would just politely remind you that when Baroness Casey published her report, I believe that everyone around this table accepted the recommendations. One of the key recommendations for MOPAC and City Hall was to set up the LPB. We are working with the Commissioner and his team, as he said, to ensure that the workload there is not a burden, so that it does not duplicate, and it is added value under challenge and scrutiny. However, we must also accept that one of the things in Baroness Casey's report was that the scrutiny and oversight did need to improve. It did need to increase and the LPB is part of that.

You cannot be consistently questioning: what did MOPAC do? Did you know this when we set up the processes and the structures to be more robust and to make sure that we have brought in outside expertise? That is our response to the Casey Report. We have been asked many times from this Committee, quite rightly: what is your response? This is a significant part of our response. It does not duplicate the work here. We are very careful to make sure that we do not do that duplication. The LPB, getting on to your question, has been up and running for about six months. It has had two proper LPB meetings. It is early days in order to be able to assess the impact of the LPB in relation to trust and confidence and in relation to the work it is doing.

However, with the experience and expertise that is around that table, the challenge, as well as the support and the added value, will become very apparent. We have brought people in and appointed people who have expertise in change, have expertise in finance, have expertise in transformation. I do believe that part of the work that it is doing, which is not just about the committee meetings, but is also about working alongside the MPS and being with the MPS and providing that expertise will prove its worth.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** OK. So, after six months there is no way of telling. If it stays in place, what sort of date can you say we can by this time show you just how much difference it has made?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We have agreed the indicators that the LPB will be holding the MPS to account on. Those are the indicators that we should all be looking at, about whether they move and what difference there has been around trust and confidence and around culture, as well as performance. Those are the indicators that we should be held to account for at the LPB. Going forward, that is what you should be looking for.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** When?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** When? Baroness Casey in her report said within two years there should be another review into the MPS to see if progress had been made. She was clear in the report that it would not be that everything would resolve; it would still be a journey. I would hope that in a year's time that that review would be able to show that not only has, in relation to your previous question, the strategic oversight of MOPAC and the ability to drive change improved, but the relationship between the MPS and MOPAC has improved and that the setting up of the LPB has made a change.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** Another year, OK. How is the LPB working at communicating to Londoners to demonstrate the progress the MPS is making towards delivering more trust, less crime, high standards?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The LPB itself, as we all know, sits in public. That is an important part of the work that it does to improve transparency and accountability, that that is all open and the papers are all published. It is an important part of communicating that and around transparency and accountability. We are working at the moment as to what other forms of communication and engagement we need to do around the LPB to promote and to show the difference it can make, and also to bring the voices of Londoners into the work that it is doing.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** When do you think you will have done that?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** That is a piece of work that we are doing at the moment. We are obviously going into the pre-election period on 18 March, so it is on-going. I do not have a date that we will have the finished plan by, but we are always communicating the work of the LPB every time it meets, as well as the publication and it is sitting in public.

**Susan Hall AM (Deputy Chairman):** No date on either. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Assembly Member Duvall.

**Len Duvall AM:** I welcome the LPB, but let us be very clear, it is an advisory board and with the Police and Crime Commissioner you can confuse issues and we should not. We should not be hiding the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner in terms of oversight of the MPS. We need to be clear with the public about that. Can I just say, the Casey Review wanted to set up a completely different body than the advisory group. I thought it was ambitious and wise of the Mayor to extend the remit of the advisory group beyond what [Baroness] Casey said, but immediately to deal with the various crisis within the MPS we do -- the test for me will be to see how we get on with some of the issues that were identified by Casey and on the HMICFRS reports, because we should not lose focus on those. Albeit there are other issues where the Mayor and Deputy Mayor can be helped and supported in some of those wider issues.

Commissioner, can I just go back? I thought the Deputy Mayor outlined it very clearly what the support group should do, the advisory group's role in terms of supporting the police and supporting the Mayor in dealing with the issues of the day. The LCRB was a different discussion. Are you telling me that you can have that same discussion from the LCRB in the police advisory group? Do you really believe that? I am going to ask the Deputy Mayor, because she wants to come in, but I am going to ask you first: as a professional, in terms of partnership bodies and the conversations that took place at the LCRB, you believe that that can move to the advisory board, given the people that were sitting round the table at the LCRB?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is more for the Deputy Mayor than for me. We still have other boards, like the London Criminal Justice Board (LCJB), for example. If you add something new into a landscape, it makes sense to check if the landscape needs to change. Given there are other boards where those people get together at a London level, like the Crime Disorder Partnership Boards and things at a local level, as well across the London boroughs. I am not saying it did not do anything useful, but I am simply saying as you get a new player in the governance landscape it makes sense to reset. It makes sense to me, but it is more a decision for Sophie than the MPS.

**Len Duvall AM:** Can I just come back before we move on and come to the Deputy Mayor? In governance issues I understand, but the LCRB is about professionals in terms of sharing issues, coming together on joint projects, talking through issues in terms of tackling crime and the issues of the day in London. How can the advisory board be a replacement for that from your point of view, from a policing perspective, working with your partners in tackling crime? I do not understand. Tell me, have I got it wrong about what the LCRB was? It is a completely different set of people. The people witting round the LCRB are not the same people sitting round helping you on change management. They were not doing change management; they were talking about issues of the day. Explain to me, please.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The LCJB has similar people. The LCJB has a lot of the key London partners --

**Len Duvall AM:** It has moved to that?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It was felt there was a lot of overlap with that. Also, you still have the local partnership LCRB at a Crime and Disorder Partnership Board level.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Can I come in here? The role of the LCRB, when I took over all those years ago, was very unclear. What the LCRB developed into was partly holding the MPS to account, which was not its role. Half the agenda was always the Deputy Commissioner coming along and answering questions from London leaders of boroughs. It was definitely a role that the LCRB was undertaking, which was not really its role, which was holding to account. That part has gone to the LPB. The other elements were, absolutely, as you talk about, about the partnership being there and talking about the key issues, not necessarily the topical issues of the time, but the key issues, such as offending, such as how victims are being supported, right across the Criminal Justice System.

Those elements of the work of the LCRB are part of the LCJB. I have taken over as Chair of that Board. We have elevated that Board into a much more strategic view of what is happening. I hope and I think, that if you ask partners that sit around that table, including officers from the MPS, that that Board is now functioning in a much more focused and strategic way. For example, one of the things that we have looked at in great depth, and we are really looking at is casefile quality: why is it that so many of the cases that go between the Crown Prosecution Service and the MPS do not reach the standards? There is a real focus of work on that.

I have the LCJB next week and the focus is on victims. We have all the right partners around the table on that. That is where part of that work is undertaken. Some of the other areas we looked at in the LCRB were around violence. We now have the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and we have the Partnership Reference Group, which is chaired by the Mayor and has all the partners around the table, again. What we have done in setting up of the LPB is rightly thought that we cannot simply put this on top of everything and there be duplication with the same partners coming to different meetings but talking about very similar things, so we went through looking at where there would be duplication and where else it could go. We have that governance structure right. We have partners around the table at the right boards talking about the right things.

**Len Duvall AM:** The Crime Reference Group deals with the crime reduction partnership work?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The London Crime Reduction Board had on its agenda the performance of the MPS. Every time there was a report from the Deputy Commissioner around the performance of the MPS. It was like a scrutiny process. That has gone to the LPB. It then would have papers, for example, on disproportionality. We had papers from London Councils on disproportionality. We have a

Disproportionality Board that is now looking at that. The governance and the landscape has changed. It would have been wrong to put LPB directly on top of it.

**Len Duvall AM:** I get that about the governance issues. What I am asking about is when there is policy development and discussions going on about tackling crime in its forms and about those issues. Where are those discussions taking place? When you disturb that structure and make it as clear as possible, but maybe both of you could write back, if you have different perspective, about where those conversations take place, and also give us that landscape of where these conversations are. It might have an impact on our future scrutiny work.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, there are a few other things on the list to add in as well. We have mentioned the LCJB. The Deputy Mayor has mentioned the VRU Advisory Board. There is the London Victims Board, the London Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Board, and there is a London Contest Board. There are a lot of the same groups of people coming together to discuss crime and disorder related issues.

**Len Duvall AM:** Not just governance issues, but working together to solve problems.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Exactly, yes. It is quite a crowded landscape. You can always look at the landscape and say there may be a different way of doing that. However, it is not an empty landscape.

**Len Duvall AM:** I am reassured partly, but I would like to see the detail now and maybe we will come back with some further questions.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Assembly Member Desai, briefly.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Thank you, Chair. Commissioner, as a scrutiny body, I see our role as being one of a critical friend of the MPS. We do not just scrutinise your performance, we also ask questions about the welfare of your officers, amongst many other issues. How do you see your relationship with us going forward? We are talking especially with what happens after the elections on 2 May [2024], but I ask this question in a very general sort of way. I do not think it is an unfair question to put to you this morning.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I have always enjoyed, and I use the word enjoyed, in previous roles when I was here in the MPS before and now, a good and constructive relationship with this group. I would like to do that going forward. The conversations that we are having at the moment are a volume pressure conversation, which flow from the previous two or three questions. It is no more complex than that. There is no deliberate disrespect. It is simply a practical balance of time and effort of my senior team who I want to spend most of their time helping drive the policing to be better for the people of London. That is what we are trying to do. Whatever the future, we remain absolutely committed to the scrutiny work that you do.

We have had well into double figures in the last year of officers, our subject matter experts, if you like, people at commander rank coming along to your scrutiny sessions on thematic pieces of work that you are doing on particular areas. I am sure that will continue. The balance of scrutiny of cross-MPS activity with me and my senior team where there is such a big new demand on the landscape is bound to be different. What that difference is we have to work our way through over the next few months.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. The Committee is extremely grateful for the attendance of your officers, particularly the thematic meetings. We have had some excellent contributions from officers that have been very informative about work that is going on in specialist areas of policing. That is hugely important to Londoners that we get to talk in public about that work that the MPS is doing, and that people can see that there is that scrutiny of that work going on.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I must say, Commissioner, that the session we had on economic crime and fraud was an eye-opener. I did ask your staff to let you know that that was the MPS at its best. There is some fantastic work being done there.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Absolutely. We have had excellent contributions on money laundering and fraud, also on the investigation of serious road traffic collisions, and some of the work around young people affected by violence as well. The contributions of your officers have been very much appreciated. We also appreciate the dialogues that are going on at the moment, but we will leave that out of this particular space right now. I am now going to move on to our next question, which is with Assembly Member Ahmad. It is looking at *A New Met for London* six months on.

**Marina Ahmad AM:** Thank you, Chair. Hello, panel. I have this listed for the Deputy Mayor, but it feels odd just to ask you this, Sophie, so I am going to ask it to both of you. Is the approach to reform from the MPS and from the Commissioner particularly working? Where do you feel that the real progress has been made over the last six months? Do you have evidence to support this? Deputy Mayor if you would like to start and then we will move on to the Commissioner.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Thank you very much. *A New Met for London* sets out an ambitious plan to reform the MPS. It needed to be, because as we have discussed in depth today and on other occasions, it absolutely needed transforming, not just in the culture but also in performance. It needed transforming in terms shifting the balance into the frontlines and decisions being taken around that. What is also important about *A New Met for London* for me is - it goes back to the conversation we were having about child protection - *A New Met for London* does not only deal with individual issues, but it is also dealing with, as the Commissioner talked about, fixing the foundations about what strategically needs to change for the MPS in order for it to deliver for London.

If I had been asked about the child protection thing, one of the issues for me, and you talked about it, is around supervision, around leadership, around training. That is in *A New Met for London*. You can see that being delivered at the moment. The leadership training that Mark has talked about and that was invested in by the Mayor in this year's budget, but also the strongest ever neighbourhood policing, the dedicated ward officers, the PCSOs. Importantly for me, and I went last week with the Mayor to visit, because it has been such a fantastic success story, is that response to the public. That is part of *A New Met for London* plans, as well as getting out to engage around radically transforming the ways in which calls are answered, how quickly they are answered and in terms of the response time.

An example of where things are working really well is that 91 per cent of 999 calls are now answered within ten seconds, which is up from 57 per cent in June 2022. You can see in that, just fantastic transformation. In terms of *A New Met for London*, of course it is still early days. The final plan was only published in June [2023], so it will take time. The other major part is around integrity and around transforming the culture of the MPS and the significant shift that the Commissioner has undertaken in terms of being absolutely clear to officers about the standards of behaviour that are expected, and also a significant shift in misconduct and the grip on misconduct and the way in which that has been driven through. I believe 57 officers have been

dismissed within the last six months. You can see the shift in the figures, and you can feel that grip. There is significant progress. This is not going to transform in six months or a year. It will take time.

**Marina Ahmad AM:** Thank you. Commissioner, how is it going?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** There is an awful lot to do. I am constantly impressed, grateful, and sometimes in awe of how much the team of the MPS, the good majority, want to do better for London and how hard people are working to make that happen. Working through a few themes, some of the foundational points, we talked about planning and those things earlier, so I will not labour that. Some of the work we have started to do on technology that can have a practical effect on the street: the use of investment into things like facial recognition technology is improving; the productivity of officers in hotspots by many fold; the work we are doing in terms of using data to identify the most dangerous threat to women and girls from predatory men is producing some excellent results.

We have put effort into training, as the Deputy Mayor said. We have done a lot of starting to tackle some of the underpinnings of culture, in terms of how well officers are supported, so the equipment, the training, the technology, all the things that go towards, "Do I feel that I am well supported in this organisation, or do I feel I am set up to fail?" That is an important factor. We have not got all the way there yet. We still have to balance work and demand, as we spoke about earlier. Moving on to more operational themes, the Deputy Mayor mentioned the Met Contact Centre. The national target is answering 999 calls in ten seconds. The last year the MPS hit that target for a month was 2016. In January, we hit it, having been high 80s for the previous two or three months and having, as the Deputy Mayor said, being in the 50s 18 months or so ago.

That is an immense amount of effort from the team in that environment to do that, which is brilliant. That means we are answering emergency calls quicker, answering non-emergency calls quicker. The work we have done on demand on the streets, particularly the RCRP work, which is a big change and has gone as smoothly as you could hope. That means officers have more time to do police work and are responding more quickly to calls as well. That flow-through is good. That then flows through into the work we are doing on victims. We have an improved victim care programme. We have increased the size of our victim desk, which has enabled more people to call us. We have various tools out there to help officers serve the public better, which is always their intent. That was a big theme within the HMICFRS areas to engage and is pretty much all of that is ticked off or about to be ticked off from its list.

On integrity issues, a lot are falling out of the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel Report. There are a lot of issues in there about exhibits and various processes and things that we have tackled. Those have, again, all been cleared or about to be cleared by HMICFRS, alongside the work to put more officers into the Directorate of Professional Standards (DPS) and confront the minority who let us down on standards. The way the majority of officers have stepped forward and reported more cases and been part of that, this has not been done to the organisation, this has been done with the good majority. I spoke earlier about the public protection numbers and the start of improved results in that, so I will not repeat that. Neighbourhoods are starting to get the resourcing to the right levels. There will always be abstractions, and it is a bit high at the moment because of the protest area, but that is much stronger. The leaders have commented on how that is going and look forward to the new model in the summer, which I am excited about.

Overall, we are tipping resources from specialist to local. Proactive review has moved lots of small teams, many of them central and distant from communities on to BCUs, so that now each BCU has a team of around 160 officers, who are there to be proactive in tackling crime. Being proactive means people who are going after wanted offenders and doing patrols in hotspots. People are freed up to have the time to do that proactive work which prevents crime. That number will vary slightly depending on the size of the BCU. That is

four teams covering almost the whole clock, seven days a week, and that can have a big effect. Because of all of that, we are, even with our resourcing challenges and police officer numbers going back in the worrying way that we spoke about earlier, our trust and confidence figures tend to be above the national average in policing and above, in most respects, the other city forces.

On three areas of crime, an honest take with how we are doing with the pressures we have. The protection world is going in the right direction. There is still more today there, but there is some positive work being done there. Serious violence, decent performance, in the sense that it is still well below, in most respects, what it was pre-COVID-19. Some of the numbers have crept up this year, but some of them like firearms offences and murders have not. It is finely balanced, but it is still far better than pre-COVID-19. Our biggest challenge, I have talked about public protection crime, other serious violence crime, the biggest challenge is in volume.

The volume is where we are struggling, in terms of prevention and detection. Areas like robbery and theft from person are going up quite substantially. Because of our capacity issues, because we are prioritising those areas of risk and harm and prioritising communities, those are some of the areas where we are most stretched. That is a particular challenge. We are trying to put some more resources there this year. That is my take. We are making progress in change, and we have some results to show for it, but it is the start of a big journey.

**Marina Ahmad AM:** Thank you. You talked about the challenges there. Are there other challenges in where would you like to see more progress?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I am not going to go through it piece by piece. We have set some very ambitious deadlines and some of them are going to slip. The work on victims focus desk has been good. The work on the proactive review, we set an ambitious deadline of introducing it all before Christmas. As it was, we introduced it on two BCUs before Christmas and ten afterwards. I would rather set ambitious deadlines and if we slip on a couple of them then we need to be pragmatic about that. While all this is going on, I should have mentioned, we have had some big high-risk technology programmes. The second part of our CONNECT system goes live next week. We have a lot of work going into that and getting to that final nervous week ahead and that will make a big difference getting through that programme for us.

We are now going through a process of resetting. The budget process introduces some new opportunities and also some new challenges we make in some of the savings that we have committed to, so we are resetting our timetable now as we go forward.

**Marina Ahmad AM:** Thank you. Deputy Mayor, what would you see as the biggest challenges and where more progress needs to be made?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We have talked about it already, budget and funding is a huge challenge. The ability of the Commissioner to -- we have talked about civilianisation and trying to get police officers out of back-office roles and on to the frontline. That is a huge challenge. The biggest challenge is shifting the culture and behaviour internally and then shifting the culture and the perception of that culture amongst Londoners. A huge amount of work is being undertaken in that area. It is a massive challenge. A lot of work has happened against VAWG. A big challenge is making sure that that capacity and that drive is equally shared amongst other sections of officers, such as Black officers and the Black community. That is going to be a significant challenge in how you shift that, because those perceptions and some of the damage that has happened in the past are long-living and it will take a long time to move that. Internally, that is also a challenge because of capacity.

**Marina Ahmad AM:** Finally, Commissioner, you have alluded to these, but if we could go into them in a little bit more detail, there were 70 key changes listed in *A New Met for London* to be delivered by July 2023 and February 2024. How many of these have been completed?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** That is not a number I am holding in my head. We have had a look at that at regular management board meetings, as you would expect, in terms of tracking those completed, those on track, and those that have slipped. We can give you a summary of progress so far. As I have said, at the moment we are doing a reset of our timeline now we have different strands of work that we have to do as a consequence of the budget.

**Marina Ahmad AM:** Could you give us a written update on where we are with each of those key issues and initiatives?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes. Trying to say bureaucratically, when we reset our plan as part of the budget process over the next couple of months, as part of that we will have a public document on the ground we have covered and how we are resetting. That should answer that question.

**Marina Ahmad AM:** Great, thank you. Thank you, Chair.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. Assembly Member Duvall?

**Len Duvall AM:** The new London Delivery Plan states that all senior leaders across the MPS will be able to account for how they listen to, collaborate with, and deliver for communities to ensure that Londoners get what they need. How is the MPS holding these officers to account and what have been the results, in your view?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have completely reset the internal accountability system in terms of performance management. In *A New Met for London* we talk about three sets of outcomes, do we not, around more trust, less crime, high standards. You will have seen the measures in there about that. We consider the performance at the management board on a periodic basis. There is a performance group that drives and coordinates that across London. Then each BCU and each specialist unit has its own data pack that it drives its performance forward through. That then connects into the operational tasking and coordinating of resources. We have built from scratch a system to enable us to do that and all senior leaders are being held to account. There was not a system in place beforehand that I thought was as robust as it needs to be. Therefore, we have version one out there. It is working well.

Only about three or four weeks ago, the Deputy Commissioner and I took a day to visit two BCUs. I went to one and she went to another, where we sat through their performance meeting and their subsequent operational tasking meeting. That was good to see how it is bedding in. From my perspective, we have got to version one. I can see it is working. I see it is starting to drive performance. Of course, it needs to improve, but that is great to have got that established over this year. Now they have clearer flexibility locally with the proactive teams and they have the leadership team at borough level with the superintendents, the balance of driving the organisation is changing.

**Len Duvall AM:** Of course. Those mechanisms that you have described have changed over the years, in terms of the MPS. Can you paint a picture of how one of those meetings went, what you observed - not the borough - in terms of talking about good performance and poor performance? How does it work?



**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** At the performance meeting they have a pack in front of them, which is the same pack across the organisation, which has been built involving them and with experts at the centre. It goes across all the performance areas. Because it is such a high priority for us -- I would focus maybe in this conversation on VAWG. That section, what I was really pleased to see is on top of outcome performance measures, e.g. rape detection rates, so a BCU commander can see what his or hers is and how it is comparative compared to the rest of the force and versus targets, etc. If you were the BCU commander, it is one thing knowing how well you are doing, but you also want to understand what is going on underneath that, do you not?

There was then a diagnostic spreadsheet of data behind it, which looked at about 25 metrics, like speed of attendance at scene, arrest rate for domestic violence, number of victim dropouts, casefile quality, all the different parts of the process. If you are concerned about your performance as BCU commander on rape, because it is relatively low, you can look and see the areas where you are weak and having a conversation then with your lead detectives in that area, asking: how are we going to improve these weaknesses and how will that feed through into our overall performance? We are thinking hard about everything from victim care to speed to attendance, the whole system. It is like any big, complicated organisation, the data in front of you drives the right activity.

Sometimes people think that for improving the policing for London there might be a magic lever. If only there was. There is not a magic lever. You need to point yourselves in the right direction, organise yourselves better, but then fundamentally it all comes down to hard yards. It comes down to the hard yards of going through the detail, understanding where you are succeeding, understanding where you are failing and making step by step improvement. That performance meeting is looking at that systematic approach. The tasking meeting that follows it is then diving down into the short-term: over the last two or three weeks, have we had some hotspots for sexual offences in town centres, or has there been a change in pattern, or there has been a crime series related to indecent exposure, or things like that?

The meeting looks at those issues and asks: what is our number of wanted offenders? Are we on top of our outstanding offenders? Looking at all those tactical issues and staying on top of them. You have the performance and policy driving through the operations.

**Len Duvall AM:** It is the tasking group that deals with, I know it is the wrong word, the poor performing areas? The areas we are not quite doing well on is then dealt within the tasking group?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The immediate operational priorities, yes. Say we have identified a hotspot for theft of mobile phones from people that has grown in this area, who has a plan, what are we going to do about it, is it targeting offenders, is it hotspot patrols, are we working with partners in terms of some targeting hardening? All of that work is done in that group.

**Len Duvall AM:** OK. If I could return to the Deputy Mayor, *A New Met for London* states that in July/August 2023 the MPS zero tolerance approach to discrimination takes full effect. How will you ensure that this has been embedded across the MPS, how is MOPAC holding the MPS to account on this commitment, and what is different as a result?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** That is part of the way in which we undertake oversight, which is on a number of levels, either the bilats that I have with the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner as well as Assistant Commissioners and also through MOPAC officers directly being part of the groups that are operationally delivering this within the MPS. MOPAC officers attend several MPS meetings to monitor the progress of this and to seek assurances. That includes the monthly performance

meeting with the commander in charge of the DPS, Professionalism Reference Group and the Counter Corruption Steering Group, as well as vetting, and also looking at the transformation project board which is around the professional standards units.

There is a lot of oversight in that as well. The LPB has had this issue on the agenda for the People and Culture Board, as well as the LPB. I am sure that at the next LPB, Mark will be reporting in his Commissioner's Report on progress on this area. In terms of embedding anti-discrimination and zero tolerance, the things that we will be looking at are indicators around misconduct and what has changed within the misconduct process and importantly what has changed in terms of those going into the misconduct process. That is where the biggest amount of disproportionality lies. We are also continuing to look at the use of police powers. We are doing a piece of work around getting underneath that so that we can understand where the disproportionality that is so clear is and what is driving that disproportionality.

We have a number of pieces of work to do there. In terms of what the Commissioner has just been outlining, in terms of tasking, we have a piece of work within MOPAC to look at: how is that tasking? How is the vision and drive from the management board going down into the BCUs and into that tasking? Can you see that thread? We have that piece of work underway.

**Len Duvall AM:** OK. I raised with you about why did we not have a review of MOPAC at the same time as we have made these other changes, in terms of going on. You rightly came back and said that would be a bit of a diversion of time. However, in your answers you indicated there would be changes in the way that MOPAC carried out its work. The problem is that if we had a review, we would be able to monitor what those changes were, because we would see the recommendations and see how you performed against those. Could you outline, even six months on, what you think the changes in the way MOPAC is dealing with its work now in terms of holding the MPS to account post Casey [Review]? Where do you think we are? There must be some changes, because this change agenda you have outlined today in all the answers that we had is quite huge. Tell us where MOPAC has changed?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** MOPAC is still changing. It is not a finished journey. It is still bringing in some capacity around expertise, but also capacity around making sure that the work that we do is visible and transparent to Londoners. Some of the work that we do is available via the dashboards and the evaluations, and we are doing work around that to make sure that that is transparent, accountable and the value added can be seen. I have outlined for you in terms of lifting up from the tactical to the strategic, and to make sure that the LPB and that thread from the LPB all the way down to officers sitting on reference groups. That is where the oversight happens and that is where MOPAC has improved its oversight.

In terms of what difference that has made, we still have to be able to prove that. Six months on from this milestone, but a year on from Casey, we have definitely improved those processes, but we have to be able to show what difference that has made. We can point to that through work that we have done through *A New Met for London*, work we have done through Child First, as well as the VAWG Action Plan. It is a journey, and we have a job of work to do to be able to communicate that.

**Len Duvall AM:** Thank you very much.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Could I circle back a couple of questions and bring in Assembly Member Pigeon, who has a follow-up?

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** On your *A New Met for London* 17 actions -- we were talking about children earlier and I have now pulled it up in front of me. You were supposed to have produced your new children and young people strategy in November last year. You were working with key partners and experts and making sure that the voices of children and young people were heard and reflected in it. Clearly that work has slipped. Does that ring any bells? Is there anything more you can tell us about that? If not, can we have something in writing very quickly, please?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The work has started and is quite advanced, but there is still quite a lot to do to get it to capture that difficult balance I was talking about earlier between the enforcement with children, balance with the support and the safeguarding responsibilities. That is the work the team are --

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Delayed it really.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** That is what has made it difficult and challenging. Also, it is the same people doing that strategy who have been doing all the hard yards in public protection, in terms of improving some of the outcomes that we spoke about earlier. That is an example of setting ambitious dates. Some of them in hindsight are harder than we anticipated.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Do you have any idea of when we might expect it?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I will let you know.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK, thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Assembly Member Prince, very speedily, we are coming to the end.

**Keith Prince AM:** On a slightly different subject, and I promise you I am not having a dig or having a go, on your Estates Strategy, I am trying to establish if it is likely that anything will change within the next year? I know it is a big project you have to do; you have to relook at everything. However, there are some police stations that were at one point offered up for sale. I wondered whether there would be any movement within the next 12 months on that?

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, I would expect us to have the Strategy finished within 12 months or sooner than that, frankly. It is a massive challenge to reset it. There are several factors within it. Two of the biggest ones that recreate the reset are the sale of properties to invest in technology and better estates. This has got to the point where I am concerned that we now have close to 100 wards where there is not a base where a neighbourhood team can be within a 20-minute patrol time of that on foot, which was an initial commitment that was changed over time. I am concerned about that as we are trying to value that connection locally. It does not have to be a police base. It may be with partners and things, but we have to work our way through that.

The second issue is the current strategy assumes in some department some fairly ambitious working from home proportions, which might have been pragmatic during COVID-19, but I am not sure are long-term solutions. That affects the number of desk spaces you need, etc. We need to do a lot of work to double-check desk occupancy and what we need in resetting that. We will reset those two big issues, alongside lots of other complicating factors. Another big one is the green agenda, particularly our fleet issues, a fleet that will have to

move over. Frankly, ignoring legal dates and other ambitions, the way the market is changing, we will have to move. When you are using police cars 24/7 and using charging facilities things get complicated.

There are some big factors in there. You put all that in a melting pot and reset something for the whole organisation, alongside some more tactical issues, like in some places we do not have enough locker space for officers to store their kit. If you run all that together, it is quite a big reset. None of those things will make sense to you as ambitions, but the maths and logistics to make it make sense is taking some time.

**Keith Prince AM:** Are we likely to see disposals within the next 12 months? From what you are saying -- it is not a bad thing, once you have sold it, it has gone.

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Exactly. We will get the Strategy in hopefully over the next few months and get that finalised. There is then an ambition in what we would like to do and there are current cost assumptions based on the pre-existing sales and things planned. Having more community bases and fewer sales has a big impact on budget. We have to look at the realism of that and have a conversation with the Deputy Mayor and others. It is a massive reset.

**Keith Prince AM:** Thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. I have had a request from Assembly Member Devenish to send the Committee an organisational chart of all the different bodies and groups that have been mentioned and the rejigging that has gone on.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes, sure.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** That would be incredibly helpful to us all. Thank you. I want to thank you both for coming this morning and for all your answers to our many and varied questions.