

Police and Crime Committee – 15 December 2016

Transcript of Item 6 – Question and Answer Session with the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and Metropolitan Police Service

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Now, going into the main part of the morning, which is our question-and-answer session, welcome very much to Craig Mackey QPM, Martin Hewitt QPM and Deputy Mayor Sophie Linden.

This morning’s questions have three particular parts to them, which, before we launch into that particularly, I would like to just ask Craig to reflect and give us a statement upon. Our first item today is about the extraordinarily bad report on child protection, which we will all spend some time on in questions. That is the first part of today, but the Committee is reflecting upon the fact that very recently the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has come under some criticism around the Stephen Port [British convicted murderer] investigation and, equally, part of the recent report was around the abuse of authority for sexual gain and corrupt activity. These are three concurrent reports that have been critical of the MPS in relatively short timescales. This is of concern and I would like, possibly, Craig, for you to make some comments about that.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Thank you, Chairman. If I can, I will separate them. I know we are going to spend quite a bit of time on this, mostly the child protection report, but let us touch on the Stephen Port one.

The horrific murders of four young men and the rapes and serious sexual assaults committed by Stephen Port have, rightly, led to a number of questions being asked about the original police response. That is why we have admitted missed opportunities for arrest and Commander Stuart Cundy [Specialist Crime & Operations (SC&O) Command, MPS] has apologised to the families. We have referred ourselves to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), which will investigate and see what actually lies behind that. Is it individual failings? Is it organisational? Is it systemic in terms of the approach to these sorts of crimes?

We have also done a number of things in the meantime. We have looked at the guidance we have given to officers about dealing with chemsex and gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB) sexual offences. We have rolled out a new toolkit and advice in relation to that and specialist training for frontline officers who have to respond to those sorts of incidents in terms of the things to look for. We have also started a piece of work where, with the consent of people, we are doing a forensic study looking at the prevalence of GHB in sexual assaults, particularly in the male community. We are trying to understand the extent of the challenge there.

Also, as a retrospective, we have gone back for both London and the Home Counties to look at deaths where either GHB was found or we believe it was a contributing factor to see if there are any other lessons to learn from that. Is there a pattern to this? Is there a pattern to its use?

We are also doing a lot of work with Galop and other lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT+) organisations about how we understand and provide the best support and how we provide the best support to people who find themselves victims of these sorts of crimes to overcome some of the barriers to reporting.

There is a lot of work going on. In terms of the actual learnings from [Stephen] Port, because there is an IPCC investigation into those, clearly, we have to await the outcome of that. In the work we do with the IPCC going

through these investigations, it is quite normal that we talk to them throughout and say, “Are there things or are there organisational learnings we can pick up now and address?” That is where the work is around the tragic case and the horrific murders of four young men.

On the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) legitimacy report and the work that was published this week, it is important first of all to see the overall context. What has got lost in the noise, as you are probably aware, is that the MPS was graded as “good” in the overall report. There was some stuff that did not get a lot of coverage but the media picked up in some places. London had the best visibility rates in England. South Wales was best in England and the United Kingdom (UK); we were second. There are some real things to celebrate in there in terms of the things we are getting right.

This issue about police officers in particular and also police staff roles or any role where someone has a position of power and is abusing that position is very real. We are absolutely clear: it is completely unacceptable. We work with our specialists in the Directorate of Professional Standards Prevention and Reduction Team giving advice to people when they join about where those barriers are, what is right, what is wrong and where those boundaries are that you cannot cross at all.

Just picking up on a couple of the points that Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) raised, I have worked with the lead Her Majesty’s Inspector (HMI), Mike Cunningham. He and I have been working in this area for over five years and I was doing work in this space before I came to London. It is an issue that we have been aware of and have been working with.

They are right to raise the issue that there is something about how we define it. I would say: do not get too hung up on the definition; it is wrong however you define it. To give you why it is complex, we use a slightly different definition of corruption to the HMIC. The National Crime Agency uses four different definitions of corruption. I do get that there is probably a better way to collect that data nationally but, whatever it is, it is serious professional misconduct and it should be treated as that and that is what we do. Fortunately, it is relatively rare but it is shocking when it occurs and the impact on individuals, particularly individual members of the public who have had their trust abused, is appalling.

The HMIC also picks up a number of things there. It talks about something that we have discussed or something that I have discussed with you as a Committee before. It talks about the move to have legally qualified chairs of police misconduct panels and whether the outcomes at police misconduct panels are appropriate for the offences for which people appear. You will remember that when we moved to this, probably two years ago now, we raised then one of the concerns we had. We thought legally qualified chairs would be more reluctant to sack police officers. They are. You will remember the position we had in the MPS prior to this when we had a dedicated Commander who did that because we thought that being clear about our own standards as an organisation was absolutely crucial. There is work going on with legally qualified chairs of panels to make sure that, as I call it, where is the bar for what is acceptable and what are the values around that?

The other point that the HMIC picked up is whether we could do more work to actively seek out corruption. Yes, we do that. As you are aware, we still have, certainly by size and capability, one of the largest anticorruption commands in policing. We have made no secret of the fact that we have maintained that with its full capability to do everything as a standalone command. They suggest to us some areas like talking to refuges and like talking to domestic abuse referral centres. Is that another way of getting intelligence on people in positions of power who might be prevalent to abusing their position? We will look at that and see what more we can do about that. For the anticorruption command, this is fairly bread-and-butter business.

These sorts of allegations when they are received and working around these is one of the ways we work around it. That is the work that is going on in relation to that at the moment.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you, Craig. You will understand the concern of the Committee is that we have had two or three reports that have been very critical of the MPS's procedures and the Committee will continue to take an interest in that.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): If I may, Chairman, we have to be really careful with that last one, the PEEL inspection. That was not the MPS. The MPS was part of it, but there are forces in there that did not get a "good" grade and who did not "pass", in HMIC speak. No one supports that, but I would not want to just take one piece out of a national report and say, "Therefore, everyone is bad", because that would do a disservice to the work that the HMIC has done to produce quite a detailed report. Also, with that PEEL analysis, they spent two-and-a-half weeks with us. It feels like they are living with us for a period of time. It is important that we get the full perspective of that.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Your point is well made because it is a more holistic report and the MPS did come out in more favourable terms. You have made that point.

That leads us into our work around the actual HMIC inspection on child protection investigation. At our earlier meeting, Commander Nick Downing [MPS] came along on 1 December [2016], which we were grateful for, to give high-level feedback on what the action plan would look like and the work around that. That was really helpful on that day.

We would like to ask some more detailed questions and I am glad that you are here today, Martin. You will introduce yourself in a minute, but you are the [MPS] lead. There was a weakness of the previous approach because there was no identifiable lead. We will be interested to hear your responses around that.

My first question around that particularly is to you, Martin, and again you can introduce your role in that. How confident, as the lead, are you that the HMIC recommendations are achievable?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): If I may introduce myself, I am Martin Hewitt. My day job, if you like, is with Territorial Policing (TP). As you will all be aware from the report, one of the issues that the report very clearly raised was no person at the most senior level in the organisation having the overview in relation to child protection. That is a position that I took up in the very early stages after the immediate debrief we had with the HMIC on its findings.

It is really important to make the point that what they were saying and the fact was not that there was an absence of senior leadership completely in terms of how we deal with child protection. What they were reflecting was the fact that child protection activity takes place in different parts of our organisation and our organisation is unique in the size, scale and volume of what we do and so, by definition, control is broken up. We had very senior people within the SC&O Command who oversaw the command that deals particularly with child abuse and sexual offending and we had leadership within TP.

The point that the report legitimately makes is that at board level in the organisation we did not have one person who was bringing that all together and bridging some of the gaps that we have in terms of our organisational structure. That is the role that I now have.

As I know [Commander] Nick Downing said when he was here a couple of weeks ago, we had the "hot" debrief, as they described it, from the HMIC immediately after it finished its inspection and it became very

apparent that there were going to be some very difficult messages and that it had found some issues. We began a process at that stage of dealing with what we saw as the emerging findings and trying to identify what we would do and how we would do it.

We have put our work together in a number of areas and there is a very extensive action plan now that runs to 10 pages of a spreadsheet and picks up all the issues, not only in specific terms the recommendations that the HMIC made but also all that sits underneath those recommendations and gets us to effective delivery. The areas are around initial contact, investigation, our decision-making about cases, how we deal with those who manage a risk or pose a risk to children, the issue of police detention and then, lastly, the issues of leadership, management and governance.

We have a range of governance processes that we have put in place. In the immediate aftermath of that "hot" debrief, we created a Gold Group to pick up all of the issues that sit around that. That Gold Group sits and continues and is chaired by my deputy, Graham McNulty, who is the Deputy Assistant Commissioner within TP. That Gold Group brings together a range of people from across our organisation and also has Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) representation on the Gold Group.

We then have a delivery group below that, which is multi-agency and which is looking at how we actually deliver through the extensive action plan that we have put together. We created a scrutiny group as well, which is made up of people who are not part of the MPS - academics, professionals in this field, people from the third sector - who are able to challenge us in terms of the way we are developing what we are doing. We now also have an oversight [group] that the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] chairs to make sure that we are moving forward on the action plan.

I am confident that we will be able to deliver against the recommendations that the HMIC makes there. What I am really focused on as well, though, is not to just produce, if you like, a transactional response to those recommendations because many of them focus on policy and procedure. There, for me, is something about how we transform collectively within the organisation to focus on the protection of children.

It is really important as well that a lot of the discussion subsequent to the report has focused very much on child sexual exploitation (CSE) and that particular arena, but this is about protecting children in the round and in all the stages that a child may have an interaction with the police. We need to see it in that broad context.

We have all that work going on through those various groups and, then, where this links particularly is into our proposals for how we want to develop our operating model and the process that we have around the plans for creating Borough Command Units (BCUs), which - as I know Nick Downing articulated to a degree last time - brings together some of those specialist officers who currently work within SC&O in the child protection and sexual offences arenas with those officers who currently work within boroughs in our Community Safety Units (CSUs) so that we are able better to bridge some of the gaps that the HMIC quite properly identified in continuous service provision. Also, very importantly, we want to see children and the vulnerability of children in the full context of, potentially, the domestic environment and the care environment and linked to other criminality as well, which, for me, is as important in terms of protecting children.

Therefore, I am confident that we will get to a situation where we are able to meet the recommendations. It is going to require an enormous amount of work and there is an enormous amount of work going on currently. It will be overseen, as I have said, by the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] and the HMIC will be coming in. We do not have its programme for when it is coming back, but it will be coming back, very clearly, in a staged process to assess our progress.

There is also, for me, that much broader point about us transforming more broadly and out-with just the specific recommendations to better protect children in all the various ways that we have that responsibility.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you, Martin. The work and the action-planning reflects, clearly, the recommendations from the report.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Very clearly.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): The point you made is a good one, which is about also working out how that then works towards delivery and you will get some questions later ---

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Of course.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): -- about MOPAC and Borough Operational Command Unit mergers, etc. You are well placed, being in charge of TP, to see how that is delivered out into the boroughs --

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): -- as a practical piece. You mentioned that the HMIC will come back with different schedules and different timings and will set you different timings around your work. What sort of timescales are you working towards?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): You will see from the recommendations that they were based on immediate --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): They were staggered, yes.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): -- three months and six months and so we are working through that process and prioritising those.

The important point to make is that, as I said, we had the "hot" debrief when they immediately finished their fieldwork and the inspection and so this work has been going on. I know that Nick Downing gave some figures on the number of people we have provided training to and provided awareness to, particularly in that initial contact arena, whether it is in our call centres or whether it is with frontline officers. There is a range of work going through and all the action plan has, as you would expect, a timeline and milestones for delivery.

One of the really important elements that came out of the report for me was the disparity. The methodology of the inspection was that they selected a number of cases and asked us to review those cases internally and give an assessment of how effective we thought those investigations were. They then took the same cases and did an assessment. Probably the single most concerning issue for me was the disparity between our internal assessment and the assessment that the inspectors came up with.

We immediately created a team to go over every single one of the cases that HMIC looked at, which were 370-odd cases. That team started out to do that and we have now, effectively, turned it into a continuous improvement team in this arena and it has looked at a significant number of further cases. That will be the process that will provide us with some auditing and checking across the boroughs and within the specialist unit.

That issue, for me, was one an issue of our assessment, which was not good. Clearly, there were some issues and, whilst we had disagreements with the HMIC, they were fairly minimal and so I accept that we were not doing that correctly. Also, for me, the point before that, which is why the decision-making element is a big part of our programme, is that even before you audit them, the normal day-to-day supervision should be providing that Q&A into the quality of an investigation and whether we are doing that correctly. There is a lot of work to be done in and around that arena. We are working it through along the timetable.

I anticipate that they will be back in probably late January or early February [2017] in the first instance. We are working very closely with them and I know the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] is working very closely with them. We will have a programme throughout 2017 when they will be coming back and assessing how we are progressing against their recommendations.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Before I bring Len [Duvall AM] in, this Committee will take an interest continuing into 2017 at appropriate times around it.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That is absolutely right.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You mentioned yourself the improvement around the internal MPS scrutiny, which, clearly, was a shortcoming in the report.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You also mentioned the fact that you will have an external group of experts as a scrutiny piece and I will come on in a minute to speak to the Deputy Mayor about the Safeguarding Board. Len, did you want to come in?

Len Duvall AM: Yes. I put my hand up just before you went into that last bit about the assessments, which I was quite interested to hear. Look, this is, no doubt, a damning and shocking failure of the MPS, both at the territorial level and at central level, because that was the sampling that was done.

I get the issues around issues being at different levels, but what I do not understand is around -- there are two different issues, are there not? How come our specialist central unit gets it so wrong when it should not? Is there a particular time period that we are looking at? What was the issue about staffing levels? What were the pressures? Was this because other people were taken off the cases, drilling down into it a bit more on TP, for that failure to happen?

I recognise that we are going to ask questions later on and I do not want to take that away around issues with the MOPAC 7 [crimes], but in terms of supervision where does screening-out crime fit into these failures and what are the pressures that are now falling on those individuals? This does not just happen overnight, does it? With this failure, there is something in the system and, clearly, something was missed. Try to paint some pictures for this Committee to understand those issues and then relate that to your 10-page action plan to put this right.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Just for my clarity, when you said at the beginning about the failures of the specialist central team, can I just be clear what you mean by that?

Len Duvall AM: I presume it is not just TP where this was. There were other units and other levels.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, there were.

Len Duvall AM: I presume they are specialist levels. If I am wrong, correct me and put that right. On the specialist one, I find that really shocking because we took steps to avoid these various issues. Should I expect it? No. I might accept there were problems at the TP level more readily than I would in some of our specialists units, which should be better at this.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. If we break it up, on the TP side, in each of the 32 boroughs we have a CSU, which deals with all of the issues around vulnerability at a local level: domestic abuse, hate crime, some of the lower-level sexual offences and some of the lower-level protection-of-children offences. They will, as boroughs, be working alongside Missing Persons Units and alongside the CSE Units that we have set up.

Then what we have at the centre is the Sexual Offences, Exploitation and Child Abuse (SOECA) Command within SC&O, which deals with the higher level of sexual offences, adult or child, and deals with child abuse issues when a crime is deemed to be more serious.

The reports highlighted that there were gaps in the effective working between those two units. Clearly, some children would be the subject of an investigation over on one side that was related predominantly to them, but there could be other activity going on over here in relation to their domestic setting, their status as a missing person or whatever. There was a gap there.

The report was largely very complimentary about the specialist units. It actually said that the quality of investigation there was, generally speaking, very good, up to and including CSE. Where you are coming from is over the years when we have had other issues. That is why we created a more centralised and specialist unit. That, clearly, has been delivering in that sense.

The criticism about a lot of the investigations that we looked at was particularly at those that remained with TP, which by definition would be the less serious offences. That is a combination of factors. There is an issue in that we have seen a significant increase in all sexual offending, as you will know, and whilst some of that is historic sexual offending, not all of it is historic or non-recent. We have done a good job of increasing people's confidence in coming forward about issues for which, otherwise, there was very significant under-reporting. That has put some volume into the system.

We increased the specialist investigators in the SC&O Command after, as you will recall, [The Rt Hon] Dame Elish Angiolini's [QC DBE] report into rape investigation [*Report of the Independent Review into the Investigation and Prosecution of Rape in London*, April 2015] and also, by virtue of the increase in reporting, we have increased the number of staff in that particular arena. We have, over the period, increased the number of staff that work in the CSUs in boroughs.

One of the challenges, having come into the TP world about seven or eight months ago, is to achieve consistency across the 32 boroughs. This kind of work has always been very important to me and I have worked in it in the specialist world. On every visit when I go to every borough, I will go into the CSU and get a sense of where people are there and how it is operating. I have to say that there is some frustration that we do not see the same model in the same places.

What happens at that level, being frank, is that a lot of this is about making the links between different parts of the system. We will have people over here who are dealing with domestic abuse investigations. We will have people over here who are dealing with missing persons and, in this instance, young people who go

missing. We have a CSU Unit that we have created to start to try to lift and see where are around that. We have the response officers who are, fundamentally, the first people who turn up and deal with many of these things. Then, over here, we have specialist teams that are coming in when it gets more serious. A thread that runs through the report is that we have not tied all of that together.

There is the fact that, by the terminology alone, the specialist units have the more experienced officers. By the nature of the work that the specialist units are doing, they will have more time to undertake the work that they do and there is, to an extent, a greater degree of control over their workloads. For those people who work for me within the boroughs, it is very busy and relentlessly busy and we have a larger number of the less-experienced officers.

I know that you will be familiar with some of the challenges we have had in encouraging people to become detectives. All of our detectives will start in my world and that is where they will learn their trade, but there is no doubt that there is work we need to do on the quality of the investigations and the quality of the supervision.

I have to be really careful because, also, the HMIC looked at 300 cases and there were some very shocking things in those cases. We have been back and have looked at every one of those cases and I am in no way saying that there were not things found. Of course there were things found but these, as everyone will know, are incredibly complex, often, with the situation and the circumstances but there is stuff to be learned.

Equally, day in and day out, we have literally hundreds of officers who are protecting children in London. It really is important to me to make that point because, as I go around those CSUs and as I interact with the people who are in the specialist units, these are incredibly dedicated people who are working hard and, day in and day out, are protecting young people in London.

However, we need to improve the quality of those investigations, particularly the ones that are basic and at the lower level. We need to make sure that the appropriate supervision is in place with the right knowledge and understanding. That is part of what drives where we want to go in terms of the BCU model and bringing some of the specialist and the local together.

There are two reasons for that, in my view. One is that it allows us to bring that quality, that experience and that knowledge closer so that we are bringing everybody up to a standard. Secondly, of course, it allows us to see any investigation or any case in the round with all the factors that may be contributing to that child's vulnerability because often, with children, there are multiple factors. As we have seen, there would have been a time when we were talking in the main about child abuse being in a domestic setting and relatively contained. Over the last few years, that has expanded enormously in terms of where that threat exists, in terms of CSE and what has emerged from the non-recent cases, and in terms of the impact of technology and the amount of time children are spending in a virtual world. There are a whole range of threats now that were not there and what we have to do is to adapt.

That is my point about how this is about transforming our approach as well as transacting against those recommendations because this is constantly changing. A child is vulnerable when they are doing whatever they are doing on the internet and people are able to reach, exploit and groom children in a way that did not exist a while ago. We have to have a system that is able to pick all of that up.

It is about the quality and experience of people. It is about the volume of work that people are dealing with in the different places. To a degree, we have to put in the leadership focus to make sure that that is seen as being an important part of our role, if not the important part of our role.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you. I am going to come back to screening because I want to talk about screening at that level and what was going on and the implications around that because it has a wider impact about reduced resources. How do you actually prioritise and what? I presume there was an element of screening-out somewhere and the supervision said on these cases, "We do not need to do any more". Presumably, that was an issue and so I would like to come back further on that --

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): OK.

Len Duvall AM: -- but we will move on, Chairman, if we may. Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We are going back to that a little bit later. Thank you for that overall strategic piece.

Turning to you, Deputy Mayor, Martin Hewitt mentioned the fact that you are, as part of the new processes, chairing an oversight board. Tell us how you will be holding the MPS to account in the context of this report and this work, please.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Absolutely. Just to reiterate, this report is, clearly, a really worrying report and incredibly concerning. Martin [Hewitt QPM] has set out how the MPS intends to put improvements in place. It was an inspection that took place from January to May of this year [2016] and the results are really worrying, particularly, as Martin has said, around the self-assessment and the ability of officers to understand what they are doing and the quality of what they are doing.

In terms of what MOPAC and I have put in place, it is a strategic board. Alex Marshall [QPM, Chief Executive Officer, College of Policing] from the National College of Policing is on it, Simon Bailey from the National Police Chiefs Council is on it because he takes the lead on child protection nationally, as well as Martin [Hewitt QPM]. Mike Cooke [Chief Executive, London Borough of Croydon] will also be on it from Camden. He chairs the London Safeguarding [Children] Board (LSCB). What it is there to do is to ensure that all the elements that Martin has outlined today are moving in the same direction and are producing the results that, yes, the HMIC wants to see and that we meet the timetable it has set out. It has set out very clearly in the report about the next six weeks, the next three months and the next six months and what we have to report. The Home Secretary and the Minister for Policing [Fire and Criminal Justice] have also asked for the HMIC to report back on a quarterly basis and that is something that the Mayor and I have discussed with the Home Secretary and the Minister for Policing. We are making sure that that happens and those deadlines are met.

As Martin has also said, what is important is not only to respond to this report and the failings within this report, but to make sure that it not just about the structures that are changing but also about what police officers on the front line as well as the specialist units are doing, and to make sure that that changes and to ensure that we are setting up the MPS in the right way to make sure that, where there are new vulnerabilities emerging, they are in the right place to meet those challenges as well. We do not want to make sure just that we ask the questions that are, rightly, in place from the HMIC report but that we know we are in the best position going forward. This is not a static position with child protection. The threats and vulnerabilities of children are constantly changing. We have to make sure that the police are able to be flexible to do that.

I am chairing that group. We have met already. We are meeting monthly and we will continue to do that until we are satisfied that we are making good progress and that we have the right systems in place.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): At an early stage, are you satisfied that the work and the action-planning in the 10 pages of spreadsheets is correct and is heading in the right direction?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I had early discussions on this as soon as I became aware of the HMIC report. I met - and have met on a number of occasions - with Martin [Hewitt] and Graham McNulty to discuss the Gold Group and to discuss what has been put in place. That has been an ongoing process.

In terms of what is in place at the moment, that is what we are assessing. At the moment, I am very confident that the leadership of the MPS is taking this incredibly seriously and that a lot of time, resource, capacity and drive is being put into this. What we will do as a board is to make sure that that continues and that it does produce the results that are needed.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We are going to have questions both in this part of the morning's Committee work and also later about the Police and Crime Plan and how you will be holding the police to account on targeting and also the other responsibilities that you will be holding the police to account for, which are the other policing objectives and how that balance needs to be struck.

That takes us into now some questions about the MOPAC 7 [crimes]. That was identified within the report and Unmesh has some questions about that.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): I have three sets of questions, Chairman, all directed at the MPS.

Looking to the future, MOPAC proposes to scrap the MOPAC 7 and give local areas greater control of local priorities. How do you see this impacting on safeguarding and child protection investigations?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Martin [Hewitt] has touched on some of this. There is a piece here that is really important for us both internally and externally about how we convey the messages about what the priorities are and it lay under some of the questioning we see today.

One of the concerns we have is that everyone rushes to the other side of the lifeboat, so to speak, and it swings right across because there is a real challenge in London that I am not sure we got over as well as we could have to the HMIC. Some of the issues around volume crime in London are around volume crime that is serious and I can say that as someone who has not grown up in London. I did not start my policing in London. Some of the stuff that elsewhere we would regard as very serious crime is in our volumes. People being stabbed on a nightly basis, to me, is about safeguarding, safeguarding young people from being stabbed and getting the balance right. The Mayor and the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] are absolutely alive to getting it right.

That issue around giving some flexibility locally offers some really good potential. It is certainly something I have done elsewhere and I have seen elsewhere. We have to now look - and the Deputy Mayor was absolutely right - in terms of consulting about how that will be done, but this area of getting the priorities right is the crucial bit of this work on the Police and Crime Plan. That opportunity to consult on that and that and engage people on it is absolutely right.

We are at a different point in the crime cycle. If you look at the latest national stats that are coming out, crime has plateaued across the country and, if you look at London, we are probably a bit behind. Some of our crimes are still falling, but violent crime across the country is rising again and we have to be alive to some of the issues behind that.

In getting this balance right, we are working very closely with the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] and her team to get that balance right about how we get to - and it is good that there is a public debate - those priorities at a local level and also the things that we are going to look at and monitor at a MPS London-wide level. That is a good thing.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Just to ask you very directly, it cannot be right that some areas choose to prioritise tackling CSE and some do not.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): In the proposals and I do not want to speak for the Deputy --

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): There has to be that consistency across the MPS. I can see Martin[Hewitt QPM] nodding.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, there will still be central control over the consistency. We are talking about local flexibility perhaps with some crimes. There will be some that absolutely have to be there and have to be done.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Martin, do you have anything to add?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. For me, I do not envisage any flexibility around safeguarding activity being a fundamental priority for every one of the Borough Commanders or BCU Commanders in the future.

What the plan is trying to reflect, which I support and which is one of the phrases I often use with the Borough Commanders, is that they have to police what is in front of them. In some places there will be things that are more prevalent and more of concern to the community than in other places.

However, there is running through the centre of that a core of issues and child protection is a core issue. I would put violence as a core issue. However you subdivide what we do, that has to be a core priority activity.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Can I just clarify this? In terms of the Police and Crime Plan and the priority setting, we are quite clear that what we are going to do within the consultation for the Police and Crime Plan is to consult on the priority setting around volume crime. That will be data-driven. MOPAC will provide evidence and will work with local Borough Commanders, local borough leaders and chief executives to set those priorities.

However, in terms of vulnerability and harm, there will be core priorities that every borough must work towards. That will include CSE. It will include violence against women and girls. That is there.

It is almost as if there are two baskets of priorities. One is around volume crime, which will be data-driven and where local boroughs with the local police, working with MOPAC and the MPS centrally, can set their own priorities; but harm and vulnerability across London is absolutely consistent. We expect every borough to have that as a priority and that will be consistent.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Len, did you want to come in on that?

Len Duvall AM: Yes. Sorry, Chairman. I know that we are coming back to the Plan later on in part two --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We are, yes.

Len Duvall AM: -- but there is an issue with the way the plan is written, then, for my colleague to ask that question and not understand that. Some clarity might be there.

Let us go back to the MOPAC 7 issue and, clearly, that HMIC looked at this. Was this a case, then, of you taking other officers to work on the MOPAC 7? I have a little smile on my face on this because we had the Deputy Commissioner here and we had the very conversation about the operation. I forget what the operation was, but it had a grand sounding name. I was particularly concerned about violence. Let me just remind the Deputy Commissioner about this.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Len Duvall AM: I was saying this and I had assurances that violence would be dealt with rather than thefts from sheds, which are important in terms of tackling crime but, in terms of harm and vulnerability, it was not where I was quite coming from.

When we talk about the evidence given to the HMIC - and this may go to another wider issue about what the MPS needs to think about rather than just looking at this issue in isolation - were we taking other officers off other priorities and is that why HMIC came away with the conclusion about this MOPAC 7? Is there - as I call it - extraction, a wider issue in terms of the MPS? You are quite good at dealing with crises, but is that the issue and is that why the MOPAC 7 is in the frame here for being one of the guilty trends and why we got this so wrong?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I will start and I will let Martin [Hewitt QPM] talk about specifically what happened in boroughs.

What the HMIC would say it saw - and it is probably best to ask them directly - in relation to it is that where we went in the organisation, the focus was on volume crime and those seven main crime indicators, particularly in boroughs. Forget the centre because you have the serious crime work, the work that you would expect, the guns and gangs. They would say that when they went to boroughs they did not see "safeguarding" and "vulnerability" as language used in the same way that they saw "reducing crime", "tackling street violence" and "tackling gangs". That is why they attributed that and said that our focus around the MOPAC 7 led to exclusion of language around "vulnerability" and "safeguarding". Several of us have sat with them to try to understand that. I think it is actually more nuanced than that, but that is their explanation. Is that fair?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, that is fair. There is no question that going into the boroughs at that point in time, you would have been very hit by the MOPAC 7 being what the place was all about. In prioritisation terms, they were absolutely right about that. It is fair to say that the performance management regimes were focused on the MOPAC 7, which includes violence offences but they were focused on the MOPAC 7 offences.

The other level to it, rather than a very stark "extraction" in the way you described it, is that if you imagine that a borough has a vast range of things it has to do, you have a core decision about how you are going to deploy your people, how many will be answering calls, how many will be investigating and so on. What you have over the top of that is your deployable asset, if you like, that you can flex to whatever issue. There is no doubt that that deployable asset was predominantly flexed towards MOPAC 7 issues rather than other things

and there was an undoubtedly a sense within those people who worked in the vulnerability arena that they did not get their voices as loudly heard. That is what they saw.

Len Duvall AM: All right. Excellent. Let us go back, then. In your 10 pages of your action plan, it is wider and there are wider lessons for the MPS to use. The word is probably - and I am a bit blunt - "extraction" and there are elements of extraction and "flexing" is the word that I really was looking for. In terms of guidance, really, your good supervision will be on top of that and we understand that. We would like to see consistency across the MPS.

In your 10 pages, what are you saying about flexing resources in the future? It is not saying that this is a priority because it clearly is and we have to get this right, but there are lots of priorities and there are lots of important issues --

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): There are.

Len Duvall AM: -- that the MPS has to get right. We heard of one of the cases earlier on. What are we saying about flexing and the way management and supervision should be used in terms of delivering all of the services of the MPS? This clearly has lessons on other aspects, not just in TP but in other bits of the service.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. It is less of an issue in other bits of the service where they will tend to be very specific. We know what the murder team does and we know what various other teams do at the centre. The real challenge in a borough is that you have to spread yourself across the whole range of everything that involves local policing.

The first thing for me is that those discussions have to be nuanced, intelligent discussions at the leadership level and in the way we run all of the normal business processes that drive the business in the borough.

The first time I ran the TP Crime Fighters meeting was in May, I think, and from May through to today - because they are meeting today in another part of London - we have shifted what is on that agenda to get a balance in what is on that agenda. We are talking about the individual borough response to missing people, we are talking about how we deal with CSE offences and we are talking about all of those other factors that perhaps were not being as routinely spoken about. My expectation is that that then is what is happening with the Borough Commanders when they are running their own processes because we all know that what you put into the main performance meeting is what they are going to go away and focus on and so that is the first lever we have to pull.

It is then, really, about having those conversations with people about how we do flex. There was the phrase Craig [Mackey QPM] used about going from one side of the boat to the other. The other one that I use is about the children playing football and they are all in the corner where the ball is. We cannot do that in policing any borough or any BCU in the future in London. That is what we are working into the plans. How do we get that core establishment right so that we have enough critical mass of people to do the things we need to do? How do we knit it all together to make sure that that unit over there is working with that unit over there?

If I talk about CSE, again, one of the things that I am really pushing is that a lot of CSE emanates from children who are in care in children's homes. Every one of those children's homes is in one of our wards. We have neighbourhood teams and we are going to increase the neighbourhood teams. They have to be the front line of people who are interacting there, who are establishing relationships and who are understanding what the vulnerabilities are. That does not happen as well as it could happen at the moment in my opinion. It is

bringing all of those bits together and then it is making sure, with all the training and awareness we are doing, that everyone in their head gets that this is a key responsibility that we have as the police service.

It is a multi-layered thing, which is really what I was trying to say about it. We can be transactional about training 10,000 people, and we all know that that has a place, but for me it is more about that leadership and governance bit where we are driving it.

Sorry, just one final bit. That that is not to say that that means we do not care about burglary. It was a frustrating-for-them conversation that I had, having spent a lot of years in specialisms, when I came to TP and all the Borough Commanders said, "When are you going to tell us what the most important thing?" I kept saying, "All of it. You have your challenges. You have to be able to deal with everything from road traffic at one end to serious violence at the other end in your patch. Our challenge is how we flex ourselves to make us capable".

Len Duvall AM: Chairman, it is a question for you, but sometime in the future we have to devote more time to flexing, extraction and the issues around that to understand what it means for the MPS in a wider form and what it means for TP as we go into borough mergers and everything else. We might want to return to this.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We should another time but also, equally, in the second part of this morning we are going to look a bit more deeply into priority setting. Did you want to very quickly come in [Sophie]?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, just to pick up on this issue of MOPAC 7, priority setting and the action plan around the HMIC child protection report. There is of course the action plan and the steering group, as we have already set out, but that has to be seen in connection with and alongside the new Police and Crime Plan, which is out for consultation. That has very much shifted the emphasis from only looking at volume crime, which is what has happened over the last four years --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Yes, we are going to cover that in the next session.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- to vulnerability and harm. Martin [Hewitt] has touched a little bit today on what the performance measurement of the MPS was in the last four years and it was to look at the MOPAC 7. That is what the HMIC has found and has raised and highlighted as an issue.

Frankly, what the HMIC has said in its report is probably what many of you in this Committee and I have found going around talking to people in pre-consultation around the Police and Crime Plan. They have told me that it was a straitjacket and they did not feel that there was the focus on harm and vulnerability because of the absolute focus, through the crime-fighting and the performance management, on the MOPAC 7. It did make a difference in terms of what happened on the ground. That we can see from the HMIC report.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Fine. I am going to be asking some questions about that in the second part of the session and also on the other priorities that you have also set them, which are violence against women and girls and hate crime. Andrew had a quick question and then --

Andrew Dismore AM: Just a quick one, going back. I do not want to get too bogged down in the borough merger stuff because that is going to come later, but it is a very simple question. You said that boroughs set their priorities. I am not going to get into the detail of what the priorities are; Len has been doing that and will no doubt later on. I am just concerned about the merged boroughs.

Supposing Camden and Islington or Barking and Dagenham and Havering and Redbridge decided that they have different priorities from each other. Will they each be allowed to set their own priorities even though they are in the same merged command?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We have this as a question later.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, and they do have different priorities if you look at those two boroughs together. They do have different priorities when you look at the crime types, absolutely.

Andrew Dismore AM: It will not be one-size-fits-all for the mergers?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No.

Andrew Dismore AM: Each borough will definitely be able to do its own thing?

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

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We have some questions about that later specifically.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Just moving on to staffing now, what is the latest assessment of the MPS's child protection staffing levels, in particular with regard to determining the extra officer resources needed, including supervisors?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): As I said earlier on, in response to [The Rt Hon Dame] Elish Angiolini's QC DBE report, there was an increase in the specialist unit. The specialist unit now has just over 1,300 officers and is the unit that sits in the centre. They are the officers who work on the child abuse investigation teams and also on the rape teams and do all of the specialist elements around that. I do not have the exact figure, but in the CSUs across the boroughs, there is something in the region of 900 staff that work dedicated in those boroughs.

I did check around the supervision ratios. The supervision ratios on average will be one sergeant to five or six constables. Generally speaking, it is very hard to do a complete figure because it will vary slightly from team to team. What we reflect in all of those areas is, because of the degree of risk involved in the work, we have to have a higher supervisor-to-constable ratio.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): The specialist unit you referred to is the SOECA?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, the SOECA.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): The SOECA has 1,300 officers. Is this fully resourced?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): It is. There will always be a small churn, but it is pretty much up to strength in terms of where it is supposed to be. I do have that somewhere and I will try to find it as we carry on.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): The ratios in that unit are Detective Inspectors to Detective Sergeants (DSs) 1:5, which is good, and DSs to Police Constables (PCs) and Detective Constables (DCs) 1:4. I think you are running in TP an average of about 1:8, are you not?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Nine.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That gives you an idea. As we said, we would always keep more supervision in that unit and in that space.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): While Martin looks at some figures --

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, I will try to find that for you.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): -- what I want to ask also is where these officers come from? What impact has this had on other investigative units? Have they been transferred from elsewhere?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): The officers for the SOECA Command?

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Yes. Where have they come from?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Most of them came from within SC&O, did they not?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): They will have come from some of the work we have done in murder commands or some of the work in proactive teams. It is only one pot.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): It is a significant shift.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, it goes back to the point that you have touched on a number of times and you touched on earlier. You have to reprioritise. They only come from one place.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I will find this eventually for you.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): If I could then ask you, Craig, just turning to the One Met Model, how will the proposed changes for the One Met Model improve understanding and help to deliver a more co-ordinated approach to safeguarding and protecting children?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): We will probably touch on this a lot when we get into the Police and Crime Plan. The strand we talk about around that is protecting vulnerable people. One of the things that the HMIC identified is that the way we split the work currently between high-end serious and serious-but-volume [crime] out in boroughs has allowed things to get missed in the middle or we end up in a scenario that is described - as any of you who have spoken to safeguarding boards across London will know - where sometimes we end up with three or four members of the MPS for one family or one issue.

By moving some of that central asset – and it is redistributing existing resources – to those local levels and breaking it down into a smaller grouping across London, we allow it to come together more closely. We will bring protecting vulnerable people, which will bring all of the stuff that was previously in the CSU, some of the SOECA work, the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) work and the stuff that goes on with registered sex offenders, and bring that to one place locally so that people can join up and offer a better service. Then, working with the local authorities in the new model, we can talk about how safeguarding boards work and how we can better service those as well.

Taking it from the centre and moving it closer to where the point of delivery is makes logical sense. There are some challenges in getting everyone in the model and getting that done, but that is the proposal for the future.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I have found my number. The current staffing number for police officers in the whole command is 1,314. Currently, the child investigation teams are up to strength, apart from the odd bit of movement. They are up to strength. For the teams that investigate rape, there are about 100 vacancies on the teams that investigate adult rape but, in the December posting panel, we put another 25 towards those and so they will get posted in January [2017]. It is pretty much up to strength and certainly, in terms of a vacancy factor, it is a good vacancy factor compared to other parts of the organisation.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): I will leave it there, Chairman.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): It is worth noting now that the Committee, previously led by Caroline Pidgeon [MBE AM], did a lot of work about this and it is a shame that Caroline, for family reasons, is not with us today.

Part of the recommendation that that report and also the HMIC report made was around training and issues with that. Andrew, you have a few questions on this.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes. If we could look at the issue of training first, when this Committee looked at safeguarding in 2014, it then highlighted that there was a need for more training but that does not seem to have been picked up.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): In relation specifically to what?

Andrew Dismore AM: In relation to child protection and safeguarding children.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): There is a range of training that people will go through and certainly those people who are on the specialist teams go through a significant amount of training.

What the HMIC found will partly be a symptom of the fact that we have moved quite a few people in and that people leave, go out and come into the teams in the boroughs. There is a degree to which we have not effectively provided the training for people who work within the CSU environments within the boroughs and that is being addressed as part of the plan.

Then there is the broader issue, which is the more generic training hitting all of our first-responders, which we have made quite significant progress on since May but it is fair to say that we have not kept that up as well as we should have done.

Andrew Dismore AM: The HMIC says that it is “a very serious omission”. It talks about “officers in roles focused on tackling CSE who had not been trained in the subject”, and in particular highlights the issue of command-and-control centres where the staff “could not recall having had any safeguarding or CSE training” at all.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, we have rectified that now within the command-and-control centres.

Andrew Dismore AM: That is good to know. What are you doing to reinforce the message about their individual and collective safeguarding responsibilities to all staff?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That, as you might imagine, is something that we have to do in many different ways. We have routinely for all officers what we call professional development days that are built into their shift patterns and we have agreed that we will use two of the four professional development days for all of the issues concerning safeguarding. We have provided training now - we are up to nearly 11,000 of our frontline officers with about 4,000 to go - in terms of the issues around CSE, safeguarding and missing children.

However, this is not something that is a one-off hit. It has to be something that is continually reinforced. Clearly, one of the other elements of TP is that we get all of the new people and so we can do that through their initial training. We constantly have to be refreshing and bringing this into people’s minds. It has become and has been for some time part of all promotion training and so, for anyone who is promoted to Sergeant, Inspector or above, it is part of the programme they get before they take up their responsibilities as leaders. It has to be something that is continually reinforced.

One of the most powerful comments was from Simon Bailey [QPM], who is the Chief [Constable] in Norfolk [Constabulary] and is the national lead on child sexual offences and sits on the group that Sophie [Linden] chairs. Simon came and spoke to us a couple of weeks ago at the Board. It is important to recognise that his force four years ago had a similar inspection response and, in fact, there have been 12 forces that were inspected prior to us by the HMIC and they have all been fairly challenging. Ours, of course, comes at scale in a way that other people’s do not. The point that Simon made was that as the Chief Constable of Norfolk, in every interaction, in every event that he is involved with, at every point where he is interacting with his staff, he emphasises the fact that they all have a responsibility for safeguarding those who are vulnerable, not exclusively children.

That is part of where we are trying to go which, again, for me, is what I was talking about in terms of transformation.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes, certainly, it is a continual process.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): It is, yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: I fully understand that and that is the right approach, but how long is it going to take to catch up before you get to that point?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): We are catching up fairly rapidly in terms of that initial hit to people. As I said, we have dealt with all of the people who work in the control centres. We are nearly through all of those who are initial responders, particularly around missing persons. It is just going to be a programme that continually works its way through with the normal cycle of events for our leaders and the normal cycle of professional development days for all our officers. As I said in response to one of the previous questions, every time we are conducting performance or development meetings, it is getting reinforced with our leaders, which is what will be happening --

Andrew Dismore AM: How long is it going to take to catch up?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): We will have gone through that initial exposure to everyone by, I would guess, January or February [2017] time, but I do not like to see it in those terms because it really is a continuous --

Andrew Dismore AM: I accept that, but there is a catch-up job to do and that is what I am probing.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Of course, yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: The next question I am going to ask about this in particular is about children in custody. I am going to go on to some of the other questions about the protection of children in custody more generally, but one of the things the HMIC particularly highlighted was the lack of awareness of custody officers of these issues. What is happening in relation to training custody officers?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): We have done a lot of training. As you will be aware, we have one command that sits under me and looks after all of our custody facilities. They have done an enormous amount of training.

However, I want to put some context into that particular finding. The first point is that it talks about having looked at 40 cases. They were 40 cases where children had been charged with offences that would mean they would not be granted bail. Therefore, it is not a percentage of the overall number of children who come through custody in any given year. About 60,000-odd children will be suspected of an offence.

The challenge we have is that if we are going to remand a child, generally speaking, to go to court the next day, there needs to be suitable accommodation for that child. Where we have not been strong enough is in pushing to find that accommodation. I have an examples where children were being remanded in custody, with no bail granted, to go to court the next day and the nearest secure accommodation for some of the more extreme elements was in the northwest of England, which is clearly not an acceptable way of operating.

There is not an absolute lack of understanding on the part of custody sergeants. There is a lack of provision and the custody sergeants are taking decisions about looking after those children.

Andrew Dismore AM: That is not what the HMIC found. One thing that it did find was this about the lack of appropriate bed provision: there is no "evidence of escalation by senior officers with relevant partners to resolve the issue". In other words, you have not been taking this particular problem up with local authorities at the top level, never mind what is happening at the bottom.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That is probably fair. What has happened is that custody sergeants, when they have tried, have ended up with results that have not worked. Why has that not been escalated? I do not know the answer to that. What then has happened is that

custody sergeants have almost anticipated that there is not going to be the provision and have taken the decision to care for children in that environment. I can assure you, as somebody who has been a custody sergeant, that you do not want to have a child retained in the cells any longer than you absolutely need to.

However, you are right. We have not pushed hard enough and made enough noise about the fact that there should be alternative provision for someone who is a child.

Andrew Dismore AM: You are right in that they looked at only 40 cases, but I was asking questions about this earlier this year. In the six-month period over the most recent dates available, you had over 3,000 under-18s kept in custody overnight and 483 over a weekend. The youngest child at that time was 10 years old. One child had been kept in detention for 93 hours. That does seem to me to show quite a bit of a failing.

I am not going to go through all the criticisms that the HMIC made because there are a lot of them about the approach to custody, but I am not satisfied, really, that you actually have an understanding of those criticisms from what you have been saying about the approach of custody sergeants.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, I absolutely understand what the criticisms are. What I am trying to point out is that there is inadequacy in the system. Clearly, we have not done what we ought to have done and in those particular cases the criticism can be levelled. At the same time, with the numbers you present there, I do not know of the individual cases or why they came into custody.

However, just to give an example, I went to speak to the LSCB last week or the week before and we were talking about this very issue because, certainly, several people in that group were very exercised about it. The person from the Safeguarding Board in Harrow was talking about a very young child who had been in custody for a very extended period at that point because there was no secure place for that child to go, there was no adequate mental health medical provision to look after that child and she was a very significant danger not only to herself but to other people. The point being made by that non-police member of the LSCB was that there is a real dilemma here that we have to face.

Andrew Dismore AM: One of the criticisms there was that they found examples of custody officers requesting secure accommodation when alternative accommodation could have been requested. I do not know whether that would --

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That may be but - and this is not to say that there is not criticism and we accept that - significant work has been done by the Detention Command because that is an area where we can very clearly control the consistency across the piece.

Andrew Dismore AM: The other thing I was going to raise in this particular part is about appropriate adults. The HMIC found that the request for an appropriate adult often was made by the investigating officer rather than the custody staff, which is in breach of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). That resulted in kids being kept in longer than perhaps they ought to have been; for example, being kept overnight until the interviewing officer was available the next day. That is not appropriate either, is it?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No. As I said, all of those issues that have been raised in that particular detention section have been taken on and are being dealt with by the Detention Command. Clearly, a breach of PACE, if it was such, is a very serious issue.

Andrew Dismore AM: That is being looked at root-and-branch, is it?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That is being looked at root-and-branch and we will, clearly, be able to go through precisely what has been done within that particular arena because, as I said, it is a self-contained unit.

Andrew Dismore AM: Are we going to have some effort made to lobby local authorities to provide that? We are?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, and I raised that at the LSCB and we will continue to do so.

Andrew Dismore AM: Can I move on to the issue of missing and absent children? The HMIC was also quite critical of this when it said:

"... absent episodes appeared in the midst of missing episodes and risks were not adequately recognised despite clear indications that the children in question were vulnerable."

What are you doing to improve your response in relation to this?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): We have a Missing Persons Unit on every one of the boroughs and we have had those for a period of time. Since the inspection, we have undertaken training in that and that is a specific part of the training that is going to all of our frontline officers.

Predominantly, we have the response officers. They are the ones who, when they are on duty, get the task when a person goes missing - and there are about 25,000 children each year who go missing in London - and they will be given the responsibility to try to do that.

We then have the Missing Persons Unit, which will deal with and intervene with the higher-risk cases and those that go on for any length of time. Equally, if a case is high-risk, not only will it be getting reviewed by a duty officer but it will get reviewed by a detective inspector to see whether they need to move some or all of that search into the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). We have done the training for the response officers.

Andrew Dismore AM: When the HMIC talks about there being a rather "inconsistent service", you are going to achieve consistency across the boroughs?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That would be the objective: to achieve consistency across the boroughs. Again, we get a disparity in terms of the number and the nature of the children going missing. In Tuesday, I was in Redbridge Borough, which has a very significant level of children going missing because they have a very significant level of children's residential homes within that borough.

Keith Prince AM: Barnardo's --

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): We have to also get behind this and look at the broader issues. Our responsibility is to find children, make sure they are safe and well, check and return them to where they have come from --

Andrew Dismore AM: The reason I am concerned about this is that ten years ago, when I was chairing the Joint Committee on Human Rights in Parliament as a Member of Parliament (MP), we highlighted then the problem particularly of unaccompanied minors who were being put into care and were going missing and nothing was being done to find them. It is not a new problem.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, it is not a new problem but, equally, I do not accept that nothing is being done to find them. Every single morning when we - as in the leadership - get our daily overnight [report], a significant proportion is vulnerable missing people and most of the children will be on that list. However, we have to work collectively with all the other partners and agencies and all those places that have a responsibility to look after children to try to get behind why these youngsters are going missing. Some youngsters are going missing repeatedly. Some of the case studies that the HMIC chose to use in its reported talked about looked-after children who have gone missing 20, 30 or 40 times.

Clearly, we have a responsibility. We need to get that risk assessment right. We are asking our people to make challenging risk assessments and often quite dynamic risk assessments. The risk assessment is based on the information provided by wherever that young person has gone from. We have to get that right. We have to equip our people to do that and we are doing that training, but I do not accept that we are not making any effort to find them because, day in and day out, we find the missing children.

What we have to do collectively - and that was part of the conversation I had with the LSCB - is to get behind that and to the reasons why these youngsters are going frequently. Then, of course, the really key one is the link into CSE.

Andrew Dismore AM: The lesson that I pick out of this is the need to join the dots and that has not been happening.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I agree with that entirely.

Andrew Dismore AM: That is going to happen?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. That, for me, is part of that transformation. Part of what we want to try to do in the way that we organise ourselves is about joining the dots and getting behind those. We have some of the information that gets behind the reasons, but it is about joining the dots, as you said.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We now have reassurance around that, Andrew. Do you want to move on to the last part of the questions?

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes. The last question I want to ask, hopefully relatively briefly, is about the new investigation into allegations of historic abuse in football clubs and what impact that is going to have on your resources.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I will let Craig answer this particular one.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I shall take this. In terms of what we have, I will just find my note ...

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We understand that it is an ongoing investigation, but just some high-level --

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. We made some announcements yesterday in relation to the ongoing investigations into this.

Like everyone, we have seen the reporting nationally and we have seen people coming forward in terms of what is there. We have a specialist capability within our SOECA Command, the specialist command at the centre, which is co-ordinating all of these responses and you probably heard the Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] talking about the range of responses we have had. Yesterday it stood at over 100 but that number changes quite regularly. This goes back to a number of things that we have touched on this morning. It is all being co-ordinated through an operation through the National Police Chiefs Council and through Simon Bailey and his team in Norfolk, an Operation Hydrant team. We are linking in at a national level with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, which, as you are aware, has started a helpline around this, and so we are getting those.

We will then look at and work through those and we will have to put resources to those that need investigating. They will be broken up in the normal way that you would expect: some where there are safeguarding risks immediately, some where there are historic issues. As you are aware and as we spoke about yesterday, it covers both professional football and also grassroots football in clubs and things that we are associated with, and it will work across London. It is right across the piece. Sadly, I think it is going to grow in terms of numbers and, as we go forward, we will have to look at how we resource that and what we do in relation to those investigations.

Why do we need that national co-ordination? Like many things, people may have worked in sport in a variety of places across the UK or further afield and that is what the national co-ordination does.

Andrew Dismore AM: I have a last question on this issue. There may or may not be some high-profile suspects. I do not know. Have we learned the lessons from the [Sir Richard] Henriques inquiry [*An Independent Review of the Metropolitan Police Service's Handling of Non-Recent Sexual Offence Investigations against Persons of Public Prominence*, November 2016] about how this is going to be done?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Absolutely, we learned lessons from all of these. Actually, with all of these inquiries - and it is a really good point - you can see some of the complexities around it. People have immediately started to use language about "victims", which Henriques said something different about. It is quite a good way of highlighting the real dilemmas that we ask our operational officers to wrestle with. Absolutely, rest assured. The best people are looking at this and will work their way through it, but in your question you highlight some of the dilemmas because none of this is an easy space to work in.

Andrew Dismore AM: I am not going to go into that in detail because we went through that with the Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] before, but it is something that needs to be borne in mind.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you. That is the end of that part of this morning's work. We will, clearly, carry on looking at this during the course of the coming months and in the New Year [2017]. I am sure we have some reassurance around it, particularly with you, Martin [Hewitt], taking the lead on that.

I want to move quite quickly into the next part of the morning, which is about the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan. The new plan has just been published for consultation for 12 weeks leading up to February 2017. This

Committee will clearly do some more detailed work in January with invited guests and we are trying to do some work around that at the moment but while we have you here as a panel it is an opportunity to have your first thoughts around it. Clearly the Plan differs radically in many parts, which we have already touched upon, from the previous [Police and] Crime Plan.

We have some questions around the priorities and others in a minute but first of all questions to the MPS, to either Craig or Martin [Hewitt QPM]. What input did the MPS have into the drafting of this particular plan?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Thank you. We were involved in a number of ways. In early November some of our teams worked with colleagues from MOPAC around looking at some of the areas that could be in the draft. We were fortunate that prior to the release of the final version, we had the opportunity to see it and comment. I fed back comments along with another wider submission from the MPS. We have been involved certainly throughout as this starts to emerge. At many of the meetings I often end up sitting alongside the Deputy Mayor, whether it has been with London Councils, whether it has been with chief executives or others, and we have talked broadly about the thrust and focus and the key areas of the plan. There are no surprises in terms of what we saw.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We have already touched upon the prioritising. We have talked around safeguarding, quite properly over a period of time. In the priorities set, there are a lot of targets within the plan. There are over 50 identified crime areas that we want to reduce, although there may or may not be some specifics around that. We have already touched upon a critique of MOPAC 7, which was a hard-edged target area. We have talked around that already with neighbourhood crimes.

The Mayor has asked you to prioritise safeguarding, violence against women and girls and hate crime as three threads, themes or targets that should sit within all the borough pieces and then, on top of that, formulate local crime priorities for those individual boroughs, almost unique to those boroughs, that are prescribed for and by those boroughs particularly in replacement of the MOPAC 7. You said yourself when you visited the boroughs that MOPAC 7 permeated the borough targeting from top to bottom, rightly or wrongly. We did see an 18% to 20% reduction in those crimes.

How do you see that target-setting? Is there enough clarity, do you feel, for you to be held to account as senior police and for you also to judge and hold to account your own officers within that matrix of priority-setting? Is there enough clarity for you to be held to account?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): There will be by the time we finish it.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It will be good when it is finished.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): This is important. This is out for consultation at the moment and the consultation questions effectively say, "Tell us your priorities. Talk to us about what you do more of and what you do less of". You have touched on it a number of times. The feedback we have given is around some of the hard choices. We will have to make some hard choices collectively as London going forward and the Police and Crime Plan hopes to provide the framework to allow us to make some of those informed decisions.

It goes to a point that the Deputy Mayor made earlier on. There is a danger sometimes, and it may be in the way that we have all ended up with a draft, but it is not intended that it is a free-for-all. It is intended to be data-led local priority setting. Let us think of an extreme example. I will not name a borough but if someone

came back and said, "Tell you what, I have robbery figures like this, I have moped-enabled crime like this and I have sexual violence like this but I am going to focus on damage to bus stops", we might have to be saying, "Come on, where is the data? Where is the information? That is not a priority". It is now going through the detail of that.

We have had some useful sessions with the teams together saying, "How could this look and how could this work?" If you remember, one of the things that the local bit was designed to address, as we go through a transition and the MPS changes over the next three to five years, is trying to give a much more local feel to an organisation where the critique you often make of us is, "It just feels like you give the same to everyone". This will hopefully give some local flavour to that. It is different and it can work but it is keeping that tight enough.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I heard your comments earlier that when you used to visit, it felt like MOPAC 7 was the only game in town. Of course, that was not true.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Clearly, the leaders of those boroughs were looking at murder and looking at terrorism across the piece. They were not MOPAC 7 and they were properly adhered to. Deputy Mayor, among this cocktail of targets that you are working towards, how will you be able to hold the Commissioner to account? It appears to me there is not the clarity around the targets.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): You are valiantly defending the MOPAC 7.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): No, I am not at all.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): In terms of the MOPAC 7 --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You are putting words in my mouth. I am not in the slightest. If I may say, they were of their time. They had a success rate in and of themselves. They are then. We are now in the new world. I am talking about your Plan.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): In terms of priority-setting in the Police and Crime Plan, we are out to consultation but it is very clear from within - and the consultation we are having is the best way of indicating this - that we expect, through data-led evidence that MOPAC will work with the boroughs, the Borough Commanders and the MPS to produce because we do have very good evidence and insight into this, we will discuss with the boroughs the best way of them setting those priorities.

They will be within two baskets, the first volume crime, whatever is the most prevalent and the most important to those boroughs, and the second basket around harm and vulnerability. I do not think that is a very complicated message. It is a little bit more sophisticated than the MOPAC 7 but the MPS is a large, sophisticated organisation with a large staff and can rise to this challenge. It is the best way forward, ensuring that yes, we make sure that those volume crimes that are producing the most concern in the local boroughs are tackled and are reduced but also that we really have a focus on harm and vulnerability. I hope in four years' time we will not be having the lengthy discussion we have had about that because the performance framework of the MPS will be such that from MOPAC and from my position, we are able to assess very clearly where progress is being made and where reductions are being made because they should be reduced.

Also it is important to state that in some of these areas we would expect reporting of crime to go up. We are not looking for reductions at this stage. For example, with CSE, domestic violence and some of the other

vulnerabilities, we are within this Plan saying we want increased reporting because we know that the crimes, high as they are at the moment, are not being reported in sufficient volume that we know is out there from our own assessments. We have published a sexual violence needs assessment and we know that there is a lot of sexual violence and it is increasing, whether that is through reporting or confidence, we need to get underneath. I believe that through this consultation process, by the end of it, when we come out with our final publication at the end of March, there will be very clear criteria that I can hold the MPS to account to and the public can hold their own local police to account to, local boroughs can hold their local police to account to, and there can be a clear understanding of where progress is being made.

Tony Arbour AM: These are really questions of you, Deputy Mayor. It is very striking that yesterday, at the final meeting of the Assembly of the year, the only thing that was mentioned by the Mayor that related to the Police and Crime Plan was that he took a single sentence out of the Police and Crime Plan that referred to the sale of water cannon. Clearly, the Mayor thinks this is the most important thing in the Police and Crime Plan.

I would like to ask you a few questions about the importance of this. First, was it a manifesto promise of the Mayor that the water cannon should be sold?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, it was.

Tony Arbour AM: It was. When was the manifesto published, Deputy Mayor?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): It seems such a long time ago. It might have been at the beginning of the New Year that the manifesto was published.

Tony Arbour AM: When it was published, you knew that that was a commitment. Do you know how many other actual commitments there were relating to police in the Mayor's manifesto? This one said "sell". It was actually going to do something.

Do you know if there was anything else in there where the Mayor said he was going to do something positive, rather than use weasel words like "ensure", "try", "fight" or "encourage"? Can you think of anything else that was in the Mayor's police manifesto where he said he would actually do something?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The manifesto that was published on which, as you all know, the Mayor won a resounding victory --

Tony Arbour AM: No, I am not interested in that.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The manifesto --

Tony Arbour AM: I am asking you what he said in the manifesto, and I should tell you I have it in front of me here.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The manifesto is very clear what the Mayor's priorities would be around policing and crime: tackling knife crime, tackling violence against women and girls, setting up the Harris review around the preparedness for a terrorist attack --

Tony Arbour AM: Deputy Mayor, I asked you what specific things --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- and ensuring the return of real neighbourhood policing.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Stop talking across each other.

Tony Arbour AM: No, Deputy Mayor --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am trying to answer the question but I am being --

Tony Arbour AM: You are not answering the question. I simply asked you if you knew whether there was anything else in the Mayor's manifesto that related to crime when he said he would do something definitive rather than use the sort of words that you have just been using, such as "tackling", "ensuring", "undertaking" and so on. Was there anything else, other than the sale of the water cannon, which he said he would actually do?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The Mayor's manifesto very clearly states that he is going to restore real neighbourhood policing.

Tony Arbour AM: No, you are not answering the question.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): With respect --

Tony Arbour AM: The point I am making, Deputy Mayor, is this. There were only two things in the Mayor's manifesto where he said he would actually do something rather than using any weasel words at all. One of them was that he was going to "sell", something that he was actually going to do, a proper verb, the water cannon, and the only other thing he said that I am taking as a proper, active verb was that he was going to "implement" a tough crime strategy. Given that there were only these two --

Len Duvall AM: There is a lot more than that, obviously.

Tony Arbour AM: Given that there were only these two definitive promises in the Mayor's manifesto --

Len Duvall AM: What a misleading --

Tony Arbour AM: No, I will not take these interruptions. The Mayor considered this to be the most important thing and that is why I am -- asking the Deputy Mayor about it. When you took office - I cannot recall when you were appointed; I think it was in May but it may have been in June - you knew that these water cannon were to be sold, didn't you?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): If you would give me time to answer your first question, which was what else did the Mayor say in the manifesto that he would deliver --

Tony Arbour AM: No, I did not say that. I said, "What definitive action or thing did he say?"

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Let the Deputy Mayor answer now, Tony. Yes, you can.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): This is a very interesting form of questioning, where you get to question and question and question but I do not get to answer.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Continue.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Chairman, I would ask you that you would allow me time to answer rather than being constantly interrupted by Mr Arbour.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It is yours.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Thank you very much.

Tony Arbour AM: Mr Arbour expects questions to be answered, Mr Chairman.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): If you give me the time to do so, I will answer them.

In the Mayor's manifesto it was very clear that we would restore real neighbourhood policing, tackle violence against women and girls and set up the Harris review into the preparedness of the capital city if there was to be a terrorist attack. Not only has that been done - the review has been delivered very promptly, and a comprehensive review it was too - in terms of the manifesto commitment that said he would reintroduce real neighbourhood policing, a commitment has been made and is on track to ensure that there are dedicated ward officers in every ward. The manifesto was very comprehensive and clearly the voters of London thought the manifesto was very comprehensive because they voted for him in significant numbers in order for him to deliver it.

Tony Arbour AM: Please let me continue. I listened to all of that. The very interesting phrase you used there was "very promptly". Let me come back to this. When you were appointed, you knew that one of his promises was to sell the water cannon. Is that right?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Of course I knew, as did you know --

Tony Arbour AM: Thank you.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- and as did the voters of London know --

Tony Arbour AM: No, my questions --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- because it is a public manifesto document.

Tony Arbour AM: My questions, Deputy Mayor --

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Point of order.

Tony Arbour AM: -- are very simple questions designed to elicit either a yes or a no.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I have a point of order.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Point of order, Chairman.

Tony Arbour AM: So you knew --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Tony, I have a point of order. I am sorry. I have to interrupt you.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): It seems to me that we are straying from the topic that we should actually be considering.

Tony Arbour AM: No, we are not. It appears in the Police and Crime Plan. The Mayor himself yesterday drew attention only to this one aspect. I think, Mr Chairman, I am entitled to ask the Deputy Mayor why the Mayor thought that that was the most important thing. I am asking the Deputy Mayor questions about the sale of the water cannon. I ask very simple, very easy questions, Deputy Mayor, as I say, designed to elicit a yes or a no. I think that your answer to the question about the sale of the water cannon was that, yes, you knew that that was something that was in there.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Was that revelatory to you that I knew what was in the manifesto?

Tony Arbour AM: That leads to the next question.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Go to the next question, then.

Tony Arbour AM: The next question related to this, Deputy Mayor: what did you do when you arrived in office in relation to this manifesto commitment to sell the water cannon?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Clearly, as it is a manifesto commitment to sell the water cannon, we discussed it with the MPS and set in train the processes to do so. That is what the Mayor was highlighting yesterday. It was not because he thought it was the most important.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Let the Deputy Mayor finish.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): You are forgetting or deciding to overlook all the other analysis --

Tony Arbour AM: No, I am not.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- and the other times the Mayor --

Tony Arbour AM: Deputy --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- has talked about policing and crime.

Tony Arbour AM: Deputy Mayor, the Mayor himself decided to choose this single aspect of the Police and Crime Plan yesterday as being the most important thing and so I am entitled, as someone who is here to scrutinise him through you, to ask questions as to the way he conducts his post as being responsible for the MPS.

You have told me you had lots and lots of discussions about it. When were these discussions held? When you arrived, did you find MOPAC, having read the manifesto, had prepared a plan as to how it was going to sell the water cannon?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): When I arrived, it was very clear that we were going to deliver the manifesto commitment to sell the water cannon. That is what has been put in train. The announcement yesterday was how that was being put in train. I do not think there is a great deal of mystery about this.

Tony Arbour AM: No mystery. I am trying to make it clear to Londoners precisely what happened. You have already told us that you acted very promptly. Now then, at the end of June, a press release was published saying that you were *en route* to selling the water cannon and you were going to, as indeed the manifesto suggests, devote the money to helping young people. That was six months ago when that press release was made.

What happened, Deputy Mayor, between the issuing of that press release and the repeat of the issuing of that press release yesterday?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I have to admit, I do not recall there being a press release. I do recall the Mayor answering a question at the Mayor's Question Time around that. If there were a press release, in terms of the time it has taken to put the procedures in train, it is not a simple matter to put three second-hand water cannon on the market. That is what has happened.

Tony Arbour AM: Deputy Mayor, you are deliberately trying to obfuscate the matter.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am not. --

Tony Arbour AM: You have been telling us how very punctually you are doing things. I am seeking to demonstrate --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Move this on.

Tony Arbour AM: I am seeking to demonstrate on this issue - which is, as I have already pointed out, one of the very few definitive promises that the Mayor made in relation to policing - why it has taken so long and why it has been necessary to constantly reissue press releases on it. I want to know what MOPAC and you have been doing between the time of the publication of the manifesto and yesterday, when you still have not sold these water cannon. Please tell me exactly what it is you and MOPAC have been doing in relation to this.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): When you answer this, I want to bring this to a head and move on. OK?

Keith Prince AM: Mr Chairman, I have other questions on the cannon as well.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): On the same subject? Let us get this answer and move it on because we are using a lot of time.

Tony Arbour AM: We may be losing a lot of time --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Using.

Tony Arbour AM: -- using a lot of time on this, Mr Chairman, but it is our job to see the Deputy Mayor is doing her job --

Len Duvall AM: I tell you what, Chairman --

Tony Arbour AM: -- and the Mayor is doing his job. I am seeking to suggest --

Len Duvall AM: -- point of order --

Tony Arbour AM: -- that in this particular instance they have been falling down on the job and the Mayor himself has been using this to get a lot of cheap publicity at the expense of his predecessor.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Tony, I have that. I have yet another point of order.

Len Duvall AM: It is not the issue of the Labour Group to frustrate anyone's desire to ask questions of the Deputy Mayor or the MPS but in terms of the document before us and how we pursue it, what I want from you, Chairman, is that if we do not get time to ask our full set of questions, then we are coming back for a second meeting. There are some important issues in this document. I have a number of questions here that I want to pursue, as much as the colleagues there opposite. Albeit it is not for me to suggest otherwise, we are asking the wrong person some of these questions. There may well have been opportunities yesterday to ask those questions.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Let us not fall out around this. If you could ask the questions, keep them relatively sharp. Answers to the point, nicely, please. Go ahead, Tony.

Tony Arbour AM: What has been happening? What has been happening in the eight months since it was advertised that you were going to be selling these water cannon?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): A straightforward question. Answer it, please.

Len Duvall AM: It is not our priority, is it?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): All right, all right. Let us not fall out over this.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): We have been having discussions with the MPS, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Federal Republic of Germany to put these second-hand water cannon on the market. These things do take time. They are complicated. It is just that the process that has been gone through has taken that amount of time. It is not a simple matter to put three water cannon on the market. As you will see, it has gone from MOPAC to the MPS, and the MoD and the Federal Republic of Germany have all been part of these discussions. Those discussions were finalised in the service level agreement signed very recently and the announcement on this was made yesterday. I hope that is clear in terms of what has been happening.

Tony Arbour AM: No, I am afraid I --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It sounds like that is all you are getting, Tony.

Tony Arbour AM: I am afraid it is not. It is entirely unsatisfactory. Tell me, Deputy Mayor. When did you know that this press release, that was issued yesterday, was to be published?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): When the service level agreement was signed off by the MoD, we made a decision to make a press announcement around this. You are using time around the Police and Crime Plan around the minutiae of this process of the delivery --

Tony Arbour AM: Wrong, Deputy Mayor.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- of the manifesto commitment.

Tony Arbour AM: Our job is to see how you are conducting your office.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Keith [Prince AM], do you have a couple of questions on the same subject?

Tony Arbour AM: Do you know? It is not on, Chairman, for you to seek to inhibit me.

Andrew Dismore AM: This is not the Mayor's priority. It is ridiculous.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Andrew, please. I am trying to get a balance here.

Tony Arbour AM: It really is not. It is not me who has chosen to give this prominence; it is the Mayor and the Mayor decided yesterday that this was the only aspect of the plan that would have prominence.

Andrew Dismore AM: How is --

Tony Arbour AM: He made various statements that I do not believe were right and true, and I am asking the Deputy Mayor, who presumably has the confidence of the Mayor in this matter, to tell us precisely what she has done on this. As I say, I find your answers so far very unsatisfactory. Can you tell me, Deputy Mayor, if, when you came into office, you knew that these machines were to be sold, how much was spent on the maintenance of these vehicles between then and now?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The maintenance of these vehicles has not been spent between the time I came into office and now. The maintenance of these vehicles was spent under the previous administration once they were bought, to make them roadworthy. You will have seen yourself in the press releases what --

Tony Arbour AM: You are telling me that not a penny has been spent on these machines since you came into office?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Nothing should have been spent on these machines since I came into office. They have been stored on land so there may have been some cost. In terms of the cost of the purchase of the vehicles and the initial fit-out, which was published yesterday, that has not happened under our administration.

Tony Arbour AM: Does that mean, Deputy Mayor, that those machines have been completely stationary wherever it is that they are kept, at Gravesend, and not been used in any way?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): They should not have been being used.

Tony Arbour AM: That was not the question. Have they?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): As far as I am aware, they should not have been used. It is certainly not something that has been discussed with me if they have been used.

Tony Arbour AM: I have no doubt that there is some sort of evidence trail of that kind of thing and we should be seeking information on that. Again, in relation to the water cannon, are you aware that when they were acquired, the Commissioner and members of the senior management team of the MPS believed that they were an essential purchase?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am aware of that, yes, because that is what has happened. However, as you are also aware, the Home Secretary and now the Prime Minister did not think they were an essential purchase and did not think it was an appropriate policing tactic for the city of London, for the capital city of the country.

Tony Arbour AM: Deputy Mayor, supposing the police wish to make a purchase again and they advise you that something that they want to buy is necessary for the policing of London, or they come to you and they advise you that some other action, possibly not related to a purchase but related to some kind of activity that they believe is going to be useful to London, would you ignore such advice?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Of course I would not ignore advice but in relation to significant changes to operational policing, which the use of water cannon would be, there has to be the appropriate discussion and response. I know the Assembly itself voted against the purchase of water cannon. The only people who were in favour of it -- the previous Mayor was in favour of it. What would have to happen is that there would have to be --

Tony Arbour AM: That cannot be right, can it?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- proper discussion and consultation around significant changes to tactics, as is appropriate, and as happens already around other tactics as well.

Tony Arbour AM: Of course the statement you made was completely untrue when you suggested it was just the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor who were in support of this. The entire hierarchy of the MPS was, of course, in support of this. They believed it was an appropriate thing to be using. Are you aware, Deputy Mayor, that the police hold baton rounds?

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

Tony Arbour AM: These baton rounds have never been used, have they?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Not that I know of, no.

Tony Arbour AM: Do you believe it is an appropriate thing therefore for the police to hold these baton rounds?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The police have various tactical options. The water cannon was a significant change in tactical options around operational policing. It is not just me. The previous Home Secretary and the current Prime Minister did not give permission for the water cannon to be licensed. That is where we are. Instead of spending money on three pieces of equipment that cannot be used, we have rightly taken the decision to sell them and to make sure that whatever proceeds that there are from these second-hand water cannon are put to better use.

Tony Arbour AM: I wonder if you would mind telling me what you think the better use might be.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): In terms of the proceeds of the sale of the water cannon, as you will know because you have read the manifesto very carefully, the commitment to --

Tony Arbour AM: I certainly have. I have memorised it and framed it.

Andrew Dismore AM: That is not true!

Tony Arbour AM: Deputy Mayor, this has become a matter of levity. I have to tell you it is not a matter of levity. It beggars belief that you have had these great difficulties in selling these vehicles that have only just come to a head. It beggars belief that the publicity machine that surrounds the Mayor constantly recycles this story. The key thing is he wants them to be sold on, as I understand it, to be used again. It is OK for some other police force to use them, conceivably, I suppose, in Ulster, but not in London. Is that right?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): What beggars belief is that there has been a significant amount of public money already spent on the purchase of equipment that was never licensed and has languished somewhere. That to me is the real difficulty in this. We are taking and have taken steps to make sure that we sell these water cannon. What has happened is that the water cannon are now on the market. They are not yet sold. That was very clear from yesterday. We have another step to go through. No doubt when they are sold, you will come back and ask me, step by step, what I was doing, what the press announcement was, and we will go through this again.

Tony Arbour AM: I will only do that if the Mayor considers that to be the most significant thing in relation to policing, which he clearly does, and that indicates --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Can I just --

Tony Arbour AM: -- a great shame.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is enough. Have you finished, Tony?

Tony Arbour AM: Yes.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Can I just --

Andrew Dismore AM: That is completely out of order.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Andrew, please do not interrupt.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Mr Arbour has said a number of times that this is the only thing the Mayor has highlighted in terms of policing and that is just simply not the case. The Mayor launched the Police and Crime Plan and has spent a lot of time talking about the Police and Crime Plan and highlighting the commitments in the Police and Crime Plan. Yesterday there was an announcement around water cannon but that is not the whole sum of how often the Mayor talks about policing and crime or the commitments in the Police and Crime Plan. You are doing an injustice to do so.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I understand your response. Keith, on the same subject?

Keith Prince AM: Yes. Deputy Mayor, are you aware of why the senior leadership team at the MPS wanted to procure water cannon?

Andrew Dismore AM: They wanted a new toy.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Keith, you were in MOPAC when the discussions around the purchase of the water cannon --

Keith Prince AM: I was, and I agreed with the purchase of the water cannon.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): You may well have agreed with the purchase of the water cannon. I can only come back to the fact that the Home Security and now current Prime Minister did not agree with the purchase of the water cannon, the water cannon was not licensed and has never been used. It is right and proper that we now sell it to try to ensure that some proceeds can go towards tackling youth violence.

Keith Prince AM: Are you aware, Madam, Deputy Mayor, that in 2011 during the riots, the use of water cannon was authorised with a 24-hour notice? Were you aware of that?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No, I was not aware.

Keith Prince AM: No, exactly. At that point it was deemed that they would have been an appropriate tool if they had been available. Clearly it would have taken a long time to get the ones that we have from Northern Ireland over and by the time that would have been done, obviously the "riots" - we will put it in inverted commas; it was just civil disorder - would have finished. It is not true that it has never been deemed appropriate that they could be used on the mainland.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I would want to check that. It is certainly not something I have ever heard.

Keith Prince AM: You can check if you like. It is up to you to check. Often we have found you do not know or you need to check stuff.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I do not think that is the case either, Mr Prince, is it?

Keith Prince AM: While you are doing the checking on that, would you also check what they have been used for while they have been down in Gravesend?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): They have not been used while they have been done in Gravesend.

Keith Prince AM: Craig, Mr Mackey, what are the water cannon used for at Gravesend? Are you aware?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Since we have had them, they have been used to be training alongside.

Keith Prince AM: Exactly.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Since the decision was made that they are going to go, they are effectively sitting there waiting to go.

Keith Prince AM: They have been used since we have had them to train the MPS in the use of water cannon --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): That was under the previous administration.

Keith Prince AM: -- because the MPS are often called to Northern Ireland, certainly during the marching season. If we do not have the water cannon, if we did not use the water cannon to train our police here in London in Gravesend, which is just down the road, they would have to be sent on courses to Northern Ireland for a period of time, with us losing the use of those officers and there being a cost. In fact, because they have been used for training in that respect, we have been saving money. The MPS has been saving money because they have been used as a training tool for mutual aid that they give to the , it is not the Royal Ulster Constabulary --

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): The Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you. Clearly you are not aware of that. Maybe you and the Mayor should have been --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am aware.

Keith Prince AM: -- made aware of that. Often we know that you are not made aware of things because of your bad communications with the MPS. You should have known that. You did not know that.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Can I just clarify --

Keith Prince AM: Can you tell me --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Just let him come to a question and then we can respond.

Keith Prince AM: Can you tell me Madam Deputy Mayor, if there was civil disorder like we had in 2011, when our police officers are coming under attack, having bricks thrown at them, being injured, when horses are being injured because they are trying to push back the crowd, when we have a situation where the police have their shields up, they are defending themselves against bricks being thrown, can you tell me what is the next step to push back the rioters if we do not have the water cannon?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Can I just clarify what I am aware of and not aware of? I was aware that the water cannon had been used for training officers but, since we have made the decision to sell it, that has not happened. That is what I am saying. They have not been used. Of course I am aware of that. In terms of --

Keith Prince AM: Then why did you say, in answer to Mr Arbour's question that they have not been used and they have just been sitting there doing nothing?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Under my --

Keith Prince AM: Either that is a lie or you are suffering from some kind of memory loss.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Let us keep it civil, if we potentially can.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Can we keep it civil?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): On both sides.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Perhaps Mr Prince might not --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Let us answer this because I want --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): -- accuse me of lying.

Keith Prince AM: I did not accuse you of lying.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): You ought to be very careful about what you are saying.

Keith Prince AM: You have purposefully misled Mr Arbour, have you not?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I have not purposefully misled anybody.

Keith Prince AM: Then why did you say they have just been sitting there doing nothing when they have been doing the very valuable function of training the police for mutual aid purposes?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Answer that and then we are going to move on.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): In the new administration, the water cannon have not been used. The decision was made to sell them. They have not been used. In the previous administration, I was aware that training was taking place. That is clear. If there has been some confusion over that, I have now clarified that for you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I appreciate that. Thank you.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): In terms of other operational tactics around disorder, the previous Home Secretary, now the Prime Minister, did not think and does not think that the licensing of water cannon was appropriate for London or that it was needed in order to deal with disorder. We have had some disorder previously in the last couple of months and the police have done a very effective job of getting that under control without the use of water cannon.

Keith Prince AM: Madam Deputy Mayor, with all due respect, I actually did not really mean to accuse you of lying and so I apologise because I know you are a very honest person - I do believe that - and a very nice person, too. The question was: what happens when we are in a situation when the police are under attack, they have their shields up, bricks are being thrown, Molotov cocktails, at a push, are being thrown, what is the next level of action that we have available to us to push that crowd back, to protect our police officers and to restore order in our streets? What is the next step up without the use of water cannon?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): It is the same as it is previously when the water cannon was unlicensed and we did not have water cannon. It is police operational tactics and they have been very very effective in dealing with disorder on the streets. We have had some pockets of it in the summer and it has been incredibly effective.

There has been no change. The water cannon was unusable. The change is that we are going to sell it and use the proceeds that we do get from that to deal with tackling youth violence.

Keith Prince AM: As you cannot seem to answer the question, let me help you. The first option would be a baton charge, which would of course cause injury to both the rioters and also the police, or a cavalry charge, effectively, where they send in the horses, which often ends up with the horses being maimed and officers being injured. The next round after that, of course, is rubber bullets. We have access to rubber bullets and that is what would be used in order to push the crowd back.

Do you not think, madam Deputy Mayor, on reflection, it would be far safer for the rioters and for our noble police officers if we were just to squirt them with some water? The pressures are all variable. We can do from 20% up to 80% pressure on these cannons. They have all been modified to do that. With very little force they can push back the rioters, they can make space, and it is a well-known fact in Northern Ireland - I have spoken with officers who have used water cannon in Northern Ireland - that what happens is the guys get wet, after a short period of time, especially if it is not nice weather, they get fed up and they go home. Much better than hitting them over the head with truncheons, much better than charging them underfoot with the cavalry --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You have made your point, Keith.

Keith Prince AM: -- and much better than using rubber bullets. Do you not think, on reflection, that makes sense? The senior leadership team of the MPS did and the Home Secretary at the time in 2011 did agree that with a 24-hour notice, water cannon could be used? It is not as if it is a mystery.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Keith, you and Steve are valiantly - and I respect it - defending the policies of the previous administration, of which you were part. I respect that. I have not spent my time in office attacking the policies of the past.

Tony Arbour AM: The Mayor has.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I have just gone ahead and tried to make process. I respect that. This is not about my judgement; this is about the judgement of the previous Home Secretary and now the Prime Minister, who did not give permission for water cannon to be licensed. That is the case. Nothing has changed in terms of the police's ability to respond to disorder. Nothing is changed by the fact that we are putting these water cannon, these second-hand or maybe third-hand water cannon, up for sale.

Keith Prince AM: The basic fact is that they can be authorised for use in the event of a major civil disorder. They can --

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): You keep saying that, Keith, but there is no such thing as a special licence. The previous Home Secretary and now the Prime Minister has previously refused a licence. I really do not think that is going to change.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You have already mentioned that.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I keep being asked the same question and so I am not going to --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I am trying to obviate that. We have two quick questions on the same subject. I really did not want this to dominate the whole morning because we have two senior officers there who need to take some more questions about the Police and Crime Plan with a limited period of time because I know you are time-poor. Andrew, without making it tit-for-tat politics, just a question, please.

Andrew Dismore AM: I am not making it tit-for-tat politics; I would just like to put a proposition to the Deputy Mayor. It would have been far better if Mr Prince had been able to convince the previous Home Secretary and the previous Prime Minister, the Home Secretary now being the Prime Minister in this case, rather than putting it to you because it is not your decision in the first place.

Would it not have been rather better had the previous administration actually cleared their lines with the previous Home Secretary and Prime Minister before spending a third of a million of taxpayers' money on these three white elephants?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Absolutely.

Andrew Dismore AM: Is it not the case that, of all the things that we have to deal with in policing, the sale of the water cannon is trivial, albeit a manifesto commitment, compared to the time that has been spent preparing this document and the time that has been spent in dealing with issues of hate crime post-Brexit referendum, which led to that huge upsurge that we saw, the time that the Mayor has spent in developing Safer Neighbourhoods, real safer neighbourhood policing, and the time that you have devoted to implementing the Harris review? All those things took rather more time, I suspect, than deciding how to sell the water cannon. Is that the case?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): It certainly is. In terms of communication, there may be some miscommunication in the past but we have not spent over £300,000 because of miscommunication.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): My point on this is that I was not defending the previous administration. Bar the gentlemen in uniform, I was possibly the only one around here who stood on the front line back in 2011 at the north end of Croydon. At that time, it would have been of use if we could have had our hands on it. The difficulties then with civil disorder in Croydon were immense. Let us move on.

Andrew Dismore AM: No.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Andrew, it is the Chairman's prerogative to summarise.

Andrew Dismore AM: The Chairman has given three quarters of an hour to these people and he has given me two minutes. The point I want to make is quite simple. If you read the report that this Committee produced, you will find that water cannon could not have been deployed because of their size and that they were dangerous. It is all very well the former Mayor saying he was prepared to be squirted by it but he did not do that, did he?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): All right.

Peter Whittle AM: Mr Chairman, just to make one point.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Please do, Peter.

Peter Whittle AM: This issue surely has been decided. This is going way off.

Len Duvall AM: Exactly.

Peter Whittle AM: It is 12pm. The fact is that there is no point rehearsing arguments all the time that have been settled, surely.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Point taken, Peter. Can we move back to the agenda item, please? I always lose the thread. I have you down, Keith. Have you moved on from your last question?

Keith Prince AM: Yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Peter, why do we not get back to the agenda with you and your question? Let us get back on track with your question.

Len Duvall AM: My question relates to a follow-up to your question, which was about MOPAC 7 issues, performance issues and local plans.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Please do.

Len Duvall AM: Shall I do it then or should I come at it another way? I have about six or seven other issues that I want to raise in relation to this Plan, some that I have some real concerns over.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We can be here as long as it takes, if that is the case. We have taken the time out.

Len Duvall AM: In terms of your question and the opening issue of differences and priority-setting, thank you, early on, Deputy Mayor, for clarifying the issues between local policing priorities and the issues you were raising that were London-wide. I go into the document - I have read it once - and I did not quite see that there. For clarity, just repeating it for the Committee again because this is important and we might come back to it, what are the London-wide 'reserved matters' that you think must be achieved across the MPS and what are for local discretion and local discussion? Mixed messages have led us into a load of problems in the past in the MPS and we can learn those lessons. This could be quite an important one that we can be clear on.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Absolutely. Maybe the best way is to point you to page 16 of the draft Police and Crime Plan consultation document. At the top of page 16 it gives you the two baskets, as I have talked about, one on volume crimes, which is about data-led local priority-setting with some parameters around it so that we do not have too many priorities, and then high harm crimes, which have been included in every borough to make sure that police and local partners are focused on them properly, such as CSE, violence against women and girls, knife crime and gun crime. Also within the Police and Crime Plan we talk about the importance of reducing repeat victimisation and tackling repeat offending. That is also a cross-London issue.

In terms of your question, what is local priority-setting and what is London-wide priority-setting, the top of page 16 gives the parameters of that and we are consulting as to the best way that that can be implemented and delivered.

Len Duvall AM: Going back to one of the issues - this is one I want to ask Martin - on the borough mergers, we have some pilots in the draft plan. Obviously, this is the issue. You answered earlier in relation to an earlier question that we think we can manage two lots of priority settings. If we have a two-borough issue or three-borough, we can handle this.

One of the issues and arguments for merging is flexing and moving one person from a borough into another borough. I go back to the "basket of ten" or whatever it was called, never mind MOPAC 7. Bearing in mind those problems of what problems we do and what we leave, the screening-out bit and also mixed messages, briefing police officers in terms of going into areas, the flexing issues and watching the pilots that are in this document, what is the advice we are giving to police officers of how that would work?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): The whole thing works on a number of levels to start with. Even as we exist, if you look at any borough in London, within one part of the borough the priority can conceivably be very different to another part of the borough because of their make-up. The first level for me, and a really important one, is that level of a neighbourhood and those dedicated ward officers. You have the dedicated ward officer and the police community support officer (PCSO). That will increase. They are very much focused at what the real issues and problems are in that particular part of London. We need to give them the space and freedom to allow them to focus on the things that matter to the people that live there; whether it is individuals, groups or organisations within that particular area. You are then going to have, running across the lot, the key themes that are common across the piece that we have spoken about and that the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] has just mentioned. They will drive not only, as I said before, your core resourcing of different teams but will also drive some of your flexibility.

Within any of those BCUs you will then have issues that are common or particular to a borough. Again, this is going to be different across London. In the Camden-Islington BCU there is probably going to be a reasonable degree of commonality between those two. When you go out to the one in the east there will be some differences of priority in particular areas around those issues. We will still have officers who are focused on a particular area. We will still have accountability to a particular borough in terms of what we are doing.

The other advantage - and the really key difference that the merger gives us - is that it gives us the ability to have a bigger flexible pot of officers to deploy to a particular issue; to deploy them in support of a neighbourhood team that have a particular problem in an area or deploy them against a particular challenge in a borough. At the moment in most of my boroughs we do not have a huge flexible asset. That is one of the things the merger gives us, and that then allows you to flex around.

Len Duvall AM: To help the Committee more - because we are going to return to this - I am a great fan of neighbourhood policing. I have lost my way and am now bit of a sceptic of what the MPS. I lost my way in the last administration. Time is out on this administration. Yesterday the Mayor did speak of other priorities. I am quite supportive of the priorities he spoke to. However, in doing so he gave an additional challenge - could be a burden if you are a police officer - of saying what the neighbourhood teams are doing. The theme here is getting closer to the public. We have the local setting of priorities, which is one theme. Then we have the local team that is going to appear or not appear as the case may be. I still want to know about the flexing of these issues, although you say they are dedicated.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): They are.

Len Duvall AM: Something that has never been quite explained is whether we are still into sector policing. You do not call it that; you call it “neighbourhoods”. That is not neighbourhoods to me. Do we still have a sector team issue?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No.

Len Duvall AM: It might have been helpful, Chairman, if we had known that. We do need to understand what these different officers are going to do, not just in mergers of policing but in terms of this borough plan. What are the expectations of this local team in their patch or in their ward? In times of woe, we understand, and real emergencies, they will be moved.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Of course.

Len Duvall AM: What we think are real emergencies I think we can agree on.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I agree.

Len Duvall AM: A local Borough Commander might have a different view. As much as we want to get local to people and deliver, surely that should go alongside this in the policing plan. It is almost like a ‘nod and a wink’ to it in terms of resourcing issues. It is about managing and supervision. Their right to manage locally and not really be centrally managed. It is difficult for the MPS because that is how the MPS has always worked.

In a setting of reduced resources, how do we get the best out of that? Do we trust our managers and supervisors? Now woe is me, the last couple of months do not give us much confidence, I suspect, but is that not where the MPS has to be going over the next four years. Should it not be one of MOPAC’s desires to try to nudge and support you in terms of some of those management changes?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Can I just answer some of those before I let the Deputy [Commissioner] answer.

In terms of the neighbourhood bit, I know where you are coming from. I am very clear about what we mean when we talk about dedicated ward officers. That is dedicated. There will be a minimum of two for every ward. For the majority of wards in London there will be more than two police officers, depending upon a whole range of factors around demand, workload and so on. Every one of those wards will, equally, have a PCSO. The decision-making process about how and where we do that increase will be done in conjunction with local authorities so that we are getting a joint decision around where we think priority requirements are. Those individuals will be protected and will be left to get on and do what I think they should be doing. I am going to load some other things onto them, such as, “I expect you to be in your children’s homes and I expect you to be looking for issues of radicalisation if you are in a place where that might be an issue”. However, their primary role is to engage with those communities and deal with those communities.

We have inadvertently stumbled upon how this can work with the Police Now programme that I am sure many of you are familiar with. Like Teach First, you join for two years. Every one of those individuals - good quality people - was placed as a dedicated ward officer. We placed them all in our most challenging wards. Because they are not trained to do loads of other stuff, we have let them get on and problem-solve in their ward on whatever it is the local councillors and other groups in that ward are saying are the issues. They have done an incredible job. That, for me, is how I want to expand that to what dedicated neighbourhood teams look like.

Tony Arbour AM: It sounded like a lot of students will be running our neighbourhood teams.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): They are police officers. I am not aware there is a problem with someone having been a student.

Tony Arbour AM: Forgive me, Chairman; it was a *sotto voce* comment.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Martin, can you just continue? Then we can pick up any supplementary points that you may wish to make later.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): What that has given us is insight, inadvertently as it happens to be. You are right that if there is major disorder, then clearly I will not give the Borough Commander or the BCU Commander the power to move those people around. They will know that. Merging gives the critical mass that allows us to have that resource.

The way you described sector policing - and the way you described where neighbourhood policing went - we had some dedicated officers and then the other neighbourhood officers were effectively that flexing resource. I do not want to call those neighbourhood officers. We will have a flexible resource. The neighbourhood officers will be what it says. They will be working alongside the increase in youth officers who will be in schools, in pupil referral units and in other engagement with young people. Collectively that is a significant number of officers, spread across every one of the wards in London, dealing with what I would regard as neighbourhood policing that I think is the same as you would regard as neighbourhood policing.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): To pick up the second part of your question, your analysis is absolutely right. We have touched a number of times over the last six months or so on what a fundamental change the next four years will be for the MPS. That move away from an organisation that has been very centrally controlled to empowered leaders fits with the work we are doing around delayering and skilling up our leaders for the future. That is how you have to do it. In a decreasing budget environment you have to be more effective and allow those leaders the flexibility to do it.

What comes alongside it is transparency and openness around data. One of the conversations we are having with the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] is how do we make those instruction levels visible to the community. You will see we have a beta version of the website at the moment that allows you - down to a beat level - to look at and have available to you what is going on in your area, what is happening in crimes and incidents in your area and what it looks like against the rest of London. You can have Twitter feeds into it if you do not go on Twitter. You can have all sorts of things done. We are looking at some quite exciting ways to get things to that very local level which fits with that wider performance framework.

What is behind the question is, when we struggle to get consistency across 32 and then suddenly go to a scenario of 12 or something like that, how we create a scenario to get consistency across that and let everyone do their own thing. There is always a balance between tight and loose. You absolutely have to deliver those things around the performance framework. Some of the freedom to move things around at local level has to be there. As Martin said, in relation to neighbourhood it is not. It is non-negotiable.

Len Duvall AM: I have three more points; two quick ones and one that is going to take a little bit longer. The Committee might want me to take a little bit longer on that. I will be guided by you where they come from. Shall I tell you my points? I will give you a 'starter for ten' so you can start preparing for them.

One is on our proposed commitments. I want to talk about the Night Czar and licensing. The other issue is about violent crime, which should be a quickie. The other one was around Prevent. Two quick ones and one big one.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is fine. To pull this together, I have one observation on your point around two in every ward and three in the target wards. This would - and I am probably speaking to my own question - involve the dismantling of the existing policing model, which was the team behind the one and the two. That is legitimate. My point - I will just let it hang there - is that it seems to me that much of the ambitions and priorities are predicated around delivering two in every ward and three. This Committee particularly will be keeping a close eye on that. I know for a fact from my travels - and other Members can probably potentially agree with that - that often you are unable to deliver sometimes the one and the one. A member of the public might say, "I have not had a one and a one for six months or three months and they tell me we are now going to get two". It is going to be a big challenge. If many of the Deputy Mayor's [for Policing and Crime] priorities hang on that, it is something we need to think about.

Keith Prince AM: It is for Mr Mackey but anyone can answer it. This has been half answered. It is about the disappearance of the flexible team that stands behind the neighbourhood team. In future - whereas at the moment in Redbridge we have the one-one system - when there is a particular issue around the antiterrorist squad (ATS) or something else or the mobile team, as I call them, are tasked to do some special work, does that mean that will no longer be able to happen?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): So I can be very clear with what the Chairman said, the minimum will be two police officers and one PCSO for every ward. There will be more dependent on the need in that ward. It will not just be three in some. In some wards we predict it would go up to six and seven if you have a really high demand part of the city. In your particular situation you would have the two plus one as a minimum in each of those wards. Bear in mind they would not be abstracted in any way. Currently, I suspect some of the additional support officers would be abstracted quite a lot. The support officers that currently sit within the neighbourhood teams, as you describe, will be officers that often are having to go and do a duty for demonstrations and so on. You will have a much bigger dedicated group that is there.

What we will build into the model is, as I say, this flex resource that would be there to support if you have a particular problem in a particular ward or there is an operation that needs to be run. That is where you will get the flex to come in and support those officers. We also need to use the broader part. Of course we need to organise a command into different teams but we have to move towards a place where you have more flex between the teams in terms of the way they support one another. You will get a thicker permanent base and then there will be support coming from within the BCU, a flexible asset.

Keith Prince AM: Once you have taken out the extra PCs from what we will call the mobile team at the moment there will obviously be far fewer of those left. You are then going to divvy them up onto the higher demand wards, is that what you are saying?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Some of them will, yes. I do not know exact numbers of how many are in that team in that particular case but, yes, some of those will be. The process at the moment is being run - I was there talking to them about it earlier this week - to identify who will go as the new dedicated ward officers. It will be PCs who have expressed interest.

Keith Prince AM: In the past, as you quite rightly said, abstractions came from that mobile team.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Correct.

Keith Prince AM: That will not exist anymore?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No.

Keith Prince AM: The abstractions will have to come from the ward teams then, will they?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, they will not come from the dedicated ward officers. There will not be abstraction of dedicated ward officers for aid or anything like that.

Keith Prince AM: Are you limiting that to the two plus one? Say for instance in a ward such as Barkingside which is my ward - it is not a troubled ward so it would not really qualify for three but let us say it has three - would that third officer still be liable for abstraction?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, he or she would not.

Keith Prince AM: Once you have said, "There are two going to be two in Clayhall, three in Barkingside and four in Clementswood", for instance, they are fixed assets and cannot be abstracted? There will clearly be holidays and things like that.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Correct, for holidays and *in extremis* - for example, there is a job in Westminster - that is exactly the model. Although the number of overall neighbourhoods now looks bigger it is because of those support teams that spend a lot of time being abstracted. We will have what I describe as a carpet of dedicated ward officers and their PCSO colleagues who will not get abstracted.

Keith Prince AM: I have two more questions. Where does the flex team come from if everyone is divvied up into wards? That is the first question. The second one: where will the abstractions come from?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): You are able to create a much bigger critical mass when you bring two or three of our units together. The problem at the moment is in many of our boroughs, because of the relatively low numbers they have, by the time you divide that up by 10, 11 or 12 different units you get very small teams that do not have the critical mass to be flexible. We will bring those together. That will allow us to roll out those neighbourhood numbers. Then we will also increase the numbers within the response teams, the day-to-day shift teams. Some will be from flexing and some from other places. That will be where we will draw from for aid. Simultaneously we are continually driving down the requirement for aid as well at a central level in terms of reducing abstractions as much as we can.

Keith Prince AM: Have I understood then that maybe two wards will work together?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, no wards are working together. A ward will have its number of dedicated police officers and its one PCSO. They are the immovable element.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you. That was very helpful.

Len Duvall AM: In terms of Prevent and Contest, there are, again, some mixed messages in here. You say you welcome the review of the Government on Contest. That is fine. Then we talk about the issue of Prevent and the role that we play in identifying extremists with partners in that sense.

Which side are we on? I do not mean that literally. I know which side we are all on and we are all on the side of keeping people safe. What are we really saying about that side? In my view, it is the only game in town at the moment. We stick with it until something better comes along.

Where are we politically, Deputy Mayor, on - not Contest because I presume we all want to do better and I think we are - the rest of the piece with our partners? Where are we? What are we trying to achieve with this document and what are we saying?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): What we are saying within this document is that tackling radicalisation and extremism is part of the police's response and also part of the response of partnerships, and the importance of that. The Deputy Mayor for Social Integration will have a role to play in terms of social integration and tackling the root causes of radicalisation.

The Contest strategy, as you know, is being reviewed by the Government at the moment. Prevent is part of that. What we are saying within this document is that we know there have been problems with Prevent. It has been controversial in some communities. We have to make sure we are working alongside the Government with communities to ensure we can tackle radicalisation. We are waiting to see what the review of the Contest strategy says. When we know what that says we will work with the Government to ensure that communities, City Hall and the MPS do everything they can to tackle radicalisation. One of the problems at the moment is there is a lot of inconsistency across London and we think that there is a role for MOPAC and the London Contest Board to try to deal with that inconsistency and work with communities and also the Prevent strategy - or whatever comes out of the Contest review - to ensure that that happens.

Len Duvall AM: Sorry to come back but, very quickly again, I get all that and that sounds right. However, lots of things are controversial in policing and there are lots of things the community is unhappy with but we do not stop doing it. We might change how it is done. Are we being very clear that we are not advocating the change? It is the consistency and the quality across the piece in terms of working with our partners that we are trying to achieve. We think we can make a contribution to that. That is what we are saying.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Absolutely. It is about consistency and quality. It is about ensuring the Government's strategy is delivered to communities and that where there are problems and issues we can tackle them and ensure we are working with communities. The overall safeguarding approach of Prevent is important and right. It is about safeguarding. That has been some of the successes around that strategy. There have been some successes within the safeguarding arena. We want to make sure that happens.

Len Duvall AM: We have talked about this over the years. We have a new administration now. Is it not the time for the MPS to bring some of its strategies together around violence and harm?

We are getting there in terms of understanding what it means in terms of the community. The Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] has said that. This is a crime that is, sadly, going up on a number of fronts, not coming down or even plateauing. If you are going to stop recording, fine. I hope we are not getting into that in terms of the new ways of working. Along with screening we need to guard against these issues.

What is the thinking of the MPS? We have various strategies on violence. Do we bring them together in an anti-violence/Prevent programme? Is it time you should be saying to the politicians here, "We are ready for this and this type of thinking"? We have talked about it in the past and nothing has happened.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): We have talked a lot today about the model going forward. Let us use "prevention" rather than "Prevent" because I am with you. A key part of the core strategy of what the MPS will look like for the next five years is an increased focus on prevention. It has to be because that is part of demand management. We have to do work that is everything from Designing Out Crime at one end to focusing prevention work on those key spaces where we know crime occurs and we know are high crime generators. I am absolutely with you on that.

On the point around bringing the strategies together, you will have some of that under this Police and Crime Plan. The way it knits together the violence against women and girls issues and the violence issue more widely gives us the opportunity to do it. It is a point we would absolutely pick up and do.

Len Duvall AM: Prevention is mentioned in parts but there is nothing really bringing it together as the big issue in terms of that. Commitment is sadly lacking on this page.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): It is written large in the work we are doing for the future. We have talked about this. Prevention has to be a key part of what we are doing. The detail of prevention you will see in some of the strategies underneath this.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Prevention and intervention is absolutely a key part of the Police and Crime Plan. Key to your question - we need to discuss this and it is an important part of the consultation - around bringing all the strands of dealing with violence together in a strategy is to understand what parts of violence we are talking about and what the tactical responses are around that. Yes, there is early intervention and prevention but we know that the night-time economy produces certain types of violence. There is domestic and sexual violence and then there is knife and gun crime. These are quite different types of violence all under the same banner. We need to think very carefully about whether it is one strategic strategy of tackling violence or strategic early intervention and prevention around violence. We have to be careful because there are different tactical responses.

Len Duvall AM: You are right in posing that challenge back. Coming back to you on that, my fear is reduced resources, a number of high priorities and - an area that I do not want to get into because while there are answers to it I do not particularly like those answers - about what you do and do not do as a police service. My personal commitment is that I want to see a police service that does everything from dealing with anti-social behaviour to tackling counterterrorism and everything that goes in between. Increasingly some of the things you have been facing over the past months has shown you cannot get more for less out of your policing resources. We are beyond that now. Despite the good efforts on your part or the Mayor's part there has to be a different type of debate - I am not saying it is here - and something has to give. I want to make sure that violence is at the heart of policing.

If you come to prioritise any crimes we have to do something about people hurting each other in various forms. That has to be at the heart of it. I am not advocating for that in this but I am worried that you, by stealth because of the circumstances you are locked into, will get into not recording crime, you will start discouraging people to do it and you will not have the resources to manage some of the ambitions here. Then we fall back into bad practices. I want to avoid that. I think you want to avoid that. We do not want to go back to those places. At various times in the MPS's history we have been in those places.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I absolutely recognise the risk. To address under or non-recording, you can look at the amount of work we now do around ensuring compliance and we have not taken the foot off the pedal at all.

The challenge with violence - we have discussed this many times - is that it is such a broad bucket you can hide stuff in there. Probably 18 months or two years ago you pointed out something around knife crime in here and I remember having the debate. You could see something was happening. The large bucket of violence was not moving but something within the bucket was moving. When you see the next iteration of the national crime figures, compared to the last published nationally one, violence is up about 5.1 for us and up over 12 most of the country. People will say it is the change in recording practices again. That is a very frustrating answer and quite hard to explain to the general public. We have to get to that level of granularity of the types of violence underneath it.

Len Duvall AM: Looking at the document, under proposed commitments, I did not realise MOPAC had a duty to the enjoyable night-time economy. I prefer to think it is to the safe night-time economy. Nevertheless, I look into the document for some substantiation and background to that. Quite frankly, I am worried. I am worried about what is being said in other places. I do not want to see this document or this work over the next four years be used by dodgy licensees escaping their responsibilities through tested practices. I am concerned.

The Mayor has used a poor example in Fabric, to be honest, to illustrate the importance of the night-time economy. Earlier on you mentioned, Sophie [Linden], what we will do. We want a strong and vibrant night-time economy and we want people to be safe within that. That is the outcome that rules and regulations are about. What I do not want to be seen - and it can be seen and demonstrated with Fabric - are dodgy licensees trying to escape their responsibility for that safe environment. It is on record in terms of the police actions that were taken, the licence authority in terms of listening to those in a quasi-judicial review, and the response. If there had been a different response by Fabric on those occasions, it would not have needed to close. Subsequently there are other issues that have been imposed. I welcome the commitment from the licensee if they do that, and the good work of the police and the Council in trying to achieve a sensible outcome and sensible operational issues.

I want to know that, from a MOPAC point of view and from a peace point of view, this is about upholding the rules and regulations to make our people safe, whatever part of the night-time economy they are in. People sometimes do not like those rules. I am more upset by those who want to try to flout them or get out of playing a responsible part in delivering a safe night-time economy. Quite frankly, I want to be assured this is not some hidden approach that some rogue licensees can pitch up here at the GLA - because they see the Mayor as a soft touch with these issues - that you will be co-opted on to an agenda and be pressurised into rolling over when actually you need to hold the line.

If we go back to consistency, the MPS's record on licencing is not impressive around that. It is one where we need to do some more work. For the very reasons that you said, Deputy Mayor, some aspects of our night-time economy do lead to crime. That is why we have the rules and regulations. I am looking for you and Londoners will be looking for you - users of night-time economy and non-users of night-time economy - that you are going to keep us safe. You can only keep us safe by carrying out your duties. I just want to say that.

There is nothing wrong in supporting a mayoral priority around this. It is not about the enjoyable aspect; it is about ensuring people are safe and others are safe in terms of the behaviours that may come from the wrong type of social activities. I just want to put that on the record about where we are, because I believe someone

should in terms of a policing position and for the safety of Londoners. I want to have some assurances from you all.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Some of what you said makes it sound as if there is some sort of difference between MOPAC and the rest of City Hall. There is no difference. When the Mayor's priority is for a safe and vibrant night-time economy those two things have to go together. This Policing Plan will ensure that the MPS and its partners' ability to do that is upheld. We will work with the Night Czar, Amy Lamé, to make sure that that happens. There is no difference. What the mayoral priority is trying to deliver is a safe and vibrant night-time economy and it is perfectly possible to do both. It is not just about what happens within the licenced premises, it is also about what happens outside the licenced premises and when people go home. That brings in all sorts of other issues around the ability of dedicated warden officers to problem-solve.

However, where there are clusters of licenced premises sometimes there can be anti-social behaviour on the streets at the times that people are leaving. It is also the role of Transport for London (TfL) to make sure that people have safe ways of getting home, there are appropriate taxi rides, there is good night-time services and there is the Night Tube to make sure that not only that is safe but also enables people to get home and get home quickly and safely. All of that together is very much about the priority.

I will just reiterate that a safe and vibrant night-time economy are two things that should not be in opposition to each other and they are not in opposition to each other with the businesses, either, because businesses and the vast majority of licenced premises want to do both.

Len Duvall AM: However, they are in conflict with each other when you make comments on a quasi-judicial process and lead people to another view that, if only people sat around the table we would not need to get to where we are. Sometimes you have to call it as it is: there are decent licence holders who are trying to do the right thing and do the right thing by their customers and there are licence holders who are just not listening and think they can get away with it. Politician's intervention on these issues - particularly in quasi-judicial processes - lead to a different outcome at times.

In your opening remarks I was less assured in what you were going to say about these issues because from your point of view it is upholding the policing and the community safety aspect. I would not put in here about an enjoyable night-time economy, however, if it is enjoyable overly people are calmer and they will not hurt each other in terms of those issues. As community safety aspirations it might well be OK but there are mixed messages at times when there is a quasi-judicial process. I do not think is helpful that the police have targeted a licensee because they fancy targeting it out of the blue and the licensee has not done anything wrong to warrant some further inquiries or some action. As the Deputy Mayor who am I to tell you what to do, but I would urge you to think very carefully about those issues because it is about being on the side of those licensees who want to do the right thing and comply but also going a step further and taking action against those licensees that do not want to listen and continually try to flout the rules. That is the message that most Londoners would want to hear in terms of these processes.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I was just going to say, rest assured - in terms what is going on around licencing - we are never going to shirk away from doing that. It goes back to your earlier point, Len [Duvall AM] around how, if we are serious about prevention, we have to do something around where licensees are out of control. You absolutely have to step into those spaces and that is what we do. We do it on a nightly basis when we close things down when there is disorder. I lead on the work around business crime for the MPS. Businesses, and particularly when we look at the work we have

done with the licencing trade, if you look at some of the stuff on the South Bank and elsewhere, they want people who are not playing by the rules out of the game. That is quite understandable.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is good. In the context that we are going to have two more meetings around the Police and Crime Plan in January and across February, some of our questions we will hold over until then.

Peter Whittle AM: Deputy Mayor, you put in the draft Plan that you want to maintain the strategic target of 32,000 personnel. What will your approach be to going towards that target? Will it be incremental?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Absolutely, as the previous administration did, we want to maintain a strategic target and maintain those officer numbers. Our approach to that will have to be around the budget and around careful budgeting and making sure that efficiencies come out.

However, the real approach to that - and I hope that you on the Police and Crime Committee will work with us on this - is to make sure that London gets its fair share of the Police Grant and gets its fair share of police funding to ensure that we can maintain officer numbers and work towards that strategic target. As you know, at the moment we are significantly underfunded on the capital city grant [National and International City grant] with up to about a £170 million shortfall. I hope you will work with us and our lobbying of the Government to try to bridge that gap.

Also, there is the added threat and the challenge of the review of the police funding formula, where we know that the pot is not growing. It is the same pot and it is how you share it amongst the country. London can only lose out from that. We will be significantly lobbying on that to ensure that we get our fair share. As I said, I hope you will work with us to make sure that London does maintain its police officer numbers.

Peter Whittle AM: How long has the figure of 32,000 been the target? It is not a new one. Roughly how long?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I believe this strategic target was the same throughout the previous administration and we are placed to maintain that strategic target.

Peter Whittle AM: Just one more: is the proportion of that in terms of officers on the front line purely officers or not?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): That is police officers.

Peter Whittle AM: Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): With the robustness that this Committee in the past held the previous administration to account around that 32,000, we will continue that and you would expect that.

That is helpful. We have come to the end of that session. As I said, we have the opportunity to pick up this work in January. Hopefully, colleagues had the opportunity to pursue lines to their satisfaction.

The next item we will move on to take us through to 1.00pm is on safer roads.

Sian Berry AM: The reason I wanted this to be on the agenda today is because I have been following up on work that Jenny Jones [former London Assembly Member] did previously asking about hit-and-run casualties.

What we found when we had the numbers from the MPS was just a steady increase in the number of hit and run crashes and a steady increase in the proportion of crashes that are hit and runs. It has gone up in numbers; it has also gone up in proportion. The average since 2009 is a 60% increase in the number of incidents and it has been 40% since 2011. It is definitely a clear trend and I wanted to ask some questions about why you think that is and what is being done about it.

Can I ask about what seems to be an emerging culture of drivers leaving the scene after a crash? Is that something you have observed?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): The first thing I would say is on those figures it is really important to make the point that the vast majority of that increase is taken up in the slight injury --

Sian Berry AM: The difference between a slight injury and a serious injury when there is a road crash is not the issue. You could be injured badly or not depending on where your head happens to be.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. I just think it is important to be clear about those statistics if we are going to use them.

Sian Berry AM: There were serious incidents.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I share with you entirely a concern about the number of collisions that happen on the streets of London. There is a range of reasons why people do not stay and report at the scene of an incident. Certainly from our perspective there will be some where they will feel vulnerable as the individual and they will not stay there. You have a number of people that we find will report afterwards, but they want to do that once they have spoken to a solicitor or something because they feel they have some sort of culpability. What is particularly prevalent with larger vehicles - and we have a lot of larger vehicles in London - is they may not even be aware of what has happened. If you are driving an articulated lorry you may not even be aware that there has been some kind of collision. There are no doubt within that group a number of what I would describe as 'criminal drivers'. They are criminal either because they are not properly insured, they are not properly licenced, their ownership of the vehicle is questionable or they have drunk alcohol or they are intoxicated with drugs in some way or another. There will be some who will check, they will see there is no injury and they will go. It is a broad range of individuals. It takes you to a larger issue about people's sense of responsibility on the road. As you know we have a very significant command that deals with policing of the road. The Roads and Transport Policing Command (RTPC), which has the dual roles of traditional road policing or traffic policing in the way we would describe it and then the work with TfL around the surface transport infrastructure.

Sian Berry AM: TfL partly fund that, is that right?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): TfL very significantly fund officers within there, to the tune of about £93 million. We have staffing levels there which are 2,350 officers and PCSOs. It is about 1,600 police officers and some PCSOs who are operating in that environment all the time. We also have what I would honestly call a world-class Serious Collision Investigation Unit, which is a fairly significant team who deal with the fatal and serious injury collisions and who provide a very effective service.

Then it is working towards how we attempt to prevent these incidents, which is around where we do identify drivers and, for lower end issues, education in order to make people aware of the impact of their behaviour.

There is the element of enforcement and we will identify hotspot areas, we will identify places where there has been significant issues and we will enforce there.

Lastly, there is the element which is around engineering. While the police can respond and react and do some preventive activity, some of this is around the infrastructure and the nature of our roads and the nature of the users of our roads.

Sian Berry AM: That would not affect whether someone stopped at the scene.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, it would not affect that particular issue. I see the failing to stop and report in the broader context of the number of collisions that we are seeing in London.

Sian Berry AM: Thank you very much. Do you have any insight into how much this involves young people?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, not specifically.

Sian Berry AM: Do you have data on that in terms of victims and perpetrators?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I am sure I could get data on that. I do not have it in front of me now and so I do not want to speculate, but I can certainly find that out and let you know.

Sian Berry AM: Since 2011 you have been able to provide Assembly Members with data by borough and what is noticeable about this data is that it varies so much. You have boroughs like Merton and Hounslow who have had more than a 100% increase in these incidents. Then you have boroughs including Lewisham, Kensington, Greenwich, Southwark, Bexley and Bromley that have decreases in these incidents. What is interesting is that Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley and Bromley are contiguous boroughs; they are in south east London. Is there something that is being done there that is perhaps effective that you could learn from?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Possibly. I have not seen that. That would be something to look at. As of January we also have a new system for us recording around collisions. This is an automated system which is going to give us some real opportunities; we will have much better and more effective data.

The other important point as well is with the current system at the moment, when an officer deals with a collision, it is a paper trail that eventually finds its way to TfL which is where ultimately we are looking at the data around the road network. That can take up to six months in some cases. Whereas now with the new system that will be an instantaneous updating to TfL when the officer's report is passed off by the supervisor. That will give us a much richer set of data to understand precisely what is going on in a much more contemporary way.

Certainly, with the areas that you spoke about, it is definitely worth looking at why there is a disparity because there is no obvious one that I can think of when you give those names.

Sian Berry AM: You have touched on - and we have been asking questions about this - how many of these drivers who leave the scene of a crash are brought to justice. Both Assembly Member Pidgeon and I have been asking questions about this system. You say that this will come live and you will be able to interrogate these things from January. Will that only apply to cases that occur from January or will it go back?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, it will not go back.

Sian Berry AM: Will you link together previous cases?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): It will not be retrospective. It will be from January. All the reporting of any collision by an officer will be on that system and then that will give us a much better data-set and a much more accurate data-set to work from.

Sian Berry AM: From the first quarter of next year we will be able to look at the percentage of these drivers? If drivers knew that they were going to be apprehended, and there must be quite a good chance of them being apprehended with closed circuit television.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): There certainly should be. Yes, I agree.

Sian Berry AM: However there have been a couple of prominent cases lately where victims who have had life changing injuries feel like there has not been enough investigation; the driver has gone and nobody has found them. A young boy in my own borough of Camden was killed a few days ago by a motorcyclist who left the scene and there is still no sign that there is going to be arrest there. People feel that that is injustice going on. If there is a high rate of clear-up, people will feel deterred from doing this kind of thing.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. I understand that entirely.

Sian Berry AM: The other question was about the RTPC. We were told in January that there were going to be 40 more officers this year and 80 by next spring. Has that increase happened?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Forty more officers?

Sian Berry AM: We were told this by the previous Mayor in January.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): No, I do not recognise that.

Sian Berry AM: Are the numbers increasing in that unit?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): If you take the total number for 2014/15 it was 2,350, for 2015/16 it was 2,355 and for this current year we are in it is 2,356.

Sian Berry AM: That is not an increase at all.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): There is very little fluctuation, but it is a very significant command.

Sian Berry AM: Will it be OK if I get the promise that was made and check?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, that would be helpful. By all means send that through.

Sian Berry AM: My final question is about Vision Zero. Maybe the Deputy Mayor will want to answer this question. It is in the new Police and Crime Plan that you are adopting a Vision Zero approach, the goal being to reduce the levels of death and road injury. Can you explain how that differs from current approaches to road safety?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The Vision Zero approach is a joint partnership approach that has been set up with the Deputy Mayor [for Transport], Val Shawcross [Valerie Shawcross CBE]. This is the connection through the Police and Crime Plan to the priorities of TfL. It is looking at enforcement, which is the role of the MPS, but it is also looking at better education and also engineering out some of the risks and some of the vulnerabilities around roads and how you can reduce serious injuries and deaths on the road. It is part of a joined-up approach around City Hall to make sure that the Police and Crime Plan plays a big part in assisting the MPS in reducing serious deaths and injuries on the roads.

Sian Berry AM: There is much closer working with TfL on this issue?

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

Sian Berry AM: That is really good to hear.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you.

Andrew Dismore AM: A couple of points. My theory about part of this is that it has become acceptable for damage only collisions - where you knock somebody's wing mirror or something like that - to just do a runner. These days, people do not seem to stop if they cause damage to a parked car to put a note under the windscreen or anything. To my mind that seems to feed into this attitude that it is all right to do a runner if you can get away with it. I do not know if you would agree with that.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): I do not disagree with your explanation, but I could not support it with hard evidence.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes, it is a gut feeling.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): It is an area where it would benefit from more analysis around it. I suspect there is a whole range of hypotheses, including the costs of insurance for young drivers --

Andrew Dismore AM: That is what I was going to come on to, which is: what discussions have you had with the insurance industry about this particular issue? If there is serious injury caused to someone there is going to be serious damage to the car, which if they have insurance then they claim on. Alternatively car repairers, if they are given a car to repair that has serious damage - it may even have human remains of some sort, blood on it or something - is there any effort to try and get car repairers or insurers to co-operate on this?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): The RTPC and particularly the Serious Collision Investigation Unit work very closely with the Motor Insurance Bureau. Particularly in the case of a serious collision or a fatal collision, I can assure you the effort and the breadth of thinking that goes into that is no different than you would get from a murder team. We have an excellent team of highly experienced and generally former murder detectives alongside the people who have gone through all the technical surveying qualifications to do the technical side of any road traffic collision. That work is going on

with all of those and we have to find all those other points where you can intervene, through insurance and through the repairs.

To your first point, again I do not have any evidence, but it is that boarder less respect for property and for people where it does not matter and you move on. There is a feeling that that occurs, but it does also play in to the younger people and the insurance issues and to potentially people who do not have the right insurance and do not have the right to drive legally in London.

Andrew Dismore AM: The last question for me is about automatic number plate recognition (ANPR). Are we running out of ANPR more widely and if so presumably that would feed into this?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes is the answer. We are in the process of refurbishing all the mobile ANPR that we have on our vehicles with an aspiration that we would get to the majority of our routine patrolling vehicles having an ANPR capability. There is a plan and we have relatively recently refurbished the back office so that all the data usage is available there. It is a tool that we use very frequently.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes. Also static ANPR?

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): The no-insurance operations we spoke before about Operation Cubo. Those are the things you have to keep doing. Make this a place that if you are uninsured you do not drive in London.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes, and publicise the car crushing.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Martin Hewitt QPM (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service): It is denying criminals the use of the road in a crime sense, but it also has the advantage in terms of general drivers.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I would like to thank our guests for this morning's thorough answers to this session.