

**Police and Crime Committee - Thursday, 12 January 2017****Transcript of Item 6 - Mayor's Draft Police and Crime Plan**

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We welcome the guests: Professor Marian Fitzgerald, Rory Geoghegan and Gavin Hales. When you start speaking, you might like to just briefly introduce yourselves and where you fit into the scheme. I know that you are not new to this building and I am very grateful that you have come along today. We have had apologies from one guest, but we are more than compensated by the expertise that we have in front of us this morning. Thank you very much for coming along this morning.

As I mentioned, scene-setting for today, the Mayor has a statutory duty to publish a Police and Crime Plan. He has done so with a draft Plan for the period 2017 to 2021. That is in a consultation period leading up to 23 February [2017]. This Committee has a statutory duty to examine said Plan and to make recommendations and suggestions as a result of that. The focus of the work today is to ask guests on their input on the draft Plan so that we can gather that evidence to formulate our recommendations and our questions later to witnesses in two weeks' time, as I mentioned earlier.

I shall ask the first set of questions, which is particularly around your take and conclusions and thoughts around the challenges for policing in this capital city in this year and in the four years hence, which the draft Plan covers.

First of all, the first question, if I may. These questions I will ask of one or two people but anyone can come in of the three of you; I am happy to hear your thoughts and ideas. How is crime evolving in this city and nationally and what impact is this having on the police's ability to deliver an effective service?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Chairman, I wondered if it would be helpful just to make a couple of remarks about the purpose of the Police and Crime Plan.

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

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** We can broadly say that there are four purposes to having one. The first is to describe the policing and crime challenge in the city.

The second is to provide the basis for the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] to hold the Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] to account and, indeed, for you to scrutinise the Deputy Mayor in terms of how things are progressing over the next few years.

The third is to guide strategic decision-making and operational practice by clarifying the values and priorities that are expected to be put in place by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). For example, does the Police and Crime Plan help an Inspector know what is most important when confronted with a wide range of pressures every day?

Finally, the Police and Crime Plan needs to provide transparency and clarity to the public, be accessible to them and facilitate their feedback as part of this consultation process.

It is helpful to set that out because that then frames a lot of the questions that come later. Do you want me to take then the question about what is changing?

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

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I suppose, when we look back over the last five to ten years, there has been a marked shift in overall volumes of traditional types of crime in England and Wales and in London. What are described as “volume crime” - things like burglary, theft and so on - have generally fallen considerably and in their place there is much more of an emphasis at the moment on less frequent but higher-harm forms of crime, things like domestic abuse, more serious forms of violence and so on.

At the same time, there is also a very significant change taking place, which is that there is an increase in offences where the local link between victim and offender is broken. I am thinking here particularly about fraud offences, which do not feature very much in the Police and Crime Plan. The latest estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales show that there were about 6.4 million traditional offences but, on top of that, about 3.6 million fraud offences. There is this rapidly growing, high-volume type of offence that is affecting people right across society. Police officers sometimes describe it as an “industrialised” form of crime. That is something that is changing very rapidly.

Alongside that, as I said, there is a growing emphasis on what you might understand as “private realm” crime. These are things that happen behind closed doors. That presents new challenges for the police. There is a lot of emphasis and there has been a lot of emphasis in recent years on encouraging victims to come forward and tell the police what has happened to them because perhaps in the past they have been more reticent. That applies to things like rape, sexual offences, domestic abuse, hate crime and so on.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** Crime within the family or a family --

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Not necessarily within the family, but this is not public-place crime. If you think back ten or 15 years, the emphasis was on things like violence in the night-time economy, it was on thefts of motor vehicles, it was on burglary and so on. This is about crime taking place between people who are known to each other and very often - and this is the challenge for police in particular - where they have one person’s word against another and where trust in the police is critically important.

Alongside that, we see that there are significant changes resulting from changes to technology in terms of the types of victimisation that people are experiencing and in terms of the challenges confronting the police, not least in terms of whether their workforce has the skills to adjust to a rapidly changing world.

In terms of crime trends in London, we can talk about how there are signs that violence may be rising slightly. This is something, I know, that has exercised minds in the last year or so with particularly signs of a rise in knife crime and gun crime. I know a lot of thought is going into what that might be caused by.

We can expect historic offences to continue to bubble up, which pose particular challenges for the police. We have seen that around historic sexual abuse allegations. Most recently there are the allegations arising out of the world of football and we can expect similar things like that to bubble up in the future, which will require a rapid response from the police, possibly rearranging where their resources are and so on.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the evolving counterterrorism threat, which is something that is exercising minds, where there has been a shift away from high-profile targets to softer targets, lone-wolf attacks, improvised attacks and so on. That has a range of implications for thinking about the police response and I suppose particularly is reflected in discussions about the importance of armed policing and the armed policing uplift, as described, which has received additional funding.

From my perspective, that sets the scene as to how things are changing at the moment.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes, that was very helpful.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** I am Rory Geoghegan from The Centre for Public Safety.

Very much fraud is something to focus on, in particular the cyber-enabled and cyber-dependent elements. It is something that is in my background. I spent three years as a neighbourhood officer in Lambeth and certainly I would regularly be coming into contact with online-enabled crime: credit-card fraud, doorstep fraud, landlord fraud. That sort of stuff is hugely growing.

It is something that I would have liked to have seen more of in the Plan. The MPS has made good progress with things like Falcon and getting that up and running, but for me anyway, it is one of the evolving threats that really does need to get a good focus for the next four years.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** You would tend to agree with Gavin's analysis that the Plan does not put, perhaps, enough emphasis on fraud?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Correct.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Where policing is at, at the moment, is that there is a great emphasis on Action Fraud, providing the policing response nationally to fraud, but Rory's experience is that fraud, of course, has local victims. The question is how you then provide services to local victims even when the perpetrator may be in another part of the world, for example.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** As well, fraud by its nature, with the online element, is boiler-room type of stuff. It is industrialised-level stuff. The trouble is that even if you do manage to investigate, arrest, prosecute and convict someone, in the sentencing at the minute we are not seeing any recognition of the fact that whilst you may have caught them for this one offence, they have in fact perpetrated probably hundreds, if not thousands. That is something as well. It is more than just the policing response; it is the whole service and system, if you will, which I am sure we will talk about.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** This phrase "industrialised", which is quite new to me, is particularly around fraud, around internet crime, etc?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I am going to bring the Professor in and then I have a couple of people who want to ask questions. Did you want to add to that?

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Yes. I wanted to pick up on a number of points, starting off with the question of how crime is evolving and its impact on effectiveness.

One thing that never gets discussed in these debates is that they are only ever about the police response to crime. Most routine, day-to-day police work does not involve crime. I suspect - and we talk about cuts to police - that there has been a major knock-on effect to police effectiveness from cuts to other services. It is not just that when people do not know who else to phone they will phone the police and there are fewer and fewer other services that they can get through to 24/7, assuming they can get through to the police at all.

Leaving that aside, a lot of police work involves them, effectively, as the first partner in a triage. It is not just mental health. It is children whom no one will come for and who would otherwise have to be taken into protective custody. It is people who need to go to hospital and cannot safely be left but are not life-threatening cases and so an ambulance is not going to come to them for four hours. That is holding the police up enormously. There are some major issues to address that nobody has addressed so far and the Mayor would do well to. There is a lot of emphasis - and rightly so - in the Plan about partnership, but it is somewhat idealistic. The issues around partnership now are where the strains are in the partnership and what the impact of that is on police effectiveness. That really needs looking at.

Looking at whether the main challenges of policing have been identified in the Plan and how crime is evolving, we have heard a lot about that. In many ways, what we are looking at is old wine in new bottles. This is quite important in terms of local policing because people of my generation, even generations down from me, who are not part of the Xbox and PlayStation generation, think that nobody who is not terribly clever and does not have at least A-levels could do this sort of thing, but they can and they do. They are doing entry-level stuff locally on their own computers and laptops. They are doing cyberbullying and so on against classmates. A lot of this stuff is going on locally from the usual suspects, who are not just exclusively doing stuff online and through cyberspace but are doing the other stuff as well. If local police want to know what is really going on in their patch, the idea is that that can only be dealt with by specialists when what you have with your entry-level offenders is a mix of anything they can get the opportunity to do. You have police officers who are also of the Xbox and PlayStation generation and who know exactly what is going on and how it is done. For that sort of work, you do not need specialist skills. You need to harness what you have in the organisation.

As for terrorism, yes, [there is an] emerging terrorism threat, but do not let us forget that the Olympics went off OK and the Olympics happened after 7/7 [7 July 2005 London terrorist attacks]. The international stuff and the organised crime stuff, yes, have been a problem for a long time, where - increasingly through cyberspace - perpetrators are elsewhere in the country.

There is one thing I would say about the point about sentencing and not picking up on the range of offences that a given offender who is prosecuted is found to have perpetrated. We have a real problem here with the legislation that requires banks and credit-card issuers to notify the police - and presumably Action Fraud or whatever - about the cases that come to their attention. I do not think that happens very much and I do not think that anyone who manages to catch someone for doing this sort of thing and who is clearly doing it on a fairly large scale has any idea of the patterns of their activity and the number of crimes that they have perpetrated. There is a huge gap there between what the police get to know about and the stuff that can no longer be reported to the police because you are not supposed to; you have to report it to your bank or card company and so you report it, but nothing happens. You know you have not lost any money, but you wonder what was going on. When it keeps happening and you keep getting scammed and you keep having to phone the bank and say that you know that somebody is getting into your account, they will say - and I have had this - "It is not personal to you", which is what frightens a lot of people who are not crime aware, "but we noticed your account is showing part of a pattern". Do the police know that pattern? Someone says to me, "Let me just check. Does your email address end in so-and-so?" No. "And your phone number ends in?" No. They have information there, which, if it was pieced together, would actually discover the scale of the offending of people who are getting fairly light sentences because they are found for one thing. There is a huge gap there that needs to be addressed.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** This is most helpful because it is moving us - and I am going to bring in a couple of colleagues - into the area about identifying what the priorities are within the Plan. Are they the right priorities and should there be other priorities there that are not detailed? You have already given some ideas around that, which is most helpful.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Sorry, there was one further challenge that I picked up **Fitzgerald** and that is that, when we talk about hate crime, yes, London is a very diverse city - it always has been and always will be - and we are not addressing the fact that a lot of the tensions that arising are arising between different communities. We are still working with a model of "it is all white people against minorities". It is a lot more complex than that. Some of it is to do with stuff back home. Some of it is to do with simple prejudice between groups here. There was an underlying factor there within the riots that nobody was prepared to speak about. That is going to hit, just as it did in Lozells in Birmingham.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is a good analysis because there is an argument that some of the descriptions of work within the Plan are somewhat binary in their analyses.

**Peter Whittle AM:** I just wanted to go back to one remark you made, Gavin. It seems quite clear why crime might be growing in the cyber area and we have talked about counterterrorism, although I would suggest that, Professor, the reason we have not had any attacks since 7/7 is because we have brilliant security services. That does not mean to say it is not going on.

Can you just offer some observations as to why the emphasis might have gone to what you called the "private realm"? You talked about "behind closed doors". I can see logically why the emphasis might be on the others, but why do you think that this has now become more of a priority and more overt?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** It is partly about changing values in society and that people are more prepared to acknowledge that this type of offending takes place. If you look at domestic abuse and sexual offences, for example, there has clearly been a change in attitudes about reporting.

In terms of the broader political context, if you wind the clock back to the late 1990s, for example, when these traditional forms of volume crime - burglary, theft and so on - were very high, it was what dominated people's thinking about what the police's role was. Those were the things that I suppose were perhaps of greatest concern to the public. One of the things that has happened is, as that volume fell very sharply over the next ten to 15 years, it opened up questions about what the wider police role should be and it has exposed failings in the police role in the past. These things have combined to bring forward a greater emphasis on, as I said, the private realm but also things like rape and sexual offences.

**Peter Whittle AM:** You are saying that they have not actually increased as such but just that there is a greater awareness and therefore a greater police emphasis?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Off the top of my head, I forget exactly what the Crime Survey for England and Wales shows about the trends, but in terms of recorded crime there has been a much greater emphasis on encouraging people to come forward and report their victimisation.

Back to those challenges to policing, one of the things that the whole of the police service in this country is having to adjust to, the MPS in particular, is the shift towards public protection demand. That is dealing with things like rape investigations, serious sexual offences and domestic abuse. It is something where the police service is having to play catch-up because it does not necessarily have the numbers of specially trained officers needed to respond to these offences.

I noted one of the things that does not get a mention in the Police and Crime Plan that might do is the difficulty that the MPS is having in recruiting Detectives at the moment. With things like the recent

revelations around sexual abuse in football, to the extent that there may be further things like that, it is reasonable to expect that the demand for that specialist kind of investigation - where the victims need a lot of support and where the issues that are investigated are very complex - will continue.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Thank you.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Can I just add in relation to the domestic violence point? Obviously, most of it happens in the private realm. The police should be commended and recognised for having moved an awfully long way in those decades. The “positive action” policy, if you will, now - where, literally, if you turn up and there is some indication that something has gone on, someone is going to end up getting arrested - is quite a move on from probably ten or even 15 years ago.

As well, the other point is that a lot more stuff is recorded now. Whereas you might perhaps in the past have settled something more informally, shall we say, on the street, now no officer, especially with bodycams looming on the horizon - and I see them as a positive thing - is going to take the risk of not recording that allegation because it is a job-loser. It is societal attitudes but also the police response has become more professional, not to say perfect but it has become more professional.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Is there something to be said - this is my last point now - for the fact that as what you might call informal networks of families and neighbourhoods have broken down, people are now just having recourse to the, as it were, state enforcers?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Certainly, as you have two squabbling children and they might call, “Mum, Dad”, for some people, even as adults, when they are struggling to cope or when there is a dispute of some description, the refrain is to just call the police.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** On that one, it is a little bit double-edged because there are a lot of areas particularly where you do not have very well-established communities and people do not know each other. Yes, on the one hand, if there is something that is troubling them, rather than risk going to a stranger and not knowing what response they are going to get, they call the police. On the other hand, those are precisely the same areas where people are reluctant to get involved in investigations or to report crimes because they are frightened of reprisals. It is double-edged.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes. Just to add to that, people are very quick to make allegations, but whether they follow through in terms of giving a statement or giving evidence is a completely different kettle of fish.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** They do not want to be involved, yes.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** You could summarise that as a potential breakdown in some communities. Whereas in the past there may have been community support and people would have gone to others around them, there is sometimes kneejerk to go straight to the police because they do not feel they can get support. Andrew, did you want to come in?

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes, I just want to put a couple of hypotheses, one on cybercrime and another on terrorism.

On cybercrime, it seems to me that part of the problem is that we do not know or have any hard figures about what is happening in London because these figures are recorded nationally but not London-wide. If we knew the scale of it in London, it might concentrate the minds of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) rather more. Indeed, even the figures that were published last week or earlier this week nationally were only the very big crimes numbered in hundreds, not all the thousands of little ones.

Also, part of the problem may well be that the banks are keeping quiet about this because they do not want people to know the extent of their security breaches because that then affects their commercial competitiveness. If people think, "We are having all of these break-ins in our particular bank and so we will switch banks", it affects them and so they may be keeping quiet about the extent of it as well. It seems to me that we have heard that if we recorded this it would be double the actual number of crimes and, if that were the case, perhaps it might carry a bit more weight.

The second point I was going to raise - I might as well do it at the same time - is about the Olympics. I take the point, Professor Fitzgerald, about the Olympics, but the Olympics was not a soft target. It was a very hard target. We had HMS Ocean and the Commandos operation moored in the Thames and I do not know how many soldiers and other military personnel were running around the Olympic Park. We do not have that all the time. Terrorism has changed dramatically since what we were seeing then in terms of bomb attacks and suicide attacks into lorry attacks, marauding terrorists and firearms offences. They are much more difficult to guard against.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** 7/7 was before the Olympics.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** It was before the Olympics --

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** It is very comparable --

**Andrew Dismore AM:** -- yes, fine, but what I am saying is that now terrorists' *modus operandi* seems to have moved dramatically into these different types of offences we have seen in Berlin, Paris and so forth.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Just on that, I would say that the Lee Rigby murder is what we all fear and what we all dread to wake up to. We have been very fortunate in terms of not suffering a larger-scale attack and, touch wood, we do not. For most Londoners and as a Londoner myself and certainly for police officers out on the street, the biggest concern is just that: a lone wolf, who may be a very vulnerable person, may have some mental health issues, may even have made threats in the past towards police, attacking them and so on. That is, for me, where the focus should be.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Just to come in on the level of detail that is available at a regional level on fraud, my understanding is that Action Fraud will be publishing force-level data from the spring [2017]. The results that have come through from the Crime Survey for England and Wales so far are on the basis of six months' worth of field work. It may well be that once that has progressed to a full year, they will be able to provide more data at a more regional or local level.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The point is that there is a probably an awful lot of this that just does not get reported one way or another --

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Indeed, that also, yes.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** -- by the banks, which try to keep a lid on it. The national reporting may not give us the whole picture. However, my main point is that unless and until we have some local numbers, it is not going to get the priority because it is not seen in the same context as burglary, even though far more is being stolen.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** This is where the gap really lies because, if you get Action Fraud providing figures force-by-force, forces do not know most of what is going on because they wait to be told by the banks and that is where it all falls down.

With the Crime Survey for England and Wales, one of the things that worries me slightly - and it is due on 19 January [2017], the revised version of the Crime Survey estimates, which look as though they are about to double - is that it did promise that it was going to look at fraud and cybercrime. The only things it is looking at, as far as I can see, in terms of cybercrime are hacking, invasion and bots infecting computers. "Computer misuse" is the term it uses. It is not touching that vast swathe of bullying, harassment, blackmail and all of the forms of psychological violence, quite often preparatory acts for physical violence, which are the major concern.

If the police are picking anything up - because they are not picking up the fraud - and insofar as they are supposed to flag offences that are reported to them that were cyber-enabled, it is precisely those sorts of things and those are not being covered by the Crime Survey. That does worry me because the emphasis is all going to be on fraud and we are going to lose sight of some of that wider stuff, which is what people most fear.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Just a last point on fraud - and this is not cyber-fraud but other types of fraud - I have lost count of the number of times people have come to me and said, "I went to report to the police a fraud and they told me that it was a civil matter and nothing to do with them", when it quite clearly was a fraud. That is another part of this problem.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** In the next set of questions, we are going to be talking about priorities that may or may not be in the Plan that you would like to suggest.

My last question before we move on to that part is for you to answer what is, for you, the biggest risk for policing in the capital today, bearing in mind that the MPS will be going through some changes: a change in Commissioner, borough mergers, etc. They in themselves may or may not be the challenges, but if there is one particular - to simplify - challenge that you feel is the biggest risk for policing before we go into the priorities, what would that risk be for the MPS in the next four years? If you could give me an idea of one or two that may concern you, then we can move into individual priorities.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** For me, the biggest risk is around the workforce.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I was going to say morale.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes, it is very much linked to morale. I left in May. The next Commissioner under this Mayor will basically determine the future trajectory of policing into the long term. Do I have all the answers for what therefore needs to happen? No, I do not. Hopefully, between everyone, we will come to something. There is a reason why it is a tough time to recruit Detectives. There is a reason why members of ethnic communities perhaps are not drawn to policing as we



would like them to be. It is not as simple as, “The police have a racist history”, or something. It is not as simple as that. There is a real issue and it comes back to the morale point and culture.

If you are a police officer at the minute, essentially, psychologically speaking, your mind-set is one of being under attack. Many have suffered pay and pension cuts, which is not an issue that London itself can necessarily do a great deal about at the present time. Couple that with an environment in which if you do a stop-and-search or if you do something, whatever it might be, however innocuous it may seem at the time - you may not even notice that you have made an honest mistake - you subsequently come under such scrutiny for such an extended period often that it really does undermine the goodwill one might have for the city that one swore an oath to serve. Couple that with the technology police officers have had to deal with for verging on a decade-and-a-half now which is more useful in hanging them out to dry, shall we say, than actually fighting crime, managing risk or identifying risk. The environment is a hostile one for police. Couple that with the fact that we have, as we have already all talked about, fraud and cybercrime exploding.

There are very attractive opportunities for people in the private sector. The pay is better. There are no shifts. You get some esteem and some kudos. Why would you not?

For me, anyway, that is the real risk. If the next Commissioner and the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] do not address the workforce issue, then in five years’ time my real concern is that we may still have 32,000 officers - let us say we do - but we will not have the 32,000 we would like and we will not have London being policed in the way we would love for it to be.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** I would like to hear from the other guests before I bring anybody in.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** I do want to pick up on some of these points because that is absolutely essential. When I was doing the study of *Policing for London* 15 years ago, what came to me again and again was the baggage and distress that officers were taking out onto the streets from the organisation itself. They had nowhere else to take it, but when they met with aggression on the streets it was going to explode. They feel under siege on both sides and it is no wonder things go wrong.

In terms of recruitment and retention, the MPS has always had and will always have the difficulty that it attracts a lot of young people who are not settled but, once they get settled, they would rather go back somewhere leafy and green to bring up their kids and all the rest of it and so it is always going to have a high turnover. That leaves it very short on specialist skills always. When morale is so low, it will have 32,000 but there will be 32,000 coming through a revolving door and it will be the blind leading the headless chickens.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I just wanted to make a point about, I suppose, the interface between policing and wider public services and the wider world. It is really important to understand that the response to crime, disorder and public safety problems anywhere, but in London in particular, is not just something that the police can deal with on their own.

It is perhaps clearest in the debate about knife crime. There is a huge emphasis on what the police response to knife crime should be and there is a lot of debate about the role of stop-and-search, but actually the problems that underpin it are much broader than that.

I suppose, for me, one of the things that is perhaps understated in the Plan is the role of community safety partnerships. There is this increasing emphasis in the Plan on returning to priorities set at a local level. There, what we are looking at is the relationship between police and other public services and we know that a lot of

those other public services have been very severely cut. That is raising concerns about whether the demands that they would traditionally have picked up are being pushed on to the police. Another area that we might talk about where the Plan is perhaps a little too quiet is what is called “non-crime demand”. That is mental health -- all that sort of stuff. For me, it is this wider systemic point. It reflects the debate at the moment in the National Health Service (NHS), actually.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Certainly, yes.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** The throughput to the police is impacted by a range of other agencies as well.

**Len Duvall AM:** Can we go back to the people bit and the challenge? It was quite interesting to hear. One of the issues over the many years that we have been involved in policing, whether it is across this side or in terms of involvement with the MPS, is about mixed messages. Sometimes in documents like this - and I am a great believer in performance and targets - you can have targets that give different outcomes. That affects people on the ground if they are not clear in the environment they are working in and what the fads and fashions of policing are this week. One of my earliest experiences is going back to when I was a councillor when a police officer was saying, “If it is not in the ‘basket of ten’, we do not investigate any other crime”, which was clearly wrong.

What is the evidence and should there be within this Plan something about good communication and issues that are clear on what we are asking from our police officers, who are working in very stretched, very difficult and complex environments? What is there that could be put in the Plan and where does that fit?

The other side of it was touched on by Marian [Fitzgerald]. If there is a high turnover, we are losing a lot of experience and, with that, there is a high risk and people will make mistakes. In the culture of leadership, when in policing those mistakes - much more than in my workplace as a politician or in an office environment or even on a shop floor somewhere - are magnified and have tragic consequences in many cases, what could be done in the Crime Plan?

When you say the direction of travel - and the next Commissioner does that - should this Plan be recognising that this is the big issue and that they need to tackle it, set a direction of travel and then see a set of actions arising internally from the leadership of the MPS? Is that what I should be looking for?

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** We are going to be picking up on measuring success and holding to account a little bit later, but could you comment on Len’s question?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Certainly. There is setting expectations for the officers and staff, but also - and this is the piece that has really been missing - what police officers and staff can expect from the service itself.

To give a very specific example - and I am conscious of time and people wanting to move on - and, for me, a very concrete example, in terms of investigations relating to complaints, they need to be done much more quickly. There is some very high-level comment in here in relation to the misconduct processes. That really does need to be dealt with and pushed forward.

As well, there are some quick wins, frankly, I believe. Officer safety is something that we have already heard of. There is the terror threat, things like spit guards and things like Taser. We need to start to move beyond one or two people having objections that put the brakes on something that actually would significantly

improve the safety of officers. It would give a clear signal to officers that they are valued and are being given the tools to do the job. Coupled with a swifter complaints process, it would benefit the public not least and it would also benefit the officers. If there is an allegation, we have the bodycams, finally, or at least we are starting to get them. We should be expecting much more from the organisation.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Thanks for that. The next set of questions is continuing the debate around priorities. The Plan clearly talks about commitments and priorities and we would be interested in your thoughts on that.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Can I say how interested I was in hearing what you have had to say on police morale? It is no good having a plan if the people who are supposed to implement the plan are not very keen on implementing it. There is no doubt that the police are becoming rapidly the whipping boys of society. Really, Chairman, we should be doing something about that and improving the prestige of the police and perhaps backing them up rather more than we have done in the recent past. I will not mention water cannon.

However, the prescribed question I have is: how well do the priorities described in the Plan, such as improving the criminal justice system and tackling hate crime, address the challenges faced in London? Who can I ask about the justice system? Mr Hales, do you know about that?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I have to say that the justice system is not my area of expertise in particular.

**Tony Arbour AM:** It is not and so you have not a view on that? I cannot imagine that you do not have a view on it, Professor.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Part of the problem with morale within the service is very often to do with things that they have put a lot of work into and they want to see somebody sentenced. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is overcautious because it is going to be found wanting if it does not win enough cases. They feel let down again and again. What is the point? What is the point of putting the work into this when it is not going to go anywhere because, hard as we may try, we know that the CPS is going to play safe on this?

I do have a particular concern about the CPS, which has not been raised before. You talk about victims and suspects as if they are separate people in separate communities. They very often are not. One of the things that they have realised about the CPS is that when it is going to be marked down if there is any risk of losing a case and either the victim themselves or someone it needs to call as a key witness has a criminal record of any sort - even if it goes back ten years and is not even related to the case - and it fears that if it is a contested case the lawyers on the other side will use that to discredit them, it is very wary of running with it. For a lot of victims from particular communities, it is not worth their while going to the police and getting the case taken to the CPS because the CPS will be very wary about running with it. That has not been on the agenda but it is part of the frustration for police officers that the work they do, even when they get a success and they care about what has happened to the victim and want to see something happen, gets knocked back again and again. They find it very demoralising.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** What we are seeking is what is missing in the Plan. That is a strong analysis, but what would you want to see in the Plan to address that?

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** I do not know whether there is any power to address that --

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is the question.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** -- other than raising the issue on behalf of the police and saying, "This will not do". Then it is for others to take it up. That is the only thing that can be done. It cannot be in the Plan because the Mayor does not have the power to make a difference, but it can be raised. This is part of the whole package of demoralisation that is having such a deleterious effect on a workforce which is difficult to recruit and retain at the best of times.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** That gets into the debate about devolution.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Mr Geoghegan, presumably you have had experience of that when you have taken somebody, you think you have collared someone, and the CPS says, "We do not have a 70% chance" - or whatever the current figure is - "of getting a successful prosecution".

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes, absolutely. To give two very brief but concrete examples, a man assaults a bus driver violently in an unprovoked attack. Police officers attend and arrest him. He assaults them, uses racial abuse against them, uses the N-word and all manner of things. The CPS gets to court. There is no comment during the sentencing and so it is a conviction and so this one actually gets over the line, but the defence offers a whole stack of mitigation that goes entirely unchallenged because by this point the tick is in the box and the CPS can sit back, relax and look at the next job. The court ends up, in terms of sentencing, providing a suspended sentence for the assault on the bus driver, no separate penalty - they are three words that you will hear more and more, I suspect - for the assault on the police and no separate penalty for the racial abuse suffered by one of the black officers. That is not acceptable.

In the second example I will give, a young man carrying a knife assaults police, resists arrest and gets to court. If you look at the sentencing and you look at the comments, the response in terms of the case is that he faces three charges: possession of the knife, assaulting police and obstructing police. He gets to court. The CPS essentially barter it down, takes a guilty plea on the knife, and drop the assaulting police and the obstruction charges. Why? They have a guilty plea; job done. That then allows that young man's solicitor to go into the court and say, "He has pled guilty and so a third off, please, straightaway. Also, he is not violent", because we cannot talk about the assaulting of police and we cannot talk about the obstruction. We are not interested in it. Again, three or four words that you will hear more and more are "not in the interests of justice". How is it not in the interests of justice to pursue these offences?

For me, the CPS is a key part of the problem in terms of demoralisation of officers, but it is also a problem for the public because the public does not necessarily make the differentiation. When they get that letter through saying, "We are going to take no further action in relation to this case", they do not pin it on the CPS. They pin it on the officers. They say, "Useless. Why did I bother reporting the fact that my kid was threatened with a knife?"

**Keith Prince AM:** Good point.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** For me, the CPS should be very much in the sights, if you will, of the Mayor's office and the next Commissioner. In terms of the measuring of success and what I would like to see in the Plan, I would like to see at least some effort from London to publish some of the more specific data. How many cases are there where there is no separate penalty? How many cases are there where cases are being dropped for being not in the public interest?

I would like to see the MPS and the Mayor's office really push the victims' right of review. That really needs to be made far more visible for the community and that is perhaps the most concrete way forward.

**Tony Arbour AM:** That really is a positive answer to the question, saying something that is missing, in effect; there is no aspiration of taking it over.

If I can give a personal anecdote, for many years I have been on the receiving end of this when I have had to deliver in court and say, "No separate penalty", and that is because of all kinds of administrative pressures that are on the judiciary. It is interesting in fact that the Mayor has an aspiration to take over the magistracy as far as this is concerned.

Can I ask? I do not know if this is being really very radical or not. I have been around long enough to remember the days before the CPS when the police officer would arrest a man in town and march him to court and the matter would be dealt with.

Is there any suggestion that the police should, in effect, become responsible for taking over their own prosecutions?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** I have sat in enough cases where I have known the case better and I have had a better grasp of the facts. It is no good prosecutors turning up to the Crown Court not having even seen the casefile. We are going in front of a Crown Court judge in ten minutes and you have not even picked up the casefile? That is not necessarily the individual barrister's fault, but it cannot be right. Meanwhile, of course, the defence has had months upon months.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** It does raise, though, a point that quite often comes up from people who also remember the days before the CPS. Police officers in those days would know when they went to an incident and would have in mind what they needed to find out there and then while it was fresh in people's minds and was there under their noses and what they needed to log as evidence and get statements about that would make the case stand up in court. Because they no longer have that experience, they are not necessarily thinking sufficiently in those terms to be able to force the issues with the strength of evidence that would make the CPS perhaps more inclined to take it. There are perhaps some issues there about training police to think further ahead, rather than just feeling that the CPS will throw it out.

**Tony Arbour AM:** The wearing of cameras should deal with all of that and it should make all of that much --

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** It will help a lot.

**Tony Arbour AM:** This is a really positive thing that we as a Committee should be looking at, particularly this question of police morale. It must be appalling particularly for police officers involved in firearms offences. Len [Duvall AM] and I have been around a long time. With the old Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), we used to give them very considerable support. Now that the MPA has gone and with the coming of MOPAC, as elected politicians, we are unable to give police officers the support that we used to be able to give them. Maybe that is something we should be looking at.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have investigated morale - quite properly - and also a link to the CPS. We are seeking other priorities that you feel are missing in the Plan.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I fully understand the point you make. When I was in practice, I could spend three years putting a case together but I could spend three hours screwing it up in court. Recently I was a witness in a case, a public order offence. I spent two hours with the police giving a statement and the case was dropped by the CPS the day before the hearing.

In defence of the CPS, I go back to one of the points you made earlier on about the way all of these other services interact with the police because the CPS itself is under considerable pressure to deliver. It is taking shortcuts because of the budget pressures the Government has put it under as well. It is all part of the same problem with the NHS being underfunded and therefore not being able to deal with mental health and the CPS being underfunded and therefore having to look to cut to corners to deal with the caseload it has.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** I would accept that they face budgetary pressures like everyone else in most public services. I would push back a little bit, though, and say that it really does not take much. Once you have the guilty plea or once you have the conviction, it really should not take much for you to stay focused on the job at hand, which is to ensure that when the comments are made in relation to mitigation, where challenge is appropriate, challenge is given.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** These problems long predate the cuts. They are endemic in the system and they have been complained about long before the services were under these sorts of cuts.

As for priorities, the only thing that I would say is that someone said something about, "There are ten in the basket and that is all I can cope with". I have great sympathy with a lot of the priorities in the Plan, but there is a danger that it is over-idealistic and that it is setting too many. I would hesitate, therefore, to suggest any further priorities.

I had an officer once who said, "I do not mind being told what the priorities are, but I have so many priorities that they are just falling off the end. If someone would tell me what my top priorities are, I would work with those, but I cannot meet all of them".

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes, we are going to get on to a piece about the removal of the MOPAC 7 and what replaces it. When an officer parades on duty at 8.00am in the morning and then goes out, what is he or she targeting?

**Len Duvall AM:** It is really about what is missing. I suppose I am very much taken by the points you said but, equally, I look for gaps and the gaps about the reality and what is happening on the ground.

Many police officers and some members of the public who are touched by this would say that one of the gaps that is missing in this Plan is about drugs and about the causes - I could maybe add alcohol - of driving up violence. The fact is that it is missing but it is not just missing in this Plan. It has never been mentioned. It was the missing word in previous plans even before MOPAC was around. The MPS back in the early 2000s had a plan that just did not talk about drugs but, in the reality day-to-day, some of the issues that police officers were dealing with were drug-fuelled crimes or drug-related crimes.

Do you have any views on that or any evidence? I am taken by what Marian just said to not add to the issues, but this Plan has to be realistic and has to face up to some of those challenges that are driving up. Some of the violence piece - some of the stabbing and wounding going on - is related to low-level and high-level drug activity, not all of it but some of it. Somehow, how would we square that piece, then? Should we - or should

we not - recognise that it might well be a factor in contributing to crime? I would probably include drugs and alcohol in that.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** There is a driver at the moment that worries me and I thought that the Plan struck the right balance. There is a drive now - and it was mentioned earlier - to focus not so much on the volume crimes but on the more serious and much less frequent crimes. The danger is that what we are going to get with that is a lot of rationing so that ordinary, everyday people who are subject to ordinary, everyday crimes find that they do not get a response from the police at all because, "That is not our priority. We are focusing on the really serious stuff", which, yes, the public want dealt with. Getting that balance right is there in the Plan.

When you talk about drugs, however, of course, the emphasis on drugs has largely been on the huge rise in stop-and-search for catching people for cannabis possession because they get a detection for that. That is still going on and it is still high and in the context of stop-and-search we need to look at that.

However, I would agree that within the package of the most serious offences that you need to be dealing with, it is the high-level drug-dealing and drug market stuff and the stuff which then recruits kids who get themselves killed. That is where the emphasis really needs to go within the list of priorities of the more serious and rare offences. That is where drugs need to go, but there are some big issues to be raised about that.

It should not be a pretext in any way for justifying the level of stop-and-search, which is particularly affecting young Asians. It was when I did the work on stop-and-search in the MPS in 1999 and it is still going on with a much higher proportion of young Asians. I warned in 1999 that this could be the equivalent of what the "sus" generation suffered among the black community. They were being picked up because they cannot smoke dope in their own homes and they were doing it in cars and so on. It has carried on ever since then and we cannot go on like this and nobody is talking about it. There is that end of the drugs thing that needs to be looked at.

To focus on the higher end and the devastating effect that that is having on communities, including through the recruitment of young kids into activities that are going to get them killed, is where the emphasis ought to go within that basket of really serious stuff that needs to be addressed.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** It is perhaps worth making the broad point that I found it quite hard to discern exactly what the priorities are in this Plan as it is currently drafted. There is not a clear statement at the beginning that says that.

There are some very useful things. There is a very useful statement of values early on in this where it talks about an ambition to make London safer for everybody but with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged. That is really helpful because it is the sort of thing that police officers can take within their heads and think, "What is most important in the community that I am serving?" That gives them a steer towards the most vulnerable end of the spectrum, which is a very positive thing.

Throughout the report as a whole - and this is not something that is unique to London but we see it in police and crime plans across the country - where we have priorities, objectives, commitments and so on, it can be very difficult to discern exactly what is most important. That really matters.

On the point about the pernicious effect of the criminal economy in communities, which is something that I have researched a fair bit in the past on things like gun crime, what is really difficult is to translate that into a set of performance measures that reflect the harms that are caused in communities. Essentially, what you

really want to know is how safe people feel where they are living, how safe the young people feel and what the things are that people see going on in their communities. If you reduce that to the numbers of people who were stabbed, the number of robberies or the number of arrests for drugs offences, you miss the point. There is something much more holistic required and that is problematic when you think about performance in quantitative terms.

One of the possible implications of the direction of travel for MOPAC is a shift towards the approach that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) takes where there is a narrative verdict about how a force is doing or how, in this case, a borough is doing rather than something that is narrowly drawn from quantitative measures.

**Len Duvall AM:** Just very quickly to follow up, Chairman, one of the issues was where the MPS was rightly criticised by HMIC and one of the prescriptions from the HMIC was saying, "Do not concentrate on volume crime", but volume crime in London is violent crime. It is the wounding and stabbing that is creeping up. If they take their eye off that and if they follow the HMIC's advice, there will be mixed messages and we will be back with some of those issues. In terms of how we square that issue, the document has it right and for the first time, in terms of our values, we are concentrating and we are recognising that violent crime is rising while other crimes are going somewhere like that.

In the last couple of years, this Committee has been arguing not just with the previous administration but also with the police to understand that those trends were in place over the last two years and that the trend was going up in violence amongst our young people. It is a volume crime for us. For the rest of the country it might not be, but it is for us.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** That is why it is important that there is room within the Plan for priorities to be set locally to reflect the different profile of crime across London. The distribution of different forms of crime is very distinct in London. What you will find is that within the boroughs particular sorts of violence of the sort you are describing will be concentrated even further. At the borough level, this gives the police and their partners the opportunity to focus on things that really matter for them --

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have some questions about that in particular in a minute.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** One of the things that I was going to pick up on is that I completely agree about the most vulnerable and disadvantaged and so on. Yes, prioritise those, but we are talking only about London residents. An awful lot of the crime that goes on in London -- we talk about the difference between boroughs. If you look at the centre of Westminster, you have the local residents but so much of the policing effort and so much of the volume of crime is not to do with local residents at all. That is very different to somewhere like Harrow or even Barking. Yes, local priorities are going to be particularly important, rather than pan-London as though it is just a homogenous lump - which it certainly is not - with homogenous communities and homogenous crimes.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We will be seeking your thoughts around that a little bit later and around the individual priority-setting.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** Before we move on, I did have two questions. The issue about drugs has already been addressed by Len and I note and I agree with what Assembly Member Arbour said about police morale, but there is also the issue of public confidence in the police. Do you think the strategy has the elements needed to drive confidence in the police service and, if not, what is missing?



**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** In answer to that, part of it for me is linked to the point about identifying the priorities. I struggled, really. I got mixed messages on a whole range of issues. I did not come away from this with any clear sense as to, “Yes, this is really going to make a difference for public confidence”.

Take as an example the setting of local priorities. There is a real issue with mistaking the MOPAC 7 as this clumsy thing that came in and drove everything else out of the way. At a ward level and a community level, it was not the case, certainly from my experience of talking to people. It was not the case that we said, “Sorry, you cannot have that priority. It is only this”.

For me, in terms of the public confidence piece and the bits I would like to see more on in this, there is some reference in here to continuing to support, for example, the [Volunteer] Police Cadets. That is a huge area that needs significant investment, not just money being thrown at it in some willy-nilly fashion but some serious thought into how we can make the Police Cadets into something so that, in every school in London, there are people who are in the Police Cadets. How do we use the Police Cadets not in some Machiavellian way but for those who enjoy the Police Cadets and at the end of it say, “I want to become a police officer”? How do we enable them to take that step? How do we instil in their parents and those who influence them the confidence to say, “That is a good decision. Policing is a good career. Policing is something that you should feel able to go into”, rather than at the minute when we have parents and others who are concerned for their children.

In my own experience, when I said that I was going to join the police, a lot of people were saying to me, “What are you doing that for?” It is not just me; it is others. When I was on estates in London and I talked to young people and asked them what they wanted to do when they grew up, there was a certain age point up to which they would say, “A police officer”. It is pretty much primary school. At primary school, there is some real positivity in relation to police officers and they are excited and interested. The Police Cadets could be a very useful mechanism for helping to develop that confidence and prolong that confidence into the teenage years.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Just one comment, -the MPS itself has done a lot of work - and this may have now transferred over to MOPAC - on the drivers of confidence in London. Looking at the responses to the Public Attitude Survey, its confidence model has four elements to it, three of which might reasonably be addressed through this shift to local priority setting and renewed focus on neighbourhood policing. Those three are: effectiveness in dealing with crime, engagement with the community and alleviating local antisocial behaviour. The fourth one is fair treatment, which gets us into the realm of what is known as “procedural justice”. The Plan could have said a bit more about that. That is what is known about the attitude of Londoners towards confidence in the police and so those things might usefully form a basis for thinking through how that might be improved.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Going back to the point that Len [Duvall AM] made, though, I said that I thought it had the balance right with this push that is coming from HMIC, from the College of Policing and from everywhere that they must not concentrate so much on volume crime but on the more serious crimes. The consequences of that would be that the vast majority -- and people are already saying, “Something happened to me and the police did not want to know”. If we carry on with that, this would exacerbate it even further. It is the thing that could most seriously undermine confidence in the police if the everyday crimes that ordinary Londoners experience they go to the police with and they find more and more that, “We do not deal with that sort of thing. It is not a priority”. It is the best recipe there possibly is for undermining confidence still further and it has to be challenged.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes, we are going to be talking about the potential loss of the MOPAC 7 and what is going to replace it. That is exactly the debate that you have just touched upon.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Could I also make one further point on confidence in relation to the police estate? It is something that last time around, as it were, with closing police stations and so on was an issue.

For me, I would have liked to have seen more about what the estate strategy looks like and I would like to see some serious thought put into who staffs it. If you look, for example, at value-for-money figures from the HMIC that show how many officers are in front-office roles - ie the front counters of police stations - for the MPS they show zero. I suspect that any of us today could go and stand outside a police station and see police officers having to work a front office.

The question is why that is. Again, it comes back to them struggling, perhaps, to recruit the right people to spend time in the front office. For many people, especially the most vulnerable, going to the police in a police station is sometimes the only way they know. It is so important that piece of the channel strategy is done right.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** I am going to move on, Chairman. Are some of the commitments in the draft plan built on existing ones, for example, refreshing the Knife Crime Strategy or improving diversity in the MPS? If we take diversity as an example, speaking very generally, what new thinking or approaches need to be considered? Depending on your answers, I will come to a couple of specific issues.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** I am afraid that as long as we keep stirring up the notion of - and it just becomes invoked - institutional racism and how the police are endlessly institutionally racist and how anything that happens to anyone from a minority is because of racism and the more that gets reinforced and reinforced, the police will be on a hiding to nothing in terms of increasing diversity and it is not in their power not to.

There were some very serious issues raised by the riots that were completely overlooked to do with the legacy - which you will have to deal with - of the abuse of section 60 [of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994] searches in the name of tackling knife crime from 2008 onwards. Nobody seems to have picked up on the fact that the context in which Mark Duggan was shot in Haringey was after three months in which section 60 in that borough had gone through the roof. None of the reports on the riots made any distinction. People did not like stop-and-search and they were aggrieved about stop-and-search. They did not make the distinction between section 1 searches and section 60 searches.

Section 60 searches have gone back to almost nothing, but the legacy is still there from when, after all of those years post-Macpherson when people were told what their rights were if they were stopped and searched, they did not have any rights anymore. There were parts of London where young people became used to the idea that they did not query what their rights were because they did not know which power they were being stopped under and it did not make any difference; the police could just stop and search you at will. That legacy, which has stirred up memories of "sus" and so on, goes very deep. It was not identified because the previous administration was well behind section 60 and it was the answer to knife crime, which it clearly was not, and that still overhangs an awful lot of Londoners. Basically, because there was a political fudge over that, nobody has addressed the legacy that has left in terms of undermining confidence.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I wondered if I might come in on a couple of things. I do not know if the Committee is aware of the moves towards professionalising policing through the College of

Policing. There is clearly a view expressed by the College that putting the police service on more of a professional footing will make policing attractive to a wider range of candidates. I am not sure what the evidence for that is, but that is clearly part of its thinking at the moment.

The second point I wanted to make is that in 2014 the MPS commissioned some research looking at applicants to join the MPS as Police Constables. One of the things that stands out in that for me relates to the question of vetting and relates to things like possibly the over-policing of certain communities in London. A particular issue that arose was people being rejected at the stage that their vetting was conducted as they went through the application process, in particular the Police National Computer checks. The finding of the research was that one in four black males was rejected at that point compared to one in ten applicants generally.

I know that there has been some work done looking at whether vetting standards might be looked at again and in particular whether people might be treated more on a case-by-case basis than has been the case previously, the thinking being that a rethink on vetting might mean that people who want to join the police are able to do so despite things having happened in earlier years in their lives, for example. My understanding is that that is with the Home Office requiring signoff and there is not any sign of progress on that.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** Let us continue on that theme and let us talk about black and minority ethnic (BAME) recruitment specifically, something that you have already referred to. The current figures are appalling. Since 2014, there has been a 1% increase each year. At this rate, it will take about 40 years to bring the MPS to the point when it is representative of London's communities.

Is there anything specific that we do or anything more? We have been talking about this issue for many years going back to Scarman [Baron Scarman, *Report of an Inquiry into the Brixton Disorders 10-12 April 1981*] in 1981. Positive action is one suggestion that has been put forward; not positive discrimination, I might add, but positive action. The Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] has gone on record as saying that she personally likes the idea of positive action. The outgoing Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] has also indicated that he would be in support of positive action.

Do you think that that would help, Gavin? The other panellists can come in as well later.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** It certainly has the potential to help. One of the things that also came through from that MPS research in 2014 was that BAME applicants to the MPS reported feeling like a minority both in terms of feeling that there were few applicants in their cohort and also reflecting on historical experiences between minority communities and the MPS. I do not know if there is scope, for example, for making people feel more a part of the MPS at the point of application so that they feel less like a minority amongst other candidates, for example, and so they do not feel that it is not something for them. There may be scope there. That may be something that positive action could address.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Just on positive action, from talking, as I have done, with officers who are themselves BAME in the service - and I do not claim to speak for anyone other than those I have had a chat with - there is a real concern for many that you can very easily find yourself, with good intent, undermining the cause you are trying to serve. My concern and one of the concerns with positive action is that you risk missing and dealing with the underlying issues that are causing you to be where you are at.

If you look at, for example, some of the police websites for recruitment at the minute, they will be websites that are completely plastered with pictures of police officers. If you take Merseyside as one example, they have a poster up and it has literally every kind of ethnicity you would imagine. They offer positive support to

candidates, which is not necessarily an issue. However, for police officers then, if they are from a minority community and they see on a poster or a website a representation of policing but then turn up and their entire cohort is white, no wonder they are going to feel like a minority.

As well, with the positive action piece, there is a real risk that if it is not done well or if it is perhaps done at all - I do not know - those who perhaps benefit from it feel as though they are being undermined. Some people may feel, "Hang on. They only got that because of this", or, "They only got in because of that". That is something that we really must be alive to.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** Rory, if I could come back to you, in an earlier answer you gave us as well you talked about underlying causes and you used the word "undermining" twice. What are these underlying causes, then? Earlier on in the first session, you talked about workforce issues and I made a note of this. You said that there are reasons why BAME [people] do not join. What are those reasons? What are the underlying causes? How can positive action actually undermine?

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** At this point, I would like to pick up.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes, of course.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** A long time ago, I worked with a young black man. He and his wife were a young professional couple. This goes back 20 years. Both of them were sick of people saying to them - and most people just thought it but did not say it and they knew they were thinking it - "What sort of special route did you get here by?" It was not that they were there on their own merits. That starts to build resentment amongst people who are very good but who know that, because of positive action, it is assumed that they cannot be there on their own merits and would not be promoted to whatever if they were not from an ethnic minority. That is very deleterious and undermining and you cannot address it.

The other thing that goes with that is that of course we are talking about cuts. I remember Jack Straw [former Home Secretary] deciding that he wanted to pluck out of the air a figure for police minority recruitment at a time when police numbers were falling. No one was recruiting. You do not get that at a time when you are not recruiting. Yet it is absolutely right and perfectly understandable that young people who have grown up in a multicultural environment, multicultural schools, multicultural neighbourhoods or whatever suddenly find themselves - just as a white person would if they found themselves in a completely black neighbourhood, the sort of thing that you find in the [United] States but not here - pitched into a minority.

Until you have a critical mass, good, bad or indifferent, within the police, people are going to feel exposed. If you do it through positive action, they are going to feel that people got there not on their merits. It is a real conundrum. At a time when not a lot of recruitment is going on, it is going to become more difficult and we have to be realistic about that.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** Chairman, I will not take it further, but you have not addressed the issues of institutional racism and barriers, which also affect other diversities like the number of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender officers, and some of the issues that are coming up from the Barking murders, for instance, which this Committee is investigating. I am conscious of the time, Chairman.

**Sian Berry AM:** I just wanted to go back to what was talked about earlier about improving skills. It seems to me that improving diversity and increasing professionalism and attracting different people into being an officer relies on changing the job or changing what it is like when you are there doing the job.

I wondered if you had comments on the different types of skills and training needed. I know there is scepticism about the idea that you need a degree to apply at the recruitment stage but what about changing the training you get when you are on the job to reflect changing information technology (IT) needs, IT systems, and the need to be proficient when dealing with people with dementia or mental health problems, when working with young people, for example? Can those have an effect on improving diversity in the force?

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** The number one skill we should look for in our police officers is communication. That really does tie in with the diversity point because if you have grown up in a multicultural area, you know how to talk to people. It is not an issue to talk to Mr Whoever, Mrs Whoever or anyone. It is not an issue at all. For me, communication is the key. There is a perfectly valid conversation and debate to be had over degrees and formal qualifications. We hear in the draft Plan some references to a proposed new recruitment process. I would like to see much more emphasis placed on communication.

You would be amazed at how some kids from very disadvantaged backgrounds have not just the gift of the gab but incredible communication skills. They might not have formal qualifications that would make them eligible to join the police service and there may even be some issues with an older brother, a sister or whatever on the vetting side that poses challenges but for me if we focus on the recruitment process and getting in the right people, who can communicate, the training piece falls to the wayside a bit.

**Sian Berry AM:** Earlier on you were talking about morale within the current force. Changing things is always a bit of a risk when it comes to morale but it seemed to me earlier that you were saying people are looking for change and that in the job as it stands, you have outdated systems and are not equipped with the right skills. Would that help? Would increasing training and diversifying the amount of work you get help? I would worry that it would further demoralise officers to see further change, but if they are after change would that not be a low-risk strategy?

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** For officers who are in the job and have done their probation, there is precious little training. You will have officers who will wait years upon years to even get a driving course. This is, again, the disconnect between what the public expect and what the police can deliver. If you see a police car behind you, you assume, "I had better not speed off. I had better not go through a red light. I had better not be on my phone". The reality is that that police car may very well not be able to pursue you. Police officers cannot even get driving courses.

Training for a long time has been the currency by which officers feel valued by the organisation. It is one of the few conduits by which the service can indicate to officers, "You know what? You are doing a good job, we appreciate what you are doing and we want you to be able to do a better job. Here is some training".

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have quite a lot to cover still. I do not want to get into too much detail. Can we briefly finalise your question?

**Sian Berry AM:** Yes. I just wanted to get away slightly from raw recruitment because of the low turnover. We need to change things within it, do we not?

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** All right. I have some questions now about the Mayor's commitments around real neighbourhood policing, whatever that may be. We have some questions around his commitment to put an extra dedicated officer in the wards. Andrew, you are going to lead.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** What do you think real neighbourhood policing is?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** There have always been neighbourhood police officers. Rory will have his own particular views from what he has done.

I had occasion to call my local Safer Neighbourhood Team about six months ago about somebody in my community who begs quite aggressively around the local bus stop. She has a story where she says that she has not eaten for three days or she has a baby at home and she needs to buy formula and so on. She is somebody I had some concerns about in terms of her welfare. I phoned the local Safer Neighbourhood Team and it was the local PC who answered the phone. Within a minute and a half he said, "I know exactly who that is. She is a dependent drug user. She does not have a baby in her care". He was able to allay that concern, "I know who her support workers are. I will get in touch with them and make sure she is OK". That seemed to me like an excellent example of real neighbourhood policing. You have an officer who knows the local community, who has been in the area for a long time, who is the public face of the local police and who is a credible voice. I immediately thought, "I have managed to speak to somebody who really knows what he is talking about and action is going to be taken". That was fantastic.

The flipside of that is that for my local Safer Neighbourhood Team, if you look on the local borough website, the last time it updated any information was 14 months ago. The last time we had any communication from it about what it is doing and what is happening in the local area was probably two or three years ago. There is a bit of a disconnect. Real neighbourhood policing means having continuity, sensitivity to local context, local insight, ideally low rates of churn and so on, but it must also mean engaging with the local community positively and proactively, not waiting for it to come to you. It seems to be a challenge to rethink how local police engage with the local community.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** I entirely agree on what it can deliver and what it should deliver. Back to the question of communication, that is absolutely essential. Just because you are a graduate, you do not necessarily communicate very well. I have seen a lot of officers dealing with very difficult situations and very difficult people. I know a lot of my contemporaries, university professors and so on, would run a mile from them and would not know what to do. If we are talking about discrimination, who is going to be discriminated against if your entry requirement is a degree or something that is going to get you onto a degree? That really does need challenging.

Having people who can communicate and relate to local people in whatever area, who serve that purpose, is entirely useful and valuable in principle. In practice, the problem is - and I think this is going to get worse with fewer police, when we talk about the absence of specialist skills and so on - that it is squeezing the balloon. The beef was that people who were committed to neighbourhood policing were endlessly getting abstracted or being told, "You are not meeting our local priorities. What do you have to show?" when some of what they are doing is long-term investment and does not.

That is why the idea of a narrative is very important. We have talked about intergenerational stuff. We have talked about the impact of organised crime on local neighbourhoods. That work is not going to work through for another generation yet and you cannot get instant results out of it but that is where the investment needs to go. For short-term results, with a low skill level and too few people to go around in all of those slots, the danger is that the first thing that suffers is neighbourhood policing. It is short-sighted. That is the danger.

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** I will try to be very brief because I am conscious that I could go on and on. Gavin [Hales] is spot-on in terms of an acid test. Does that neighbourhood officer or that neighbourhood policing team know the community? If they do not know that persistent, regular beggar, then something has gone wrong. They are either being abstracted or they are not out and about on the streets. The concrete proposal to have a minimum of two dedicated ward officers in each ward is to be welcomed. I welcome that. The dedicated ward officer role does protect police officers from abstraction for the vast majority of the time. I was never abstracted beyond Notting Hill and New Year's Eve.

The other point I would make is that for that community policing team to be able to know the community, they need to be able to get out and spend their time out. In relation to things like the MPS website, email updates and newsletters, officers sit there and have to decide, "Do I go out today and try to deal with that issue in that stairwell, dealing drugs or kids carrying knives, or do I spend half an hour loading up an Excel thing to update the website that is really cumbersome and takes ages?" That is the decision-making that goes on. Some of this is just a business process piece. It is about getting the technology right to facilitate and enable swift and effective communication in the terms that Gavin has talked about.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** That brings us back to the front counter point. Infrastructure that enables officers out there to do whatever they are supposed to be doing has been lost because of the ways in which civilian staff were used and deployed into specialist units at Scotland Yard rather than as back-up on the ground. There are some real issues there about the infrastructure that supports the frontline work that need to be looked at.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Certainly, you have made some important points. I get regular emails from our Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) with all sorts of crime prevention advice. It is probably cut and pasted from the MPS originally and so it might not take a long time to do it, but that is predicated on the fact that they happen to have my email.

The point I am coming to here is Gavin's point about being proactive and getting out in the community. One of the concerns I have is that engagement tends to focus on existing arrangements. The Safer Neighbourhood Panels, for example, tend to be self-perpetuating groups of people who are worthy and well-meaning but not necessarily representative of the communities in which they live. The priority is that we turn up to a Safer Neighbourhood meeting and let people witter on about burglary or whatever they want to talk about, which is important, but that becomes the interface rather than getting out in the way you are talking about on the estates and talking to people.

How do you balance that out? I get the emails but do the people on the estates get the emails? Probably not, because the police do not have their email address if they have one.

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** They may be hesitant to give police officers their email address.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes.

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** You can invite an awful lot of people to ward panels who you would like to come because they have something important that needs to be heard and because you are trying as a police officer to curate a panel you feel is representative. If you have three estates on your patch, you would love to have people from those estates on the ward panel. Otherwise,

you are just hearing from people who, frankly, for the most part, have a purchased house, have jobs and are not seeing the issues that others are seeing.

This comes back to the partnership piece. One concrete suggestion is that I would like to see more done in relation to housing associations and council housing. Tenants' and residents' associations on council estates, where they are effective, empowered and have strong leadership, can do enormous good. Where they have either fallen into disrepair or where they may have been hijacked in some way, perpetuating anti-police rhetoric and stuff, they can be hugely damaging. In terms of the partnership piece, if you are trying to set local priorities locally and you want those to be the real priorities of that community, if you are not getting everyone around the table you are never going to get the right answer.

For me, a concrete way of moving towards that would be working better with the housing associations. On the walk-around days, for example, where you get the residents out to frankly moan a little bit to the housing association - "Get this fixed, get that fixed" - get the police along. The best policing teams in London will be doing some of this stuff already. It is not rocket science and it is not anything new, but for the Mayor to send a signal that this is the sort of stuff we would like to see would cascade its way down.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I wanted to make one additional point and pose it as a question, which is whether the resources are being directed to the places of greatest need and whether the ambition is great enough here. On the one hand, wards in London vary from around 5,000 residents to around 25,000 residents. There is huge variation in terms of the size of the wards and there is huge variation in terms of the issues that the police are expected to deal with in those places. We know that there are parts of London where relationships between the police and the community are more difficult than others. Arguably, those are the places where you want the greatest investment in a visible, named, personal relationship. The question I would ask is whether this ambition to have two dedicated ward officers in each ward reflects the needs of communities across London and whether it could be more ambitious going forward.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The Mayor is saying a minimum of two.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** There is an ambition by 2020 to have additional resources.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. Certainly, going back to Ken Livingstone's [former Mayor of London] day, in my ward in Barnet we used to have nine rather than six because of the geography and the size of the ward. You could get the whole of a London borough into a couple of the wards simply because of the size of it. If you want people to be visible and you have a huge area to cover, you need more people to do that. That does not necessarily mean that they are a high priority compared to some of the inner London boroughs.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I agree. It really matters what they are doing, to move the debate away from visibility in terms of the pure number of people on the streets and focus on what you want to achieve.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** That is the next question. When we are talking about visibility, are we talking about visibility wandering around the streets with a policeman's hat on or are we talking about visibility in other ways, for example in the way they communicate?

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** It comes back to literally what you are doing. If you have had no training on what good community policing looks like and feels like, and you go out - maybe it is me and another officer - thinking, "I have been sent out for the day. I am wandering



around. It is MOPAC 7 but not MOPAC 7. Well, we will just talk to one another”, does that give visibility? It does not even give good visibility, does it? All people see is two police officers walking along talking to one another. My point is not therefore that police officers should never patrol together. That is not the argument. The argument comes back to the communication point on the recruitment piece.

There is also a big piece on the training. I would like to see police officers trained in how you best communicate with people. Police officers should have the confidence to go and speak to people, say hello to people, say good morning to people and say good evening to people. It may sound very old-fashioned but I often found that that would be a great way into a conversation. Some people would tell you politely to go away and other people would swear at you, but the point is that you have made an effort. With a lot of people, that effort goes a long way. All of a sudden, that person is saying, “That is the first time a police officer has said hello to me in 20 years”. Before you know it, you are having a conversation. As a neighbourhood police officer conversations are the lifeblood that ultimately, hopefully, ends up making the place safer.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** To increase effectiveness visibility is as much about communication, if not more about communication, than simply wandering about?

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Correct. Absolutely.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** Do you want to come in on this point?

**Keith Prince AM:** Yes, I do. Rory, you were welcoming the two police officers per ward. This builds a bit on what Len [Duvall AM] or Andrew [Dismore AM] were saying about the size of wards. The Commissioner is now allowing one and two-seat wards as well, which will mean that the divergence in size will be even greater. In Redbridge we are changing to some two-seat wards, ie the number of representatives per ward, and some of those will probably be around the 5,000 that you mentioned.

The question is to you and also to Marian because she pulled a bit of a face when you mentioned two. Is two the minimum? Is that the right number? I know you said it is a minimum and clearly there are arguments for having more for a maximum, but is that the right number? Does that prioritise where the need is or is it a generalisation?

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** In terms of dedicated ward officers, I would say - having done it as a sole officer - that in my ward of 13,000 people there was plenty going on. Anyone in policing who opens their eyes and goes out in the community will realise that policing is an overflowing bucket. When we go out and start talking to people, we find issues that we did not even know were issues. There is more than enough for one person. When that one person is on their own - and the best police officers do care hugely about their communities - they take on the world’s burdens, the issues that face that community, and to carry them alone is a big ask. When that officer then goes on holiday, has to go to court or whatever it might be, the community misses having someone there to speak to.

There is also keeping that relationship going. In this day and age, nobody stays in the same job for 30 years. Some police officers hopefully still will but you do not stay in the same role in policing for 30 years anymore. While we should try to encourage people to stay in neighbourhood policing who should be in neighbourhood policing, we need to recognise that there will be transitions. Two is the minimum number, I would say, to enable transitions to happen in a relatively seamless fashion. If you only have one dedicated ward officer and they move on to a new gig, the replacement officer has a cold start. They are starting from ground zero, often, whereas if you have two you have that. There are huge benefits to having a minimum of two. On the busier

places, I would certainly like to see more and I would imagine that the MPS would put more in some of the more challenging areas. Does that answer the question?

**Keith Prince AM:** That answers the question, yes. Professor?

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Rory has persuaded me about needing a minimum of two. My only concern is whether we have enough people to go around all of the jobs. This is a real dilemma. There has to be some sort of strategic overview of the skills that are needed and how best to deploy them. Neighbourhood policing is important but if you do it, you are going to have to do it properly. That probably does mean a minimum of two. Can you spare them? Where else are you taking them from?

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have a question about the balance of priorities in a minute.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The issue is also career progression, is it not? If you are a very good Safer Neighbourhood officer and you like doing it - the *Dixon of Dock Green* thing - do you want to be there forever or do you want to get on?

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Absolutely.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Going back to the training bit and the business about communication, rather than looking to people getting more formal qualifications there needs to be a lot more recognition of people who have those skills and exercise them well and wisely within local communities. That is not sufficiently recognised. The other thing that goes with training - I have to come back to that - is that insofar as there is training and people are supposed to be trained in child protection and so on, there is a huge emphasis on distance learning. They are supposed to do for themselves in their own time, over and above their day job. It really is too much. There should be more training and the right sort of training but only if they can do in a way that is supported. At present they cannot and with more stress and pressure on them, we need to take that into account.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have quite a few more questions and we will have to pick up the pace a little bit.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Just bringing a few of these points together, local community policing is something I can remember people wanting for 20 or 30 years that never quite happened. I just wondered, with your different expertise, what you think of the idea that young people at school should be recruited into the police for their own areas. Would that not also lead to more diversity in the police because you have different areas with different diversity? At the moment there is this crazy professionalism, a bit like we have with nursing, where it all has to be through degrees. I totally agree with you. Maybe this is unrealistic but the idea that police would go in and say that you would be a policeman for Ealing, you would be a policeman for Woolwich or whatever, would strengthen everything. The people would know their area and it would also widen the pool of people going into the police.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** In high crime areas it would be extremely difficult because those young people would fear that they were being seen as narcs or as grasses and they would suffer reprisals even if it was not them who told on someone. It would be extremely difficult. They could be put in danger. I was cynical at first but I have done a lot of work looking at the role of police officers in schools and some of the best of them were building up relationships with cohorts of young people who would go home and tell parents and other people about those nice police officers they

knew, who they could come to with problems, confide things in and find helpful and supportive. It was invaluable. They felt that they were not producing anything concrete to show and, again, that was a huge investment. That was engaging with a lot of young people in the ways I think you are after. I would not go that way because it could put them in danger.

**Mr Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Just quickly, I do not think you would necessarily need to do it. London has such a transient population and so on that I do not think you need people to literally be born in that specific community.

**Peter Whittle AM:** This can be broadened. Part of the problem with crime is indeed that transitory nature, things not being permanent.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** The previous Deputy Mayor for Policing [and Crime] had aspirations about officers living in their communities. We did not get where we wanted to then.

**Len Duvall AM:** On the notion of the front line, I am fairly flexible. The front line can be behind a desk as much as being on the street. That gets blurred in strategies.

In terms of the Plan that is before us, do you think they have the right balance? We have to talk about visibility now but even that might start to blur outcomes between that frontline visibility and also providing specialist dedicated units in terms of high-end crimes like child abuse commands and issues like that. Is there a balance in this Plan to grasp that or do you think we are just too glib in the way we talk about the front line?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** It is very difficult to know. There is a debate in policing nationally at the moment about how well the police service and individual police officers understand demand, how well they understand what they are expected to do and how well they are able to align their resources to that demand. Until you have seen that sort of detailed analysis, it is very difficult to make any generalisations about the balance between the visibility of frontline and specialist services. I have a particular interest in the status of analysts in the police service.

**Len Duvall AM:** Are there any left?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Precisely. My feeling is that decisions can only be as good as the information on which they are based. If you take away the analytical capability from a police service, the rest of the service must necessarily be less efficient. The focus on a visible front line and indeed the focus on redundancies hitting police staff has meant that, both in London and elsewhere, there have been a lot of analysts taken away from communities and moved into hubs. That is a particular concern for me. They are an essential piece of the picture that is not given much attention.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** That ties in very much with a point I would come to from a slightly different angle. When the proposal was first made that the Greater London Assembly put all this money into neighbourhood policing, it was the be all and end all just for the sake of it being visible. I remember asking questions about how it all worked together. What is the link with what happened overnight? When the neighbourhood Sergeant comes in the next morning, does he necessarily know? Is he asked? No thought was given to that.

Joining everything up, having that infrastructure and making sure that the right information is shared among the right people is a very important bit that has always been missing from the jigsaw. If you rearrange the organisational structure, you have a whole different set of silos. They still do not talk to each other. It does

not matter what your silos look like, it is the communication between them. That is the difficult bit that everyone misses. Yes, frontline policing, as long as it is engaged visibility rather than visibility for its own sake, which it was. It has to be engaged, it has to link in with the operational side as well as with local partners and it needs the infrastructure to support it or else it is endlessly bogged down in writing emails - or failing to write emails - and updating the website. It is putting all of that together in a way that coheres at borough level and also up through rather than being driven top down.

Talking to people on the ground, in terms of culture, it is something that needs changing, too. It is the people on the ground who see things day to day and who know what is going on. They told me that when the street crime thing kicked off and everyone was being bounced that street crime was the only priority they had, people were saying, "It is kids nicking each other's mobile phones". I finally went to someone very senior in the MPS and said, "You do realise that this is what is happening?" When local commanders were phoned up and asked, "What are you doing about your street crime? It is up by 100%", it meant that it had gone from two to four or something like that. It was nonsense but, at the top, they did not know. They had not even analysed their data. They then paid for me to analyse the data, which proved exactly what was going on, but by then the horse had bolted.

Talking to people in the front line who know what is going on and making them feel that they are valued would make a difference to how well-informed you are. It all has to join up. It starts at the bottom and works upwards, it does not start at the top and work downwards, and it needs the infrastructure to hold it together. Otherwise people cannot do their jobs properly.

**Len Duvall AM:** Can I just follow up on that organisational piece? There are some issues around the shift in this balance of reorganisation rather than action. If we take the child abuse command, we have gone from taking issues away from the boroughs and bringing them to the centre to then devolving it back.

Do you have any comments on that? This may impact on some future work that we are going to be undertaking and, very much as you have just said, we ought not to lose sight of that in terms of boroughs merging commands, the changing nature of the analyst and intelligence piece and how it is worked through. Do you have any views around the reorganisation or practical application of specialist policing and devolved issues? How do you break down these silos?

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Resources are short. You cannot afford major reorganisation that disrupts good working relationships, which are often happening. You look at whatever you have and you make all the bits work together better than they are working now. Otherwise, you waste an awful lot of time and energy until the reorganisation has bedded down. You will probably have lost two years and a lot of valuable information in the meantime. You have to work with what you have and, say, communication between those bits where it falls down. We have this about fraud, cybercrime or whatever and people need to know what is happening on their own patch. If they do know what is happening on their own patch, it needs to be communicated upwards to the people who are putting it all together London-wide. That is where it falls down and that is what you have to look at rather than reorganising anything.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** You risk just rearranging the deckchairs, really. For me, one of the biggest frustrations is, for want of a better term, the business processes, the IT and the tech. It is just so cumbersome. It should not take an officer half a day to figure out what has gone on over the weekend or over the couple of days they have been off. It should not take them that long and they should not have to interrogate a dozen systems.

I know there has been a lot of talk about moving towards the Met Integrated Policing Solution and the integrated platform. I would have liked to have seen something more robust around the technology piece and the need to get that infrastructure right. If it is not right, then all it will be is a nice audit trail by which the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) or whoever can come along and use it to go, "Officers, why did you not do this, that and the other?" "It is all recorded for the IPCC [or whoever] in the systems." You try to find the link between this girl or this victim and this suspect and this case from four boroughs away.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** That is going to become even more essential and it is also part of the question of visibility and engagement. That is not only the body-worn cameras but having the iPads and so on so that people are not going back to the station and not working with cumbersome machines. They can only do that if they are feeding that information into systems which communicate with each other and back to them and put it all together. That makes it doubly important.

The other thing about having those sort of handheld devices and recording information on them is that it means that they do not have to go back to the station and they do not have to sit in police cars and do it. They should be going and sitting down in the local café. They can chat to anybody else who happens to be in the local café and do it there. This is a model that works abroad where you never go back to the station; you just communicate with the people around you and back to base with your handheld thing and you do not have an excuse to go off the street.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have been talking about that probably too much for too long - the last four years and onwards - and we need to really deliver that. We are soon to be getting to measuring success, but before then we have a couple of questions around the criminal justice service, which again we have already touched upon.

**Florence Eshalomi AM:** Just on that, one of the things is looking at the Police and Crime Plan and we have talked a lot about that. Just overall, do you think that as it stands the Police and Crime Plan will achieve what it sets out to do?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** In respect of the criminal justice system?

**Florence Eshalomi AM:** Yes.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Clearly, the main policy proposal is this demand to devolve powers to the Mayor and this is not an area that I feel particularly well qualified to comment on. It is reasonable to suggest that the criminal justice system is a complex, distributed system. There does seem to be potential for a clearer leadership and bringing that system together, streamlining processes and so on, and perhaps getting a grip on some of the data that Rory was talking about earlier. There certainly seems to be a lot of potential for benefits to be accrued from that devolution of powers.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes, I would like to see devolution and the devolution agenda is right. Take some of the issues we have had with tagging of offenders as an example which can, when used appropriately, be an effective community sentence. The trouble is it is all run centrally, the budget is held centrally and we still do not have working global positioning system tags out for police officers and probation officers to use to good effect.

I am sceptical. I am sure more thought has gone into it, but I do not feel there is enough in this draft at the minute to give me confidence that there is anything more than just nice words in relation to criminal justice. I

would like to see much more and I would like the CPS as a key part and a key entity that needs to be engaged and held to account.

**Florence Eshalomi AM:** The introduction of a Victims' Commissioner, which has been floated, would help.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** That would make sense and it would be very helpful. Having been a victim, a police officer and a witness in various cases, the experience as a victim and a witness is very shaky and can be very inconsistent.

The key to success of making that role worthwhile would be for that person or that team to move beyond just policy. A bit like an undercover shopper or something, they could go out and see the experience that Londoners are going through and then deliver concrete actions. If it just going to be a report here or a report there on issues affecting victims, it does not hold the feet to the fire enough and it would not be particularly beneficial. My support for that would be on the basis that it would be very much getting into the nuts and bolts and making concrete recommendations for things that need to change now.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** In London, it would have to address the fact that, as I mentioned earlier, a lot of victims are also suspects. The distribution of a lot of vested interests in victim services, which are locked into particular areas, are not necessarily in the areas where they are most needed and where victims may be less willing to come forward and who may have fairly chequered histories, family relationships and so on. We are not reaching those people.

If you had a Commissioner who is prepared to recognise those complexities rather than divide the world into victims and offenders, then you might start getting somewhere with this. That is particularly in high-crime areas of London where there are a lot of victims who simply are too frightened of reprisals to report or who simply do not get a service because the services are not there. Certainly, there are not services available from people who are able to communicate with them in their complex situations.

**Florence Eshalomi AM:** Going back to a Victims' Commissioner, we have talked about some communities not having confidence in the police. Equally, do you feel that there is an issue with victims not having confidence in the police and the whole criminal justice system?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** This ties in with something I was just going to say. That is that for me the first order of business, if I was a Victims' Commissioner for London, would be to really get into and expose the tragedy that are members of, for example, the black community. There are members of that community whose sons are being exploited in horrendous ways and being groomed into things that are horrendous. The son might tell mum that a bit of it is going on, they go to the police to report it, the process kicks in, it is reported and a crime gets logged. Then the intimidation and the retributions start and sooner or later a police officer has to go round and take a statement, essentially retracting the previous statement. All of a sudden it is, "Great. We have a reported crime but", and that family now thinks, "What confidence can I have in the police? Is there nothing you can do?" That feeds into things like bail conditions and the effectiveness of police bail.

As a Victims' Commissioner, it is key for them both to be focused on action rather than just high-level fluffy stuff, real action, and to really get into some of the tough areas that most people will not have experienced.

**Florence Eshalomi AM:** From a policy angle, Gavin, one of the things that the London Assembly looked at was maybe devolving the work of the criminal justice system and, again, making sure that is a bit more separate. Do you think there is a stronger case for that and would that help in terms of some of those issues?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** The point has been addressed. The scope to bring the different parts of the criminal justice system together and, for example, to address the victim experience throughout the criminal justice system does seem to have some transformational potential. Yes, I personally would be supportive of it.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** It is a great idea and it is really important. When I first went to the Home Office in 1988, they were endlessly wrestling with how to make the system cohere, how to make systems speak to each other, how you actually counted; whether you counted the number of victims or the number of offences or the number of people involved in the offence and so on. It did not join up through the system. Then of course the Home Office was split and you have these two major empires there governing different parts of the criminal justice system. It would be interesting if London could, bottom up, create an alternative model. It is going to be hard to do politically.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Exactly correct. The previous administration did push this. We had the MOPAC Challenges here where we were inviting or pressganging members of other parts of the criminal justice system to come along and be challenged. It is a worthwhile aspiration, but it has been spoken about and aspired for such a long time about whether it could be delivered. We will move on now into the third hour on measuring success. We have already touched upon the removal of MOPAC 7 and its replacement by some local measures and strategic London measures.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** This is really to all three of you. The Mayor is to scrap the MOPAC 7 and move away from hot targets. What are your views on this? Rory, very specifically, if you can draw on your own personal experiences as a police officer, tell us about the impact that MOPAC 7 had on your day-to-day work.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes, I will answer that straight away. With MOPAC 7, you can disagree about what the seven were and you could have had the MOPAC 4 or MOPAC 8 or whatever makeup it was. It provided a useful default position. If things are going well, relatively speaking, on a borough and you have a set of officers assigned to you to do something, it is useful to have a default position which can be employed.

Reading the draft Plan but also reading some of what HMIC has written in relation to the handling of child abuse, child welfare and so on, there seems to be a risk of really scapegoating, to an extent, the MOPAC 7. That does not mean that I am opposed to scrapping it or something, but there is a real risk of going, "The reason there were issues and deficiencies in that area is because we were all so focused on MOPAC 7".

That may be true but that is not a valid argument. You should be able to have your set of priorities that are set from the MOPAC 7 and then deal with quite serious issues like child abuse, sexual assault and so on. For me, the MOPAC 7 is quite useful and it was not this bulldozer that you get the impression that it was.

At ward level, communities will forever tell you what their issues are. It is for that neighbourhood officer to ideally have the right panel of people to set those priorities or for the police officer to do their best and say, "I know that you think car crime and dog fouling is the key issue, but actually up the road on that estate, X, Y and Z is happening". It is again coming back to communication. If you can communicate to that ward panel, funnily enough they will listen to you and go "You know what? Yes, I will put that estate above the safety of my high-end car".

I am nervous a little bit about scrapping MOPAC 7 in this wholesale way. It might have been helpful to perhaps have considered having some sort of a transition mechanism where you would go from a MOPAC 7 down to a MOPAC 3 or whatever it might be that addresses the issue of, "We feel there are other things that we need to be able to prioritise", whilst still giving the MPS for the time being some certainty. That would be around, "OK, we know what the MOPAC 7 is or we know what that mechanism is and we know what we are working with and everyone is quite happy with how that has gone". That would be helpful, whereas at the minute the risk is that with a new Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] as well, it is "What are we going to be focused on?" People look for that.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have heard some rather unkind words about ward panels and I speak as the Chair of one. Actually, the MOPAC 7 did give something for ward panels to hang their hat on and it is going to be interesting to see the replacement. Sorry, Deputy Chair, I interceded.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Moving on the conversation a bit from me, the thing I would like to see when it comes to measuring success and what that even looks like is just greater transparency. If someone wants to know what knife crime is currently like in London, there is not a great deal out there, and when eventually something is published, it is three or four months down the line. I would like to see much more transparency, as a concrete thing, for example, an overnight sort of digest, if you will, of what has occurred with some redactions. That would be a really beneficial thing to put out there so that people could see the complexity and some of the challenges that the MPS deals with and that they do not hear anything about. Say they were driving home in a taxi or in an Uber and they saw some horrendous number of police officers dealing with something. What was that? They do not know. It may have been something; it may have been nothing, but transparency is the only way we can hope to find the right answer in this world where maybe there is this whole raft of local priorities. How do we measure them? I do not know, but I would like to see more transparency.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** This is reflective of a change that is happening in policing nationally and it is in some ways a function of the withdrawal of Whitehall from telling the MPS what it was for. There is something of a crisis of confidence in policing about what exactly its role is and how to know whether it has done a good job or not, and that goes all the way down to the level of individual officers. There is clearly now a mainstream view within policing that the police role is too complex to be reduced to simple measures but also in particular to arbitrary targets.

One of the things that the draft Plan does not do is to set numerical targets. It has moved away from that, but it does still talk about reductions in certain things and that is a target of a sort. Some of the perverse outcomes that have been seen in the past around things like crime recording will still need to be kept in mind in a post-numerical target world. That will not go away, particularly when people find themselves on the cusp of something that is or is not a reduction.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** A reduction of 1%, for example --

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** For example.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** -- is not to be applauded particularly.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** The thing that the Plan needs to do is to say how the sum of the parts can be assessed. When it comes to the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] holding the Commissioner to account, what do the numbers add up to? How do you know whether the MPS in London as a whole is doing good work?



The Plan as it is drafted at the moment needs to say more about how performance will be assessed and what good performance is going to look like. There is a risk in the talk of moving to dashboards and complex measures and so, back to this narrative point, it becomes very difficult to communicate clearly what is going on. It is also incredibly resource-intensive. Thinking back to the days of Whitehall targets and the Government Office for London, there was an enormous amount of scrutiny of boroughs and an enormous amount of quality control went on. That may be reintroduced to some extent in the model that is being proposed.

Having said that, there are one or two things that are really positive and one of those in particular is the focus on repeat victimisation. If we are talking about wanting to have a police service that focuses on the most vulnerable and the most disadvantaged, one of the very good ways of doing that is to look at repeat victimisation, those who are repeatedly victimised and the service that they are receiving. That is to the extent that they can grow to transparency - to Rory's [Geoghegan] point - about what is happening around repeat victimisation in London. That would be a good measure of whether the police was doing a good service and keeping people safe.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** On measuring success, what no one is prepared to grasp is that if you are being successful, again I challenge the notion that rolling out Safer Neighbourhood things had within a year reduced crime in those areas. If they were going to be successful, communicating with people and getting people to tell them what was going on, crime was going to go up. Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy model, on which it was supposed to be based, found exactly that. You could control for how much more you knew about crime from what you knew previously and that should be a measure of success. We can say it about rape and sexual offences and we can say it about hate crime and so on. The fact that numbers have gone up means that we are getting through and more people are coming forward.

We have to grasp the nettle of saying if this is really working, if crime is going down to that extent, it is because people have stopped telling you about it or you are fiddling the books because you feel that crime has to look as though it is going down or you will be beaten up. We have to be realistic and honest about that and find a way of measuring that.

The notion of objectives rather than targets needs to be far more of currency and how you have met those objectives to be a narrative which goes out to the right channels rather than statistics which people do not understand and are very sceptical about. In setting those objectives, you also need to look at what the problem is that you are trying to address and you have to have not just short but medium and long-term goals attached to it. Otherwise, you will do something that looks nice, as I say, in the short term at the expense of some of the medium and long-term effects which are going to be the ones that stick. By next year, you have another set of objectives because that one has been ticked and the problem still keeps coming round.

I think we have to think short, medium and long term in terms of what the main objectives are, and I do think that local priorities are going to be an important way of getting into this rather than London-wide and everybody being judged by the same yardstick. How you set those local objectives is another matter and it is very difficult to get through to politicians and bureaucrats that, for most people, going to a meeting is an unnatural practice.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have some questions about local authorities in a minute.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** If you want to talk to people, the officers must be going out and talking to people who will not come to meetings and finding

out from them what is going on. Those officers are an invaluable source of information about what the priorities are, not just the panels which have their role, but which can be a buffer between what communities actually need who will never come to a meeting and what becomes the objective.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** That neatly takes us to the next set of questions which is about local authorities.

**Keith Prince AM:** Some of the questions have been answered really, but I would like the panel, if they can, to elucidate a bit more on the measurability. One of the good things about MOPAC 7 was that it was very measurable and you could measure performance, “Are you doing a good job or not?” We can argue about whether they were the right seven but at the end of his term Boris [Johnson MP, former Mayor of London] was able to say, “I have achieved this”.

There is measurability, but also have we any experience of any forces which do something similar around local priorities at all?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** In some ways, local priority setting takes us back to the Crime and Disorder Act and the advent of what were then Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and which are these days known as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). That is where strategic assessments are produced on an annual basis and the local community is supposed to be consulted about their content.

One of the things that this Plan does not address is what the relationship is between the local priority setting of the MPS and the local priority setting of the MPS with their partners, given that the MPS will be represented on those CSPs. It may be that in some ways this more local approach, locally understood at a borough level, is a way of reinvigorating CSPs in the relationship between policing and the wider public service. As I say, that point is relatively under-addressed.

There are examples where the Police Foundation has been working in Thames Valley for five years. Relatively recently, Thames Valley Police has introduced what it calls priority-based budgeting where local police areas, which would be equivalent to boroughs in London, are given greater control over their budgets and over their priorities. In Thames Valley’s case, that is very much about ensuring that they can make the savings that they need to take. That is about empowering local areas to reflect the demands in the communities that they are serving and tailoring their resources accordingly.

That does happen and lots of police forces do a lot of work on understanding the distribution of demand in their force areas, where they need to put their resources and what their priorities should be in different places. It is not particularly revolutionary.

**Keith Prince AM:** To build on that as well, how are they going to assess these priorities? Is it just going to be a matriculation on where the highest levels of crimes are or is it going to be through consultation, perhaps using Safer Neighbourhood Boards or ward panels to get the public perception?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** As in how to establish what the priorities should be?

**Keith Prince AM:** Yes.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I am not sure that is entirely clear at the moment. Essentially, what the Plan talks about is that there will be priorities that are given to everybody and those will

relate to high-risk areas of crime. For what we talked about earlier, volume crime, there will be then some scope for local areas to set their own priorities.

I am aware that the thinking within MOPAC has moved on since the draft was produced and doubtless the detail will come out at the next session you host with them. MOPAC needs to be clear. What does a good priority look like? What are the parameters that are going to be set? In particular, it needs to mitigate the risk that priorities are set because they are the things that are easiest to do or they are reflective of what is most practical rather than perhaps what is most important.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** To build on that, you can very easily find yourself setting priorities that are just completely out of left field. For example, you could imagine a scenario - whether at a local ward level or perhaps at a borough level - some priority emerges around "We need to provide more opportunities for young people to do things". Is that a police priority?

**Keith Prince AM:** Good point.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** I do not know. I do know but --

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** The degree to which this process is prescriptive will necessarily constrain how priorities are described and understood, and back to the example I gave earlier. If a community is concerned about the effects of the chronic presence of the criminal economy in young people's decision-making about what they do, how do you boil that down to priorities, for example, that are defined in terms of crime categories in a way that reflects the needs of the local community? They are going to be difficult issues to contend with.

**Keith Prince AM:** I agree. Do you have any thoughts on that?

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** That is exactly the sort of case that I am talking about where it should be a priority. You also have to understand that if you are going to realise that objective, it is going to take a very, very long time and you are not going to see instant, measurable results. That does not mean to say that you put it in the bottom drawer and you put it in the too difficult drawer because it is absolutely of the essence.

Objectives rather than targets and short, medium and long term, recognising that sometimes long-term goals will take time. There may be just stories of success on the way to encourage people rather than hard facts, hard statistics.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Andrew is going to ask you a couple of questions in context about the mergers.

If I can just say, the concern around this has bothered me, certainly over the last four years. There are the three priority targets they used to set in ward panels, and the Safer Neighbourhood Boards which we have not touched upon about how they filter in in target-making, what I still call, being old-fashioned, the CDRP, which you mentioned. They all say, "We are the group that sets the targets for the borough". If you do not have clarity, then you overlay that with these local targets, it is very muddy and that is a real concern.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes, you took my question again about how this would work with the merged boroughs. Keith has merged boroughs in pilots or whatever they are called. They are not pilots. They are called something else, are they not? I have forgotten what they are called. Pathfinders or something.

**Keith Prince AM:** Pathfinders.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I have merged boroughs as well in Camden and Islington which are just coming on stream now. How is this system going to work with merged boroughs? I put this question to Sophie [Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime] at a previous session of this Committee and she said, "Each borough can set its own priorities". That seems to suggest that the prioritisation is going to be at a borough level rather than further down, to take up the points that Gavin [Hales] made, the more generic phrase, to coin a phrase, "tough on the causes of crime as well as tough on crime".

Realistically, it is going to be a borough-wide thing. Then at the same time the pressure is going to be coming from the ward communities to prioritise the crime rather than the causes of crime that they see affecting them in terms of vehicle theft or burglary or antisocial behaviour. How is all this going to fit together, particularly at the merged borough level?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Where that is particularly problematic is where, for example, you have two boroughs which are merged together and you have resources that are shared across those two boroughs. Somebody has the responsibility of deciding where those resources are going to be targeted. To what extent do they rely on objective assessment of things like harm and to what extent do they reflect the local priorities of the two boroughs which may be very different? Exactly the same debate is playing out nationally as there are moves to thinking about the way that some policing services may be delivered above the level of police forces.

**Keith Prince AM:** Can I just add in? The Pathfinder in my area is Havering, Redbridge and Barking and Dagenham so it is a three-borough area and that exacerbates the situation that you were describing.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** There will be perhaps concerns from one or more of those local authorities. Particularly if their neighbours are seen to have higher levels of demand and higher levels of crime, they will see resources taken away. That then places much greater emphasis on the governance of policing in those areas and how that is going to work effectively to provide people with assurance that they are getting the service that they need.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** You still have that legacy in some London boroughs. They are mostly dying, but people remember the old days when there were all different boroughs, Walthamstow and Chingford and Leighton. There is still a feeling sometimes and it is sometimes exploited politically that, "They get all the resources and we should be having them". When you merge boroughs, this was a big contradiction that I saw in the Plan. I could see the value, difficulties and challenges in setting local priorities, but I could not see how that was going to work. You were talking about merged boroughs and particularly that they are competing for resources and they are competing - they would be competing anyway - but under different political leaderships with different orientations on these issues. That is going to undermine massively the city or local priorities and investing in those.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** As well, the question then has to be asked. Say we have a minimum of two, let us say, dedicated ward officers at the very local neighbourhood who in my view will be dealing with what that community needs whether it is because they have asked for it or whether it is because that officer thinks that the key issue there is X and it needs to be dealt with. Then you have your response teams which are for the most part driven by what comes in on the calls.

At that stage, you are still not really into anyone who has the freedom or the capacity to start going “You know what? That set of priorities that has been agreed at the borough level”, or the merged borough or whatever it might be, “I am going to go and deal with it”. You then end up with the real concern which is the shared resources perhaps are the ones that are subject to the priorities. That then becomes a thing of: if there is the poor man’s borough and the rich man’s borough, where are the resources going?

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** Who can shout the loudest?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** Yes, who is going to shout loudest and that is what I would drill into. When these priorities are set, what resources really are against those priorities? If I was able to ask one question, it would probably be that one.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** The point there is that there is only point in setting priority if you have some discretionary resources to put against that. If there are no discretionary resources, then what does the priority actually mean in practice?

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Another issue that comes to me is also the leadership of these two boroughs. I do not know what is happening with Keith [Prince AM] in those three boroughs, but we have two boroughs and one of the Borough Commanders is now the Commander for both boroughs. The fear is the Commander who has taken over knows more about the borough they are coming from rather than the other borough. Therefore, is there a risk that that borough might get favoured? That is rather than starting from scratch with a completely new double-Borough Commander or triple-Borough Commander who is coming in from outside but then does not have the history of either borough. I do not know if you see what I mean.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Leadership goes largely unaddressed in the Plan and that is perhaps a separate point. You would hope that the Borough Commander who takes over would have the professional nous to realise that their responsibilities have doubled. Doubtless, the officers from the two boroughs which form the merged borough will be making the case very strongly that they require resources for A, B and C and those will have to be balanced.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** That would work through over time because when it became the norm that you were taking over a double-borough command, it is what you would do. You do not have a history with one borough or the other but it would take some time to work through that particular issue.

**Keith Prince AM:** Around the resources, Rory [Geoghegan] quite rightly pointed out that boroughs may set these priorities. However, with two officers per ward dealing with those issues and the response team dealing with responses, where are those resources going to come from?

I wanted to put to you the fact that under the old local policing model there was one officer per ward but there was a team which backed up. They would be tasked to go to wherever the local priorities were deemed to be, which will now not be the case because it is going to be another 629 officers being put into the wards. There may be a ward – one of your wards, Tony [Arbour AM] – from no crime in the last three decades and one of my wards where it happened just about a second ago.

There is the issue of redactions as well where historically the police officers were taken from that back-up team so that it did not affect the local area, but now that will not be the case. My understanding from what the

Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] has said so far is that now those officers will be taken from the response teams. Can I have some thoughts on that?

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** The dedicated ward officer is the only thing holding together the day-to-day community policing. If that dedicated ward officer was not protected against abstractions, we would be in a worse place so I welcome the second one.

I take your point on supporting the broader neighbourhood officers. The question is to what extent were they just at the time a bit of a political fudge; to put officers into neighbourhoods when perhaps at the end of the day what do they end up doing? Is it really just that they end up having to mop up stuff for the response team? It is a tricky one and a difficult one. The best way to protect neighbourhood policing is to have dedicated officers protected from those abstractions.

The broader piece is about whether you then have larger response teams or whether you still have that siphoned-off portion of officers to back up and provide that floating resource. The bottom line is there is not that much slack in the system. Again, it comes back to if you set the priorities, who is there? Even if you set a priority that the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) might be interested in, going into a community safety unit they are drowning often in domestic violence cases, child abuse cases, hate crimes and so on and so forth. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out why no one wants to join the CID.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I wonder if I might also make the point that the Police and Crime Plan and the discussion today have been very much about borough level policing. In MPS terms, that is what falls under Territorial Policing (TP) and there are 11,000 police officers in the MPS who are not part of TP as part of the central unit.

One of the things that is notable about the Plan is that where it talks about strategic policing capabilities, there is nothing in there about what success looks like. It would be a mistake to assume that you can assess the performance of the MPS as a whole simply by reference to what the boroughs are doing. There is this very large piece of the picture which needs to be in scope as well.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** You say it is too TP-oriented? Naturally, if you talk about neighbourhood policing, it is TP, but what you are saying is there is a significant part of the operation that may or may not be mentioned in the Plan?

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** Yes and so how are the priorities set for some of those central units? To what extent do they reflect the priorities that are set locally or are they, indeed, something completely different?

**Keith Prince AM:** Yes, thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** This is meant to be useful in our deliberation. We have been taking notes around your comments and we will be using these to think around that for two weeks' time.

In summary, is there anything that you have not been able to bring out in the course of the conversation that you feel, for example, should be in the Plan or should not be in the Plan? Relatively briefly, it gives you that last opportunity.

**Gavin Hales (Deputy Director, Police Foundation):** I have two points, one of which is non-crime demand where 60% of the emergency and priority incidents that are recorded in London do not result in a crime being recorded. There is a very large part of police business that is not necessarily well reflected in the Plan.

The second point and the final point I wanted to make is that perhaps the key issue will be implementation. One of the things that the MPS finds quite difficult to do is to implement plans with a degree of precision. One of the tasks for MOPAC will be to have a clear overview of how this Plan is being implemented.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes, exactly, a good point.

**Rory Geoghegan (Founding Director, The Centre for Public Safety):** I just will reiterate the point I made earlier around the workforce. I would push really hard on that and woe betide us if the workforce is ignored and not tackled. Then there is the thing that will not go away which is the technology. That cannot go on much longer.

**Professor Marian Fitzgerald (Visiting Professor of Criminology, University of Kent):** There is going to be a focus on climate and so on. However you set your priorities, unless you deal with those issues of partnerships and of workforce, you are not going to get anything delivered. Maybe those elements in the Plan need to be strengthened a lot more rather than just focusing on which crimes are going to be our priorities. You are not going to be able to deal with anything unless you have those right and they are big challenges.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is a most useful summary. Again, thank you, guests, so much for today.