Item 6: Appointment to the Office of Vice Chairman of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA)

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Kit, good to see you. Thank you very much for agreeing to today’s date. I hope it was not too difficult for you.

We were hoping to do this discussion over about 45 minutes and although we have not agreed fixed questions between us, I think we have established a pattern now that we try to cluster our discussion ideas, really, so we will kick off probably with some questions about the external challenges facing the MPA; have a look at some of their internal issues and then we will drill in a little bit - if you do not mind - into your personal experiences; your attributes; your ability to commit time; etc. We are moving in from the outside looking at the external challenges first.

Just by way of a kick off then, Kit, I wonder if you would like to make a short opening statement and tell us what you see the challenges and the opportunities of the role of the Vice Chair of the MPA and basically what would you be trying to achieve through your position on the MPA.

Kit Malthouse (AM): Thank you. Oddly enough I was speaking at a conference this morning, the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU), about policing in the 21st century, accountability and migration, and obviously notions of policing and how policing is governed in the UK is in flux at the moment. There is a Government Green Paper; certainly both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats have put out policy documents about greater democratic influence or control in policing, so it is in that atmosphere of flux that I am appointed to that position on the MPA with the Mayor coming onto the MPA within a month as Chairman.

We do think that that changes fundamentally the kind of governance structure around the police. The idea of a big democratic mandate coming on there, allied with the fact that it is undoubtedly the case that the residents of London believe now - if they did not before they certainly do now - that the Mayor is somehow responsible for policing in London. You only have to ask the Community Safety Team about the massive inflation to them in the post bags since 1 May to realise (a) the importance of the issue, but also (b) the fact that people in London were looking for somebody who was responsible for this to write to, at the very least.

On that basis I do think that things are changing in London and in particular that phase is a challenge for the MPA. There is a school of thought that says within two to three years the Authority, as it stands, ie the 23 or 24 members will not exist basically. The Government’s Green Paper has a big black hole where London is concerned, and certainly there seems to be a move towards greater control by the Mayor, and certainly the Conservative Party and the movement of the Liberal Democrats is towards greater democratic control. If the MPA is sort of on the way out from that point of view, how does it become relevant? I think what we want to try to do, and this is under discussion with MPA members at the moment - we had our first working party earlier this week - is
to move it onto much more of a scrutiny, supervisory, strategic level, away from the micro-management that it has been involved in over the last eight years and for the policy direction - policy push - to come much more from City Hall.

At the moment - I mean those MPA members who are here can agree or disagree - the policy push on policing comes entirely from within the Metropolitan Police Service; there is very little that comes externally and we do not necessarily think that is right, given that political responsibility is vesting in this building - certainly for violent youth crime. Moving the Authority onto a much more strategic level will allow the Mayor to take … I was going to say control, but it would allow the Mayor to have greater influence in terms of where policing priorities lie. Ally that with the fact that the other strand, if you like, towards the Mayoral strategy is to stitch the police back into their local community at as local level as possible - and you saw the launch of mapping last week - we do think that that will change the way things are done.

Mapping ostensibly appears to be about looking in your area for what crimes had been committed. It is actually much more than that. Each little area on the map will have a named police officer who is responsible for crime in that area. That means that down to four or five streets people will know who is responsible and there will be a sense of territorial ownership and it will almost take Safer Neighbourhoods to the next stage. Making the authority more strategic; having greater policy influence from the Mayor into the Metropolitan Police Service and then this stitch back into the local area is the big challenge for us and that is the sort of delivery framework. Within that we obviously want to deliver a significant decrease in violent youth crime and then the same as everybody else, a reduction in antisocial behaviour, reduction of crime across the borders as much as we can, but getting the delivery framework right is the first step.

**Valerie Shawcross (Chair):** I think there are probably some constitutional issues that Members will want to dig into there during the meeting, because obviously you are taking on the role with the MPA as it is currently legally constitutionally empowered and I am sure there will be some questions about that. Just to continue the kind of opening gambit question, if I may, I gather the Mayor has reiterated that he does want to become the Chair of the MPA himself?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Yes.

**Valerie Shawcross (Chair):** Can you say something about how the role of the Vice Chair will work in relation to the Mayor, given that he is also planning to be Chair of Transport for London (TfL), so how is that function going to work?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Well, I think obviously you sort of feel your way as you go to a certain extent but from the outset we expect that the day to day business of the Chair’s office, if you like, will be performed by me and that I will obviously consult upwards with the Mayor on key strategic issues. He will retain the executive power of the Chair and delegate it to me where appropriate, but in terms of day to day liaison with the Authority and the Metropolitan Police Service that will be my job.

**Valerie Shawcross (Chair):** OK, you do not think there is any contradiction there then? That, on the one hand, you are saying that the public in London will expect the Mayor to be in charge of and responsible for the police in London, which is a step in a different direction, but in fact you are saying you will be day to day in charge.
Kit Malthouse (AM): I do not think the public would see any inconsistency in him being assisted in that job, in the same way that they regard the Prime Minister as being responsible for running the country but they do not expect him to run the Home Office, there is a Home Secretary who does that. She has effectively delegated authority by the Prime Minister.

Roger Evans (AM): Obviously one of the main objectives in reducing crime that the Mayor has is the whole youth crime agenda and issue. What part do you see yourselves playing in that and how are you actually going to make, if you like, a lot of the sentiments the Mayor makes known, which are very worthy and have great support from people in London, how do you turn those into reality and actually start to deal with what is a desperately serious problem?

Kit Malthouse (AM): It is a very good question and actually goes to the heart, to a certain extent, of organisation in this building because one of the issues here is delivery, it is turning the Mayoral ambitions and ideas and policies into actual action on the ground. Every cloud has a silver lining and one of the silver linings from the departure of the previous Deputy Mayor for Youth (Ray Lewis) is that that job seems to have fallen onto me alongside the policing job at the same time, but it does mean I can bring the two sides of the solution, if you like, together. We are doing, as you know, some assertive enforcement around violent youth crime, but in terms of the intervention programme that we want to put in place I think it is fair to say that is work in progress.

The plan is that we will be announcing a direction of travel effectively on 3 November and there are a number of meetings going on at the moment with academic groups, charities, the like, to work out exactly the structure that will be in place. The other side of it of course is money and there is a budget process ongoing across the whole family of the GLA where the first line in the Mayor’s budget guidance was that everybody has to find a clip to put into youth intervention work and we will be gathering that pot of money as well over the same period. You will forgive me if I do not know exactly what we are going to do, but in terms of the delivery mechanism November is the end date and we are working on the structure at the moment.

Roger Evans (AM): Do you think that intervention, the soft and positive approach to solving the problem if you like, belongs with the Metropolitan Police Service or with the Mayor or with some other agency? How is that going to be lead?

Kit Malthouse (AM): It certainly does not belong with the Metropolitan Police Service. I mean it is the case that the Metropolitan Police Service has got involved in a lot of social work.

I think it has got involved in a lot of social work because it felt it had to and because no one else is doing it. Of course some people are in London but quite a lot of boroughs are not doing it, so they felt they needed to plug that gap. I would like to see a position where that work migrates away from the Metropolitan Police Service, possibly to the Authority or even then to this building under the Mayor’s Office.

Brian Coleman (AM): Boroughs.

Tony Arbour (AM): To the boroughs.
Kit Malthouse (AM): Well, obviously the boroughs. I was going to say the other key side to this are the boroughs, and one of the key external challenges for us, if you like, is driving performance of the boroughs because we do think that over 60% - I mean it is an ultra figure but more than half of the solution to crime in the city is going to be borough-driven. That includes all the youth intervention work, but it also includes some of the environmental crime, the broken window stuff and the general setting of the atmosphere.

Interestingly one of the things we are looking at is about who has the relevant powers and ability to enforce those powers for some low-level crimes. It is not entirely relevant but I will give you an example: when I was a councillor I ran a huge campaign in Pimlico to get coach bans into Pimlico. After four years we managed to get these coach bans in; put in the signs; vast cost, all the rest of it. Coaches still ploughing up and down. When I asked the Metropolitan Police Service how many coach tickets they had given out in the last five years it was a big, fat, round zero - they had not given out a single coach ban ticket in London ever. They did not know they had the power, the council did not have the power - it is one of those things - so we will have an exercise to see who can do that. Driving performance in the boroughs is going to be key.

Jenny Jones (AM): I am quite concerned with Operation Blunt because it was in fact using a piece of legislation that was only intended to be used on a temporary basis and in a very particular space, whereas Blunt II is clearly London-wide and there is no notional end at the moment. Now, to me this is misusing the legislation and it is also, I think, infringing civil liberties because one of the things that has come out of our MPA report on youth and the police is that just one bad experience with stop-and-search can colour their whole perception of the police and lead to future very bad engagements. Obviously if you are rolling out Blunt II, as is happening at the moment, you are going to get a lot of officers who do not have the same high standard of training, so you are going to get worse interactions. To me, this is a potentially quite explosive situation. Are you concerned about that?

Kit Malthouse (AM): I am concerned about it. You are right, it is in many ways a controversial thing to do and it does have to be handled extremely sensitively - you are quite right. I do not agree with you that it is necessarily an infringement of people’s liberties. I do think the police are doing quite a good job in terms of rolling it out, but fundamentally I think you have to judge it from the response of some of the communities who have been affected both by knife crime and who may see Blunt II happening more in their area than elsewhere.

In this very Chamber only six weeks ago we had a meeting, with about 300 members of different communities from across London, many of whom were victims in that they lost relatives on the streets and their support for Blunt II was pretty unanimous. In particular what I have tended to find when I have gone out to talk to people about Blunt II is that it tends to be a maternal concern as much as anything. There is a lot of support - we went to Brixton - amongst mothers on estates that their 14-year-old son might stand a better chance of making it home in one piece because of Blunt II. Having said that, you are absolutely right to say that it needs to be handled sensitively; officers need to be correctly trained and to handle people with respect; there should not be obvious profiling taking place with Blunt II. Pleasingly I was asked to go through a knife arch myself at Earl’s Court tube station.

Jenny Jones (AM): They recognised you, Kit!
Kit Malthouse (AM): Maybe I look intimidating, I do not know! You cannot do these things without being concerned about them. It is an assertive response, but in the face of the mounting numbers of deaths no one has yet offered a better alternative now. The better alternative is the long term stuff, but that is going to take years to take effect. Now, the fact that we are getting one, two, three a week means we have to do something now.

Jenny Jones (AM): I am well aware that there is community support. I mean I live here in Southwark and we have a lot of crime that needs dealing with, but although some sections of the community support it there are several sections that do not, so it is not a general community approval of it by any means.

Kit Malthouse (AM): No, I agree.

Jenny Jones (AM): Also, what I am saying is that you might have approval now from the community but what about in 15 or 20 years time when these kids are adults and they have a very bad relationship with the police. I think you are storing up problems; that is the thing that I think is happening.

Tony Arbour (AM): This is a Confirmation Hearings; it is to do with confirmation.

Brian Coleman (AM): For the MPA.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Tony, Jenny, I think we agreed at the first Committee that it is absolutely legitimate to discuss anything in relation to these jobs.

Brian Coleman (AM): Well, it is silly actually. You agreed; I never agreed.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian, we have had some of your bad behaviour in this Committee --

Brian Coleman (AM): I never agreed. We are wasting Members’ time consistently.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian, you are the one wasting time.

Brian Coleman (AM): We are wasting Members’ time consistently asking trivial, silly questions --

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian?

Brian Coleman (AM): -- with policy questions that are the --

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian, please be quiet.

Brian Coleman (AM): No! I will not be quiet, Chair --

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian?

Brian Coleman (AM): -- because you have wasted Members’ time all day today --
Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian, I am trying to get on with this Committee.

Brian Coleman (AM): -- and you are wasting Members’ time by dealing --

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): I am trying to get on with this Committee.

Brian Coleman (AM): -- with policy matters that are matters of policy for the Authority --

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian, I am trying to get on with this Committee.

Brian Coleman (AM): -- Rather than whether Mr Malthouse is fit or not to be Vice-Chair --

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Brian, I am trying --

Brian Coleman (AM): -- of the MPA which is supposed to be the matter we are discussing.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): -- to get on with this Committee.

Brian Coleman (AM): Well, you are not making a good job of it.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): We do not all share opinions on this Committee, but one thing we do try to do is treat each other with respect.

Brian Coleman (AM): Well, you are wasting Members’ time.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): I think you are wasting Members’ time, as usual. I think Jenny has a perfectly legitimate right to debate policing by consent; the relationship of the police with the community and a long-term view of the Human Rights situation within this context.

Brian Coleman (AM): Oh, don’t! It is absurd!

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): And Kit is answering these questions perfectly seriously.

John Biggs (AM): Can I propose, Chair, we move to standing orders to consider whether you name a Member and require them to leave the meeting?

Brian Coleman (AM): Good. I am quite happy to get on with something useful.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Sorry, if any Member does not wish to take part in their democratic duties on this Authority then they are perfectly at liberty to walk away, but I would really like to hear Jenny conclude her conversation with Kit, which Kit has been answering quite seriously.

Jenny Jones (AM): Thank you very much. Are you going to set an end date - I know there is going to be a review of it? Are you going to set an end date?

Kit Malthouse (AM): I am not going to set an arbitrary end date, no. I mean obviously it is an operational matter for the police and I am in constant touch with them
about how it is going and community engagement. I have to say one of the unfortunate fallouts of the current ET (Employment Tribunal) fuss is around that and I have been alarmed about community reassurance about that stuff. The police are a very different organisation from what they were when I started out as a councillor. Their community engagement is much better and they are handling it very well so far. It is under constant review and we will see where we get to, but fundamentally, unless you can offer me a better alternative, I just do not see I have any choice than to support it at the moment.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Kit, I was wondering what training or outreach programmes you are thinking of trying to put in place or suggest for the police in terms of confidence, for example, from young people in the police force and how they deal with them and how they communicate with young people. Certainly young people I have spoken to very much feel that the police do not understand them. For example they do not understand their culture about having more than one mobile phone - it does not mean they have stolen one, it is because of different tariffs, all sorts of things. Also, our diverse communities in London, for example, the Latin American and South American community. I attended a huge thousand-person event at the Elephant - I have attended two actually; the first the Mayor came along to - and since Stockwell they really have a lack of confidence in the police force. Are there any particular things you plan to put in place to develop confidence in those communities?

Kit Malthouse (AM): Well, the police themselves are very good at that now. I have seen some fantastic training that they do with Territorial Support Group (TSG), particularly around stop-and-search. I went to a very amusing demonstration of some young Afro-Caribbean kids and some TSG officers, and the kids were way more articulate than the TSG officers, but they were interacting and learning that each other were human beings and how each other’s reaction in certain situations might spark a difficulty, so there is some training going on at that level.

In terms of specifics, I have not got any specific training that we want to put in place, but one of the things we are looking at is that post Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) there is no career development or any kind of training for any officer ever. They do the ACPO course and that is it; there is no future development for them at all. One of the things, I think, we urgently need to do is review post-ACPO training for senior officers because that obviously cascades down and some of that will be around community engagement, I must admit, but also frankly financial management. ACPO does not include any kind of business training or financial management at all and some of these people are managing very big budgets. I have not got any specifics, other than there is a general intention to increase the level of training.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Yesterday I was in a meeting with the people who work both on the young people and how they follow it through. I have tried to spend at least a day a week learning a bit more about this great wide brief you have, and one of the comments that was made to me, and following on from what Caroline said you might like to consider, they said they were trying to improve the SHARP Programme and also the Miss Dorothy Programme and their community engagement - the various things that happen at different stages of education.

One of the things that the policeman said was that it would be really interesting if some of the Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) could have the opportunity of being attached to a school, because at the moment although you can have a sort of rotation,
he said one of the roles of career development that could happen was they felt that it was much better to have continuity and form relationships rather than individual people. Going back to what you said, I think you’re quite right, if we went back to the police and said, “OK, how would you extend some of the community work you are doing?” I think you will find that they might have some answers rather than us and everyone else imposing them.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Well, we are definitely looking at schools as an issue because there is a very high correlation between higher levels of antisocial behaviour, gangs and all that kind of stuff and truancy and absenteeism from school particularly post-13, at the entry level to secondary schools so we are looking at that as part of our general youth programme.

**Valerie Shawcross (Chair):** Let us move on then. Comments; questions about the internal issues?

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Can I ask you a little bit about the relationship between the MPA and this place as well? You started off in your introduction by saying that you want to enable the Mayor to have greater control/influence over policing because the electorate are looking for someone to hold directly accountable.

That may be where you want to get to but at the moment the critical friend, if you like, the governing body of the police is the MPA. I am right in thinking that under this structure and also the new structure that is coming in in October, you were there as an Assembly nominee, is that right?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** There as the Mayor’s nominee, yes. All Members of the Assembly are there as the Mayor’s nominees.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** OK, but you are a Member of the Assembly, as any member of the MPA is here. Now, the MPA is the independent scrutiny body of policing. I am wondering how you can reconcile any conflict with being an independent scrutineer at the same time as saying that you, via your Mayor, want to exert more policy control over the police, because it seems to me you have got quite a conflict there.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Yes, I mean the MPA, the Authority itself, is a scrutiny body for the Metropolitan Police Service and on that basis being a member of the MPA -- I mean obviously the legal powers that the MPA has do not change, so the executive powers, for instance, that Len Duvall currently exercises as Chair of the MPA do not change, they will just vest in the Mayor and the Mayor will delegate them to me just as Len delegates them to me or to any of the other Deputy Chairs at the moment, so that does not change.

In terms of scrutiny in this building, I think you are quite right and what I think I said at the first Plenary when I was called – my third appearance now in front of you – was that I would not be participating in scrutiny of any matters to do with the police as an Assembly Member, in the same way that I do not think Len Duvall has participated in scrutiny of things to do with the police.

**Brian Coleman (AM):** You scrutinise your own budget. I mean there is always …
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**Kit Malthouse (AM):** I guess.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** See, I think there are conflicts that have not been worked out yet, substantially, and I think it could cause issues. I want to come to something else as well because I think you have misunderstood that, but you also said in your introduction that – and please correct me if I was wrong – with regards to youth crime, that policy now lay in this building and not with the police. Did I understand you correctly that you said that?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** No, that is not what I --

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** What did you mean by saying that?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** What I said was there is an awful lot of money being spent by the Metropolitan Police Service on youth intervention work and that I did not necessarily think that was a proper thing for them to do. They are not social workers; they are not experts at it.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Before that you actually said that the public looked to the Mayor and the issue of youth crime was coming into this building, and I was just wondering in saying that, are there any other policy areas you are taking away from the MPA and trying to put into this building and your role?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** No, I think I said the perception of the public is that the Mayor is in charge of the police and that they certainly look to him for a solution to the youth crime issue.

**John Biggs (AM):** Do you have any evidence of that?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Well, as I said in my introduction the massive amount of post that has come into the building, to the Community Safety Team, about youth crime since 1 May – it has gone up by a factor of 10 to 15 times, the level of post, and it has not stopped, it is still coming in – indicates that, if you like, they are looking for someone to hold responsible for the issue and, for better or worse, the Mayor has put himself in that position. He campaigned on it; he came in on the basis that crime was a big issue and that we were going to do something about it. On the basis of him declaring that knife crime was a big issue – I mean you may dispute it but he won the election on the basis of crime; crime was the issue that decided the election either way – that for then nothing to happen on youth crime or to carry on the way we were with ever mounting numbers of teenagers getting killed would just be politically unacceptable. When the Metropolitan Police Service brought forward Blunt II we were obviously more than happy to support it as something that was required.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** What I am concerned about is how you are going to deal with the MPA, because it seems to me that yourself and Boris [Johnson], when he chairs it, are still only two votes on the MPA and it seems to me that from what you are saying that you want to have more day to day control over operational policing and I am just trying to see where the dividing line is.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** No, what I said was we want to have more influence over where police priorities lie.
Joanne McCartney (AM): But that has to be in conjunction with the MPA and persuading the MPA of your ideas. It is not as a right because the Mayor is the Mayor and is the Chair that those things will happen.

Kit Malthouse (AM): Well, the MPA does not decide Police priorities. It does not. It does not give any policy indication to the Metropolitan Police Service at all. It decides how they spend the money; it decides on the structures; it does all the discipline. It has a certain amount of emphasis; it can create some emphasis but it does not say to the police, “You will concentrate on knife crime.” The Home Secretary does. She will quite often ring up and say, “I’d like you to do this,” and they jump to it.

Joanne McCartney (AM): That is not true. It is not true, Kit.

Tony Arbour (AM): The MPA decides priorities.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I think, again, that is a misunderstanding. Can I also --

Kit Malthouse (AM): I do not think it is. That is certainly my perception of having been in there.

Joanne McCartney (AM): When we questioned Tim Parker (former First Deputy Mayor) at the Assembly before his departure he stated that in the office of First Deputy his role was to sit down with yourself and Richard Barnes (Deputy Mayor and Assembly Member) and come up with a work programme and targets. I am just wondering with the change with Sir Simon Milton (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning) are you still going to be targeted by Sir Simon Milton?

Kit Malthouse (AM): Not that I am aware of, no. I mean I am obviously in close consultation with the Mayor and he certainly agreed objectives and priorities and what needs to be done, but not with Simon, no.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Can I just draw Members’ attention to the briefing note we have got about the role of the MPA and it does say, ‘MPA’s key responsibilities are: (1) strategic planning and setting priorities and performance targets for policing.’ Maybe we do have some confusion.

Jenny Jones (AM): I think part of it might be that Kit came in after the election and things have not been the same since the election as they were before. We have always helped the police set their priorities - always. I mean we do not get involved with operational policing, although some of us do in fact get involved, but that is not our job; it is the priorities.

Kit Malthouse (AM): I think that is what happens but …

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): OK, you said very early on you think it is in a state of flux and clearly there is even some disagreements around the table about the role, but I think one of the things we might, perhaps as a Committee, want to talk about is actually this appointment is to the role, as it is currently legally constituted and I think we may need to discuss that.

Kit Malthouse (AM): Well the truth is that the situation around the Metropolitan Police Service, the governance and all that kind of stuff - I think I said this at the start -
is confused. It is. For instance I cannot see anywhere that the MPA - you correct me if I am wrong, Jenny - in the last four years has said, “Knife crime is an issue, you will concentrate on that.”

**Jenny Jones (AM):** We have.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Yes, we do. We set priorities.

**Valerie Shawcross (Chair):** OK, well I think this is maybe an issue we will talk about later, but I think there is probably more confusion in your mind about it than there is on the existing Members of the Assembly but that is not to say that things do not develop and change.

**John Biggs (AM):** I am somewhat perturbed by your assertions which you then are not able to provide evidence, so you say, “Crime is the issue on which the Mayor is elected.” I am not sure that was the case.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** It was.

**John Biggs (AM):** You saying, “People expect leadership from City Hall,” which implies that the statute does not apply, so the Mayor can countermand the legal constitutional framework in which things operate. I think I am wondering sort of rhetorically whether you watch too many movies, if you like, and you think this is a bit like the American system because it is not.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** John, you know as well as I do that politics is some often an odd kind of alchemy, for instance, there is nothing as useless in political terms as a back-bench opposition Member of Parliament (MP) and yet a back-bench opposition MP in their constituencies say, “I want this to happen and that to happen,” it often tends to happen. The reason is because the mandate gives them a certain power. What I was trying to say was that I think the mandate gives the Mayor a certain right to have a greater influence, for instance, over policy in the Metropolitan Police Service than an independent member who is appointed after a 20-minute interview and a CV.

**John Biggs (AM):** Right, so who do you think you are accountable to as a member of the Police Authority?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** As a member of the Police Authority I am accountable to - that is a very good question actually - the Mayor who appoints me every year.

**John Biggs (AM):** Are you, as Deputy Chair of the Police Authority, accountable to the Police Authority at all?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** I guess I am accountable to the other members of the Police Authority as well, yes.

**John Biggs (AM):** Do you think you might be accountable to the Home Office in some degree because they help to set priorities?

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Well this is where the confusion rises because there is no relationship, necessarily, between the MPA and the Home Office other than the one Home Office appointee onto the Authority.
Tony Arbour (AM): Appointment of the commissioner.

Kit Malthouse (AM): So, no, I do no think I am.

John Biggs (AM): And, how do you - and this is at risk of revisiting Joanne’s question, but putting it in my own way – how do you reconcile the fact that you are an adviser to the Mayor with your legal status as a board member, a non-executive board member - not an executive board member by the way - of the Police Authority? Because, say the Mayor said, “God, I’m fed up with John Biggs, can’t you get him arrested or something?” Then clearly as a Police Authority member you might say there is no basis for doing this and, “I am sorry, Boris, but we can’t do it.” How do you reconcile those potential conflicts?

Kit Malthouse (AM): It is slightly factious example.

John Biggs (AM): Well, OK, it is a factious example but it is a serious question.

Kit Malthouse (AM): We are not talking about specifics; this is not CSI (Crime Scene Investigation; American crime drama television series) or Law & Order (American police and legal drama television series), John; we do not decide who does and does not get arrested.

John Biggs (AM): No, I think we have established it is you that watches too much television.

Kit Malthouse (AM): If the Mayor says to me, “I do believe that knife crime is an issue. Could you please translate that into a priority for the MPA and the Metropolitan Police Service?” then that is what I should do.

John Biggs (AM): So you would take that to the MPA and you would then workshop it with MPA members and see whether they agreed with the Mayor or what?

Kit Malthouse (AM): Not necessarily; it depends. I mean things are much more dynamic than that in many ways. I do think that obviously annually the MPA approves the policing plan and we will be bringing forward the policing plan just the same as everybody else, but should I go and discuss that? It is actually a very good question. I mean I have had this discussion with a number of independents on the MPA and I do think there is a problem with governance around the police generally, so it is confused. Should an independent member who, as I say, is appointed off a 20-minute interview and a CV be able to frustrate the legitimate democratic desire of a Mayor who has a mandate of 1.2 million?

John Biggs (AM): You see, that is the system we are presented with and I could say the same about list members of the Assembly, for example, but I do not.

Kit Malthouse (AM): This is what I said at the start. One of the things I am trying to workshop with MPA members is about finding an appropriate settlement for the authority in the atmosphere of the Mayor coming onto the Authority. I mean the Home Office, in changing the regulations to allow the Mayor to appoint himself Chair of the MPA, quite obviously intended there to be a greater democratic accountability by the police.
Jenny Jones (AM): If he makes decisions, yes.

Kit Malthouse (AM): There is no other reason for them to have done that. In that atmosphere what is the legitimate role of an Authority member, an ordinary Authority member and in particular independents?

I am just a simple chap; I think democracy is a binary issue and I think the whole thing should be democratic; I do not believe in independent members, but nevertheless what is their genuine role in that? We are workshopping that through at the moment.

John Biggs (AM): Well, OK, it is not our purpose to have a conversation about this, but I mean they are all equal members and the same argument could be applied to argue that Simon Milton has no legitimacy because he has no mandate at City Hall, so it is, with respect, a rather dangerous argument to deploy if you want to give strength to your administration.

Kit Malthouse (AM): Simon Milton is not deciding policy.

John Biggs (AM): Well, I do not think that is how he sees it, but let us get back to you as the candidate anyway.

Kit Malthouse (AM): To be honest, John, it is an extremely fair line of questioning and I think everybody is slightly confused about how the MPA, the Authority, should function with the Mayor coming on; what the Green Paper implies for London because there is nothing in it about London; what the intention of the Home Office was in putting the Mayor on to the Authority. In the absence of any specific direction we have assumed that that had meant greater direction from the Mayor.

John Biggs (AM): Right, OK.

John Biggs (AM): My last question on a slightly different area, hopefully other Members will not get too excited about this one either, is you have on record, I think, in an article in The Times made comment about the role of Ian Blair as Police Commissioner. Do you think that in any way compromises your ability to work with him as Commissioner?

Kit Malthouse (AM): It has not done so far, no.

Tony Arbour (AM): No, of course not.

Brian Coleman (AM): The Commissioner should be sacked. Nothing wrong with that.

Tony Arbour (AM): Some of us proposed it.

John Biggs (AM): Your role is then to put him in his place or what?

Kit Malthouse (AM): No, my role is to --

John Biggs (AM): So any comment you make about him is totally separate from any role you may exercise on the MPA board?
Kit Malthouse (AM): Well I obviously made the comment before I was elected. I am happy to stand by it and he and I have had a conversation about his role as a police officer as opposed to being a sort of political figure, but on an operational basis the relationship is very productive and perfectly cordial. He, like you John, is able to separate the personal and the business.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): I wanted to pick up on that point, given the comments made by the Mayor last week in a live interview. I am wondering whether the Commissioner enjoys your full confidence.

Kit Malthouse (AM): Well, I am not sure that it is entirely appropriate for this meeting. The Commissioner has a job to do and so do I and we are both working hard to make sure that it happens.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Given your important role I really would like to know whether he enjoys your full confidence.

Brian Coleman (AM): Caroline, does he have the Liberal Democrats'? No.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): I am not the one that is being questioned today.

Brian Coleman (AM): It is a hypocritical question because he does not have yours.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Sorry, Brian, I am really getting --

Brian Coleman (AM): I cannot stand hypocrisy.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): -- fed up of your childish behaviour at these committees. We know you are unhappy in having to attend these committees but please do not interfere with the function of the Committee as a whole.

Brian Coleman (AM): Honestly! It is the usual tactics of opposition parties.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): Sorry, carry on, Caroline.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Having the interesting position that I sit on both the Fire and Police Authorities, I have a far better constructive relationship with Kit here than I do you.

Brian Coleman (AM): You do not have time to do either properly!

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): I am going to name you if you do not stop interfering with people questioning on this Committee.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): I really would like an answer, yes or no. Does the Commissioner enjoy your full confidence?

Kit Malthouse (AM): Well, Caroline, yes, it is one of those crazy political questions where I am hung if I do and I am hung if I do not. The Commissioner and I have a very, very good working relationship. I have seen him this morning; I will be seeing him again tomorrow. We are all trying to get through the thicket of problems at the moment and
focus on the day job and if we can get that done then we will have achieved something I would say.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): OK, I will leave that there then.

Valerie Shawcross (Chair): OK, can we move on then to any questions Members have got on Kit’s experience and time commitments, etc?

Jenny Jones (AM): In your CV it does mention you initiated a number of relevant policies including halving the number of street homelessness. Was it your policy that was hosing them out of doorways? Was that your policy?

Kit Malthouse (AM): We certainly instituted a policy of making life - it sounds counterintuitive and cruel - more uncomfortable; that is absolutely right. One of the major issues when Simon Milton became leader of Westminster, one of the targets he set me was to more than half the number in Westminster. Working with a number of charities and groups across Westminster we analysed the problem and one of the issues was that in many ways - it sounds counterintuitive - life was too comfortable on the street. I know that sounds an awful thing to say but let me finish the argument, OK? There were, at the time, plenty, well-funded - we managed to get quite a lot of funding - night shelters and night centres; we managed to extract a cheque for £130,000 for St. Martin’s so it could stay open all night; plenty of them. The Passage Day Centre similarly. The difficulty was getting rough sleepers into those centres so that they could be interacted with, their needs could be met. Finding them out on the street was extremely hard and in particular at the time there were some very large encampments that had built up, Savoy Place had a big encampment in it, round the back of Army & Navy had a large encampment and there were some pretty horrific crimes taking place in those encampments.

Jenny Jones (AM): No, sorry, I have got to interrupt you because that is not the whole truth. I mean I was volunteering for the Simon Community so I saw a lot of this.

Kit Malthouse (AM): Well the Simon Community have a particularly aggressive stance towards Westminster Council, and do not pretend they did not have an agenda.

Jenny Jones (AM): Well they do now. They do after that.

Kit Malthouse (AM): That does not surprise me actually, but the truth is we did halve the number - more than halve the number.

Jenny Jones (AM): Well a lot of those people actually just moved into other boroughs. What I am concerned about is the ruthlessness that you display because it sort of suggests that there is a complete lack of understanding of the people that you are dealing with.

Kit Malthouse (AM): Well, that is pretty unfair, Jenny, and I resent that allegation. The one thing we did not do was be ruthless. The one thing we did do was make sure that there was lots and lots of downstream provision and in fact Julie Jones, who was the Director of Social Services with whom I worked extremely closely on this issue, would be extremely cross and angry if she heard you speaking in those terms.
The work we did in Westminster was welcomed by almost all the charities, the Simon Community excepted because they had a particular bee in their bonnet about soup runs in Westminster and they refused to cooperate pretty much with anybody, including the Salvation Army who found them very, very difficult to deal with and almost militant in their approach and unwilling to cooperate with anybody, so please do not come and accuse me of something that is not true because you come with an agenda from another organisation who did not happen to agree with me at the time.

**Jenny Jones (AM):** Well, we will have to leave it there because we are going to have to disagree and I am more than happy to repeat that to anybody that you would like to produce. Thank you.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Well maybe you could repeat it to some of the people who got off the street.

**John Biggs (AM):** I have one question about conflict of interest which is for the record, if you like, which is you have declared at times various business interests, director of a number of investment companies or whatever, can you describe in very simple terms what that is, whether you perceive there might be any circumstances in which a member of the public might perceive there to be a conflict between that role and your Police Authority role and whether you have taken any steps to ensure that any such perception does not arise? A two-word answer would be fine if you are very clear.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Yes, there are three business groups, if you like, with which I am involved. One is a leasing and asset finance business that I started 12 years ago that is based near Coventry, that finances contractors, plants and equipment, so I cannot see any conflict with that. The other is a company listed on the Stock Exchange which I have just recently stood down as Chief Executive of, which is involved in investment management, if you like, essentially kind of hedge funds, so I do not anticipate that being an issue. The third is I am a director of my wife’s company which is a classical music website, so, no.

The only other interest that I did think might present a difficulty was I had a shareholding in Tribal Group, who are a contractor to a lot of local authorities. I did not hold at the time more than £25,000, but I thought it was worth declaring anyway and I have subsequently sold those shares, I have to say, at a vast loss, but nevertheless I have sold them because I just did not want there to be any sense that -- I mean it was not a huge amount of money but I just thought it was worth being clear.

**John Biggs (AM):** OK, thank you.

**Valerie Shawcross (Chair):** Good, OK. Any further questions? OK, Kit, we are going to have a discussion now and decide our commentary on any position we are going to take, so thank you so much for coming and I think you are welcome to stay or to go; it is entirely up to you, but that is the end of our conversation. Thank you very much.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** OK, will you be less rude if I stay?

**Jenny Jones (AM):** Will not make any difference.

**Kit Malthouse (AM):** Thanks.