

Budget and Performance Committee – 1 July 2015**Transcript of Informal Discussion on Police Outsourcing**

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Yes, but you are going to make sure it is much more uniform, no pun intended. You mentioned open book. We talked about that last week as well and have just discussed it now. The public sector I'm told is not very good at using open book contracting. Is that something you could improve on?

Lynda McMullan (Director of Commercial and Finance, Metropolitan Police Service): It is always something that we can improve on. I think that personal experience would be that to do it properly you need time to invest time into which means you need to have both --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Do you have the time to do it properly?

Lynda McMullan (Director of Commercial and Finance, Metropolitan Police Service): -- but that is why we need to invest in the intelligent client function. Just to pick up something that Lee mentioned something just in passing which I think is quite important as well. Getting that sort of independent audit challenge into that space as well because, ironically sometimes when relationships work really well, you lose some of that independent challenge, so maintaining that external ability from an audit function to go into that open book world and check things, it is really important to maintain that tension so that is really important as well which we forget.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: One of the subjects dear to our hearts as elected Members and Members of the Budget and Performance Committee in particular is transparency. What are you doing to make sure that any function services that are outsourced, that we do not lose that necessary level of external public oversight and transparency. Things like information requests. Can we expect the same level of access of information?

Lynda McMullan (Director of Commercial and Finance, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes.

Lee Tribe (Director of Procurement Services, Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. It is a very similar question. In terms of Mayoral priorities, we do feed all of them into our contractual documentation so that every tender we now raise, has a provision in there that it is disclosable under the Freedom of Information Act (2014) which they have to support, and that is a "go-no-go decision, if you want", and then we transport that into any contract we subsequently let with them. That is the "flow-down" terms and conditions.

John Biggs AM (Chairman): I am the guy who is obsessed with transparency issues so we might write further to you about that because we are doing another follow up on this.

Helen Bailey (Chief Operating Officer, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I think it is worth saying, Chairman, on that transparency point that if the back office processes are more efficiently performed it is often easier to information and it is not always the case that when information is not available it is because people are choosing not to disclose it, it sometimes because it is difficult to sort out the wood from the trees. Good back office processes can be enormously helpful, as well as wanting them to be transparent in themselves.

John Biggs AM (Chairman): This goes back to your earlier point about understanding your business. Thank you very much.

