

Police and Crime Committee - 3 November 2016**Transcript of Item 5 – Policing and Security at Notting Hill Carnival**

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): We have a full day today. This morning we have the substantial item on a very important subject, the policing and security at Notting Hill Carnival. This is part one of two meetings around this subject and I am grateful particularly to Pepe [Francis], who is coming along on Monday [7 November 2016] as well.

At today’s meeting, we are welcoming again Commander Dave Musker, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS); Dave Morgan, Operational Advisor; Martin Jackson, Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security, which does the stewarding piece of the Carnival; and Pepe Francis MBE, who I have down as Interim Chairperson but is the all-round main man, I understand, for the London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd. I am sure you will correct me, Pepe, if I have your job title wrong.

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): No, that is all right.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Welcome.

As part of the meeting today, colleagues will understand that at the end of this session we will finish, adjourn and come back later this afternoon for a further [reconvened] meeting of the Police and Crime Committee, but I will mention that at the end of the meeting.

First of all, I would like to thank the guests for coming along this morning. I would like to scene-set. This is a very important subject, which is the Notting Hill Carnival. Everyone around and the Members here, I am sure, have been to the Carnival. The Deputy Chair and I were there this time around. We recognise it as an iconic institution of London that has evolved over many years and is enjoyed by millions of Londoners and people nationally and internationally.

We thought it absolutely appropriate [to meet] today after the last Carnival and the work plan of this Committee is to have a look at the Carnival and have a look at the evolution of the Carnival - we can talk about that because it is an evolving festival - and look at how it has got to where it is and what sort of things we can talk about and draw from the last Carnival those weeks ago and reflect on that today. On Monday, with a slightly different set of guests, we will be looking at going forward, including the Council. We want to do this in a very positive manner but we want to reflect on the policing and security issues coming out of the last Carnival. That was the scene-set around today.

If we may start the questions, first of all, to Pepe about the elements and the evolution of the Carnival. I know that this is something that - and you can tell us how long - you have been involved in it. The Carnival has grown and evolved over time. What, for you, Pepe, are the core elements of traditional carnival?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): The core elements of traditional carnival are costume, steel band music and DJs. The birth of carnival is *J’ouvert*, as we know it, I know it and everybody else, I suppose, who has grown up with carnival, as I have.

That is what Notting Hill Carnival is based on: our traditional carnival as we know it in the Caribbean, particularly in Trinidad. It started off in the early days with the celebrations of the plantation workers who wanted to celebrate after the harvest and it has grown into a worldwide thing that happens in different countries every year. I have just come back from the Carnival in New York. The Miami Carnival has just finished. There are carnivals happening all over the world now.

That is basically how it started. Where we are with it now, as far as Notting Hill is concerned, is a separate question.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It has evolved but, in fairness, as you have said yourself, it has evolved from what was initially a street party over 50 years ago plus into something with millions of people, in essence, attending. It has changed over that period of time, has it not?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): You are talking about Notting Hill in particular?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Yes, I am talking about Notting Hill. This is the subject.

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Yes, it has changed from when Mrs Laslett [Rhaune Laslett, Notting Hill community activist] came over with a few kids and two steel band players on a float on Portobello Road. Obviously, it has grown into what we know as the Carnival in that sense. Yes, it has moved on from 50 years ago.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Is it comparable? You said yourself that you visit other carnivals - New York and others - around the world. Is it comparable in numbers, range and scope to those other countries?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Yes. Notting Hill is the biggest carnival in Europe, but I would imagine that the Labor Day Carnival in New York is just as big and the Miami Carnival is just as big. Carnival just grows.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): As it grows and changes, which it has done significantly, it is a victim of its own success but it has been successful, has changed, has attracted more people and has evolved and moved in different ways.

How has that been organised? How has that been changed? Who has overseen that change or has it been organic? How does that work? How has it changed and who is responsible for it?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): You should know that Notting Hill Carnival has seen several changes in terms of organisation over the years. I have been involved with the Carnival since its inception and, to date, I have seen 12 different committees. The one that I am now chairing is the 13th and we started in 2012. The whole reason behind it was to keep the Carnival going and keep it as we knew it and try to improve it in every possible way so that it does not fail. That is what we have set out to do and that is what we are doing.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You talked about your organisation, which you chair. It is four years old. There are many organisations involved, many sitting around the table and others, and we will learn from the boroughs on Monday. Where does your organisation fit in the decision-making on how the Carnival evolves? Are you just a partner of several organisations or are you the key organisation in the changes?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): The London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust is the organising body for the Carnival. We are responsible for the Carnival. It is made up of the five arenas. Everybody who sits on the board represents one of the arenas and we have independent people whom we have brought in with different skills to sit on the board and to run the Carnival. All our decisions we make in conjunction with all of the other agencies and we meet once a month. That includes all the boroughs, the police, the [London] Ambulance Service (LAS), the fire service, London transport and the operational planning and safety group (OPSG). We have a meeting every month and the Carnival is planned from September to August.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): After each Carnival, you will have meetings to review the following year, which is part of the timing of today because we wanted to get in relatively early whilst you are still gathering your thoughts around that.

Whilst you are saying that your organisation is, in effect, the lead organisation for the Carnival itself, bearing in mind today we are thinking about the safety of Londoners attending the Carnival, the responsibility for that - and we will hear from Commander Musker later - is shared, clearly, with others and the stewards as well. Your organisation does not have sole responsibility for delivery of the Carnival in itself. It is a joint affair, I assume. I would be correct in saying that?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You are the chair of your group?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Yes, but I also represent the steel band arena.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): What I am trying to understand - and we will talk about this - is who has overall responsibility for the Carnival, the way that it has evolved and the way that it may well evolve going forward because, as you said yourself, it has changed over the years. It may well, reflecting on improvements, change further.

What we are trying to understand and tease out is who the decision-making person or persons would be around any change in the Carnival. I know the MPS will have a key role in that, but how would you see it? For any changes in the Carnival, who would decide, Pepe, on that or would it be a group of people?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): It is a joint discussion. Dave Morgan [Operational Adviser for Notting Hill Carnival] here is working on our operations, etc. He could answer that a lot better.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Yes. We will bring Dave in shortly.

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Martin [Jackson] [Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security] is overseeing security in terms of stewarding. It is an overall matter. Mr Musker [MPS] and his team are responsible for policing.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is clear. We are going to be talking to other colleagues in a minute. That is fine for me at the moment. I am appreciative.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Good morning. I have three sets of questions, which are all to do with event planning and the preparation and build-up to the Carnival.

The first set of questions is to you, Mr Morgan, Commander Musker and Mr Jackson. What are the main risks to our safety and security at the Carnival and how have these changed over time?

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): The main risks come down to the scale of the event. It is a huge event. It is growing, as has been identified by the Chairman, and it is growing organically. We must keep in mind in our deliberations that the Carnival Trust as it sits at the moment has been in place since 2012 and so it has really come from nothing to try to take over and manage an event which has in the past been far more chaotic than it is now. Pulling those strands together has been one of the biggest challenges of the Carnival.

I remember when I did my first Carnival as a young police constable (PC) back in 1983. At that time, we had something in excess of 200 sound systems operating at the Carnival without any regulation. There was no Carnival route. There was no stewarding. There was no committee or multi-agency liaison. It has come a long way.

However, where we sit at the moment, we are on a road and there is a vision as to where we would like to be in a few years' time. This is where we are driving towards, to have a safer Carnival that forms an integral part of the life of the capital, but we are doing that from a very low base and we are doing that with very little in the way of resource or resilience. That, to us, is one of the main challenges.

We have made some steps this year. I am sure Commander Musker will have a view on those. We have looked at the various aspects of the Carnival which initially - we are not going to solve this in 12 months - we think are the biggest barriers to progress. We have tried to address those and we are building on the successes of this year. We have looked at some low-hanging fruit that we can take on this year.

We are very conscious that the Carnival would not take place without the assistance of partner agencies. I could never foresee a day when the Notting Hill Carnival Trust will ever run this on its own, but we are trying to move away from absolute reliance on those agencies to work more in partnership, as opposed to being reliant upon them.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Those other agencies, presumably, are the Council and --

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): The Council, the police, the LAS, Transport for London --

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): What about community groups?

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): We do, yes, engage with community groups. We have done quite a lot this year with the local residents associations, particularly the tenant management organisation (TMO), which is the biggest owner of social housing within the Carnival. We have met with them for the first time to discuss their respective issues. Some of them I was already aware of. Prior to my retirement from the MPS, I was sector Inspector for the Notting Hill area and so I was quite well versed in the challenges the residents face throughout the course of the weekend. We have done as much as we can within the resource available to us this year to not only start that dialogue but take some steps to mitigate the inconvenience that some of the local residents experience during the event.

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): The biggest risk, as I see it, to reiterate what Dave [Morgan] said, is the breakdown in working relationships between partner agencies. From where we sit around the table, that is the critical factor. We are unable to deliver our service to the best of our ability without very integrated relationships with the partner agencies in the Carnival, particularly, from a strategic point of view, with the MPS. Previously, we have not had that level of engagement.

This is our fourth Carnival. Previously, the way that we have been engaged with the Carnival has been on a year-by-year basis. As a commercial entity, for us, it is difficult to get traction. With Dave's [Morgan] inclusion and some upgrades around how we have been engaged and, again, a further level of engagement and integration with the Greater London Authority (GLA), we are now on a three-year contract with the Carnival, which gives us a lot more traction.

If we are talking about engagement with the police at a strategic level, we are included on all of their walk-arounds, we share our plans and we come to mutual agreements. We had not been able to do that. There is a more integrated approach. We always previously worked in isolation.

In terms of engagement with communities, we have now pushed on. Part of our programme now includes the access control around the Brunel Estate for CityWest Homes. We are linked in through radio communication so that we are aware of what happens in other parts of the Carnival. We have other smaller projects that are working alongside and they give us the feedback under the bigger project.

Again, to reiterate that point, the biggest risk area for us is losing that level of engagement with partner agencies. That would put us out in the cold and we would not be able to deliver the best for the resources that we have.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Before I bring you in, Commander Musker, can I come back to you, Mr Morgan?

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): Certainly.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): I really should have come back to you straight away. You have talked about consultation and you have talked in broad terms. You speak with the residents and so on. What do you talk about? The residents we spoke to were bitter. I am not saying that they speak for the whole of Notting Hill, but we spoke to a fair few residents with the local Member of Parliament and they were absolutely bitter and angry, especially the people in basement flats with people using their private space to urinate or to dump rubbish. It was appalling. I first went to the Carnival --

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): I completely agree. It was --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We have had written submissions to the report, which were balanced because there were, clearly, some people saying, "This is fine", but many residents were writing to say that they were very uncomfortable.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): It seems to be happening, it seems to me, year in and year out. I first went to the Carnival in the late 1970s, 1976, a year after the big riot in 1975, before your time. Yes, it has grown but, clearly, lessons have to be learned over the years.

What is the consultation? What form does it take? How engaged are the residents? What do you do with them throughout the weekend itself? How do you respond to their concerns? It is all very well to consult but consultation has to lead to something as well.

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): Yes, it is something I have heard both in my role within the Carnival and in my previous role as sector Inspector there. It was a big concern year on year and it is disgraceful. There is a real problem with people coming to events, not just the Carnival but other events as well in London, and not behaving as they should.

Within the resource we have, being realistic, what we can do about it at the moment is limited. We work with the Council. We try to identify certain areas. It is on a small basis, but there was one particular street that was badly used in the past and we have worked with the TMO to try to mitigate that. We have deployed some of our stewards near to a sound system where there was a particularly bad problem.

However, again, it comes down to resource. I cannot excuse - and I would not try to - the behaviour of some people who come to the Carnival in the same way I cannot excuse the behaviour of some people who go to New Year's Eve. A friend of mine has a house near Twickenham Stadium. Rugby supporters are notoriously some of the best behaved in the world, but his garden also gets used as a toilet. Yes, I do share those concerns, but I am not sure that the Carnival can totally take responsibility for them.

We, as the Carnival Trust, are here trying to manage these things and put them right. We recognise that these things are a problem. However, the Carnival Trust has been in place since 2012 and Martin [Jackson] and I have been working together for 12 months. It is something that is high on our agenda, but I cannot sit here and say to you that I am going to fix it this year or the next. There is a public education programme. There are arguments around the supply of more toilets.

We speak to colleagues from the Council. We do not just speak to them once a month. We speak to them on a daily basis. We have a really good relationship. We are in a situation with a lot of the agencies where we just pick up the phone and we can have grown-up conversations about these things. However - and I do not want to speak about what they will probably speak about on Monday - there is an issue of resource for them and also an issue of getting suppliers to supply for Carnival. There are not many suppliers out there who can provide enough facilities to cope with an event that size. Also, there is this balance between how much the Council spends public money on providing toilets. That is something that they will have to address on Monday.

I completely agree with you. It is a horrible situation and it is one that we wish would go away.

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): May I add as well just some elements? Dave [Morgan] talked earlier on about low-hanging fruit. There are some quick fixes that we see and some things that the Carnival project team can put forward.

One of them worked fairly well this year and was something that we introduced at very low cost. That was to give residents a 24-hour contact number that came through to our offices during the day and during the evening. That went out on the 60,000 leaflets - or however many leaflets - the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea gave out. That 24-hour contact number was on there. That was to do two things, really. That was, one, to make sure that the Carnival team were putting a face to the problems and we were understanding what was happening as opposed to hearing it second- or third-hand and, also, to make sure that there was some sort of accountability and we were saying, "Yes, we want to deal with that before it gets pushed out".

There are some things that we cannot deal with. Noise on licensed premises does not come within the realm of private security. We cannot go to a private residence and tell them to turn the music down; that needs to be transferred. However, in terms of low-hanging fruit, we are looking at these things.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Chairman, if I may continue and if I could bring in Commander Musker?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Good morning. Perhaps I can answer it in two ways. I am a Gold for Carnival but I am also an experienced public order Commander. I have policed the Carnival since 1990 when I was a PC and so I bring a certain view about it. I will answer that in two ways.

The job of the police is not public safety. Our statutory responsibility is around crime and disorder, keeping the Queen's peace and responding to major incidents. If I look at it from my own experience and also my experience of policing many events across London, the critical issue of the Carnival is public safety. Each year - and last year was no exception - we come exceptionally close to a major catastrophic failure of public safety where members of the public will suffer serious injury. Therefore, from a non-policing perspective, public safety is the issue.

From a policing perspective, clearly, we would take responsibility in such a situation for co-ordinating all the emergency services to deal with that. There are substantive crime issues associated with the Carnival. Counter-terrorism is also an issue. I reviewed all of the plans last year in light of what happened in Nice. You could see the parallels between the Promenade des Anglais and Ladbroke Grove. Lastly, there is the amount of resources. It is a massive operation that is planned 12 months in advance. I have already held the first planning meeting for next year.

Those are my two perspectives. As an event specialist and a nationally qualified public order commander, the Carnival has a problem around public safety. From a policing perspective, it is around crime and disorder and the consequences that can stem from those crowds being in that place for those two days.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): I should say, by the way, just to put on record that we were impressed with what we saw of the operation room, the level of planning, the professionalism and everything. We were very impressed, weren't we, Chairman?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We were.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): If I could come back to you again, Mr Morgan, very specifically on the planning processes for security at this year's Carnival, you touched upon this, I suppose, but how has the Carnival safety planning changed over recent years and who takes overall responsibility for the safety of the Carnival?

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): To answer the second one first, nobody individually takes overall responsibility for the safety of the Carnival. It is a multi-agency planning process and the responsibility will be, in my view, shared across those agencies. In the event of an incident, the circumstances of that incident and either proactivity or failures to act on behalf of those agencies involved may well decide where the blame, if any, lies. The answer to that is that no one person takes responsibility for the security of the Carnival.

With regards to how the Carnival has changed over the years, it has changed massively. I sit here and I do have concerns about the Carnival. I will make no bones about that at all. However, I look even back as far as the Year 2000 and the crowds are not massively different now than they were 15 or 16 years ago. In 2000 we had

much higher levels of crime. I was trying to find the figures but I could not quite find them. My recollection says that there were almost twice as many crimes in 2000. I can, hopefully, find those figures for the Committee.

There was much less control of the route. The route went on far later. The sound systems were very much working to their own agendas. There was no control of them. Yet this year, whilst I will not in any way, shape or form pretend this was perfect, we had all of the sound systems shut off by 7.00pm, we had all of the music off on the route by 8.30pm and I think we had 500 crimes.

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Four hundred and forty.

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): Yes. Again, I have not seen the final figures. Whilst I do not diminish those crimes - it is a dreadful thing and it is something that used to concern me not only in my role as helping the Carnival but also in my role as sector Inspector - certain aspects of where the Carnival is now the Gold commander 15 years ago would have given their right arm for. It has moved forward, but it still has a long way to go.

There are a number of things that the Carnival Trust moving forward could do to help that. We are fully engaged with not just this review but the Mayor's review into the Carnival. We welcome the fact that there is going to be a crowd risk assessment, a full academic piece of work, to allow us to make better decisions in the future. I would encourage the Carnival Trust to be looking at the artistic content of what goes on the route because the route was very full this year and, arguably, that is something that the Carnival Trust can directly do by means of conditions of entry to ensure that not only Carnival is more artistically spectacular but that route is more controllable and is more manageable with the amount of people turning up.

We have said and I think the phrase we used at the board meeting last time when we were discussing that was that no options are being taken off the table. There is this recognition that for the Carnival to thrive into the future, we have to look long and hard at where we are now. Unfortunately, sometimes emotive language gets used around the Carnival and I can see why, but to an extent that is also not helpful. When things get emotive, people's opinions become polarised and bringing the Carnival community along with this process becomes more difficult.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): My final set of questions - and conditions of entry we may come back to later - is to you, Commander Musker, with two questions.

In terms of policing of the Carnival itself, how do you decide on the number of police that you need to support the Carnival? How satisfied is the MPS with the planning process for the Carnival in terms of safety and security? Generally, your thoughts behind how you decide numbers --

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It is difficult to work out the resource implications for the Carnival. I have a team planning the event from September. The actual Carnival operation lasts from the week before to the Saturday through to the Monday and the post-incident investigation of crimes.

Approximately, depending on circumstances, over the Bank Holiday weekend, it is about 14,000 police shifts. If you put that into cash, it equates to somewhere in the region of £7 million to £8 million in direct costs of policing the Carnival to the MPS. I have taken money out of that and, when you came to the Carnival in terms of feeding and the way the officers were deployed, we have taken money out by looking at efficiencies, but in

essence the number of officers and support staff deployed to deliver that event is significant. If I equate it to something like one of the other events in London, it is the biggest event of any event in London in the year. It is the biggest policing operation in Western Europe. The only thing that is comparable is the Rotterdam Carnival in terms of size and scale and that has roughly 500 cops on that because it is a fully stewarded event. In terms of resources, that is the envelope I am working with.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): In terms of the build-up itself and something that we read about in the papers, how successful were your disruption tactics ahead of the Carnival compared to previous years? What more, if anything, can you do in advance of the Carnival to prevent crime occurring?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I have the figures here. We executed 172 search warrants. We arrested 215 people for a variety of offences: rape, possession of firearms, people involved with the Hyde Park disorders to prevent them going to the Carnival. There were 177 drug seizures of [class] A and B, six firearms, two were viable and one Taser, and some imitations, and we conducted a number of weapon sweeps.

That all took place on the Thursday before the Carnival. That was our pre-event to try to prevent people going to the event. Everybody who had been arrested would have been put on police bail conditions not to attend. That gives us the opportunity to exercise some control around people who would come to the Carnival to cause disorder and crime. I command that operation but that is with our Trident colleagues, mostly, to look at gang members or people whom we know have a propensity for violence.

We will review again how we do that. We can do a more targeted piece of work across August to try to look at the tactics. However, to be honest, if I need to get into the media to say, "Do not come to the Carnival and cause trouble", the operation is called Vitality and Vitality gives me something to piggyback on to get those messages into the media to come and not be involved in criminality at the Carnival.

In terms of the main policing operation, I am not omnipotent, surprisingly enough, and so I have had it reviewed by the College of Policing. I have had it peer-reviewed by colleagues from the MPS. I have also been to Rotterdam and had our Rotterdam colleagues come across and review our operation so that we have looked at something that is comparable within European terms around our policing style. I have copies of the reports should you wish to look at them. Every year we will have a formal debrief. They are frank because we will be the ones doing it next year. It is something where we have to access that learning and put changes in place. We have already had that review and there are things that we will put in place next year that are different.

This year was the first year that we started to use the full suite of counter-terrorism tactics and we need to work out how that can be better in terms of both policing and also the buy-in of our partners to make that work properly. We are not going to step away from those tactical options compared to next year. The world is not going to change by August 2017. We are going to have to start building in a whole different set of tactics both in the run-up and at the time to make sure we have the right balance of safety and not changing the character of the Carnival. It is a full process throughout the year. The command team meetings have already started where we sit down and do the planning.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you.

Len Duvall AM: Before we move on, I just want to go back to one of your earlier answers you gave. I completely understand the issue about public safety, the crime prevention plan and the operation of the event itself. Can we just go back to the separation? You made the statement - these are my words, not yours - that on the public safety side, in the opinion of the police, we have come close to a number of near-misses.

Could you paint a picture of what those potential near-misses are - so that we fully understand from your professional side - with the large numbers of people within the footprint? What are those near-misses on the public safety side? I am not saying that that is your responsibility. I am not trying to put it that way. However, you are the people who police big-number events and you have expertise there. Of course, there have been nationally a number of difficult circumstances where we have learned lessons from what happens around that public safety side and order.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I agree completely because, before we moved on to the criminality point, there was this point about public safety. You were quite clear in separating the two and talking about near-catastrophic incidents. Could we have a little bit more detail or understanding of your take on that?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): If I may, I will talk about two incidents, which, if you were there, you were probably near.

You have Ladbroke Grove and you have a number of constriction points, particularly underneath the Westway and the Tube. When that is full of people, we are normally OK because the densities of people will regulate itself, and they are all going the same way and so you are not getting that crossing and problems with crowd densities. If you put an articulated lorry with seven or eight support vehicles behind it and a large number of people pushing their way through that crowd, the people do not go. There is nowhere to go. The only way to do it is for people to be pushed to the side of the road. I have video of officers who are on their normal duties diving in to pull children out from those crowds and members of the public who are suffering crowd distress. At that point, with that massive vehicle in Ladbroke Grove with the tail behind it, forcing its way through a crowd, it is obvious. They have to go somewhere. The densities get to catastrophic points.

Secondly, if you look at some of the sound systems in All Saints Road, you have a high density of sound systems with a large number of people. It is similar at the Tube stations. On at least two or three occasions, the safety barriers collapsed because of the crush of people. I am 53. Do you remember the Ibrox disaster in the 1970s? A barrier went and everybody cascaded down and the people at the bottom of the pile died through suffocation. If we have a situation where the safety barriers give way and the crowd comes forward, there is always the possibility that the people at the front will get crushed.

If you look at those two examples, I have the videos from our cameras and also from the helicopter showing that movement of crowds followed by what potentially could be a catastrophic incident.

The reason why I say that - and I genuinely do not want to be dramatic about this because it is unhelpful, as Dave [Morgan] has already said - is that there are instances in our memory across this country where those things have happened and substantial numbers of people have died. I can think of Hillsborough, I can think of Ibrox and I can think of other public events where those failures have caused substantial numbers of deaths. I will show you the videos. That demonstrates that when those sorts of things happen at the Carnival, you are mirroring known events of the past, which is why I am confident and not being dramatic. I am stating my professional opinion.

Len Duvall AM: That is fine. Just to help the Committee, our deliberations are probably twofold. What activities are being proposed by the decision-makers to limit that? The secondary issue is how quickly the emergency services can respond if something happens. We try to design out most of these issues, but it happens. How quickly can we get there? How do we get through the crowd to do that?

In those two, do I have it partly right that we should be concentrating on the remedial action and learning those lessons? What are the options for the Carnival to try to minimise that? We cannot say 100% that we can ever ensure complete safety. It is just impossible, is it not? How do we minimise that? Secondly, if it happens, what is the plan? Hopefully, the plans are there for very quick intervention, albeit if it all goes horribly wrong people will lose their lives. Is that the right sort of thing that we should be thinking about and looking for --

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It is, yes.

Len Duvall AM: In terms of the evidence of the people presenting to us? Presumably, the Mayor's inquiry - and I should know this but if people would just indulge me - is about the public safety aspect of it and of course there are separate issues around the operational policing. I am not wishing to minimise the level of operational issues because there have been great changes to the Carnival and the numbers have decreased, but that is actually one crime too many. Do you know what I mean? Particularly with the wounding incidents, even though we have proactive policing, the number of wounding issues is pretty high for that level of event in terms of the numbers. Is that not fair to say that from the policing side?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It is. First of all, we absolutely welcome and support the Mayor's review. The way in forward is in partnership and the way forward is evidence-based. I can have my professional opinion, but to put it out to an academic who has experience in looking at crowd flows and give us something to work on that is evidence-based is entirely right and entirely appropriate. My understanding is that we will be looking at getting something in time to look at that before 2017.

We cannot un-know what we know. I cannot stand in front of an inquiry and say, "Yes, I knew all about this but I did nothing about it", as you quite rightly point out. To get to a place where we have some independent consultancy and reporting that tells us how we can mitigate against these obvious risks, we are entirely supportive. The Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] has gone on public record as saying that that will be extremely helpful.

On the second part of your point, the criminality, this year at the Carnival I held ultimate responsibility. Many of you have been to the Gold suite and seen me sitting there looking quite swan-like when everything is going on. We nearly had four murders. I will supply you with a video of a police officer on all fours with his finger in a femoral artery stopping a man bleeding to death on Ladbroke Grove. We would have been having a very different conversation if we had had four murders at the Carnival. Those people were saved by my officers and by the emergency services.

The other piece is that, yes, it is extremely challenging to try to deal with a major or critical incident in the middle of the Carnival when you have massive numbers of people and so it would be a challenge. We prepare and practice for that, both multi-agency and individually, to put plans in place to do that. It would be foolish of me not to say that if we had a catastrophic incident or a major incident in the middle of the event, it would be extremely challenging to deal with. That is the nature of the beast, but we are prepared for it. I have in a box in my office of files and plans and we try to mirror that as well.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): There are the three parts, as you have just said, Commander, which are about the sheer numbers and the public safety aspect and the near-catastrophic events. Then we have a set of questions around the criminality and the number of arrests this year, which was higher than in most years. The third point is, if there was a significant incident - terrorist or otherwise - within the present structure, with the

numbers involved, the difficulty would be for officers and others to get there to address that. There are three parts to that that we have just covered.

If we could just move to the criminality piece, which you have touched upon, we have a few questions around that.

Sian Berry AM: Can I just ask one more question? Assembly Member Duvall was getting somewhat to the heart of what the problems are there a little bit. I am new to this Committee. I know we have discussed it before but I have not been into such detail before and many people reading our report may not be quite so familiar with the Carnival.

Is there anything qualitative that is different about the Carnival compared with, say, a cup final or a rugby match or something like that? I have been down to Twickenham myself and seen those signs that say, "Please do not use the toilets here", and that kind of thing. Is it the sheer weight of numbers or is there a qualitative difference with the Carnival? Is it because of the noise and drink? I do not know. What would you say?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Obviously, rugby is a game for thugs played by gentlemen and you would understand that if you went to Twickenham.

Sian Berry AM: Seriously, is there something about the Carnival in terms of the event itself that is different compared with other things where there are just very high levels of numbers?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Let me tell you about the evolution of Twickenham because that is probably helpful. Twickenham is a rugby event organised by the Rugby Football Union (RFU). When I first policed it in 1990, we put roughly 500 or 600 cops on it. We would be doing the stewarding, we would be getting people across the A316, we would be patrolling and we would be inside the stadium. This year there are less than 100 police officers on that event, even for one of the rugby events, and that is a consequence of the RFU taking responsibility because it is their event and they are responsible for the safety of the people who go to it, some licensing changes and also a professional stewarding operation that takes people from the station to the event and back again. We have gone back to our core role, which is crime.

In those 30 years, people have taken responsibility for public events. It is not the responsibility of the public purse to police a private event. That is the journey that Twickenham has been on. Most other events in London - from the Football Association (FA) Cup final to New Year's Eve - have been events where the police walk away or walk back to their core role and the event organisers take responsibility for delivering their event.

The difference with the Carnival is that there has not been that journey. People come to the Carnival. It is a great event. I love policing it until about 8.00pm at night and then it changes. Then we get violence, we get disorder and we get the problems that we see every year. It is about the people who go to the event and the way that is structured. It is completely unstructured at the moment. The public safety aspects flow from the way the event is organised and has evolved.

My hope is that the report will give us an opportunity to evolve it in a different way so that we can have something that looks and feels safe for the general public.

Sian Berry AM: Can I ask if the other guests agree with that? Is it the sheer weight of numbers? Is it the length of the event and the fact that it goes on --

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): There are a number of factors. The weight of numbers is one. The expectation of some attendees of the event and what they are going to do is another. There is a difference. I may have been to Twickenham once or twice myself and it is a completely different circumstance. You have a closed stadium and you have conditions of entry. That is something we do not have at the Carnival.

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): May I interrupt as well? If we are talking about large-scale venues, they are purpose-built. Twickenham is purpose-built and Wembley is purpose-built to accept those people --

Sian Berry AM: Maybe that is not the best comparison, then. Maybe we should look at Pride or Christmas shopping. I am not naming that as one particular comparison to focus on.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: New Year's Eve?

Sian Berry AM: New Year's Eve, yes.

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): I 100% agree. We have to understand that this is an event in a public space. Wembley Stadium and Twickenham are not public spaces. They are privately owned spaces. They are controlled. They are built to accept people in and out.

This is, essentially, Europe's largest street gathering in a non-event-specific place. All of the issues that Mr Musker has talked about - areas of constriction where there are large volumes of people, entrances in and out of train stations - are all because of the geography of the environment. The resources that we need to change a non-event-specific space into an event-specific space we do not have, from a Carnival point of view.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is going to be the nub, particularly on Monday, of the issue. This is a public event of a porous nature where people can move in and move out without tickets and we can talk about that separately --

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): And without powers of search.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): -- and without one organisation having an overall statutory responsibility. That is the nub of it. Did you want to go towards the crime aspects?

Sian Berry AM: Yes. To talk about the crime aspects now, which I am supposed to, and the Operational Vitality work that goes on ahead of the Carnival, I have asked Mayor's questions about this and have been given statistics and you have given us statistics today about the arrests you have made.

What is it that the criminality is aimed at doing? What do the criminals have to gain? What are they doing at the Carnival that you might be targeting there and how do you know that that is what they are planning?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Intelligence. We find out which gangs are going to come.

Sian Berry AM: When you say "gangs", what is their intention? What is the sort of thing that they are trying to do? What kinds of offences?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): There is something about being seen at the Carnival. If they see other people whom they are in dispute with, violence ensues. It is a show.

I did bring along some pictures because I thought it was worthwhile demonstrating the sorts of things we have taken off people. If I could possibly stand up and do that, these are the kinds of things that we would take.

You get people coming to the Carnival to be seen. It is a major event in London, which has a history of people coming. They tend to come and we will try to arrest them or divert them away from the event. When we are not successful, you can see it happening on the sound systems or on the route when you see two groups come together and next thing, you have violence.

Sian Berry AM: For the offences that you have talked about at this year's Carnival, did you say you did not have the final numbers yet but it is around 500?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It is, I think, 420 or 430 offences. It is the way that they have changed that is the issue. Ten years ago we would have been arresting a lot of people for a little bit of cannabis or minor public order offences, whereas this year I think you came to my briefing and heard exactly what I wanted my officers to do, which was to look at knives and violence, particularly legal highs or illegal highs as they are now. There were 90 arrests for possession of offensive weapons and knives.

The other bit that was really prevalent this year, which was different, was nitrous oxide. We seized nearly 100,000 canisters of nitrous oxide. One thing that I did not appreciate was seeing people walking around with little balloons. People were carrying, literally, diving bell-sized canisters of nitrous oxide for filling the balloons because it is cheaper and they make more money than the little things you see them with. With the combination of alcohol and nitrous oxide, there were people who were extremely intoxicated. Let us put it that way. That was a very different dynamic. Every year, we get a different dynamic to police.

Sian Berry AM: Nitrous oxide was only made illegal between last year and this year.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It is illegal to sell; it is not illegal to possess, except in Lambeth where you can have an on-the-spot fine. You cannot sell it. You cannot distribute it.

The other bit that is probably worthwhile talking through is that I had 61 officers injured. One of them had a fractured skull. Four were bitten; one was concussed. There were bruises and cuts. Nine of them were spat at with mixtures of blood and spittle and had to go to hospital for antiviral treatments. There were sprains, swellings and the normal sort of stuff. That was quite high this year and we made sure that we put in place mechanisms to support officers who had been injured.

Sian Berry AM: Can I ask about that? Again, I have asked a written question to try to see how that compares to other types of events. The answer I had was basically that it is not recorded at other events. Is that a thing that is more prevalent at Notting Hill? Is it something that is newer to target police officers or is there a similar level of injury at other things?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): There are two parts to that answer. One: following an incident in Hampshire when an officer was seriously assaulted, we have put in new protocols to support our people should they be assaulted. The reason why we monitor them at the Carnival is that officers are injured; whereas at most major events, apart from public disorder, it is not really an issue that we would put in at the planning stage to make sure that we have designated hospitals. It is one of those things that in my planning I monitor because it is important.

Sian Berry AM: I asked specifically about football matches and the recent football match trouble. No record is kept of how many officers were injured at that in comparison.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): We would take that but not in the same sort of way. This is one of the things that we do in the debrief and so we would have to go and look at it in another way.

Sian Berry AM: Can I ask how much of the crime at the Carnival is attributable to organised gang activity?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I do not know. That is the quick answer. We would not attribute -- I am just trying to think how we would do that. I could not tell you. That is the quick answer.

Sian Berry AM: We have been looking at serious youth violence on this Committee and what we have found there is that the label "gang" is not all that helpful. A lot of the knife crime and the violence is not actually gang-related and there is a difference between organised crime and violent people. I was just wondering if that applies here where "gang" becomes shorthand for things.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): That would be a reasonable suggestion, yes.

Sian Berry AM: Can we ask also what impact the Carnival has on crime in the areas around the event, not actually within the area itself?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It depends where you draw the line, really. We monitor for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, Brent, Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea, but the hotspot is in the Carnival. If you are asking whether it spreads out from the Carnival, I do not think so. It does not look like it. It is concentrated within the area.

Sian Berry AM: I just wanted to go to the other guests now and ask each of you in turn. What is your view of the nature and extent of crime and anti-social behaviour during the Carnival? Do you have anything to add to what the police have said?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): Understanding the role of the stewarding operation, what we do and how we do it is quite important. For us, we are engaged under one big operation and various different smaller operations.

Our main operation - and the exact words - is that we are to facilitate the safe movement of performance units around the Carnival route. A performance unit, as we have said, can be made up of four, five or maybe six vehicles and 200 or maybe 300 dancers. That is a performance unit. In terms of what we do, very simply, to visualise it, when we see a vehicle, we pick up a rope and our team of stewards holds back the crowd as much as possible and make sure that we allow turning circles. We do that at specific junctions around the Carnival route. That is the extent of our stewarding operation.

We do not deal with anything security-wise other than assisting. We put an operation in three years ago to run a case study to see if a private security organisation would be able to take the responsibility away from the police. We manage the entrance, along with MPS officers, around the Swinbrook Estate. People who go on that estate have to show their identification (ID) or a form of bill so that we do not have groups of people congregating in residential areas. From our point of view, we do not get involved in any security whatsoever.

We build our teams around some security qualifications. I am not sure if the Committee is aware, but we have had our increase in our budget and the amount of grant that the GLA gives. We have been able to do a lot more with that and we think that we have proved some points along the way. One of the things we have done is to change the body of our staff from stewards to Security Industry Authority licensed security officers to get better team members. We have been able to do that.

In terms of the stewarding operation, since we started - and this is our fourth year, as I have said before - we have never been a victim of crime within the Carnival. We have had a couple of lads wee up the side of one of our marquees and that has been the extent of it. We have had no injuries to any of our staff all the way through. The information that we get is based on other people's experiences.

Sian Berry AM: That was really interesting.

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): Crime at the Carnival is a problem. One is one too many. It is very damaging to the event itself. One of the things that I have been discussing since I have become involved is that crime is the narrative of the Carnival and one of my key drivers is to change that narrative. It is very difficult taking the event forward if you are trying to reduce the burden on the public purse and to engage partners to come in and help us. It is very difficult when the first thing that people talk about is crime. Levels of crime are too high at the Carnival. They are too high at most events, actually, and that is not to diminish it but there are levels there. In my view - and this is a view supported to an extent by Bronze crime, the guys in charge of crime at the Carnival - the Carnival has a number of different aspects of crime. There are a number of organised criminals who will do the whole range of public events within this country. They largely come from abroad and Carnival is the last in a series of events that they will do.

Sian Berry AM: That is thefts?

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor for Notting Hill Carnival): They are largely involved with thefts, pickpocketing and things like that. We do have violent crime there and that is really the most damaging. It is people coming to the Carnival to settle scores or to have a fight or becoming involved in impromptu violence. Unfortunately, it is against a backdrop of a rise in knife crime across London. Again, not to diminish it, but it is a problem for us.

We are really concerned about this narrative moving forward. Bear in mind we are fairly early in our progress and we are on this journey, as Commander Musker said earlier. We wrote to Commander Musker in January saying, "Please help us. What are the crime drivers? Is there anything we are doing in there that is acting as a crime driver? Tell us where the hotspots are. We want to be part of this".

We have taken a number of proactive steps at All Saints Road. We have been engaged in a number of meetings this year. Last year, I believe the figure was 17 stabbings on the All Saints Road - 2015 - and so we have been engaged with the local police commander, the Bronze in charge of that area, with Chief Superintendent O'Connor, who is Silver for the event, and with the sound systems. We came up with a barrier system that we hoped would, firstly, facilitate safe movement of the crowd, facilitate access for emergency services and also, importantly, allow police access to the various areas of that road so that, if we had criminals arriving, they were in a position to deal with them. To make it clear, we really support proactive policing.

We have worked on a stewarding operation. We have had the upturn this year, as I said, but that is aimed at taking away the low-hanging fruit around the Carnival, the things that cops were doing and should be stewarding roles. We have taken those away and, by taking those away, we have freed up some police officers.

Not only is it more cost-effective but it frees up those police officers and allows them to do what cops should be doing, which is arresting people. We knew in advance that that would result in an increase in arrests and we view that, frankly, as a positive thing. If police are out there dealing with criminals, it is a great thing for the Carnival. If they are discouraging these people from coming back and having free rein year after year, it is a good thing for us.

We were even involved in providing some equipment. To some of the proactive units that intervene as various known gang members are coming into the Carnival were having problems with communications because of the restrictions of the budget within the MPS. I was at a meeting where they said that they could not get a separate radio channel and that was hampering them in their ability to point out known gang members entering the Carnival and having their units intervene. We came forward and, working with McKenzie Arnold, we provided these people with a separate radio system and noise-cancelling headsets that will work within the Carnival environment. I understand that a number of arrests were made as a result of those things.

We are being as proactive as we possibly can. We want criminals to be arrested at the Carnival. We do not want to do anything that is going to encourage them to come there. Unfortunately, it is a big public event and it happens.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We understand that. We have some more questions around that. I get that completely but, as we said earlier, due to the nature of the numbers, the porous nature and the open nature of the Carnival, you will have people prepared to do acts of criminality and acts of extreme violence able to access and get within the area.

Keith Prince AM: If I can just go back to Commander Musker, you were talking about the injuries to your colleagues. I just wondered whether the use of spit-hoods may have been something that would have been useful to you at this event and prevented some of the injuries to your colleagues and the need for them to rush off to hospital.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): No, they would have been no help in the circumstances in that most of them were involved in dealing with people who spat at them. The initial trial, I believe, was around custody, which is very different to an interaction on the street when somebody takes it upon themselves to spit.

Keith Prince AM: Yes, I accept that the trial that was delayed was around custody, but there is nothing to say that in the future these things could be used in public to protect officers.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): In these circumstances, mostly, having an interaction with a member of the public who spits at you, you cannot suddenly do that every time you meet a member of the public. There would not be the opportunity.

Keith Prince AM: No, I appreciate that. I have another question, actually. You have mentioned a couple of videos that you have, one about crushing the crowds and another one about a police officer saving someone's life, effectively. You indicated you might be happy to share those with us.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, I can get you a copy of that.

Keith Prince AM: It would be interesting, actually. When is the next thing we are doing on Notting Hill? Monday. Do you think it might be possible for us to look at those on Monday before the meeting?

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): If they can get to us in time, we will find that time, if possible. It is quite tight, but it depends if they get to us. Dave, would you be able to get some of those videos to us in short order?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I shall try.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): You shall try. That is good enough.

Peter Whittle AM: Commander, I just wanted to clarify one thing. You said that in 2000 there was far more crime at the Carnival than in 2014 but that it has just gone up. However, then you went on to talk about the kinds of things that you are concentrating on in terms of crime. The impression that I had from that - and please correct me if I am wrong - is that what it amounted to is that the things you would have arrested people for in 2000 you were turning a blind eye to this time or at least saying mentally, “There are more important things to go after”.

What I am trying to get at is whether the actual level of crime, if you take it as a whole, is much greater. I have spoken to police officers who were on the Carnival and have been on the Carnival. They say, “We have to have cannabis smoked right in our faces and just sit down there and smile”, and things like this. In other words, has it become so much worse that you are just turning a blind eye to all sorts of other things?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): No. The issue for us is, if you divide 14,000 cops by 1.5 million people, there are not many cops for the numbers of people and so you concentrate on what is important. What is important is keeping the public safe. That is dealing with people who have a known propensity for violence or who carry weapons. That is my job.

You and some of the Members of the Committee saw me speak to the command team on both days. I was very clear that our job is to keep the public safe and to target people involved in violence and also people carrying weapons. That is the focus. Most people would support me in that. At that major event, we are there to keep the public safe. I was very clear with my officers. I even went on video at the start to make sure that they knew what I wanted them to do. That is our focus.

Peter Whittle AM: I understand that it is your duty to keep the public safe but it is also your duty to, as it were, impose the law of the land. I get the impression that therefore you prioritise certain things.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, we do.

Peter Whittle AM: That therefore means that, in terms of actual offences that take place, they could be far greater than what comes up here.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. In some ways, these are symptomatic of police activity. If we arrest 90 people for possession of offence weapons, it means that my officers are out there targeting people who carry knives. I do have the numbers on how it has gone up and it is a substantial increase. As you will see from some of the pictures, they are knives designed to harm and so, yes, that is my focus.

Peter Whittle AM: Thank you.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): We are going to get on to this. It may be difficult to make comparisons with other events where the briefings from the Gold or the Silver would not equate the same as yours. We

were there when you were speaking to your officers and giving them priorities, which you have just talked about. There may be other events - football events or rugby events - where that instruction may not be made and they would not be good comparisons. That is my point.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Perhaps I could start with Pepe. Given the number of people who are attending the Carnival, is the level of crime really proportionate to the actual size of the event?

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Dave [Morgan] should be answering that because he --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: No, I would like your view on it.

Pepe Francis MBE (Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Funnily enough, I was looking at that this morning. For the amount of people at the Carnival, comparing it with something like New Year's Eve, I looked at it and we are about the same on percentage, except that we have more people. To be quite honest with you, no level of crime is acceptable but, when you have that number of people at the Carnival, you would have a certain amount of crime. It should not be as high as it is, but it is something that we need to work on.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: We have heard that people have suggested that you compare it to something like the size of the Glastonbury Festival. I realise that is not on the move like the Carnival is but, if the Carnival's crime rates were similar, we would see more like 750 arrests rather than the 450 or so that you mentioned.

Maybe I could ask Commander Musker. How do you think crime and anti-social behaviour at the Carnival compares with other large events or street-based celebrations?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): What is different is the level of violence.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: It is the type of crime that is different?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. In response to the level of violence, particularly serious violence and stabbing, we will put on dedicated rapid-response units and forensic units to go and capture the evidence and deal with it.

If I was to just reflect on last year, we had four incidents when people were stabbed and for at least three hours we were not sure. They were classed as "life-threatening" or "life-changing" and all four of them were very seriously injured. Very rarely when I am policing an event will I have that level of serious violence.

Let me think about what I have done this year. I have done Pride, the Euro [Championship], the policing operation around the anniversary of Mark Duggan's death, the State Opening of Parliament and all of that sort of stuff. This is the only one where we have, predictably, a high level of serious violence and injury. It is not a quantitative issue; it is more a qualitative issue, I would suggest, in my view.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: You have already done a lot of arrests to try to prevent some of this and so it might have been worse if you had not. Clearly, as Peter [Whittle AM] was highlighting, there are other lower levels of crime - if I can put it like that - that you are just letting go on because you have to focus on these potentially life-threatening or potentially catastrophic incidents.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Yes. This is the point about arrests. I have been very clear that if people are involved in serious criminality and they come to the Carnival, we should be arresting them. I have given that as a priority to my command team and they have gone out and done that. The number of arrests is more a sign that we are trying to let the Carnival be what it is supposed to be - a celebration of London - without that criminality. That is a success for us.

What I cannot tell you is, if we had not made those arrests, what would have happened if they had got into the event. My professional judgement is that that suppressed the criminality that potentially we could have seen, but I cannot prove that.

Tom Copley AM: Just on the Glastonbury comparison, it was in the 1990s when Glastonbury was very nearly closed down completely because there was a high level of violence and people were bringing guns and everything like that. Essentially, there was a big wakeup call and they massively upped the security to the point now, of course, where people still manage to find their way in but it is very difficult. I do not know if I am treading on anyone else's question area here.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): No.

Tom Copley AM: I know it is a very different environment being in the middle of a big city rather than being out in the countryside, but would ticketing arrangements and more security arrangements help to resolve these issues around the more violent elements of crime?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I do not want to jump to a solution because what I am supportive of and what we as a service are supportive of is getting that independent review, which is evidence-based. Too many people jump to the answer without working through and showing their working out. I am delighted that that is going to happen. I look forward to looking at the results and then working with my colleagues to do something that is safer.

Tom Copley AM: We will leave it until Monday.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is going to be part of Monday because today we are identifying the kinds of problems that are arising.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Very briefly, what you have not talked about, Chair, is the crimes that are not reported, in particular crimes of a sexual nature. Again, it is anecdotal evidence, but one or two of the residents that we spoke to in the presence of the local MP were telling us of several incidents of what was referred to as "groping".

What are your thoughts on this, Commander? How can we, in terms of planning for next year, encourage --

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): This has brought --

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): I know it is hard, but what I do not want is a culture where women in particular feel that, "It is a huge crowd around us and something that just happens. There is nothing that can be done about it and therefore we will not report about the problems within this --"

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): There are a number of different answers to that. Firstly, we recognised this was starting to be a problem a couple of years ago and so we put dedicated sexual offending officers on each of the sector bases. Last year, we recognised that taking somebody who had

been assaulted through a load of cops having a cup of tea was not the best way forward. You noticed that with all of the sector bases there was an alternative entrance and a suite on each of the sector bases so that we could give a first-class service to anybody who came and said they had been sexually assaulted.

You are right in that I can police the symptoms, but I cannot change those symptoms of what is happening. Our objective has always been to make sure the officers are properly briefed to properly be available. Secondly, we have a prompt and effective investigation which is about having those private areas if somebody has been assaulted in the middle of Carnival so that we can take them out and speak to them. Thirdly, we have a positive and robust arrest policy for the people who have been involved in that sort of thing so that they will get arrested and we will prosecute them.

We are evolving our response to that to make it effective and, much more importantly, victim-focused so that people have the confidence to come and speak to a police officer. They will know they will be treated seriously and that the perpetrator, if we can identify them, will be robustly prosecuted by us.

Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Caroline has some more questions, but there will still be that concern perhaps for Londoners that there would be an understanding that you could go to the Carnival prepared just to commit low-level crimes and the police will not be overly concerned because their priorities are on more serious violence. That is not a good message to send out for future years of the Carnival, I am just suggesting.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I wanted to really understand, Commander Musker, how you would go about policing the Carnival because it is such a complex area. Your work, as you say, has already started. What roles do the police undertake and what do they feedback from officers? When I was a ward councillor, my beat officer used to go over and he loved it. That was his big thing every year and he absolutely loved it and really enjoyed it, but things may have changed a bit from some of the descriptions you gave earlier. Can you set out the particular roles that the police now play and officers' feedback?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It is a highly complex operation lasting three to four days. There will be different elements from officers in beat duty uniform providing a visible presence on the route, manning the safety zones and being a visible face to the public, which is your point around low-level criminality and having a police presence.

The next layer will be dedicated public order officers in kits ready to intervene if there is public disorder. That is backed up by specialist officers from all the specialisms from detectives, firearms officers and the full range of pieces that we have to intervene if we get that high-level violence. That is basically what we do around the Carnival.

My main focus is to stop people of violence - or men of violence, principally - getting to the Carnival. Within this little bit of Notting Hill, you will have a large number of officers but also we will have a number of officers across London based on intelligence looking to stop people coming to the Carnival in the first place. They will look to engage across all the London boroughs where we know from intelligence are based and try to stop people coming.

It is a layered operation from where, when you walk around, you would normally see the smiling face of the MPS, standing there in beat duty uniform maintaining that presence. Those are the specialisms behind it that come in and deal with the various incidents that you have.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: What about the role of the British Transport Police (BTP)?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): The BTP manages the stations for us because it is a specialist policing fact. Within the command team, I have a BTP Bronze who will work with me and so it is a Benbow operation (agreement between the MPS, BTP and the City of London Police). We also get the City of London as well coming out to work with us and so it is a joined-up London policing operation with me as the substantive Gold for the event.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Also the BTP can report in, "There is something happening in this bit of London on the transport network. We think people are", and you can head them off or whatever?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Within the specialist operations room, there is a BTP pod. They can feed any intelligence they get across the Tube and the rail system into the policing operation and deploy either BTP resources or MPS resources or whoever is best to deal with that particular problem. That is the advantage of having one Gold for the operation and I am Gold for policing the capital on that day or two days.

One of your later questions was what about the London boroughs? Within the command team, there is a chief superintendent from Territorial Policing who sits within the command team. If he needs resources for any issues, we can move them across the capital in a fluid way. This year, it was Chief Superintendent Rose from Barnet, one of my cluster.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: What impact does it have on policing across the rest of the capital? Over 6,000 officers patrolled on the Sunday and Monday and they are extracted from the boroughs. Are the boroughs left with virtually no police on the ground? Is there an impact in response times in those boroughs?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): You would not thank me if I extracted all of the police in London. Remember that the Sunday is a force working day and so everybody is obliged to work anyway. As part of the planning process, we will make sure we have enough resilience across the capital and everybody is at least at the minimum strengths across all of the response teams across all the tours of duty.

In fact, because we have all the resources on, it makes London a more resilient place. We are not mobilising to deal with something; we are already mobilised. In some ways, the Carnival is one of the safest days to be in London because all of the cops are on duty.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you.

Sian Berry AM: Just a very quick question. The press release that went out ahead of the Carnival said that the MPS was trialling overt cameras using facial recognition software to try to identify people who are wanted for other offences. Can I ask how that went? Did it result in some arrests of people who are wanted maybe for completely different things?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): It needs a bit of tweaking. It needs a bit of technological tweaking. I wanted to try it because we have used it in controlled conditions. However, having it with such a massive number of people coming through the entrances, if you have any technological aid, we can have to link up with our databases so that we know that [for example] Len, who is on bail for robbery in Tower Hamlets, would get stopped. That would be a much better way of targeting people rather than having lines of cops using our policing skills.

That is the objective. I will try it again next year, hopefully, with some technical enhancements. It gives us the ability to pick individuals out from crowds whom we know are involved in offending. It has to be a good thing if we can have that net as people enter the Carnival to pick out the ones whom we know are involved in violence.

Sian Berry AM: Related to that, I have been to the Carnival and some people who fed back through the written evidence have said it seems like sometimes people are funnelled through a narrowing gap in order to check them out. That would seem to conflict with the public safety aspects of things and the fact that crushes can occur. Can you confirm that that is not why that happens?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): No. There is a tactic. You can put lines of cops in to be able to start if you are looking for people, but we do not restrict access or egress. In fact, we try to put safety zones in place so that if there are crowd density issues, we can open them and allow people out. It is not the cops who cause that.

Sian Berry AM: Thanks.

Peter Whittle AM: Just one thing. I want to get this clear. We are talking an awful lot about crowd density and porous areas and so this is somehow something to do with it. There are huge numbers of events that happen. Take for example just a few years ago the Diamond Jubilee when something like 3.5 million people came into London from all different areas. I do not know that there were many murders or possible murders during that time. Why is this being effectively used as an excuse in a way? Rather, why is the emphasis being put on this being about just sheer density of people and we have to expect it?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Are you asking me that question?

Peter Whittle AM: Yes.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I remember the Diamond Jubilee and the only risk to public safety on that day was getting frozen because it was pouring down all day, as I recall, when I was wet through all my uniform. It is a different flavour of event, is the simple answer.

Peter Whittle AM: This is a happy event. It is a carnival. Even when it comes to things like football matches - and it would show up what we have seen this week as appalling and everything - where there is this conflict element between two groups and so you could possibly use that as well. This is meant to be a celebration and this is how it is sold. When you say it is a different nature of event, what do you mean?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): The Carnival has different aspects principally on the time of day where you are there. From my perspective, having policed it for many years, during the day it is a brilliant, vibrant, wonderful place to be involved in and I enjoy it and volunteer to do it every year. When we start getting to the evening on a Sunday and a Monday, the feel of the event changes and the focus of the event changes. That is my professional and experiential judgement. If you go there on a Sunday at 2.00pm with your family, you can walk round, you feel safe and you have a marvellous event. If you are there at 9.00pm on a Monday, it is a different feeling.

Peter Whittle AM: Can you not just close it and say, "All right, the Carnival now ends at 5.00pm"?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I do not organise the Carnival.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We will get on to those sorts of solutions potentially on Monday particularly.

We are going to move on to a question about stewarding. My last comment on that was that where the Carnival appears to be different events like football over the years - and we all know this - it has gone away from policing but more on stewarding. We are going to hear about the increase of stewarding, but the paradox is we still need extra police. It is seen to be a challenge particularly for the Carnival.

Tom Copley AM: Mr Jackson, could you tell me what sort of roles your stewards perform at the Carnival?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): As I touched on earlier, our main role and keywords are to facilitate the safe movement of performance units around the Carnival route. I make sure that visitors do not get run over and that operates in various different projects. We manage Panorama the evening before, which is the competition for steel bands, and that is at Emslie Horniman Pleasance Park. That is a 40-man stewarding security operation which happens the night before Carnival. Then we have *J'ouvert* in the morning, which starts at 5.00am, which is a procession up and down Ladbroke Grove and which takes a team of 23. Then we go into the main day of the Carnival and our stewards and their team leaders are based on various different junction points around the Carnival.

We run various different filters at certain stages, ie the entrants into the judging zone. That is to make sure that the judging zone is only for carnivalists, those people who are performing, and that friends and family who are associated with that do not necessarily get diverted the long way around. They can then meet up with their friends and family on that float at the bottom of the judging zone area.

At key points around the route, we manage those junctions. In real terms, that means that our team leaders will instruct our stewards at certain times to pick up a rope and they will hold the crowd back to allow the vehicles space to turn as much as humanly possible. Across section 4, which is the bottom of Carnival, we manage crossing points so that when there are no performance units, we allow free access across the road. Then, when the performance units come past those crossing points, we hold the public back to allow the performance units to pass through.

Tom Copley AM: Would you say your role is more safety than security?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): One hundred per cent. We are not involved in any security roles other than, as we touched on earlier, in a few minor places. We have nine officers at the entrance to the Swinbrook Estate.

Tom Copley AM: You are not involved in any security roles. We have some figures here to do with the increased number of stewards. It went up to 2,000 from 900, did it, this year?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): Two thousand shifts.

Tom Copley AM: Two thousand shifts, sorry, yes. You had additional funding and we have a figure here of £340,000. Is that the total grant the festival gets from the GLA?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): That includes value added tax (VAT) and so we have to understand there is a real working budget of about £283,000.

Tom Copley AM: The Carnival Trust estimates that the MPS could save £430,000 as a result of the GLA's additional investment. How much of that £340,000 was an additional investment?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): The figure in 2013, the initial budget we had, was £160,000 including VAT. It was then reduced for the following two years to £150,000, which gives a real working budget of £123,000. The increase was £190,000 including VAT.

Tom Copley AM: An increase of £190,000 from the GLA. The estimate is that it could save up to £430,000. Over what period? Is that £430,000 in one year or is that over a number of years?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): I am not really sure who has come up with that figure.

Tom Copley AM: It was the Trust that came up with that. I am sorry.

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor, Notting Hill Carnival): That is annually.

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): That is annually.

Tom Copley AM: That is quite a significant saving, which is about twice the increase in the GLA grant, more than twice.

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor, Notting Hill Carnival): It is fair to say that we did not just pull those figures out of the air. Those figures were discussed and agreed with the Silver from the MPS, who has ratified that they are realistic figures.

Tom Copley AM: So they are sound figures, which is good. What is the split in responsibilities between the police and the stewards? You have already covered a lot of this, really; you are more the sort of --

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): We fully understand that stewarding the Carnival is not a police job and crime and disorder is not down to a private security company. The issue that we have is that we have never had enough resources to do the job without at some stage putting up our hand and saying, "We cannot cope anymore. This is too busy", and then our colleagues have to step in to assist us.

What we proved this year - which was quite clear and reported to all the stakeholders through the Silver calls and through the East London Transit- was that at significant times throughout the Carnival the stewarding operation was robust enough that police officers were able to stand back and not get involved in the stewarding operation.

Tom Copley AM: In a sense, your stewards took on additional roles?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): Internally, there are things that we do where we try to motivate our staff. You have to understand that your average steward does not go to the police training school at Gravesend and get petrol bombs thrown at them for two weeks. They are stewards who have minimal qualifications. They had a stand-up brief from us this year because of the additional budget. We were able to buy them lunch and everybody went out with a nice backpack on with sandwiches in it.

We were unable to rotate our staff and so, when we say we have 900 staff out on the Carnival, they are out for a 12-hour shift and we are not able to rotate that around. We understand that there are areas where they can go to for breaks and we push that, but what you see is what you get from us; we are not able to rotate our staff around. On a junction, for example, we would have had 40 staff and five or six of those would be off for a break at any one time.

We run a thing called "holding the line", which is basically not giving up until you cannot physically hold people back. In many cases, all our team leaders reported that they held the line all the way through.

Tom Copley AM: There will always be things that have to be the responsibility of the police. What more responsibilities do you think your stewards could take on to relieve the police?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): We have run a series of case studies over the last four or five years and there are lots of things that we have said we want to be better at given a longer run-up. We talk about a long slow burn. We are now on a three-year contractual basis and being engaged for longer allows us to develop the training side of what we do. We have a sister company where we draw down government funding.

Over the last couple of years, we have trained up nearly 110 people for free who now have a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 in spectator safety, which is the equivalent to five General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs), which gives us a little bit of legacy out of the Carnival. They can go off and they can work at Wembley Stadium and earn £10 an hour when they are not working for us at the Carnival. They volunteer their time for us at the Carnival and we are allowed to do a little bit more.

This year, we added in an additional training day for our band stewards, who walk around all day long with the bands. We gave them specific radio training in how to use their communication a lot better. Historically, that is quite difficult to recruit for and so we draw people in from the world of art as opposed to the world of security. You are not going to get your average security officer to understand that they have to walk around the whole of the Carnival route for 12 hours; that does not interest them. The Carnival always lands on the Bank Holiday weekend and so we compete against things like the Reading Festival where a lot of security officers want to go and work.

Having that additional training in place made our staff more robust so that we were able to get more out of them during the day. They were better at what they did, they were more empowered and they understood more about a performance unit. Last year, the 72 staff who were involved with that project turned up for work at 9.00am in the morning. They had a half-hour standing brief and then got sent out to meet the performance unit on the junction that the performance unit was going to join the route on.

This year, we brought them all in a lot earlier. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea allowed us to use the school where the control room is based, which has a huge auditorium. We brought all the staff in and gave them a brief and tea and coffee and we told them how important their role was. We got a lot more out of them on the day and that feedback was excellent.

There are some very basic principles moving forward and in our tender process we have identified that. We know there is a big academic study going on, but we have already put our suggestions forward through to the Carnival and the OPSG to share.

Significantly, there are traffic management points that are covered by police officers now. We think they could be taken over by robust private security, which would save a significant cost. We understand that there are

hostile vehicle mitigations at a counter-terrorism level that the police would always want to take control of and we would not want to assume that we would get involved in that.

There are basic duties that we could cover and probably the other easy quick fix is safety zones. Within the Carnival, there are areas that are identified in yellow as safety zones, sometimes sterile zones. They are not sterile zones; they are safety zones where people have had a little bit too much Carnival where they need to get a break out, whether they be staff, stewards or people who are visiting the Carnival. They are manned by police officers at the moment and we think that could be another transferable skill.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you. Finally, how do you co-ordinate between police and stewards during the Carnival?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): During the Carnival operation?

Tom Copley AM: Yes.

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): We work on what we call the “tens” principle within our organisation. Every time we put out ten security staff, they will have a team leader. As evident around the Carnival route, our team leaders are always in orange. We stretch that sometimes on the Carnival to about 25 stewards to one team leader and we have a sector manager who mirrors the police sector Bronzes. For example, the sector manager at sector 5 goes to all the briefings through the police sector 5 and they are engaged earlier on. We probably have about five or six meetings pre-Carnival. We share plans, all our plans are visualised and they have lots of pictures in them so that everybody can see what we are expecting to do. They are fully embedded with that, they will be backed up through mobile phone contact and they will go to all the briefings. Then the sub-Bronzes work with our team leaders on each junction.

Pretty much, we are very embedded and we think we have made significant ground and covered a lot more by doing that and by having that engagement.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): David, would you agree that you are completely embedded with stewards on the days of the Carnival?

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): There is more work to be done and having a three-year contract with some consistency so that we can plan with a longer lead-in time is a helpful way forward.

That consistency is the key to success rather than parachuting in every year and then suddenly having to develop the relationships on a year-to-year basis. Having a longer relationship means we can really bottom out who does what when and not have those rubbing points when things are not going well. I welcome that and it was an important step to take.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Before we go to our final set of questions, there was one point about funding which I did not quite completely understand. I understand the GLA contribution. I understand that other events and organisations - and we are talking about football and others and eventually West Ham perhaps - have gone away from policing and they have introduced stewards. Those organisations have in the main paid for that stewarding, be it my own football club, for example, and other concerts, etc.

Going to you, Pepe, how much does the Trust contribute towards the cost of stewarding? I do not have that in my briefing note. Can you help me with that at all?

Pepe Francis MBE, Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): The Trust does make any contribution.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Your organisation as the main organiser - though that is arguable - does not directly contribute towards the stewarding in a financial manner?

Pepe Francis MBE, Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): No.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): OK, I just wanted to get that.

Keith Prince AM: Just on the point, can you tell me: does the Trust get any income from the Carnival either?

Pepe Francis MBE, Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): No.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is fine. Monday's session is going to be about going forward, but we are going to have a last few set of questions from Keith just to set the scene around that.

Keith Prince AM: The first question I was going to ask you has mainly been answered. If you want to add anything to what you have already said without repeating what you have already said, I would be grateful.

What lessons have you learnt from this year's Carnival in terms of ensuring safety and preventing crime? Mainly that has been covered.

More interestingly, I would be interested from Dave Morgan, Martin Jackson and, indeed, all members of the panel. If you were going to start with a blank piece of paper, how would you advise Carnival should be organised?

Dave Morgan (Operational Advisor, Notting Hill Carnival): That is a tricky one. Unfortunately, if you were going to start with a blank piece of paper, we would not be where we are today. That is the reality. It has organically grown and there are some challenges as a result of that. Some of those have moved forward considerably but they still remain there in some, way, shape or form.

The key to looking forward over the next few years is firstly we have to change the narrative about the Carnival. The question was asked about how much the Carnival produces and that is not an awful lot at all because of the narrative to an extent. It makes it very difficult to engage potential partners who could realistically come on board as sponsors or whatever else and then the Carnival could realistically start paying for elements of this to take place.

There are also a number of strands to be pulled together because people have become very used to the way they currently operate within the Carnival. After this inquiry or after this review, that is maybe not where the recommendations will be. We need to work hard to work with those various, very diverse organisations to pull together the many strands of the Carnival in order to move it forward.

It is a very complex event to the extent that, very briefly a number of years ago, the Chief Executive of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea at the time in the first year came and said, "Come on, boys, this is not rocket science". The next year, he specifically said, "Actually, it is". It is a really difficult one because it

has so many political and cultural connotations, which make it a much more complex thing to manage than possibly any other event there is.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): Can I answer in a different way?

Keith Prince AM: Yes.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I have policed New Year's Eve for many years, sat in Trafalgar Square and taken alcohol off people. I was a principal Bronze on the South Bank and thought, "How on earth are we going to make this safer and better?" without ever thinking we would come up with a completely innovative solution with a ticketed New Year's Eve which is stewarded, safer and with fewer cops.

I do not know what I want the Carnival to look like, but what I do want is some innovative ideas to come forward that will change it in a way that is positive. That is the --

Keith Prince AM: If I can just cut across you, that is one of the reasons why we have you here. As you guys are at the coal face, you might have some ideas on how we could do it better.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): I do not really want to articulate those without having seen the evidence from the academics because that would be much more helpful. The point I am trying to make is we need to have an open mind about how things could change, rather than be wedded to some of the things of the past.

I used that New Year's Eve analogy because I never thought that I would see a ticketed event. I used to have nearly 1,000 cops on the South Bank and now we are much more reduced with a private security firm and a lot safer and very different feel. We need to be innovative and come up with something that is not wedded to the shackles of the past. That would be the way I would answer your question.

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): I would like to suggest as well that if you are starting with a blank canvas then there is opportunity to look at the whole project without any of the biases that have been pushed into it. There are some significant structural changes that have already been discussed that perhaps would be highlighted and allow the Carnival to develop a Gold, Silver and Bronze structure.

The board clearly is Gold and it sets the vision. It is saying, "We want the Carnival to be the best carnival in Europe, the safest carnival in Europe and culturally the most engaging". Then there would be a team of people underneath who would develop that under different strands. You would have your arts representatives.

This is not doing down the hard work of the board. This is more engagement with an events management team, people who are going to make those phone calls, who are going to print the signs, who are going to be engaged in doing that.

Purely from a stewarding point of view, there is the opportunity there to set a long-term standard and push aims and we have already highlighted some of them through the processes. One of the significant factors is taking those responsibilities away from police officers, not only reducing their budget but giving the Carnival more responsibility for itself and ownership of those problems, ie traffic areas and safety zones and filling those gaps.

Commander Musker talked earlier on about those areas or instances where there are crushes. If we were able to identify those earlier, we know through our experience of crowd management that there may be a barrier system, a stop-and-go and filter cordons that we would be able to put in place outside of just the management of the Carnival route. You would be reducing the amount of people that would be in those areas, measuring those crowd densities, and measuring the amount of people that come away from a train station. When the queue backs up down one street, you would split them off using another street, holding the third street as an area you can additionally filter people into.

Keith Prince AM: A bit like football?

Martin Jackson (Managing Director, McKenzie Arnold Security): Yes, absolutely, but it would just be removing yourself from the problems that people foresee now and taking that thing back. We understand people have said, "Put a wall around it and sell tickets". There is also the understanding that there are many events around the world that do not sell tickets and are still extremely safe.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Pepe, do you want to say anything from your point of view?

Pepe Francis MBE, Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Most of this discussion has been about the crime and things around the Carnival. I would like to say that in the 50 years I have been involved in the Carnival and the different committees that I have seen organising the Carnival, what we have done in the past four years to try to improve it is very positive in my view.

Yes, I am very concerned under my watch that something disastrous could happen in the Carnival. I have a band in the Carnival and I have a lot of young people in my band, five generations of people including my own grandchildren. Ladbroke Grove worries me when we come up there on an evening, especially if we get there after 7.00pm, which I tend to try to not do, trying to get there before to make sure that we are all safe.

This committee has taken a lot of steps to try to improve and it can only improve step by step. One of the things we did when I took over as chair is to get a stewarding company to be on a longer contract. Through the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, we are bringing Dave [Morgan] on board so that we have event plans/risk assessments now done by December and on the table for the OPSG in January. In the past, we were still trying to get an event team or a stewarding company in July/August.

We have done a lot of improvement, but there is a lot more to do. Let us face it: everybody on the board has a daytime job and it is all volunteers running this thing. The paid staff we have are Dave Morgan and Richard [Pitt, Event Assistant, Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd] on a part-time basis. We need staff to work and to be able to get this thing better off.

One of the best things that happened this year from all the bands who have reported back is we had the serial policing backing the bands where you had two police officers assigned to each performance unit. That worked so well that up to last night I still heard people complimenting that part as one of the things that was very good this year. There are a lot of positive things along with the negative things that happened in Carnival.

Keith Prince AM: If things do not improve quite dramatically because of the cost of the Carnival and the amount of crime, do you not accept that there is potential that one day a politician is going to turn around and say, "This has all got to stop"?

Pepe Francis MBE, Interim Chairperson, London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust Ltd): Everything is possible. I do not even think about that part of it. The Carnival is here to stay and it is going to

be here for a long time as long as we can do the work that is needed to improve it and have it on a safe footing as it should be.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Yes, that is a good answer to a good question. The work that we are doing and the general review with you and the Trust will hopefully enable the Carnival to have a future but perhaps in a changed manner about what we do.

Len Duvall AM: I am very grateful for the way people have answered questions today. I am a great supporter of the Carnival and I do not think we even start this inquiry with a blank sheet, whether people want that or not. There is history and parts and I do recognise over the many years of conversations that have taken place in this place and other places that there have been changes.

I suppose just very quickly to all people, let us deal with the safety issue first. There is a tipping point now that the Carnival's success of numbers generated is about how we avoid the crush and the serious incidents. How do we get to them if it happens? Are we confident we can get there in time to avoid deaths and all the rest of it? There is a tipping point on that and everyone accepts that we have to have a really honest conversation about that.

I take it from the questions and the way you have answered that that everyone would agree that is a big issue that has to be resolved and some different actions taken. Regardless of that, we should have proper conversations and hopefully the inquiry will deal with some of those issues. If the inquiry does not, then the decision-makers have to try to deal with that and take those decisions around the safety of people in attendance at the Carnival.

On the crime side in terms of the tipping point and in terms of numbers - and we are driven by numbers - there is the serious nature of that violent crime. Potentially, there are stabbings/woundings and potentially murders. I was not aware of the number of police officers who were injured in carrying out their duties.

Pepe, you were honest enough to say, I think mirroring, that the nature of the Carnival changes. I am not saying I support that. There are a number of elements of the Carnival throughout the weekend, even during the day, and somehow there is an element that slightly changes. We have gone through about learning lessons about police tactics around that, but we really do need to address that part as well. That may well be addressed about the safety side. Ticketing could be an interesting factor about elements of that.

Equally, this Committee needs to remind itself - and I get that - that it is still a small number of people who are making it worse for the large number of people who attend the Carnival peaceably, abiding the law and carrying out these activities. We are still quite clear that it is not the majority who are turning out on the Sunday/Monday night for the ruck or for the fun or for doing their business. We are clear it is the small numbers that we have to constantly deal with as in policing issues as a whole.

We have reached the tipping point on public safety. In my own mind, even with the numbers, we have reached the tipping point about violent crime. With those two issues, we have to do something; we cannot not. I am not saying the police have not done anything or saying the Committee has not done anything. There is a tipping point now on both matters where we need to address those issues either separately or together around safety of the Carnival.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): As I alluded to earlier in my other answer, there were two very serious stabbings on the Sunday night. I do not know whether you were there. I sat in the command team on the Sunday night and thought, "What are we going to do to prevent more?" If we had gone into the Monday having had two young men stabbed to death in the middle of the event, then you and the public would have expected me to have responded to that to prevent further people being injured. We have not had a death in the Carnival since ...

Dave Morgan (Operational Adviser for Notting Hill Carnival): 2000. There were two murders in 2000.

Commander Dave Musker (Metropolitan Police Service): -- 2000 and two murders. One of them was a shooting, was it not? We have come close a couple of times since then.

You started to ask me what my greatest concerns are. My greater concern is in a catastrophic public safety incident or if we get violence that escalates into people losing their lives. Then it becomes a very different narrative about the event and that is what concerns me. It is my duty to try to prevent that.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

Peter Whittle AM: I was just going to say that it is open to us and to you as well about what Assembly Member Prince said. When we are carrying forward on Monday, should the option of the thing actually being closed down at least be on the table if you are going to have a proper conversation? Should we not be saying, "Do the benefits of it still outweigh the disadvantages of it?" I am not saying that I agree necessarily with that position, but we are carrying on with the basis that it should go on.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I will try to be helpful with that. The point of today has been useful and we have heard about experiences. On Monday, we will be looking at recommendations or thoughts going forward. The point that Len [Duvall AM] made very strongly is about it being potentially a tipping point around crushing and around violence. To be sensible around this, you would look at potentially all options as a discussion point. I do not think anything is off the table at all because that is not the way that we would be expected to work on behalf of Londoners.

Unless there are any other questions at all, I would like to thank the guests very much for coming along. Pepe, we are going to see you again on Monday. I will ask the Committee to note the background report and also agree that I will write to the guests with any further actions.