Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Good afternoon. We are, in essence, reconvening the earlier Police and Crime Committee meeting from this morning under an ‘any other business’ item, which I have agreed to take as a discussion on counter-terrorism in London as a matter of urgent business. We are very grateful that Lord Harris could join us at this short notice, only one week, I believe, after the publication of the report, so again, immensely grateful for that and to Members for making themselves available.

The context of this meeting is for the Committee to ask questions of Lord Harris who is the author of the report, which I understand has been submitted to the Mayor. The Mayor is formulating and drafting a formal response to that report and we will have the opportunity to see that at the appropriate time. Equally in a couple of weeks’ time, when this Committee has a question and answer (Q&A) with the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the Commissioner we will have the opportunity to ask questions to those people regarding how they intend to continue with the recommendations. Hopefully, we will have seen the Mayor’s response by that time.

Without further ado, I know colleagues have read what is a very full report with 127 recommendations, and I commend the fullness and thoroughness of the report.

Initially, a question to you Lord Harris, on taking responsibility for this piece of work, what were you hoping to achieve?

Lord Toby Harris: Can I start just by thanking you for accommodating me at this comparatively late hour in the day. As you know, the Government published its White Paper on prison reform today. A year ago I published a report on deaths in prison and so I have been engaged with some of that during the course of the afternoon, so I am grateful for that. What was I hoping to achieve? It is more, I suppose what was the Mayor seeking from this because, as I understand it, his main concern had been looking at the incidents that had taken place in the last few months in Paris and in Brussels, looking at the appalling incident in Nice, where the lorry drove into the crowds. He wanted to have someone come in and look at how well London itself was prepared to respond to those major terrorist incidents. I think that was the initial motivation, particularly how to respond to a marauding terrorist firearms attack, but he set some wide terms of reference, which is why you have ended up with 127 recommendations.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): The Mayor may be the judge himself, but are you satisfied that the review has met both yours and the Mayor’s aims in those terms?

Lord Toby Harris: I cannot speak for the Mayor.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): No, indeed, that is my point.

Lord Toby Harris: With all of these things there are plenty of areas where ideally one would have gone into more detail. There are one or two things where perhaps it would have been useful to look at, but in terms of the very limited timescale available, and the Mayor was keen to get a report quickly, because if there were major issues that needed addressing he would want to get on with it. I did agree to keep him briefed during
the course of the exercise. As far as I am concerned, yes, we have delivered as comprehensive a report as is possible in the three to four month period. I hope that the content of it and the recommendations are useful to the Mayor, to yourselves, and indeed to others to whom the recommendations are directed.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Because you made the point there that there are many recommendations - and colleagues may have some comments around that - some of the recommendations, for example, the one about merging the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), British Transport Police (BTP) and City of London [Police], lends itself to our scrutiny at least within itself. An example of a very large recommendation that was there with enough detail around that, can I ask you about that one?

Lord Toby Harris: I can talk about the content of the recommendation, if you like.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Yes, as an example, there are massive implications but quite lightly touched upon.

Lord Toby Harris: Yes. In fact, the recommendation is not quite as firm as either the City of London Police or the BTP have reacted to it, because it says that this is something which should be looked at. As far as the BTP are concerned there are going to be a number of potential major changes affecting them. The first thing which is definitely supposed to happen is that the BTP’s functions in Scotland are to pass to Police Scotland. The second is that the Home Office has a major review of infrastructure policing going on. If those are happening, which could affect the BTP, because it is part of what they are looking at, that raises questions about the stability of the BTP. Therefore, in the light of that, we should return to considerations whether the London functions -- I can go on, but I suspect --

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): No, I wanted to cite it purely as an example of 127 recommendations, and some with perhaps a detail.

You have included, I believe, which is pleasing, that London is better placed now five years on since your last experience, is your words, to deal with terrorist incidents. With 127 recommendations the man on the Sutton omnibus might think he is not so reassured by those words, because you are making so many recommendations. How would you counter that potential criticism?

Lord Toby Harris: The headline has been very clear that, as far as I am concerned, having been heavily immersed in all of this up to five or six years ago, to return after that time, but what I can see is that the preparedness is very substantially better than it could have been at that stage. That is the headline. That is the level of reassurance, but that has to be caveated by a number of points. The first is you can never guarantee safety. Secondly, the risk of a terrorist attack in London remains highly likely. What has been done in the last few months, but also in the run up in the last few years, in terms of uplifting our capacity, the training and the exercising, means that one can be reassured to a substantial degree.

For example, if you think about the Russell Square appalling attack [on 3 August 2016], which led to the death of the American tourist, that was not really in the end a terrorist incident, but for the first few minutes you had to assume it might have been the start of something very big. The time between the first 999 call being received and the point at which the control room was informed that the suspect had been subdued - and incidentally, not shot dead, as would be the case in most other jurisdictions - and had been arrested was less than six minutes. Now, that is quick. I do not believe it would be anything like as quick five or six years ago. I know it would not have been anything like as quick. Because I have looked at the details of when vehicles were arriving where they were, it is not because there happened to be an armed response vehicle cruising past Russell Square just at the point at which the incident happened.
I would just warn people, and I warn you as elected politicians, that had it not been an individual with a knife, but it had been say two or three individuals with automatic weapons, you would probably have been talking about many dozens of people who were killed. What is a quick enough response, there is no answer to that. It would be an eternity, literally probably, for some of the people on the scene. The question is about balance, and only politicians can make the judgement as to how you make that balance between what is safe and what is not. In terms of, “Well what about the other 127 recommendations?” The whole purpose of having a review like this is that somebody slightly from outside comes in and looks at it and says, “Well, have you looked at this? Are you thinking about that? Have you considered that?” I think that is a good challenge process. It is a useful challenge process.

It is now for those people who have responsibility to address those issues and to decide whether or not they might decide that my recommendation is wrong, that is fine, but I would hope that they would then give the reasons and then you, as the relevant scrutiny body would be able to say, “Yes, OK, we accept those reasons. We think those reasons are valid”, or you might think, “No, those reasons are not good enough, we think you should go away and think about it again”. That is why they are there. They are not to frighten anyone, but they are there to say these are the thing that I think, having looked at it in some detail over the last few months, are important.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): I know some colleagues are going to comment on this. What will be pulled out by colleagues is that many of the recommendations fall outside the Mayor’s remit and that is a fact of it. Therefore, the logical thought then is are those bodies going to be held to scrutiny because they fall outside this building. You are right in your aim, such is the wideness of the question, you needed to think about other bodies. We would have to question and consider, and we would ask the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and others, how that vote is taken forward, because that sits outside this building.

The last point for me, really, is from your conclusions from the report do you, Lord Harris, consider London to be prepared fully for a major terrorist incident now?

Lord Toby Harris: I think I have answered it: it is far better prepared than it was.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Yes, than it was five years ago.

Lord Toby Harris: For anyone to say they are totally prepared, when they have no idea what might happen is, frankly, foolish.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): OK.

Lord Toby Harris: One of my messages is that one of the things that all agencies should consider is that they should prepare themselves for the unexpected. It is too easy to plan for, exercise for, something you have seen before, either in London or in other parts of the world, and not to put yourself in the mind-set of a particularly nasty terrorist organisation, which might decide to do something completely different. It is about that flexibility and that readiness to respond, which I think is critically important. It is about how all of us, every citizen, every business, need to be part of the process of building a safe and secure and resilient society.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): I understand there are complexities. This morning we covered Notting Hill, which was about, for example, with those crowds how would a terrorist incident --

Moving on, we are now going to look at individual parts of the review.
Lord Toby Harris: Do you want me to respond to my other bodies bit, or has Tony got --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Tony, I will bring you in.

Tony Arbour AM: First of all, can I say how much I enjoyed the report? I thought it was quite a good read. I particularly liked the foreword, but it is the recommendation which is missing, the 128th recommendation, which I expected to see. You talk about the incoherence of the existence of the City Police and BTP having bits of policing. Equally, scattered throughout your report you talk about how we cooperate with the London Ambulance Service (LAS) and with the London Fire Brigade and how good it is that they are all on Airwave and this, that and the other. Clearly the obvious next step recommendation would have been all those resilience bits, which the three separate blue light organisation have, ought to be brought under a single umbrella and it is not in here. Was that a recommendation you disregarded?

Lord Toby Harris: Two of them are already under one umbrella, in that they report to the Mayor, so the fire service and the MPS report to the Mayor. They have different structures and those structure are changing because legislation is going through Parliament as far as the fire service is concerned.

With all of these you have to look at what is the proportion of their work which deals with emergency preparedness and what is dealing with other matters. If you look at the LAS, yes of course it has a critical role in a major incident of this sort, or indeed in other major disasters. The vast majority of their work is the individual crisis, somebody who needs a 999 transfer to hospital or, indeed, more routine advice and support through the 999 service. You have to make a judgement as to whether there is enough of a case and more coherence of bringing that under the Mayor or whether, because the bulk of their work relates to the rest of the health service, that it makes more sense that they are related to the LAS.

In response to Steve’s half question about other bodies, I have always understood the role of the Mayor, and indeed the role of the Assembly, to be standing up for the interests of the people of London. Therefore, while the Mayor has certain functions, the Mayor has the authority of being directly elected by the people of London to speak up on behalf of Londoners. If that means saying to other bodies, “We think you ought to do that”, then that is the case. I am not sure that when I was on [the Assembly] we ever tried it very effectively, but part of the role of the London Assembly was also to hold other bodies to account. I would have thought you would be well able to ask some of those bodies who are not directly under the remit of the Mayor what they are doing and, if they have not responded to this the reasons for doing so.

I should say also that I met with total cooperation from all the external organisation, I think all of which are listed in one of the annexes, who were very willing and very ready to talk, very open and very frank. I assume that they will be ready to listen and ready to talk to you as well.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): That is perfect. One organisation the Mayor clearly has sway over is the MPS and policing. We have a few questions around that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes, you made a number of recommendations for the police. One of them was about Tasers, possibly increasing the number of Tasers, but also you talked about getting a new model, but we know that is not approved by the various Government agencies, or whatever, that approve that. How viable are these recommendations, also given the financial pressures the police are under?

Lord Toby Harris: The first point is the recommendation on Tasers, or as we are supposed now to call them ‘conductive electric devices’ (CED) or something, which does not trip off the tongue, but I suppose we can all
try and learn it, is slightly nuanced. I am not saying that there should be more Tasers available. I think there are very large downsides to issuing more Tasers. I am saying it is one of those things that you should make sure is constantly reviewed. In particular if you, for example, had a spate of nasty knife attacks which were associated with terrorism, or indeed nasty knife attacks associated with other things, there may be a case, in fact, for a higher proportion of officers, or more ready availability at local level of Taser use, but that is something you would keep under review. In fact, it was late last night we were debating the use of Tasers in mental hospitals, in the House of Lords. There will be some limited circumstances when a Taser is necessary and appropriate and a better solution, but it is not a general recommendation about Tasers and there is not a resource implication associated with it.

The specific point about the model and the need to approve a new model, as I understand it, the Taser that is currently issued by the MPS is now regarded as obsolete by Taser or CED manufacturers and the process has to be gone through of the MPS making a case to the Home Office, and the Home Office approving that model, because that is the task of the Home Office. That has not yet been completed. I have to say I had slightly conflicting versions of why it has not yet been completed, but it seems to me it is one of those things that whatever the reason as to why it has not been done yet it should now be done and sorted out.

As I understand it, the stocks of the current Taser held by the MPS are running out, because police officers drop them, or they are used or they do not work anymore, and the stocks that you might buy are running out because that model is now obsolete and they have been sold out. Therefore, this is something which has to be addressed quickly and urgently. That is not resource intensive. It would have a resource implication in the event of you saying, “Well, we want to change all this and we want to have far more Tasers”. I am not recommending that, I am saying it is something you should keep under review.

In terms of the general resource point, and I have not attempted to - I was not asked to I am pleased to say - cost the particular recommendations. I do think that there is a responsibility for the Home Office to fully fund the National, International and Capital City (NICC) Grant, which the MPS receives. In my day, if I can put it like that, there used to be regular arguments about the NICC Grant that the MPS received. I was told, in terms, by a senior Home Office official, “Well, we listen to whatever figure comes from the MPS and we divide by two and then we negotiate from there”. I am sure that 15 years later, or whatever, things have changed and it is now a much better dialogue.

As I understand it, the current figure is one where there has been an agreement between the Home Office and the MPS and also City Hall, as to what that figure ought to be and the Home Office is not fully funding it. I do not need to tell you any of this, many of you being local government politicians, as well as being here, it is not always helpful if you simply press the Home Office to say, “Yes, we will fully fund that”. You then have to watch that the money does not disappear from the other grants and support that you get. You have all been there, you know all about how that works. I do think there is an issue. If it costs a certain amount for the national, international and counter-terrorism functions of the MPS then that should be being met, because that is supposed to be the agreement.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Particularly with the high level of operation we are under.

The other question I have for you is that in your report you say that you gave the Mayor further advice on matters that would not be appropriate, for sensitivity, to put in this report, which I completely understand; will there be an opportunity for you to brief us in a private session on some of those issues that you raised?

Lord Toby Harris: That is a matter for you. I am quite happy to have a private session. The reason they are not included in the reports is because it is not appropriate to do so. Can I say, and I raised this right at the
beginning when I was asked to do this; I said to the Mayor’s office, “You want a public report, which I understand. What am I supposed to do if there is some really big issue that I am frankly terrified about?” We then came up with this idea of private advice. The private advice, I should make clear, is not so voluminous that the people of London should be scared, like they are already scared, according to Steve, by the 127 recommendations, but they are things which cannot really be put explicitly in the public domain. You may find, if you read it very carefully, you can guess what some of them might be.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): If the Committee wanted it, you would be happy to come along for a private conversation?

Lord Toby Harris: Yes, absolutely.

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

Sian Berry AM: Going on further into equipping of the police, on firearms officers you do not come to a view about how many firearms officers there should be, but you do review the uplift of 600 that we know about. Recommendations 20 and 21 are about the capacity for training and the need for that to increase. I think we all agree that if you are going to put more armed officers on the streets they should be very, very trained, and that is a concern of ours. At the recent Q&A that we held with the Commissioner, he said to us that the increase in the number of armed officers was in fact now 720. I wondered if you were aware of that figure and whether that maybe increases the strength of those recommendations.

Lord Toby Harris: I think, as with all of these things, there are different definitions of what the various figures look at. There is the armed uplift, which is associated with the responses and the armed response vehicles; there is the figure of having some backup additional armed capacity for a Commissioner’s reserve; there is also the general requirement for armed officers across the system, some of which is being bolstered. It depends which of those you focus on whether you get the 600 or the 720 figure.

In terms of whether or not I formed a judgement on the total size, the judgement I formed was that I did not see the case for going beyond the current uplift under present circumstances. However, if you collectively decided that you would like to have seen the Russell Square incident resolved in three minutes rather than six minutes, then there is a massive implication in terms of the armed resource that you would need to do that. It would not just be doubling it in practice, because of all of those implications.

In my view, to achieve significant change in that speed of response you would be changing the look and feel of London. I do not know if you notice when you see an armed response vehicle, some of you will, some of you may not know quite what to look for, but you would be very conscious of them because there would be an awful lot of them. I have a general view that we want essentially to have an unarmed police force. It is better for civil society that you have an unarmed police force.

Therefore, my judgement is that I have not made a recommendation that you should go beyond it. You have to keep it under review in terms of what may happen in the future. To come back to the training point, which I have probably drifted off from, is that the training capacity and the capacity to deliver that is right at the limits of what can be done on the timescale that has been set. The Home Office was looking for this to be achieved by spring of next year. The Commissioner wants it done by the end of the calendar year, and I would share his judgement that that is appropriate. To do that requires the training capacity to be operating absolutely at full tilt with extra shifts being put in. I sat in on one of the Commissioner’s fortnightly meetings where he progress chases. I would not like to be at the receiving end of that in terms of whether you had or had not delivered.

Page 6
There are a whole number of issues to be looked at. One is the physical throughput of trainees, one is the recruitment of officers who want to volunteer to do this, but there are also practical issues about the availability of weapons. There is a standardised weapon; I do not really do guns, so I cannot tell you the name of it, but it is a standard piece of equipment which the police in London use. As I understand it, every other police force in Europe has decided to go for a similar sort of weapon. Actually the market for selling these guns - they are manufactured in the United States (US) - in Europe is minute by comparison to the demand in the US by every citizen who wants to have one of these things. I exaggerate only slightly. This is just a small part of their business and, therefore, the physical procurement of these weapons and getting them available is a constraint. That is something I had personally not assumed. I thought you would just go out and buy these things, but it is a little bit more complicated, so that has been a constraint on it. We are right up against it. If you said to the Commissioner tomorrow you would like it to be 2,000 instead of an uplift of 600 or 720, depending which figures you want to use, there would be real practical problems in delivering that.

Sian Berry AM: Going back to the training issues, you basically conclude there is a risk to the quality of the training.

Lord Toby Harris: No, I think the training is fine. It is one of those things which requires constant vigilance. Even once you have achieved the uplift you are going to have to maintain a higher level of training than you have before, simply to deal with the churn of officers who retire, but I do make some recommendations about officers retiring.

Sian Berry AM: Just finally, your recommendation 24 is about the recruitment of more firearms officers and you make comments there about making sure that that is a diverse set of officers, as well as the rest of the police. Do you have any recommendations about how that might be achieved, any specific ideas?

Lord Toby Harris: I think it is a standard set of recommendations you would have about achieving a more diverse workforce in any area. I have to say, when I went to the fortnightly meeting I had rather assumed that anything about diversity and general ethnicity would not be heard in the room. I was, quite frankly, surprised, and I do not think it was there for my benefit, that actually there was a regular item which looked at that, looked at the initiatives they were taking, for example, to promote being part of the firearms command to women officers, looking at selling the message in terms of different minority communities, so something which is there. I am not sure that it has been necessarily hugely successful in terms of changing the profile, but some progress was made. Certainly, all the things in my immediate automatic equal opportunities checklist, how do you achieve diversity, were being addressed. I am sure there are other things that people could think of, but the normal standard things that we would all immediately recommend are being looked at and are being pursued.

Sian Berry AM: We will be monitoring progress on that.

Lord Toby Harris: I am sure you will.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I touched upon the mergers just as an example of the 127 but, Andrew, you have some more questions around that.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes, but before that there are a couple of question on training, Toby, if I may. First of all, there is also the issue of ongoing refresher training for a higher number of officers, which also increased the demand, but also the question of the Tasers. If we are going to have a whole raft of new Tasers, presumably all the Taser officers are going to have to retrain on a new piece of kit as well. As the training is done by the same people who do the firearms training, is that ultimately not going to increase demand?
Lord Toby Harris: Yes, as I understand it the new model Taser I think is similar but it is a different model and that would be done, but I am not sure how much extra training would be required by police. At some stage that is going to have to happen, because we are going to have phase that in.

There is actually a further complication about the training - I know this is not necessarily your remit - but the desire to have more fire officers and more ambulance officers who can operate in the warm zone in the event of an incident, requires a degree of training which, in practice, would be given by the same -- obviously not about shooting a gun but about protecting yourself against it, so the delivery of that will require use of the same training resources.

Andrew Dismore AM: Can I go on to the question of the mergers of the BTP and the City of London [Police]? They have been lumped together like sex and violence, but in fact they are two different issues.

Lord Toby Harris: Yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: You have set out a pretty strong case in the report. I think in the end, superficially, that looks like a very good idea. Why has that not happened before, each of them?

Lord Toby Harris: The first point I want to caveat is that I found examples of good practice and useful initiatives being done in both the BTP and City of London Police, which I think would be usefully learned by the MPS. The temptation within all police forces, the ‘not invented here’ syndrome, is really quite strong. I even found some initiatives which, as far as I could tell, people in the MPS, though you never know whether you have spoken to the right person in the MPS, did not know about. That is a weakness. The question of why it has not happened before, there is one strong reason as far as the BTP is concerned, which is the funding model. That is that the BTP is funded by the train operating companies (TOCs). In this instance, the Mayor is a TOC because he has responsibility for Transport for London (TfL) and they provide the funding. However, the more general changes to the BTP, I have always found, is from the TOC say, “Hang on, we are playing the tune here, this is the way we want it to operate”. Then there is the question of the integration of the transport operations and the fact that they have developed a specialism around transport, which undeniably is the case. I do not think that would necessarily be lost by a merger, although I think that is what would have to be looked at, to make sure that that particular ethos, understanding the particular nature of transport emergencies and transport policing, is important and would not be lost, but I think the main reason is the funding. The City of London --

Andrew Dismore AM: Shall we just stick with the BTP?

Lord Toby Harris: I do not want to bore you.

Andrew Dismore AM: I have two more points about it. You have not said anything about Overground. You talk about the Underground. Obviously, now the Mayor is responsible for chunks of the Overground, which is presumably the TOC. Obviously there is also a pitch to bring more of the suburban rail within TfL as well, which may or may not happen, but looks as though it probably will, over the next few years. You have not referred to that. Any reason why you have not referred to those?

Lord Toby Harris: This was one of the recommendations that comes back to Steve’s [O’Connell] initial point, where I think this is something that should be looked at. If you want to do it then you have to look at all the detail on how you would make it happen, and one of the questions is what would be the dividing line and how you would actually manage that on the suburban rail. The problem with some of the suburban lines is some of
them go way outside Greater London and the remit of the Mayor. However, if the responsibility has been transferred for them then I think the logic is that you would take that into the MPS, if that is the direction that you went in.

Andrew Dismore AM: If we go on to the City of London, why hasn’t the City merged?

Lord Toby Harris: You have to remember that the City of London [Corporation] predates Magna Carta and that special rights and privileges are enshrined in Magna Carta as a special section. The City has its own governance arrangements and governance rules and I know that when the last major reorganisation of police forces was done, and I think there were at that stage 140 different police forces in England, and the last time a merger was suggested it was clear that the City of London Police would not have been merged with anyone at that stage. You will all be aware of the way in which the City makes its views felt, at all sorts of levels and high levels. What they do, they do very well. However, particularly when we are looking at some of these very serious issues, the question of delivering better coherence is one that you have to look at. I have to say that the Mayor has got to decide how much energy he wishes to expend in pursuit of this, in seeking to persuade people this is something worth doing. Logic suggests that the coherence question means that a full assessment of the benefits of such a merger should be looked at.

Andrew Dismore AM: The City’s speciality is city fraud and white collar crime, rather than necessarily counter-terrorism.

Lord Toby Harris: I would not mind betting, and you might want to ask this question, whether the number of officers dedicated in the MPS on fraud and such matters does not exceed the entire police force of the City of London.

Andrew Dismore AM: Next question, following on from that, for the City it is all about identity, rather than necessary functionality or efficiency, in this particular spat anyway. Obviously, the City funds the police at levels that the City wants to fund the police within the City. Is there some sort of halfway house for the City, and I suppose also to an extent for the BTP, of whilst allowing them to maintain their identity as the City of London Police, integrating them within the command structure of the MPS?

Lord Toby Harris: Yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: Would that be an easier way of doing it?

Lord Toby Harris: It might be. Whether that would make the City of London Police and the City of London itself feel happier is another question. Part of their argument is that because they are policing a particular area of what used to be, but I am not sure it still is, the key financial district of the capital, that there are particular expectations which are placed on them about the style and nature and effectiveness of policing and, I am sure they would say, they would not want to see that diluted by a change in the structure. Having said that, you could devise a number of halfway houses which would still enable the City of London Police to have a Commissioner and for that person to appear regularly at all the functions that the City of London organises.

Andrew Dismore AM: The City police is no bigger than a borough command unit (BCU) for even a large borough.

Lord Toby Harris: I think it is now less than 700 officers, or it is around 700.
Andrew Dismore AM: Yes, it is about the same as an outer London borough. A bit bigger perhaps, but certainly it is more than an inner one.

Lord Toby Harris: That is what people used to say to me about Barnet.

Andrew Dismore AM: Barnet is around about 550 now and Camden is around 650/700, although they have just merged Camden and Islington now without notification, but there we are. That is another issue.

Coming back to the City police issue, if we are looking at a terrorist incident in the City, did you look at the extent to which the City is equipped to deal with that? How many firearms officers does the City have, for example?

Lord Toby Harris: Under those circumstances, it is not as though the City would be left on its own and the Mayor would be sitting and saying, “Oh yes, fine, yes, let them get on with it”. It is quite clear that what would happen is there would be a common mobilisation. It is a common mobilisation which works the other way as well. The City of London - do not necessarily hold me to this - but I think they have two armed response vehicles and I think they are going for a third. Those would be put at the disposal of the rest of London, should they be required. The same would be true of the BTP’s armed response vehicles, except they use them in a slightly different way. Equally, if there was an incident in the City, the MPS would be --

Andrew Dismore AM: We have got the City boundaries, as it were, for which the MPS would not trespass unless there was some incident like that. Would that slow down a response in the City?

Lord Toby Harris: I doubt whether it would slow it down very significantly. This is something which is rehearsed, there are good protocols in place. I do not want to hark back to 7/7 and the report that the Assembly did following that, but one of the issues that that identified was the City of London Police taking a different decision, and this was about switching off a mobile phone network, which they did essentially unilaterally. Now, in the scheme of things there are much more important issues to worry about. It is that point about coherence which is important, and that is why I think it is something which is important to look at and to be satisfied that all of that could be dealt with properly.

Andrew Dismore AM: That could be dealt with by bringing it in the same command structure.

Lord Toby Harris: Yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: If you went for the wholesale mergers here, inevitably there is disruption when you try and merge two or three organisations together, two smaller and one bigger, to what extent have you factored the impact of disruption into your recommendations?

Lord Toby Harris: You will note that the recommendations are “you should review whether this is something that is worth doing”. That is the balancing factor you have to look at. The balancing factor is this will cause disruption; is it worth that in the short term for something which broadly works reasonably well? Do you lose something unique, which you would not otherwise have access to? Those are the factors you would have to balance into account in terms of whether those possible losses were outweighed by the benefits of greater coherence.

Keith Prince AM: Whilst it is generally agreed, Lord Harris, that this is a valuable document, and I share that view, there does seem to also a body which is not limited to just political parties that feel that it strayed a bit wider than it needed to. There are 127 recommendations, which is rather a lot. If we just look at the sensible
suggestion of merging the City of London Police and the BTP, I think most people feel there would be some sense in that. Generally speaking, a number of people feel that this report would have benefitted had you been a bit more focused on an issue like that. You have given us some very useful information today which would have been probably better if it was in the report. Had you dug a bit deeper into this issue and stayed on-piste, if you like, around it, so my question is: do you not think you should have maybe looked at those protocols and maybe joint training or something, as an interim solution to the problem of there being three different police forces? Also, would the report not have benefited more from having more in-depth drilling down on key issues, rather than going across the whole 127?

Lord Toby Harris: Most of the questioning has been about two recommendations, which related one to the City of London Police and one the BTP. There are 125 others. Most of the points are already taken into account because the joint training, the work done by JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme) group, and so on, does cross the various boundaries. Had I been concerned about serious problems in terms of commonality of training, because the training is on the same basis and the same staff, I would have raised that. You seem to think I went a little bit too wide. I refer you, which I am sure I have somewhere in these pile of papers here, to the terms of reference I was set by the Mayor, and they were very wide. I was specifically asked to look at the other police forces in London. That is why I did so.

Keith Prince AM: With respect, I do not think we are challenging that part of it, but when you make your recommendations around what the [UK] Border Agency should do, and suggesting that maybe there should be a fortnightly newsletter, most people seem to think that is outside of what your remit really was.

Lord Toby Harris: I disagree entirely. I am seriously disagreeing. First of all, I had quite a long series of discussions with representatives of the business community in different forums. The current agreements for briefing them, providing them with information and material are inadequate. I looked at an example of the CSSC (Cross-sector Safety & Security Communications) briefings, which I am sure you have seen, and they were cut and paste jobs, or looked to me like cut and paste jobs from press statements. If you are a busy business person you are looking for something which relates to that. I talked to the Head of Security at Canary Wharf, and he made the point that he can go on the internet and look up guidance which is produced by the Department of Homeland Security in the US, and get more valuable advice on the sorts of things that he and his organisation ought to be doing and looking to respond to on terrorism than he can get from any of the formal sources that he gets. There are very strong feelings in the business community about the nature and the flow of the information they get. Again, it is actually part of the remit. This was a very important area to cover.

In terms of the [United Kingdom (UK)] Border Agency, this is about facilitation of terrorism. We have a sort of cosy feeling that somehow we are safer in this country because it is harder to obtain firearms than it is on mainland Europe or in the US. However, there is a steady drift of arms which can be smuggled into this country. There was a recent incident where the National Crime Agency (NCA) intercepted a boat with the purchase of arms by an organised crime group and it was quite apparent that they had had no difficulty in sourcing that, that they perhaps did it in a rather cack-handed way which meant that the NCA managed to catch them.

One of the other things I do is I chair National Trading Standards and we have a Ports and Borders Unit, which is dedicated to trying to stop unsafe or counterfeit goods entering the country, so I have been in the ports. I have watched these crates come in, often with manifests which bear absolutely no relationship to anything inside it.
Keith Prince AM: I do not disagree with you on how important that is, but really that was not in the remit. The remit was to undertake an independent review of London’s preparedness for a major terrorist incident and the resources and expertise needed to cope where necessary. I do not disagree with what you are saying is important. I do not disagree that it is something that someone should have looked at, but the point I am making, and it is with all due respect, and there is a lot of good information in here, is that had the report been a bit more focussed, had you drilled down deeper on to some of these issues then the report would have been a better report than it is.

Lord Toby Harris: You may be talking about style and approach. I will continue to defend -- and I appreciate you do not want to go there -- about why it was important to have the recommendations on arms. I also make the additional point that one of the things that I discovered in the course of my discussions is the MPS are themselves taking this extremely seriously. One of the particular things I wanted to avoid --

Keith Prince AM: I would be surprised if they weren’t!

Lord Toby Harris: No. They were looking at the importation as opposed to the arms incidents in London, which should cause concern, and I can quote some statistics about firearms discharges, but what I wanted to avoid was a situation where the MPS and Counter-terrorism Division were doing something which duplicated work which was being done by the NCA, which is why I want to talk about the joint intelligence hub, which is something that during the course of this review, possibly because I was asking questions about it --

Keith Prince AM: Can I just take you up on that NCA bit? In your report you say that if the City of London Police were to be merged with the MPS, they should lose the fraud aspect to the NCA. Would you also say that should happen for the MPS as well? Then you also say, however --

Lord Toby Harris: About fraud or anything else?

Keith Prince AM: Fraud, yes. The fraud aspect that the City of London specialise in. Then you also in your report say about the MPS they should retain the national responsibility for terrorism. There is a bit of a conflict there. You are saying one police force should lose its specialism to the NCA, but you do not comment on whether that should include the MPS’s specialism as well. Then you are saying that MPS should not lose its national responsibility. Could you just clarify that for me?

Lord Toby Harris: Yes, the simple answer to that is that the City of London has a national lead and provides a number of things which are done nationally, for example --

Keith Prince AM: Can I just say that you quite rightly say that the MPS’s department is probably bigger than --

Lord Toby Harris: Yes, that is about effectiveness and what they actually do. They [the City of London Police] organise Action Fraud and so on.

The distinction is fraud is something which happens in every police force area and, therefore, you would expect that there would need to be a proportionate capacity in every force to deal with what is actually probably the biggest area of crime. The latest crime statistics suggest that. Therefore, you would expect every force to be retaining a degree of capacity in those areas. The question is the national specialist function, which I did not look at, is not part of it; I am just saying this is how you would resolve this question if the merger happened, you would put that in. It could come to the MPS. I am sure the present Commissioner and, no doubt future Commissioners, would make a bid for it because they make a bid for everything. This simply was that point.
The reason why I think that the argument about transferring the counter-terrorism function to the NCA is a much more profound issue, is apart from, and this is where the disruption question becomes an important one, is that if at a time it is highly likely that there is a terrorist incident, this is not the moment to be causing disruption. However, there is another reason, which I think is very important, which is I believe there has to be a thread between ordinary local policing and counter-terrorism, because so much of the local eyes and ears are part of normal policing. The truism of the Police Community Support Officer who notices or hears about the discarded peroxide bottles and he makes the referral and that then leads to it, which I am not sure how true but it is alleged to be the case. There is also the point --

Keith Prince AM: Lord Harris, that is quite rightly the regional threat, but we are talking about the MPS’s national role, because clearly the MPS’s national role, MPS do not patrol in Liverpool, do they?

Lord Toby Harris: They may well be part of the operation which, if something occurred in relation to that. It is the point about policing the consequences. If what you did was you set up the National Counter-terrorism Unit and you moved it to the NCA, they would do the major raids, they would do the major interventions. The difficulty would be - and I am sure you would try and avoid this - that the agency would not be responsible for policing the consequences, the community consequences. I cite somewhere in the report the --

Keith Prince AM: I do agree with you, Lord Harris. I will shut up in a second.

Lord Toby Harris: That is fine.

Keith Prince AM: I am just trying to get to the point whereby what you give as the example of the MPS, because they are the national agency for terrorism, that theory that you are purporting, and I do not necessarily disagree with it, does not apply to Liverpool. I am not picking on Liverpool for any particular reason. If the MPS send their counter-terrorism team to Liverpool and do whatever you were suggesting they may do somewhere in London, they do not have to clear up the mess afterwards either.

Lord Toby Harris: No, but they are part of the same policing family. The National Crime Unit is not a police force, it is not part of that. That coherence of having to have responsibility for it is critical and the protocols that exist between the police forces to manage that are extremely important. I was involved some years ago in the development of that. It has now moved on substantially since then, and I think rightly so.

Keith Prince AM: I will leave it there. Thank you.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Those are questions around the police, some of those we will pick up with the Commissioner. Tom, sorry, I did not see you.

Tom Copley AM: I just wanted to ask you about the first two recommendations, which related to where police officers live. I wondered if you thought that perhaps the police needed review their estate strategy and approach that as a result of this. This is something we looked at recently on the Budget and Performance Committee and they intend to reduce the number of homes that they own from 830 to fewer than 200, which is a 75% reduction. They are talking about having conversations with Housing Associations about prioritising police officers, though I got the impression that perhaps those discussions have not been particularly fruitful. In light of the recommendations that you have made, do you think that perhaps the police need to review these disposals?

Lord Toby Harris: I am not convinced. This is not something I looked at for this exercise, but I have never been convinced that a police force is an ideal landlord. I really do not think it is where they have their skillset.
My experience of some of the police housing and the way it was managed and maintained was not good and not happy. What I do think is important is that there is a clear recognition of the need to make it possible for more police officers to live in London and I think that should be by agreements with Housing Associations. This is something where I think the authority of the Mayor, or the Mayor’s Office, is something where progress could be made. There is also a separate issue, which you may not want to go into, about the need for temporary accommodation in the event of a major incident, which is lasting over potentially several weeks. If you had London operating at a critical state of alert for several weeks you would have to find ways of accommodating emergency service workers in the capital. I am not sure enough thought has been given to it. The current idea is about block booking hotels and so on, but I do think it is one of those issue which has to be addressed as part of this.

Tom Copley AM: If you are not of the view that the police ought to be a landlord, then perhaps you would agree where the police are entering into land disposals that perhaps there should be a condition in the planning process that a registered social landlord perhaps provides on that land a certain number of units which are available to the police.

Lord Toby Harris: Yes, that would be fine. The purpose of this is to ensure that there are some properties which would be available for emergency service personnel, so that would be a route to delivering that.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Sian Berry AM: Can I just ask, recommendations 1 and 2 both relate to housing, as Assembly Member Copley has mentioned. The two reports you reference and a report I did, which was similar to the Policy Exchange Report, about a month or two before, all recommended things like putting emergency service accommodation into the London Plan. The response from the services themselves was, “This isn’t so much of a problem” or, “It’s not a critical problem”. Do they agree with your recommendations, the services themselves?

Lord Toby Harris: It is symptomatic that they do not think about this as an issue. Sorry, I think it is symptomatic they do not see it as a priority issue, let us put it that way. They talk about the importance, and the police certainly do, of trying to recruit from London. There are going to be consequences in terms of people’s accommodation. In London certainly, the police at least are saying they are not having problems in finding recruits, so they are not seeing this as being the pinch point. I am saying, “For the welfare and morale of your officers you may need to have more housing available within the London area”.

Sian Berry AM: Your report is about emergency responses and I think although the response when I talked about this was people were quite sad that police were not living nearer to where they worked but that in an emergency situation they would get in somehow. That did not seem to me at the time to be a very good answer. You must have found out that is --

Lord Toby Harris: Never underestimate when there is a major emergency the desire of those people involved in it to make sure they make themselves available. However, you can envisage emergencies where that would be physically very difficult to do, which is why the need to have the emergency accommodation available, and there is a reference to the possibility of some of the armed services reserve accommodation being used as a possibility. That is something which I think could be explored.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Before we move on to questions around the Mayor and Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), something I was going to ask you about was recommendation 87, which is about communities, which is about building up resilience across communities. Not too many of your recommendations covered that piece, but I was struck by 87, which is the Mayor building on the creation of
the MPS Muslim Communities Forum. I think create a separate pan-London multi-faith reference groups was what was your suggestion around that. I wanted to hear a bit more about that.

**Lord Toby Harris**: Yes, what I have in mind there is in the event of a major incident, one of the things which will be important is all of the faith communities coming together and in a united fashion expressing condemnation of what has happened, saying it is not done in the name of any particular faith. What is not clear to me is that there exists at the moment any straightforward mechanism for doing that, and rather than having to knit one together, at the moment when there is an awful lot else happening and a major crisis going on, having something where people have got used to coming together, talking this through, almost working out what the line would be in advance, would be something which is valuable. I also think that there would probably be some benefits for other parts of what the Mayor does and London Government, if you were able to do that and bring the different faith communities together. That is not a straightforward ‘one from each faith’ as you will know, it is much more complicated because of the nature of all the faiths that are present in London.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman)**: That is a challenging request really, because as someone who is involved with the Safer Neighbourhood Boards, I know you are pretty involved in communities, cracking that particular nut of getting faiths together, getting the right representatives of those faith groups pan-London, let alone other parts.

**Lord Toby Harris**: That is why you need to do it in times when it is not a crisis.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman)**: Indeed so.

**Lord Toby Harris**: It seems to me to be something which critically needs to be done. It does not have to be done under the umbrella of terrorism, but I think it would be particularly necessary to have done it if there was a major terrorist incident.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman)**: Absolutely. We are moving on to questions around the Mayor and MOPAC.

**Keith Prince AM**: Many of us think this is a very good suggestion, but I would just like to dig a bit deeper about your rationale around your recommendation for the need to appoint a Mayoral Advisor on counter-terrorism and resilience. The question is can MOPAC and the Mayor, and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, of course, cover issues related to resilience and counter-terrorism without such advisers?

**Lord Toby Harris**: Obviously, that is one of the things you have to do under those circumstances. I was quite struck by conversations I had with the former Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Stephen Greenhalgh, when he talked about the problem of not having the ‘bandwidth’ as he put it, which is a Stephen phrase, to cover all the issues in the sort of depth that he would think important. I recall from my time of doing a lesser role as Chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) here, a long time ago and it was all much quieter and much easier, that I was well aware that there were things going on that I could not conceivably be on top of and [the issue is] how you manage that. When I was doing that equivalent role, although, as I say, it was in a different context, you had 22 other Members of the MPA, some of whom could be relied on to go and provide that input into - I did not say they all could be relied on - particular roles! Part of it is about being able to ensure that there is somebody covering that area, who you have confidence in, has the sort of, frankly, political nous about some of these matters. As I understand it, that is not something which is currently available within MOPAC. You have members of staff who are extremely knowledgeable and informed about, but that is different from having somebody who has the oversight perhaps. That is the reason for that.
Keith Prince AM: The previous Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime did have advisers, two of whom are in the room actually. However, it seems that the current Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime does not have these advisers.

Lord Toby Harris: I do not know what arrangements she is making for providing those structures.

Keith Prince AM: You would strongly recommend it.

Lord Toby Harris: I believe that it is the case that you need somebody on counter-terrorism, because the nature of counter-terrorism, that would also have to advise the Mayor. In fact, there are issues where the adviser would need to advise some of the other Deputy Mayors.

Keith Prince AM: I am inclined to agree with you actually, Lord Harris.

Also you mention in your report about recommending that the Mayor be included at Cobra meetings. Are there any examples you have of when you think the Mayor should have been at Cobra meeting when he was not, not actually limited to the current Mayor?

Lord Toby Harris: I think there has been an incident where there was a Cobra -- I am not sure I am allowed to talk about this. I think on occasions there has been a lack of clarity as to whether the Mayor should be involved. I was certainly concerned that one or two of the conversations I had with --

Keith Prince AM: Perhaps the detail you can share with us in private.

Lord Toby Harris: -- government departments that there was a lack of clarity about this. I thought it was worth putting in to make it absolutely on the record. It would be a nonsense if there was an incident in London and the elected Mayor of London was not part of the meeting and indeed it would be a brave Home Secretary and Prime Minister who allowed the Mayor to be standing in the street in Whitehall saying, “There is a meeting going on there about the crisis in London and I am not at it”.

Keith Prince AM: Yes, I would agree with you. Thank you.

Lord Toby Harris: Sorry, did you want me to just answer on the resilience adviser point?

Keith Prince AM: Yes.

Lord Toby Harris: It is a similar version of the bandwidth argument. You could logically locate that role as it currently is with the Chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, or the Deputy Mayor for Fire, when that post is created, or you could locate it with MOPAC and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. You could do it in a number of ways. There is a natural inclination, and I am not suggesting that this currently happens, although I have had some suggestions that it might have happened at various points in the past, but if you locate it under the remit of one person who is of Deputy Mayoral rank, the other Deputy Mayors do not necessarily see it as anything to do with them, whereas actually this is a shared area of activity. There is an advantage of having somebody who is slightly out of that.

Keith Prince AM: Yes, a common czar.

---

1 COBRA (Cabinet Office Briefing Room A) is an emergency response committee.
Lord Toby Harris: Yes. You can play around with the structures in a number of ways. Simply automatically locating it with one Deputy Mayor may not deliver quite what you wanted, apart from the fact that there may be the bandwidth issue as well, because there are a lot of things to keep on top of.

Tony Arbour AM: One thing which struck me in this, Toby, you make passing reference only to the people who have come back from areas of conflict. You sort of infer that they come back, they could be doing anything. If it were me, and I obviously come from a different place from you, I might have suggested --

Lord Toby Harris: You are south of the river, I mean!

Tony Arbour AM: Well, indeed. There might have been a suggestion that these people should be kept under surveillance, or something of that kind. However, you mainly refer to the fact that half of the characters who have been there come back here, and then you make no recommendation in relation to that. Why do you not think that these characters ought not to be monitored in some way?

Lord Toby Harris: I did from time to time come against a number of issues, which I thought were outside the terms of reference. You may feel I have drawn the line in the wrong place, but this was very much about preparedness. I have strong views about precisely the issues that you raise, but I did feel that perhaps that was straying slightly too far out of the original remit. You may feel I have strayed outside in other areas. Can I make just one point about these individuals who are to be kept under surveillance?

Tony Arbour AM: Yes.

Lord Toby Harris: I did not ask, because that is not part of the remit, the precise arrangements that are in place about some of these individuals, but you do have to say if you are going to talk about full surveillance for that number of people just what an extraordinary cost that is. I seem to recall from my time being involved in these matters that full round-the-clock surveillance of an individual is like 40 people, because you have to --

Tony Arbour AM: Yes, I understand.

Lord Toby Harris: -- have different exercise emphases, you have to have four shifts and all of those things. If you are talking about several hundred people you can do the maths. It is extraordinarily expensive. There are lesser ways of supervision, lesser ways of oversight and so on. Obviously, you would do that in a proportionate way. That is the reason I did not say more about it is that just occasionally I did come across areas and I thought probably, although I would personally be happy to go there and talk about them, this is not the place.

Tony Arbour AM: All right. There is one other question which is significant. The major thing, and I recall that when you were Chairman we discussed this often, related to the national functions which the MPS carry out. At that time there was a suggestion that somehow or another the funding that the MPS got from Government, for things like anti-terrorism, royalty protection and all that kind of thing, kind of subsidised the rest of the activities of the MPS. Looking at the figures that you have produced in your report, on the contrary it looks as though we are subsidising, the ratepayers of London are subsidising counter-terrorism to a very substantial extent. Have I misunderstood that?

Lord Toby Harris: No, but I think when you talk about the discussions we had, however many years ago it was, 12 or more years ago, this was part of the shadow-boxing that was going on between the Home Office and the Greater London Authority and the MPA at the time, as to how much these things costs. My
understanding is that much more thorough detailed assessment have been done in recent years, which has led to the figure and the acceptance that the cost exceeds that which comes in a special grant.

Can I also say there are, however, benefits, I believe, to Londoners policing, of having those functions - and to Londoners. In the sense that having those extra responsibilities is good for the career prospects, good for the morale and so on within the MPS. I am not sure I would put very much financial weight on that - certainly not the amount of the gap which is identified in the report.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I have actually marked it with three exclamation marks. It is your recommendation number 10:

> “The Mayor and the Metropolitan Police Service should strongly resist any attempts by central government to move the counter-terrorism function and wider counter-terrorism policing network from the MPS to the National Crime Agency.”

Obviously we all support that, we all want these things here, but looking at it objectively is that not kind of being a little Londoner saying, “Somehow or another we know best here in London and any national body could not possibly do it any better”?

**Lord Toby Harris:** The reason why I think it should be part of mainstream policing, the earlier questions, somebody might make an argument, “Well why don’t you put the national counter-terrorism function somewhere else in the country?” You have talked about Liverpool, or the Merseyside Police or something. The reason why that does not make sense, and that is not what you were suggesting, I appreciate, is simply about the significance of London as a target, that significance of London in terms of where the terrorist threat is --

**Tony Arbour AM:** I was not speaking about geography, I was simply speaking about it --

**Lord Toby Harris:** For money.

**Tony Arbour AM:** -- as little Londoners. No. London being responsible for this rather than the NCA being responsible.

**Lord Toby Harris:** My argument about that is about the importance of maintaining that thread between national right the way through to local, and is about the danger of the disruption at a time when you have a high level of threat. I think it is something that should probably be resisted by the Mayor and the MPS for those reasons, plus I think are also benefits for Londoners in terms of having that capacity.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I understand that. There is no mention, as I told you, I thought this was a good read, of the argument that London, because the MPS is sucking away from the rest of the country into London because of these responsibilities that you are talking about, any resilience that there might be in other parts of the country in relation to counter-terrorism.

**Lord Toby Harris:** I think you will find that it is hinted at in a number of places. There is an issue about the recruitment of firearms officers, as to whether they are going to be recruited from border enforcers and, indeed, as I understand it the Commissioner has put in place a number of agreements to avoid there being a sudden depletion from other forces of officers who say, “Well, I’d rather go and work in the MPS than in my home force”. That is always a tension and that is one of the reasons why sometimes the MPS is resented in other parts of the county, and indeed why London is sometimes resented elsewhere in the country. As
somebody who believes that London is the engine for the rest of the UK, and if they really want to make that argument I would argue for full fiscal autonomy for the people of London and then they would realise how much London subsidises the rest of the country. There is plenty of debate to be had there. Again, I felt perhaps it was going outside the remit.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Well indeed.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have a couple of more questions about what happens next.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** Yi am mindful of the time, so I will be brief, but going forward who should be responsible for the monitoring of progress against your recommendations, because the report does not make that clear?

**Lord Toby Harris:** This is a report to the Mayor, so the Mayor has to decide what he wants to do with the report and the recommendations. When he has done so I assume that he will present that to the Assembly and the Assembly will then decide how it monitors, how well the Mayor is delivering that and maybe challenge the Mayor on some of the recommendations that the Mayor might choose not to accept they wish to field. I have done my bit, which is to hand this over to the Mayor. The Mayor will then make whatever judgements he wants to and what he wants to take forward. I am assuming you will then be doing your bit in monitoring what happens next.

**Unmesh Desai AM (Deputy Chair):** Are we expecting a formal response from each of the bodies that you have made recommendations to, and if so by when? Approximate times please.

**Lord Toby Harris:** Again, the report is to the Mayor. While I have discussed this with the Home Office and I have made sure that copies have gone to all the bodies that are referred to - it is a matter for them whether they respond, it is a matter for the Mayor as to whether or not he asks them to respond. I have seen - and another one came in today from London Councils - responses from various people who are putting their views on the recommendations and also talking about the processes they are taking to make a response or to follow through issues.

**Keith Prince AM:** Having bombarded us with 127 recommendations, many of which are outside the Mayor’s remit, Lord Harris, which would be your top five pick? Which top five would you seriously say to the Mayor, “These are the ones I really think you should get into”?

**Lord Toby Harris:** You have to divide them into different categories. It would end up being more than five, because I have not thought about it in terms of five. There are a series of practical issues, where a taskforce should be getting on with it, for example around potential crowded places, rising bollards, the use of the mobile barriers, which I think would save time and make things easier. Moving on closed circuit television on trains, both surface and underground, where they are not already existing. Those are practical things, which we should be getting on with. I do think the communications issue, about both to business but also to the public, we all carry our mobile phones, the idea of getting a text message saying, “There is an incident at this location, you are advised to keep away, the police are on the scene”, whatever. Those public interest messages going, making sure that that happens, and the technology is there and different countries are doing something. I even had an email from a police constable in London who has been developing one, probably on his own, I do not know, I am going to meet him and find out. The technology could be done; it is just a question of how you do it and the appropriate way that that is done.
We talked about this: I think the issue about access to firearms is extremely important. Whether or not it is within the remit of this exercise, I think it is one which is very important it is pursued.

I also think there is a recommendation in there, you may feel this is straying again, about mental health capacity in London. Given the number of instances worldwide, as well as in this country, where people have taken initiatives in the name of a terrorist objective, but if you look behind it there is clearly some mental health issues --

**Keith Prince AM**: -- outside of a terrorist initiative.

**Lord Toby Harris**: There would be all sorts of benefits of improving mental health services in London, and it seems to me to be one of those things outside his remit that the Mayor might wish to take up on.

I made a specific recommendation about school governing bodies. Every school governing body is required to have a governor responsible for safeguarding. I think there should actually be a requirement that schools should have a governor who makes it their job to think about emergency procedures. It would not necessarily be for a terrorist incident, it could also be for fires. They do fire practices. Have they done any sort of practice in thinking about what happens if somebody turned up at the gates with a gun? I do not what to think about but actually somebody ought to think about it and work through that.

Then there is another area where I think there is a concern, it is three lines or something in the report, but about the drones and the potential capacity for that, whether there are technical responses to that. I am told and I believe you shoot the things down, in the first minute they thump to the ground and presumably go off, but there are other things that need to be looked at. These are things where it may or may not be within the remit of the Mayor but I think the Mayor ought to be making some noise on behalf of Londoners, let us try and sort these things out.

**Keith Prince AM**: Thank you, that was six, not bad!

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman)**: Again, Lord Harris, thank you very much. We will be looking keenly at the Mayor’s response. We will be asking questions of the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and Commissioner in a couple of weeks’ time. We may well take up your kind offer a private meeting, but I will discuss that with party Group Lead Members.

**Lord Toby Harris**: Do not expect too many big revelations!

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman)**: No, we got the message.

**Andrew Dismore AM**: Can I make a suggestion? If Toby has written a response to the Mayor on that perhaps a copy could be made available?

**Lord Toby Harris**: No, I did not put it to writing.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman)**: Is it conversations?

**Lord Toby Harris**: Yes, entirely private advice and verbally.

**Keith Prince AM**: Nothing written down. Right.
Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you very much, Lord Harris.

Lord Toby Harris: Good to see you.