

**London Assembly (Mayor's Question Time) – 22 June 2017****Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Questions to the Mayor**

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** The first question to you is in the name of Assembly Member Twycross.

**2017/2568 – Mayor's progress**

[Fiona Twycross AM](#)

*After one year in office, what progress has been made in delivering the Mayor's manifesto?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Can I thank you for your question? Since becoming Mayor I have spent every day fighting to ensure that all Londoners get the opportunities that our city gave to me. Change is hard and requires constant work. However, I am hugely proud of what we have been able to achieve in just over a year, delivering on my manifesto promises.

Unfortunately it will take too long now to list everything we have done so I will mention a few things. We have made commuting more affordable for millions of Londoners by freezing all Transport for London (TfL) fares and introducing the Hopper bus fare which gives you two journeys for the price of one in an hour. We have the Night Tube up and running. We have made big strides in the marathon job of turning around London's housing crisis, with a record £3.15 billion investment to build genuinely affordable homes. Just last month I was delighted to be able to hand over the keys to families moving into the first of our new London Living Rent homes, my new lower rent scheme that boosts the home-owning dreams of many tenants. We have started implementing the most ambitious plans to tackle air pollution of any city in the world. We have prioritised neighbourhood policing, delivering an extra dedicated police officer in every ward in London. We appointed the first ever female Commissioner of the MPS (Metropolitan Police Service) and of the London Fire Brigade. We have launched the new Police and Crime Plan for London, which includes how we will confront extremism, keep children safe and tackle violence against women and girls. We have also invested a record amount in giving Londoners the skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow.

However, of course, there is still much more to do. I am determined that we will keep up the pace of change. Over the next year, and beyond, I will be continuing to deliver my manifesto and working to make a real difference to Londoners' lives.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Thank you. That is very welcome. I am mindful of time so I am going to hand over for colleagues who have supplementaries on this. Thank you.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Sahota.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Thank you, Mr Mayor, for your response. I would also like to thank you for the leadership you have shown, particularly during the number of crises we have had, on behalf of Londoners and to Londoners.

We also appreciate that your predecessor, initially on the critical issue of air quality for Londoners, left you with a poisoned chalice. As you have said, poor air quality affects the living environment of our capital with devastating consequences on the health and lives of Londoners throughout the city. Earlier this year the Greater London Authority (GLA) Conservatives published a report on this issue criticising your plans by stating that you will not get enough 'bang for your buck'. Surely you would agree with me, Mr Mayor, that there should be no price on the lives of Londoners and the health of children's lungs. Mr Mayor, do you think it is fair to say you are leading the way in tackling air quality in London?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you for your question. You know from your other life as a doctor the consequences of poor quality air. Over 9,000 Londoners die prematurely because of poor quality air. Adults are suffering ill health, because of poor quality air, from dementia, heart issues to asthma. It is a real problem in our city. The economic cost of poor quality air in London alone is approaching £4 billion, and across the country £20 billion. We have to deal with this. The former Mayor fiddled air quality monitors and took no action. It beggars belief that the GLA Conservative group are still opposed to my plans to bring in the T-Charge this year and the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) from 2019. We now have an air quality alert system. Rather than hiding the information we are letting the public know the information. Whereas the Labour group supported my budget to double the amount we spend on air quality, the Conservative group opposed it. What I am hoping now, Dr Sahota, is that the new Secretary of State for Environment [Food and Rural Affairs], The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP- who does not believe in evidence-based policy as we know from the Brexit campaign - looks at the evidence, changes the habit of a lifetime, and recognises that the Government has got to have a bold plan to help us address the issue of poor quality air.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Great. Thank you, Mr Mayor, for that answer.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Shah.

**Navin Shah AM:** Thank you, Chair. Mr Mayor, you introduced your Hopper bus scheme. Can you tell us how that scheme has changed London's travel patterns?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I will do that in a second but I will say this, during the campaign I announced unlimited bus travel within an hour. My opponents said it could not be done, "You cannot do it". There is an issue about the technology in relation to unlimited bus travel within an hour. Rather than waiting to fix the technology - which we will do shortly, in the next couple of years - we brought in the bus Hopper which is really important and is a two-for-one within an hour. It has changed lives, particularly of Londoners in outer London who you are very passionate about. It has changed the lives of those who are working, changing buses twice to get to work, and others who get about London. It has changed the lives of Assembly Members who, rather than waiting for the right bus, can hop on a bus and get home more quickly. That is what an accessible and affordable transport system is about.

I remind you of this, Assembly Member Shah, the last Mayor increased fares over his eight year duration by 42% - the public transport fares in London are the most expensive in Europe - and had plans to increase them by a further 17% in the first year of this mayoralty. We have frozen TfL fares and brought in the Hopper fare, which shows what a good mayor can do for a great city.

**Navin Shah AM:** Thank you.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Your next question is from Assembly Member Bacon.

### **2017/2244 - Police numbers**

[Gareth Bacon AM](#)

*Can you tell us how you calculated that 12,800 police officers will be cut from the Metropolitan Police Service?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Can I thank you for the question because it gives me the chance to, again, call on Assembly Members of all parties to back me in asking the Government to drop its police funding formula and any suggestion of reduced funding for the MPS.

The MPS has already reduced costs by nearly £600 million since 2010. The Government's current funding settlement requires them to reduce costs by a further £400 million by 2020/21. I am already working hard with the MPS to deliver greater efficiency and to minimise the impact of Government cuts on frontline officer numbers. However, before the general election the Conservative Government was about to launch a consultation on a new police funding formula. The last time they did this, in 2015, estimates suggest its proposals could have led to a funding reduction of up to £700 million for the MPS. I am doing everything possible to protect the number of frontline officers. However, the MPS could not absorb additional cuts on this scale without its officer numbers reducing. If this £700 million was paid for through fewer officers we could see a considerable reduction in numbers, anywhere between 3,400 officers and 12,800 fewer officers, depending on the amount of resources that are cut.

The tragic events over recent weeks have shown the crucial importance of a properly funded police force, indeed properly funded emergency services across the board. The last consultation on police funding had serious errors in Home Office calculations and I fear it is about to make another serious miscalculation that will have a big impact on police in London.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Thank you, Mr Mayor. I am still waiting for the answer about where the 12,800 police officers came from. It is probably in there somewhere, but would you like to clarify that?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** The average cost of a police officer in London is £55,000. If the Government proceeds with £700 million worth of cuts - bearing in mind we have already made back office savings, reduced staff numbers, Community Support Officers (CSOs) are gone,

700 police stations and we are having to close further police stations across London - the only other place we can go now is police officers.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** £700 million is the answer then?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** There are two numbers depending on what calculations the Government uses: £184 million or £700 million. That is why I gave two figures for police officers. If it is £184 million of cuts - on top of the £1 billion, by the way - that equates to, roughly speaking, 3,400 officers. If it is the top end, £700 million on top of the £1 billion, that equates to 12,800 fewer officers.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** You are attributing that to the police funding formula review?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Absolutely.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** OK. That is not accurate though, is it, Mr Mayor?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** It is.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** No, it is not. You were a Member of Parliament at the time and you should already know this. You have correctly said that there were bugs found in the police funding formula that caused it to be cancelled. That, plus pressure from up and down the country and not least from your predecessor, had identified a potential cut of £184 million. That is where the £184 million comes from. The £700 million was coming from the Comprehensive Spending Review. Non-protected budgets have been told to prepare for 25 - 40% cuts. That was at the same time, so I can understand where the confusion is. However, the reality is that those are from completely separate processes, is it not?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I think you have your numbers wrong. I will have to write to you.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** No, I have not.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** In 2010 the editor of the *Evening Standard*, who was the Chancellor of the Exchequer then, made the police cut 18% from the police budget. The current Prime Minister, who was the Home Secretary, acceded to that request of 18% cut from the --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** I am not talking about that, Mr Mayor. I am talking about the £184 million.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am sorry, we are.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** No, we are not.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** That has led to the consequence --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** No.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** -- of £1 billion we have seen coming down.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Yes.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** That has led to 3,000 staff going, CSOs going --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Yes.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** -- police stations being closed down, police buildings being sold. There is no more fat to cut.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Mr Mayor, nobody is asking about that at all. The £600 million is a matter of record and we do not disagree with that. The £400 million additional savings that needs to be found, nobody is disagreeing with that either.

The query I have is about the £184 million and the £700 million that you have incorrectly attributed as the range going from the police funding formula. It is not; £184 million was the indicative figure from the police funding formula review, £700 million was on top of that, which was going to come from the Comprehensive Spending Review. As you should know, because you were a Member of Parliament at the time, both of those were dropped in 2015. Why are you using figures that are two years out of date knowing they have already been dropped?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Firstly, I do not accept that. Secondly, he will know as a passionate Conservative --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** It is a matter of public record, Mr Mayor. You do not have to accept it; it is true.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** You can either ask questions or answer them.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** You can try answering. That would be a start, would it not?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Can I answer that?

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Absolutely. I am all ears.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** You will be aware that the Conservative party, before the general election, had plans to revisit the funding formula. It is not unreasonable to assume if their previous plans led to cuts to London of between £184 million and £700 million that a new police funding formula change would also lead to cuts of that level. I am pleased that the Conservatives failed to win the big mandate [Prime Minister] Theresa May wanted. What is important is not simply not having an extremely hard Brexit, but this being a reason for the

Government to go back and revisit whether it is sensible to make these cuts to London. I hope he will join me rather than playing party politics.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Mr Mayor, accusing me of playing party politics really is the 'pot calling the kettle black'. The £184 million and £700 million - as we have just established - is that you have conflated two figures.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am sorry, Chair, we have not established. It has been said by the Assembly Member. I am not accepting --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** It is a matter of public record, Mr Mayor.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** It is hardly accepted.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** You were a Member of Parliament at the time. Were you asleep or something? Did you not listen at the time? You would have sat in the House of Commons Chamber when the Chancellor announced that this was going to happen and when the Home Secretary announced that the police funding formula was being scrapped. They are completely different figures from completely different processes. They were scrapped two years ago. Why are you bandying those figures around in the public domain right now?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I will answer again. Chair, the former Conservative Government's plans to change the police funding formula led to us losing between £184 million and £700 million.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** They did not, Mr Mayor. You have misunderstood the situation. I am sorry to interrupt you, I know it looks discourteous, but you are running out of my time. I only have 17 minutes left. I will keep you on the hook for the whole of those 17 minutes if I have to because you are deliberately confusing Londoners on this point.

Let us move on from that point. Now, the £400 million you have referred to as 'a cut' incessantly. You are pushing to protect police funding and we support you on that. There is no discrepancy about that at all. You have issued over 30 press releases about the police since you have been Mayor. Six have directly related to funding, the first of which was in January of this year and the last one was yesterday. You have referred to £400 million worth of cuts in yesterday's press release. There is not going to be £400 million worth of cuts, is there?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** A reduction to our budget is a cut.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** It is not a reduction to your budget though, is it? You know, categorically, that what is actually happening is there is a cash freeze to your budget. That is not the same as saying the budget is being uprated in line with inflation and other spending pressures. I completely acknowledge that. However, it is not a cut to the budget, is it?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** It is a cut to our budget.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** No, it is not a cut to the budget, Mr Mayor. I know you need to get up to speed with this but that is not a cut to the budget and you are misleading people again.

That £400 million was known about long before you became Mayor of London. Your predecessor said that £300 million of that money had been allocated before he had even left office, so before you were elected that money was found. That is proven by an Audit Panel report to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) dated 24 June last year which says that £300 million has been found out of that £400 million. That has also been confirmed on numerous occasions by Deputy Commissioner Craig Mackey [QPM], appearing in front of the Assembly at various meetings. Therefore £300 million of that £400 million, that you are talking about as efficiency savings that are required, has already been found and already been allocated. Therefore what have you been doing for the last 12 months to find the other £100 million?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am not really sure if you need me for this. Just carry on.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Would you like to answer the question, Mr Mayor?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** What was the question?

**Gareth Bacon AM:** The question was what have you been doing for the last 12 months to find the £100 million that is not yet allocated?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Which money? Are we talking about the £1 billion, the £700 million?

**Gareth Bacon AM:** I appreciate that your hyperbole is making you a bit confused here, Mr Mayor. The £600 million has already been banked. There was a further £400 million that needed to be found by 2021. Everybody knows that. That was a fact established long before you became the Mayor of London. Of that £400 million, £300 million was found before you took office. Therefore what have you been doing for the last 12 months to find that £100 million that is missing?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** You will be aware from the questions you asked that were answered by the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime this week of all the stuff we have been doing to make efficiency savings. The point you do not seem to understand --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** What we are actually doing is all the things that were already being done, Mr Mayor. I am asking you what you are doing to close the gap.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Again interrupting an answer because you want to speak without having an answer.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** That is because you are misleading people, Mr Mayor. You are not answering the question. You are going all around the houses and you are using your usual smokescreen, but you are not answering the question.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** To be fair --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** What have you been doing for the last 12 months to find that £100 million? Focus on that. The £300 million is already there. We know that. The police have found it. What are you doing for the £100 million?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Every time I try to answer your question you interrupt me.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** That is because you start telling me fibs, Mr Mayor.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** OK. Assembly Member Bacon, give the Mayor an opportunity to answer a question.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Can I say to the children, this is not the way to behave as a school council. I hope you behave better.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Telling lies is not the way to behave either.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** No. Mr Mayor, Assembly Member Bacon is actually demonstrating real skills in his role as a scrutineer. He is using evidence and he has put several questions to you. Now I would like you to answer those questions if you can, if not pass and then we will move on.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** We have made huge savings over the last 13 months, Chair. We have made huge savings from things like back office costs being reduced by 16 - 17%; huge savings in relation to information and communication technology (ICT); huge savings in relation to the police estate; huge savings in relation to the numbers of CSOs; huge savings in relation to reducing the tier of policing grades, and huge savings in relation to police buildings. The savings that I have made are good progress. However, the reality is, Chair, we simply cannot afford to make the further cuts the Government is requiring us to do.

I appreciate that if you are a Conservative politician you feel on the back foot, and you have to be rude and offensive. However, as Mayor my most important job is to keep London safe. I will not apologise for making the case to the Home Secretary and to the Prime Minister, who was the previous Home Secretary.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Nor should you, Mr Mayor. We have made similar cases, as you can imagine. We fully support the idea that the MPS should be fully funded. What we do not support, however, Mr Mayor, is your deliberate attempt to mislead people over the scale of the issue and over the lack of action that you, yourself, have been taking. You cannot answer the question of what you have been doing for the £100 million you need to find. OK.

How many police counters are you going to close?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** That is work we are undertaking now in relation to the Borough Command Unit (BCU) work. You will appreciate that the general election stopped us doing the consultation. However, you will very shortly be hearing about the plans we have in relation to that. Again, those are being done because of the cuts made by central government. You may not call them cuts, I call them cuts.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Yes, I know you call them cuts, Mr Mayor. It is very debatable about whether or not that is the right term or not. Anyway, how long have you been working on closing police counters?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** We have been consulting with the boroughs across London. We will be announcing plans shortly. Obviously for reasons you will appreciate, because of the general election we could not announce those during the purdah period.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** You have concrete plans on what you are going to be doing?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** We have plans to make the savings the Government is requiring us to make.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Where in your Police and Crime Plan, published in March, does it state those plans?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I do not have a copy to hand.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** You do not have a copy to hand? OK. I can answer the question, it does not state that, Mr Mayor. That is surprising, is it not?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** No, there are a number of things we are doing to make savings; from police counters, to police building, to police stations, to borough command units—many of which have been raised at Mayor’s Question Time (MQTs) previously – to police staff, to CSOs. There is a whole host of things we have to do to balance the books.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Why are you not being upfront about closing police counters? You have been very upfront in some of the press releases that have been issued. Why have you not been upfront in your Police and Crime Plan?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Chair, you cannot have it both ways. On one front there are press releases that show we are upfront, and on the other they are somehow accusing the Mayor of not being upfront. The reality is this. If the Government proceeds with its cuts we will need to close half the police stations in London, which could lead to each borough only having one 24-hour seven-days a week police station open to the public and the busiest boroughs may have another one. That is the consequence of the cuts. I appreciate you do not like the word “cuts” but that is the consequence of the cuts from the Government.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Which cuts are we talking about, Mr Mayor, £184 million, £700 million, £600 million or £400 million?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** A combination of the £1 billion cuts in total, £600 million from 2010 until now.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** That is already banked so that is done.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** No, £400 million --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** It is. It is out of the budget.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Also, of course, the funding formula changes, the lack of National, International and Capital City grant (NICC) money, and also the lack of inflation increases. Also, you will be aware, Chair, because it is a matter that is in the public domain, that the Home Secretary criticised the former Mayor for his funding regime.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Yes, you are deflecting again, Mr Mayor. I am not asking you about that.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** You see, again -- I am answering the question.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Bacon, no, let him finish.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** With all due respect, Madam Chair, he is wasting my time deliberately. It is a well-proven tactic, he deflects and then he prevaricates and he wastes time. I have asked him a precise question. He is now talking about something else entirely.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** No, you are required to let him answer your question.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Indeed, but I am not required to allow him to filibuster with my time.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** No. Well, the clock is still on.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** You should stop him as well.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** No. The clock is still on. Mr Mayor, will you finish the answer to the question?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** It really is not worth it, he is not listening.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** OK, thank you.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Right. So the £600 million which was already removed from the MPS's budget, that cannot be a factor in closing the police counters going forward. The funding formula review, there have been very strong indications - you, yourself, have issued a press release about this - that it looks as though the Government has dropped that so it is no longer a

threat. The last press release that you issued yesterday focused primarily on the £400 million that you are calling cuts, but they are efficiency savings. Craig Mackey [QPM, Deputy Commissioner, MPS] yesterday, in front of the Police and Crime Committee, confirmed that that was what they were and they were not cuts. He deliberately moved away from the word “cuts”. That is £400 million, £300 million of which has already been found so we are talking about £100 million that needs to be found. How much of that is going to be made up by future front counter closures?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Chair, I have had no confirmation from the Government it is dropping the funding formula. If Assembly Member Bacon has he should share that with us. Has he had confirmation from the Government on this issue?

**Gareth Bacon AM:** What I said, Mr Mayor, was that there had been very strong lines in the media. You commented, “I am pleased the Government look likely to drop their plan to change the police funding formula”.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I have had no confirmation of this. If you have, please let me know. If you have friends in the Conservative party who have told you, and not me, please let me know.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Mr Mayor, you are deflecting again because I did not say I had confirmation or any such thing. I got that news from your comment in this press release so I am assuming that you are in the know. Are you not in the know then? Did you make that up?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am glad on some things he believes me, just not on others.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Mr Mayor, I am afraid that is the nature of the game, is it not? Mr Mayor, the press release issued by the Labour party dated 30 May 2017 made reference to the £600 million that has already been found, the fact that another £400 million would have to be found and it referred to it as “cuts”, and that the MPS would face a further cut of £184 million or £700 million if the Conservative plans went forward. We have heard those plans are not going forward. The £184 million and £700 million, you have misunderstood what they are. How many police front counters are you going to close? The only reason to close them now is the £400 million of efficiency savings, so how many are you planning to close and when did you make that decision?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** As I have said, it looks like we will have to close down half the police stations in London. That could mean each borough will have one 24/7 --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Yes, but is that assumption, Mr Mayor, predicated on making efficiency savings of £400 million or is that predicated on your worst case scenario of a further £700 million coming out of the MPS’s budget.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** As the Deputy Commissioner said to you yesterday, because he was concerned you did not understand this, you cannot look at the police as discrete

portions, it is all linked and the pieces are all linked. You cannot disaggregate cuts made of £1 billion over a seven-year period. You cannot disaggregate that from us not receiving NICC funding completely. You cannot disaggregate that from a police funding formula change. You cannot disaggregate that from us not getting inflation increases that the police deserve. It is all part of the same monies we use to provide a police service for London.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** It is. Mr Mayor, however, clarity is very important here. We are living in a time of great uncertainty. People are very worried. We have had a number of terrorist attacks nationwide, and also in London. What you say, as the leader of London's government, in public matters very much indeed. The timing of some of your comments, made as they were in the heat of a general election campaign, implying that things are much worse than they are is actually not the way to go forward.

The £600 million has already been banked. The further £400 million we now know are efficiency savings and not cuts. It is unlikely - from what you have said and from what the Government apparently has said - that there will be any change to the police funding formula. The NICC funding is rolled up in that £400 million. It is not an additional pressure. It is a pressure we already know about. What you say in public matters very much, Mr Mayor. Therefore why are you deliberately misleading Londoners as to the scale of the challenge?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Is it time for me?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** That is the question.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** OK, fine. I do not apologise - and I will never apologise - for being an advocate for this city. If it is the case that the Government is letting us down, as they have been, I will make that case. London is less safe because of the cuts made by this Government of £600 million during the last six years and another £400 million over the next four years. We only receive half of the money we are due as an international capital city. The Government's previous plans were to reduce up to £700 million. We have not had a real terms inflation increase from the Government. The Home Secretary has criticised the former Mayor - I appreciate a rival for the leadership of the Conservative party - for his decision last year not to increase the police precept.

I have taken the responsible action to increase the police precept this year because we need that money but also because we will be penalised in future years by the Government. However, if it is the case that Conservatives are getting 'hot under the collar' because their Government has let them down they should make that case with the same anger and passion to it privately as they are making to me publicly.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Mr Mayor, we have made the case very often to the Government in private. The fact of the matter, Mr Mayor, is you have not answered any of these questions satisfactorily. The £600 million is already banked. The £174 million that you are looking for, the NICC funding, is already part of the funding pressure. The £400 million was known about before you became Mayor and £300 million of that has already been allocated. You have used

deliberately inflammatory language, primarily during an election campaign, to boost your party's chances. You should be thoroughly ashamed of the way you have handled this, Mr Mayor.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** My response - because I am sure that is a question as the Assembly Member must be experienced enough to realise you cannot make a speech in MQTs - is that that outside Finsbury Park, after the general election, I also made the same point. Our police do a fantastic job. Their job is made much harder when they are stretched, as they currently are. The Head of the Counter Terror team, [Assistant Commissioner] Mark Rowley [QPM, Head of National Counter Terrorism Policing], no politician, has said how stretched the police are. That stretch is because of decisions made by central government. You should be ashamed, as somebody who is a member of the Conservative party, to not say more about your government rather than lecturing me as a Labour politician.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Mr Mayor, we speak to our government all the time.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Yes. Assembly Member Bacon, can I have a question?

**Gareth Bacon AM:** No, I do not think it is worth it, Madam Chair, I will not get answers.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** OK, thank you. Let us move on.

#### **2017/2174 - Estate regeneration**

[Sian Berry AM](#)

*How will your updated guidance ensure that estate regeneration only takes place when resident support has been established?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you very much for your question which is very relevant, for obvious reasons. We know when done well estate regeneration can improve lives, homes and local areas. In most cases councils and housing associations work closely with their residents and offer them the guarantees they deserve. Unfortunately, we know this is not always the case. That is why, as Mayor, I decided to get involved and use the power of my office to make sure residents are at the heart of any regeneration plans. No previous Mayor has done this. This is the first time City Hall has decided proactively to lay down some expectations around estate regeneration in our city. This is despite the fact, as you know, there are limits on how far I can insist on the principles in my good practice guide being followed. I can use my funding powers, regulation, investment and planning powers where they apply. However, beyond these formal powers I also want to see residents empowered by sending out guarantees I believe should be offered. I want my guide to underpin conversations between councils, housing associations and their residents whenever regeneration is being considered.

It is worth me saying, in light of the fire at Grenfell Tower last week, there are also many issues around fire safety on estates that are covered by national regulations rather than any powers my office holds. It is crucial that these are looked at in the upcoming public inquiry and the Government acts on them without delay.

In my draft guide I set out some key expectations I have around the protection of existing social housing and guarantees that tenants and leaseholders will be treated fairly. I also set out my initial expectations around how residents should be involved from the very start in discussions around plans for estate regeneration.

I have a longer answer, Chair, but I want to give the Member a chance to ask me questions so I will write.

**Sian Berry AM:** Thanks very much, Mr Mayor, you will be very short of time. I did table this question before the disaster, although it does bring into focus some of the issues. Can I ask whether your final guidance on estates will be delayed now until the preliminary report of the public inquiry comes forward as it may have recommendations relating to public engagement and empowerment?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** A good question. I do not want to delay them, for obvious reasons, because the sooner they come in the sooner they can be used. You will be aware the guidance is in relation to estate regeneration and there may be lessons learnt from the public inquiry. I am not sure if even the interim report will deal with that part.

**Sian Berry AM:** I am hoping that it will.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** We will all be hoping but will have to wait and see what the Chair decides. The conundrum for me is whether to get on with publishing the guidance and, if need be, revisit it later on or delay it. That is a conversation I am happy to have with you and other colleagues, Chair.

**Sian Berry AM:** OK, as long as it bears in mind the results. I am talking primarily about resident empowerment here. On Tuesday I visited JMB Leathermarket and saw the resident-led infill project on the Kipling Estate. It is very heartening to see that it has good local support precisely because residents were fully in control of that process, not simply engaged in but running it. Obviously we have seen, in huge contrast, the treatment of the residents of Grenfell Tower. They were treated very badly. They had very little practical support, even when they asked for funding for independent professional advice.

Your draft guidance says that local authorities are encouraged to consider independent capacity building and advocacy support for residents. Will the draft guidance go further and make this more than just encouragement so residents do get the professional help and legal advice they need when there are changes being made to their estates?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Can I say, Chair, one of the reasons that I did not answer all of the question was to respect the lack of time. Some of this was in the answer I was going to give you. We have to recognise there is a reason why no mayor has done this before. It is because the mayor has no locus. The levers I have are in relation to planning and in relation to funding.

**Sian Berry AM:** When planning permission is required, though, you can make requirements?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Sure. On issues around planning and funding obviously I have more locus and more levers to pull and I will be doing that. You have been involved in the consultation process. What we can do, though, is nudge councils, housing associations and others to behave responsibly. One of the things that Grenfell Tower has shown to everyone else who does not know this area as well as yourself, Assembly Member Copley and others, is that when it comes to the involvement of tenants and residents generally there are failings all across London.

**Sian Berry AM:** I only have a few more seconds but I would be really happy to have a meeting with you to discuss some of this in more detail if you would be willing.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Sure.

**Sian Berry AM:** I want to talk also about what you said in *The Observer on Sunday*. I am concerned and I have had lots of residents in towers getting in touch with me really concerned that you seem to be calling for their towers to be pulled down. You said something about them being the “worst mistakes of the 1960s and 1970s”. I know that my own council is focused entirely on blocks that they have re-clad in the 21st century and it is not helpful to jump straight to talking about more demolition.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** You will be aware because you never mislead that I said, “If it is the case”. If it is the case that tower blocks are shown to be a death trap, we have to make sure they are not a death trap. If that means pulling them down, we have to pull them down. The good news is - obviously the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is working on this with our help - it looks like the concerns are in relation to those properties refurbished, the cladding and how that was done, rather than a design fault in older tower blocks.

**Sian Berry AM:** Precisely.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** The public inquiry will obviously be useful in finding out what is safe and what is not.

**Sian Berry AM:** OK. Thank you. I am really sorry we have to stop but I will want to talk to you more about this in the future.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Thank you. Assembly Member Hall, you have a question?

**Susan Hall AM:** Yes, I do, a brief one. Despite making much of listening to residents’ requests and desires, in March you approved a 17-storey building in Harrow and a 21-storey building in Haringey against the express wishes of the local councils and of course the residents. Local residents are now extremely concerned about the safety of these towers following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower. Will you therefore urgently review these decisions to ensure that they are still fit for purpose and will not pose a fire safety risk either now or in the future?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I congratulate you on being a new Assembly Member and I am surprised by your question because you should know, as an experienced councillor, that new blocks are different from old blocks and from refurbishments, and you will know, as an experienced councillor - that is why I am surprised by your question - that the requirements for the new blocks are different to old blocks.

**Susan Hall AM:** Yes, I accept that.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you.

**Susan Hall AM:** This was a quick question for you to answer. There is certainly evidence in the information that Haringey is going to have sprinklers but not so, in any of the documents that we can find, in Harrow. You should not be surprised by that question because this is going against what the local residents want. In fact Assembly Member [Navin] Shah voted against this, or rather expressed a desire not to have this. You should not be surprised by these questions because if you say you are listening, Mayor, then you need to listen to what the local residents want. They certainly did not want this in Harrow and I do not think they wanted it in Haringey. I will leave it there.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I listen to Londoners and I am sorry you do not realise this but Londoners want affordable housing. London's population is growing. Unless we meet London's needs --

**Susan Hall AM:** Yes, I know.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Unless we meet London's need to provide genuinely affordable homes, Londoners are going to struggle. The biggest issue for Londoners is housing. Because I listen to Londoners, I am providing affordable housing. The fact is that that enquiry was had, we looked at all the evidence and decided to approve the plans, affordable housing for local residents and regeneration of that area, taking on board some of the concerns. I am surprised you do not realise that new buildings are much safer than the old ones and ones that were refurbished.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** OK. Mr Mayor, we have a question from Assembly Member Kurten on your one year review.

### **2017/2280 - One Year Review**

[David Kurten](#)

*Now that you have been Mayor for a year, will you give me some answers to the questions to which you and your officers have not given an adequate response over the past year, such as, when you will stop granting licences to diesel PHVs, how many jobs will be lost in the 2,000 businesses at Park Royal which will have to close or relocate and when you are going to plant the two million trees you promised in your manifesto?*

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Can I ask you to go to the final part of that? I am sure David will agree. Some of it has been answered.

**David Kurten AM:** The first part I received an answer just recently. The bits that I am still looking for are the things about Park Royal and the trees being planted.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** That is right. OK. How many jobs will be lost in the 2,000 businesses at Park Royal which will have to close or relocate and are you going to plant the two million trees you promised in your manifesto?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** With regards to Park Royal, it is London's largest industrial area and plays a key role in London's economy. The priority for Park Royal is to protect, strengthen and intensify the industrial area so that 10,000 additional jobs can be created. In Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation's (OPDC's) emerging local plan, all of the industrial land in Park Royal outside of the Old Oak core development area is being protected as a strategic industrial location to ensure that businesses and jobs remain in this area. Protecting the area as a strategic industrial location will mean there should be no net losses of jobs or businesses. OPDC is putting additional legal protection in place through an Article 4 direction to help safeguard business users in Park Royal.

On trees, in my manifesto I committed to:

*"Embark on a major tree-planting programme across London, in partnership with businesses and the public sector, with a particular focus on schools and colleges."*

That was my promise to Londoners and that is exactly what I am delivering as a Mayor despite the 2016/17 budget I inherited from the previous Mayor not including any funds for tree-planting at all. I have made available £750,000 in my first year in office, resulting in over 40,000 trees being planted last winter. I am making a further £5 million available over the next four years to support the planting of hundreds of thousands more trees.

**David Kurten AM:** Thank you, Mr Mayor, and I do appreciate your commitment to zero net job losses in Park Royal. I had a conversation in the plenary with Victoria Hills, Chief Executive Officer [OPDC], on 8 March in the open session. There are 45,000 employees currently working in 2,000 businesses, high-quality businesses, many of them in manufacturing and industrial businesses. She could not give a specific answer as to how many businesses would have to close and relocate. Since I have asked this question, do you have a figure on how many of those 2,000 businesses will have to close or relocate?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Not to hand, Chair, but I am happy to write to the Assembly Member to give him the answer. As you know, because of the mess left by the previous Mayor we had a review into OPDC. We now have a new Chair and she is getting to grips with the mess left by the previous Mayor. I am happy to write to him.

**David Kurten AM:** That would be good. We did have an exchange on 8 March, so it has been about three months and I have not had anything from her. I would like to hear.

As for the trees, there was a 2 million tree promise in your manifesto.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** No, there was not. There was not.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Correct.

**David Kurten AM:** There was not? Is this the manifesto that was online and is now not accessible?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am not sure what you mean. I only have one manifesto.

**David Kurten AM:** You are not talking about 2 million trees now, you are talking about 40,000 per year and £5 million extra. That is only going to be 200,000 or something. That is maybe 10% of the 2 million that was around in your election pledges on the campaign.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I had one manifesto. I have only had one manifesto. It was a record-winning manifesto, the biggest ever personal mandate of any candidate, but that is by the by. Where we are is this. No money was in the budget last year for tree-planting. I put money in of £750,000 because there was no money left by the previous Mayor. We have put in £5 million to support tree-planting in the capital but also I am trying to leverage in money from the private sector with development and public sector with schools and colleges, because we have to make sure we increase the canopy cover in London. It is crucial.

**David Kurten AM:** OK. I wish I had more time to ask you but there we go. Thank you, Madame Chair.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Thank you, Assembly Member Kurten.

## **2017/2553 - Metropolitan Police**

[Joanne McCartney](#)

*What more needs to be done to ensure the Metropolitan Police can respond to the continuing threat of terrorism?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Can I thank you for your question? First, let us remember those who were killed or injured in the recent attacks, both here in London and in Manchester. These were awful acts committed in a barbaric manner against innocent people. The response to the attacks was exceptional, both from across the emergency services and from members of the public who rushed to assist and confront those cowardly terrorists. I fully supported the MPS decision last year to increase the number of firearms officers who are on our streets. By the way, they were reduced nationally, because of the cuts made by the Conservative Government, by more than 1,000. They are highly trained, well-equipped and professional. In the recent attacks in London, their bravery undoubtedly saved many lives.

We need to recognise that terrorism is not just the business of counter-terrorist officers or of firearms officers. There is a continuum of work that starts with neighbourhood officers gaining trust with communities and being the eyes and ears of the intelligence services, all working together with communities to defeat terrorism. That is one of the reasons I have increased the number of officers dedicated to neighbourhoods, to aid better prevention to stop these attacks happening in the first place. This work creates an impact on resources on all parts of the MPS, not just their national function as counter-terrorism lead.

You asked what more needs to be done to ensure the MPS can respond to the continued threat of terrorism. They need just two things. First, there needs to be a stronger community role in coming forward and getting more information and intelligence in to the police. The better the information, the better the chances the police have to stop an attack before it happens. Second, we need a proper funding settlement that recognises the challenges facing London. The safety of London cannot be done on the cheap. The Government needs to properly fund all areas of policing to keep our city safe from these cowardly attacks.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** Thank you. It is that latter point I want to firstly ask you about. The Government say they have protected and increased funding for counter-terrorism but we know that is a ring-fenced pot and it cannot be used for neighbourhood policing. Nor is it large enough to do that. Do you think the Government has failed to realise that what the police call the 'golden thread' of policing, the intelligence obtained from good community policing, feeds right up the chain of command?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Absolutely. Craig Mackey [QPM], the Deputy Commissioner of the MPS, tried yesterday in plain English to explain to Assembly Members from some parts of the Assembly the continuum that you are talking about. I will give you an example, a specific case study. On 22 March this year, at the terrorist attack on Westminster Bridge, two-thirds of the response to that terrorist attack came from outside Westminster. That is an example. It was more in London Bridge, by the way. The idea that - in inverted commas - 'ring-fencing counter-terrorism funding' is enough is ridiculous. It is all linked, not just the bobby on the beat, the neighbourhood intelligence you get, the prevention stuff and the advice but also responding to a terrorist attack. I am surprised - maybe there are political reasons; maybe it is deliberate mishearing or not understanding - that Assembly Members and the Government do not understand that.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** Thank you. My second question is about the attack at Finsbury Park. This past weekend I, like you and no doubt many Assembly Members, attended the Great Get Together events across London in memory of Jo Cox MP, who was killed by a far right terrorist, and the appalling attack at Finsbury Park mosque was again, it seems, from a far right terrorist. You have rightly stated that terrorism is terrorism. What more do you think needs to be done to ensure that all communities, not just the Muslim community, report their concerns about extremist language to the police?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** It is really important. We have to recognise that nobody is against people having discourse and discussion. When that extends to inciting hatred, whatever your poisonous ideology is, we have to stamp that out. I have talked a lot about the importance

of resilience in communities, making sure our youngsters understand what it means to be a proud Brit, a proud Londoner, so when someone comes along, whatever the ideology is, to try to turn you against your neighbours, you reject it because you know your community better. For example, if someone is coming along with a perverse Islamist ideology and poison, you say, "You know what? That is not my Islam. There is no conspiracy against us. Non-Muslims do not hate us". Similarly, if it is right-wing, racist or extreme right-wing, somebody coming along and saying, "This country is not the same as it used to be. Non-whites do not like us" and all the rest of it, you can say, "Hold on a second, what are you talking about? That is not my experience". We have to give our youngsters the confidence.

It cannot be just a problem for one community. All of us have to get involved: parents, big brother, big sister, uncle, aunty, teachers, youth leaders, politicians. The police of course have a role, as well as the faith community and civic society. We have to recognise that there is a reason why terrorists attack us. There is a reason they want to harm us. It is because they hate the fact we are pluralistic, we celebrate, embrace and respect each other and we get on.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Duvall?

**Len Duvall AM:** Thank you very much, Chair. Mr Mayor, in the areas of Prevent, the pre-criminal activity by the state looking at extremists from the Islamic community but also neo-Nazis, do you think we need to change any aspect of that? Are there other issues? What are your current views on that and your thinking around that?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** First, there is a role for Prevent. Some people are saying there should be no Prevent at all. I see it as safeguarding. Of course there is a role. Could we do it better? Yes, definitely. There was a whole issue about, in inverted commas, 'branding'. The word Prevent has become toxic in some communities. That cannot be right. Actually, a lot of the work Prevent and Channel do is around the far right. It is around a quarter, a third to a quarter. The number of attacks thwarted from the far right is not insignificant as well.

You are right, we have to improve it. Personally, I look at it as safeguarding, making sure communities are involved in the strategy. In the Police and Crime Plan we did talk about the importance of updating Prevent safeguarding to make sure we involve communities and I have offered to help the Government. You will be aware the Prime Minister announced a plan to have a statutory body dealing with counter-extremism. I welcome that and I think we have a role to play.

**Len Duvall AM:** OK. You will be making efforts to influence that? OK. Can we move on to the more difficult area of encryption in terms of some of the lessons we have learned? The Police and Crime Committee yesterday learned how we are dealing with the issues around hate and those seeking materials to prepare for acts of terrorism on social media, and the real issue about end-to-end encryption. It is a difficult area because if you allow access, if the state can do it, then others who want to do other things will get into it eventually. What are your current views on that? Do you think, in terms of the current attacks we are having, that it is worth reviewing and reviving this, given that technology is advancing faster than the legislation? That is what we were told yesterday. What are your views?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Of course. Just like terrorists, the bad guys, are evolving and finding new ways to damage and harm us, we have to evolve and find new ways to keep us safe. We have to be careful of thinking any one thing is a silver bullet. Based on all the evidence I have of the successful attacks in London and Manchester, I am not sure how the police or authorities having a backdoor into encrypted messaging would have prevented those, for the simple reason they were not people who were subjects of very high importance under surveillance. That is the honest answer. We have to recognise that if you allowed a back door into encryption it affects digital society, from banking and finance to anybody on a WhatsApp group. The bad guys will evolve and find new ways.

There are technological innovations we can do. For example, why is it not possible for those who have platforms, whether it is - just to name the obvious ones - Facebook or Google, to have artificial intelligence to spot people who are preaching hatred and pull them down straight away? Why do there need to be human beings keeping an eye on that and then reporting it? Why are they so slow to respond to Twitter when it goes to hate crime on there? You will be aware I was criticised by some people for setting up the country's first online crime hub. That is important because online is sometimes a place where people start the early stages that lead to serious criminality in relation to terrorism and stuff. It is important we evolve and discuss what we can do to make sure we are safe. When you read the article Mark Riley wrote in *The Times*, and I highly commend it, Mark Riley was basically saying with finite resources they have to prioritise.

**Len Duvall AM:** Thank you.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Thank you very much.

### **2017/2352 - Safer Neighbourhood Teams**

Caroline Pidgeon

*What is your strategic target for PCSOs in ward Safer Neighbourhood Teams across London?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I know your time is short. Can I say that PCSOs are really important to policing in London? There has been a reduction from 4,600 to only 1,500. In my Police and Crime Plan I have no strategic target but I do say that I want to have in each ward two police officers and one CSO. Currently, every ward in London has their CSO. Most of the wards have their two dedicated officers with 109 to follow by the end of 2017. I know your time is short so I will let you ask your questions but I can send you a longer answer, if that helps.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Lovely. Thank you. I would like to see a strategic target for PCSOs alongside your one for police officers. Do you agree that PCSOs play a vital role in public engagement and intelligence-gathering?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** They are fantastic. They reassure victims of crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB). They deliver crime prevention projects. They work with officer colleagues in tackling local priorities. Just an observation: one of the easiest ways to save

money, bearing in mind the legal protection police constables have, is to reduce police staff and PCSOs.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Absolutely. You have already highlighted that PCSOs have fallen dramatically in terms of numbers in London. Even boroughs like Westminster only have 35, a 90% drop since 2010. Under your watch, Mr Mayor, in the last year, we have seen the number of PCSOs fall by 10%. There are 163 fewer PCSOs. If that decrease continues in the borough policing, you will not be able to meet your commitment in your Police and Crime Plan for at least one PCSO per ward. What I am wondering is whether you will consider bringing forward the recruitment of additional PCSOs so you can meet your pledge?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** At the moment we do not need to. You are right to raise the concern, by the way. I am not criticising you raising the concern. At the moment there are 779 PCSOs in boroughs. My commitment is to 629. We are not recruiting any more because - it is a horrible word to use for human beings - that is a "wastage". If it were to be the case we were to go below 629 for boroughs, of course we would, but do not. We also have PCSOs that are funded by TfL and Heathrow as well.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Yes, but we would not want those subsidising the wards.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Exactly right.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** They would not fund that. Looking at the drop-off in the last year, you could potentially miss that target. I am wondering whether you might consider recruiting some additional PCSOs.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** If it is the case that I cannot meet my promise to have a PCSO in every ward with the two police officers, of course we will revisit that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Fantastic. Obviously I realise this is dependent on budget. We have had that discussion/debate, if you can call it that, this morning.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** It takes two to discuss.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Obviously I am absolutely with you in terms of Government funding. I think most of us around this Chamber are. What I am wondering is: in next year's budget, would you be prepared to ask Londoners to pay further council tax to boost the number of PCSOs and police officers on our streets?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am always happy to receive representations. You will be aware I was criticised by some people for increasing the police precept by 1.99%, which was what the Government told me to do or recommended I do to avoid further penalties in future years.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** It did not come from me.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am always happy to receive representations if you want to make them.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Is that something that you may well consider? You said quite rightly earlier that your priority is keeping Londoners safe. You are concerned about that. Will you therefore think whether you may have to increase council tax to pay for more officers on our streets?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** The right time for me to set my budget is during the time when I set my budget. Of course you have heard loud and clear about safety being a priority for me but also I recognise that Londoners need to meet the cost of living in London and cannot afford to pay too much tax. I will balance those two competing interests, of course.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK. Thank you very much. Very helpful, thank you.

### **2017/2230 - Garden Bridge Review (1)**

[Andrew Boff](#)

*Will you supply copies of all communication between GLA staff and the office of Margaret Hodge or persons representing her between August 2016 and the present day?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you for your question. Dame Margaret's review shone a light on the previous administration's poor practice and disregard for taxpayers' money in pursuing and supporting the Garden Bridge project. My priority is to take action to address those failings. I have already appointed a new, stronger and more diverse TfL board and TfL has responded to the review's findings. I have made clear I do not intend to provide the guarantees the previous Mayor had, in principle, approved. To do so would have exposed the taxpayer to an unacceptable level of financial risk.

As you would expect, the process of compiling the report was detailed and thorough. A GLA officer who had not previously been involved in the project supported Dame Margaret Hodge with research, interviews, administrative matters, fact-checking and carrying out legal due diligence on the report and in preparing it for publication. There was therefore a significant volume of correspondence, much of it administrative in nature but also some of it involving legally privileged advice. The advice from GLA Information Governance is that they do not believe there is merit in officers spending what would be a significant amount of time but also public money sifting through this correspondence to remove legally privileged information, personal data or information otherwise exempt from disclosure under Freedom of Information (FOI) and environmental information regulations.

I should add that Dame Margaret spent five years as Chair of the Public Accounts Committee scrutinising public spending and has earned widespread respect from all sides of the political spectrum holding leading public figures to account. She produced and published a full, thorough and independent report. This openness stands in stark contrast to the approach of the previous administration in respect of the Garden Bridge project, as was made clear in the Hodge

report. Furthermore, significant correspondence about the project itself, which is of course and legitimately of interest to the public, has been published in response to numerous FOI requests.

**Andrew Boff AM:** Mr Mayor, will you publish the audio files and written transcripts?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** That is a question for officials. It is not a decision made by me.

**Andrew Boff AM:** You commissioned the report, Mr Mayor. Will you publish the transcripts and the audio files?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I will follow the advice I am given, which is the clear advice from GLA Information Governance. Whatever advice they give me in relation to requests that are made, I have followed.

**Andrew Boff AM:** Mr Mayor, this is about the audio files going towards production of the report.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I will release all the information that officers advise should be released once FOI requests are made.

**Andrew Boff AM:** When did Margaret Hodge request payment for this work?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I am not sure if she requested payment. £9,500 was paid to Dame Margaret for conducting her review into the Garden Bridge. This reflects the significant amount of work involved in the review and is in keeping with the level of payment made to authors of other major reviews I have commissioned, including the Harris review.

**Andrew Boff AM:** Did you ask for her to use Parliamentary resources in order to complete the report?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** No.

**Andrew Boff AM:** Did you provide an office at the GLA for her to do the work for this report?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** That is an issue for officers. One GLA officer worked on a part-time basis to support Dame Margaret. The issue of where she worked and stuff is an issue for the GLA officers and Margaret.

**Andrew Boff AM:** Do you count Margaret Hodge as a friend of yours, Mr Mayor?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Yes.

**Andrew Boff AM:** Good. Thank you.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Thank you. We skip all of the Conservative Group questions because they are out of time and we now go to a question from Assembly Member Duvall.

## **2017/2529 - Vetting of London Underground Employees**

[Len Duvall](#)

*It has been reported the terrorist involved in the London Bridge attack Khuram Butt was employed by TfL as a customer service assistant working in both Canada Water and Westminster stations. He was employed by TfL while on a MI5 watchlist and after taking part in a Channel 4 documentary "The Jihadis Next Door". What vetting are employees on the London Underground subject to and should there be a system of enhanced checks to make sure that no Underground employees have ties to any form of extremism?*

**Len Duvall AM:** Thank you, Chair. One of the lessons learned around -- sorry. I apologise. You were going to answer.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I will keep it short for your questions but in relation to the specific question, Khuram Butt worked for London Underground for under six months in 2016 as a trainee Customer Services Assistant at Canada Water, Southwark and Westminster stations. He was employed in May 2016 and ceased being a TfL employee in October last year. I am informed that he failed his probation because of extremely poor attendance.

All potential employees undertake a comprehensive check before they start work with TfL. This includes criminal record checks which would disclose any unspent criminal convictions. Screening is also carried out on the candidate's employment history, requiring a candidate to provide references for a period of three years. No employee is permitted to start work without the return of their screening checks, nor if any information received gives cause for concern.

I need to make clear that TfL does not have access to any watch lists maintained by the UK authorities and the Government but it is obviously in contact with the British Transport Police (BTP), who are fully linked in with the MPS on all matters regarding security on TfL's network. I should add also, which will reassure you, I hope, that following the London Bridge attacks the TfL Commissioner, Mike Brown, met the Police Commissioner, Cressida Dick [CBE QPM], where they discussed vetting procedures. TfL is subsequently carrying out a review of its vetting process and will of course act on any findings.

**Len Duvall AM:** Mr Mayor, could you also check and investigate further whether for this group of employees of which Mr [Khuram] Butt was a cohort, which Mr Butt was employed along with, there was a sense of urgency to bypass the vetting procedures? I know your briefing notes say that but could you ask officers to further clarify whether it was the case that this cohort of people were fast-tracked into the system of TfL to work in this position?

Secondly, there is the fact - I think it is common knowledge - that Mr Butt did come into contact with the police and MI5 in 2015. There is clearly a gap in our current vetting proposals if that did not come to their attention. It seems to me that we have a history of vetting, way back

from the Irish Troubles from the 1970s onwards, where people may have come to the attention of the police and intelligence agencies where there would have been some intervention, even on counter-terrorism, in terms of the recruitment of this. I just ask if we could walk the extra step and make sure that those potential loopholes are cut off in the future.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Firstly, you are right. You have been quite diplomatic in phrasing your question but you are right, because of the botched way the ticket office closure was handled by the previous administration there was this rush to rectify the error. I was criticised for undertaking a review of ticket office closures and you will see in the priorities to make do the mess made by the previous Mayor. I will ask the Commissioner to look into whether there was an issue with the cohort that you are talking about.

**Len Duvall AM:** At the moment, in terms of some of the information I have, am happy to share and I think others have commented on, I do not believe this cohort went through those vetting procedures in the way that other previous people would have. That may be a potential risk. Equally, I am not sure if the vetting procedures would have picked it up and whether for this individual, who did come to the attention of the agencies, that would have been mentioned. I just want to make sure that loophole is closed.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** OK. Can I just, Chair, through you, thank the Assembly Member for the way he has asked the question? No aspersions have been cast on any individuals. He has deliberately asked the question in a sensitive way. It is the process he is expressing a concern about and we will look into that. Can I thank you for asking it the way you asked it? We are not casting aspersions on anybody else but a bad process can lead to the ball being dropped and we will look into that.

Secondly, in relation to the vetting you talked about, you will be aware from questions that have been raised from around the Assembly of concerns about checks that have to be made, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and others, Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and others, that can lead to delays in people being able to be employed. We have to have a system in place that ensures we get the vetting right but without additional bureaucracy and a cumbersome nature. That is why the Transport Commissioner has met with the Police Commissioner to discuss a vetting process. We have to see the lessons to be learned in a sensible, pragmatic way, recognising the point you are alluding to. Again, we will look into this. Obviously you have raised an important issue. Just so you know, Mike Brown [Commissioner, TfL] is aware of this and he is dealing with this.

## **2017/2604 - Future for Londoners**

[Fiona Twycross](#)

*What assessment have you made of the impact of the general election result on your capacity to deliver 'a city for all Londoners'?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** First, let me say I was delighted that Labour did so well in London. Jeremy Corbyn [MP, Leader of the Labour Party] and London's Labour candidates ran

a fantastic campaign. Let us be clear that Theresa May gambled and failed to gain a big win. She failed to gain even an overall majority. However, even though we still have a Conservative Government I remain committed to putting aside party differences and continuing to work closely with the Government to secure the best possible deal for the capital.

I wrote to the Prime Minister, Secretary of State and the new Minister for London last week restating my commitment to work with them and set out the priorities that I want to work with them on to deliver. First, the Government needs to renew its support for Crossrail 2 and I have urged both the Prime Minister and the Transport Secretary to make an early announcement on progressing Crossrail 2 with the Hybrid Bill in the life of this Parliament.

Second, we are all extremely grateful to the MPS who work tirelessly to keep our streets safe and respond to security threats such as the horrific terror attacks in London. I am deeply concerned at the severe pressures on the resources available to them. They have already had to make £600 million of savings since 2010 and face another £400 million of cuts - of cuts - over the coming years based on the current Government's funding plans. I have urged the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary to scrap any plans to cut the MPS' funding, as cuts on this scale will make our city less safe, and also to ensure we get the funding that we need.

Third, the Government needs to be much bolder in tackling London's appalling air quality and I have offered to work with the new Environment Secretary to significantly strengthen the Draft Air Quality Plan.

Fourth, I want the Government to progress the London Devolution deal we agreed in March and I have also called on the Government to provide a long-term stable fiscal base for all major cities. In London this would allow me to look at a wider range of options to support innovation and support growth.

Finally, what is clear from the election results is that voters in London and elsewhere clearly sent a message to Theresa May and the Conservative Party rejecting their extreme hard Brexit. It is the biggest threat to jobs and growth in London. Londoners need the fullest possible access to the single market and the Customs Union to protect jobs and prosperity as well as allowing businesses to have access to the tunnel. I should add I had a good working relationship with the previous Minister for London, Gavin Barwell, and I hope this will continue with the new Minister for London, Greg Hands.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Thank you and I am pleased to hear of the fact that you have managed to raise so much with Ministers in the short time since the election, particularly given events of the past couple of weeks which could reasonably have been expected to distract you. I am pleased that this is not the case.

I just wondered whether you would agree with the *Evening Standard's* headline of yesterday that we now have a Prime Minister stripped of her power and I wondered what difference you thought a weak Conservative Government would make to Londoners.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Far be it for me to get involved in internal family strife between the *Evening Standard* and Theresa May. The reality is I am not sure we had a strong and stable government before but we certainly do not have one now. That is bad news for us in relation to negotiations with the European Union (EU). If you just do a simple compare and contrast, if the Prime Minister cannot do a deal with ten Members of Parliament from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) who appear, according to reports we see in the media, to have her over a barrel, what progress are we going to make with 27 countries when it comes to negotiating with the European Union?

This is also bearing in mind some of the plans the Conservative Party had in relation to the funding formula of schools, of policing, the idea of grammar schools at a time when there are real issues of inequalities in London, plans in relation to social care, plans in relation to the dementia tax and plans in relation to other things that affect our communities in London. The fact that she has been stripped back may not be a bad thing for those who would be on the receiving end of these Government policies but the problem is it is in nobody's interest to have a government who is not able to get business through parliament.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Thank you. Do you agree that your campaign, London is Open, will be more important than ever in that context?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** It is crucial. Everyone has mentioned this: we have been through a terrible period and it has been tragic for the families affected. Grenfell Tower, the terrorist acts on Westminster Bridge, London Bridge and Finsbury Park. We have got to make sure we come out of this as strong if not stronger afterwards. We cannot allow a perception to be created, the Brexit vote combined with what has happened over the last few weeks, to give an impression we are not going to carry on being open minded, outward looking, not just tolerant but respectful and celebratory of other cultures and other people.

The good news is that I launched London Tech Week last week: the buzz was amazing with innovators, entrepreneurs and start-ups from around the world coming to London.. We have got a great summer of events taking place, cultural and sporting, and so I am hoping that London is Open will be seeing the evidence of London over the summer.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Fantastic, thank you.

## **2017/2424 - Flooding in London**

[Leonie Cooper AM](#)

*Following the Cuttill report, do you have any concerns about the risks of burst water mains in London?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you for your question. I am concerned about Thames Water's maintenance of its assets and the intolerable impact these burst water main incidents have had on the lives of Londoners and the capital's businesses. I am aware the

Environment Committee held Thames Water to task on this matter just last week, as did my Deputy Mayor for Environment on 16 June.

For years London has put up with an unacceptable number of leaks from water mains and I expect Thames Water to act on the recommendations from the Cuttill report as soon as possible. Just last week Thames Water was fined the maximum amount by the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat), £8.55 million, for significantly missing their leakage reduction target. This shows that Thames Water have a lot of work to do to ensure they are meeting Londoners' needs.

The report highlighted that the rate of water mains replacement by Thames Water is not keeping pace with the deterioration of the network. As our city grows the water network must also keep pace and Thames Water need to invest in securing a reliable network for now and the future. Thames Water has informed me they will invest an additional £97 million over the next three years in the mains network, but while this is to come from shareholders rather than customers the amount is pitiful given the cost of destruction to Londoners. Early detection and intervention by Thames Water is vital to reduce the risk of further bursts. I want Thames Water to increase the investment to accelerate their monitoring system so the risk is reduced.

They need to stop relying, frankly, on old listening devices and move to more advanced leak detection systems. They also must improve their compensation offer. I would expect Thames Water to be reaching out to those affected rather than waiting for those affected to enquire as is often currently the case. I have also been in touch with the Chair of Ofwat and my Deputy Mayor for Environment will be meeting him soon.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Well, thank you very much, Mr Mayor, for that response and for being so vocal, both yourself and your Deputy Mayor, in support for the investigation into Thames Water and their failings following several floods in London towards the end of last year. Obviously this comes in a very difficult period for London and yourself. Just before I move on to ask you a supplementary, can I just extend some personal comments that have come to me from a lot of people around Tooting and Wandsworth? Obviously in the period of Ramadan they are very aware that you and your team have been working extremely hard and they hope you are looking after yourself. That is essentially what a lot of people have been saying. Some personal messages of support for you.

I asked some of the boroughs who had been affected by the flooding incidents, Lambeth, Lewisham, Hackney and Islington, to come into City Hall. We heard from a number of scrutiny inquiry teams who have been looking into these matters in detail. We heard directly from them about some of the communication failures that you have just referred to and some of the somewhat ineffective emergency responses and the lack of aftercare for the residents. Now, one of the points that Thames Water have then made to us is that they themselves are not a blue light service and obviously they need to liaise with the Fire Brigade, who do not have the end-to-end responsibility because there is that interface. They also do not have that statutory responsibility.

Would you agree that in order to deal effectively with this type of large-scale flooding that we have seen in various parts of London, the Fire Service should hold the statutory duty of first responder? If you do agree with that, what resources would be needed in terms of equipment and training and would this be something that you would be joining with Assembly Member Twycross to press Government on?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I looked to the Chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) for assistance but there are a lot of things I wanted to raise with LFEPA and with Dany Cotton [QFSM], the Commissioner. Can I just say this? Let us not allow Thames Water to get away with just the issue of first response because how you plan to do the works matters as well. There are planned works that go wrong that cause all sorts of destruction. We are trying to work with them to improve their planning. It is not simply the response to the crisis caused by the flooding but also how they deal with customers and businesses.

I am happy to look into the issues you raise about first response and there may be a need for legislation. I will need to check that with the Chair of LFEPA because there is also an issue of resources as well. Can I take this offline and speak to you about that once I have discussed this with the Chair of LFEPA and the Commissioner as well?

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Thank you very much, Mr Mayor.

## **2017/2430 - Knife Crime**

[Unmesh Desai AM](#)

*Knife crime has increased by 24% in the past year. The new Commissioner Cressida Dick has said that knife crime is 'of huge concern and will mark out her commissionership'. What is the Mayor doing to support her to tackle this problem?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you for your question. There have been too many instances of knife crime recently across our city. Knife crime has been on the increase over the last two years both in London and nationally. This is absolutely unacceptable it has to stop. I have prioritised the Knife Crime Strategy as our first piece of work following the Police and Crime Plan and this will be launched shortly. Knife crime in London is a complex problem that needs to be solved on many levels. It cannot just be seen as a policing issue, we have to deal with the causes and recognise the symptoms.

Throughout the consultation the clear message is for better early intervention, working with families, working with schools and working with communities. This is not something the police can do alone. We have not been standing still, my officers have been working with the MPS to ensure there is an increased operational response to knife crime to tackle the immediate challenges. To date Operation Sceptre, which you know all about, has engaged in over 7,000 weapon sweeps with over 1,500 weapons recovered and removed from the streets of London. Operation Sceptre 9 will run during this week with a focus on enforcement. The last phase, Sceptre 8, which ran in May, involved 1,895 activities across London, resulted in more than 500 arrests and 380 knives seized. This is the highest level of activity conducted as part of this

operation to date and will set the benchmark for the future. Since May 2016, since I became the Mayor, a total of 2,709 individuals have been charged with possession of a knife.

The new Knife Crime Strategy has an immediate comprehensive response to tackle those who carry knives and those who are responsible for the violence which we are seeing on our streets. This includes a renewed focus on targeted police operations and you will be pleased to know Operation Sceptre will now run on a monthly basis. The MPS is also deploying 80 officers both in uniform and plain clothing into high knife crime borough hotspots including super-recognisers to identify key offenders. Thank you.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Thank you for that answer, Mr Mayor. As you said this is a complex issue and there are no easy answers. For me it is about the three Es: education, enforcement and engagement, engagement with and intervention in communities. On the education side knife possession in schools went up by some 50% in 2016 compared to 2014, some 299 incidents.

What do you see as the role of schools and families in your strategy?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I know you know this but for the avoidance of doubt, the vast majority of young people are fantastic, peaceful, law-abiding and do not get into trouble, so we are talking about a small number of people. One of the reasons why I was keen to have school safety officers is to make sure we can work with the schools to make sure the message is sent loud and clear. "If you carry a knife you are going to be less safe, not more safe. You do not get respect. You will be arrested and action will be taken against you. Do not do it." All of us have a role to play there. Some schools are reluctant to come forward to have the school safety officer. They do not want to be stigmatised. We have got to work with them to make sure all schools recognise this is a problem for all of us and so we have to make sure the education role you talk about is at the centre of our strategy.

## **2017/2175 - Small businesses threatened by regeneration projects**

[Caroline Russell AM](#)

*What are you doing to protect London's diverse small businesses threatened by regeneration projects?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you. I will cut this short for obvious reasons. I am developing a number of policies and strategies to balance the need for new homes to tackle the housing crisis with the need to protect and provide vital employment space. You will be pleased to know I will be setting up policies in the new London Plan which seek to ensure we have a supply of work space that meets the needs of small and medium sized enterprises as well as large employers including the availability of low cost business space. You will be aware of the rapid loss of industrial land in recent years is a particular cause for concern. In response we are looking at how we can strengthen protection for industrial activities throughout London including re-provision of similar spaces when sites are redeveloped.

We are also looking at innovative solutions such as industrial intensification and co-located industrial uses with other uses. I am working with the London boroughs in relation to Article 4 directions to protect these areas and also the new London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP) which is looking at a good growth fund to help small businesses in town centres there is much more I will write to you on.

**Caroline Russell AM:** Thank you. I actually want to talk specifically about Earls Court. Last week I met owners of local hotels and restaurants that used to serve visitors to the Exhibition Centre before it closed down. They are really struggling now and it seems that the Earls Court master plan failed to account for that heavily intertwined nature of the local economy with those hotels and restaurants that were completely dependent on trade from visitors to the Exhibition Centre. It used to represent something like 30% of exhibition space available in London. There were a lot of visitors there. Will you propose a new policy in the London Plan that ensures that the needs of existing businesses are accounted for in new developments to stop this happening again?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** In relation to Earls Court you will be aware I have proposed, because it was decided by the previous Mayor, that unless there is an application to change the master plan application I cannot get involved. You are right to remind us of the consequences of that decision made by Boris Johnson [MP, former Mayor of London] and the then Council. I am happy to listen to the representations you have made but what I would suggest is if I get Jules, the Deputy Mayor [Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor, Planning, Regeneration and Skills], to speak to you we will see if we can --

**Caroline Russell AM (Deputy Chair):** That would be absolutely fantastic. The local businesses and campaigners are launching a report here on Monday evening. If it is possible for your Deputy Mayor to come to that launch that would be absolutely fantastic.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** You can put that yourself to Jules.

**Caroline Russell AM (Deputy Chair):** Certainly. Thank you very much.

## **2017/2565 - MPS Digital Investigation Unit**

[Navin Shah AM](#)

*Following the publication of 'Real Voices, Are They Being Heard?', that has highlighted the challenges the Greater Manchester Police are having in processing digital information (computers and mobile phones) in suspected cases of child sexual exploitation, with delays of up to five months, can the Mayor assure us that the Metropolitan Police have an adequately resourced Digital Investigation Unit and that child sexual exploitation investigations in London are not being delayed in a similar way?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation is a hugely important and demanding area of work. Sexual exploitation can have a profound impact on a young person's life and we all have a responsibility to make sure that when a young victim

comes to the attention of the authorities they are given the best possible chance of achieving justice and rebuilding their lives.

In my Police and Crime Plan I have made sure victims are at the heart of everything we do. You will be aware I have announced a new Victims Commissioner, London's first, Claire Waxman. There are a number of policies in my plan which include, for example, investing in extended and joined-up commissioner of services for young victims of sexual violence along with National Health Service (NHS) England and other London partners. MOPAC and NHS England commissioned an assessment of the level of sexual violence in London and the scale of the need for support services in order to inform our future work.

The MPS Digital, Cyber and Communications Forensic Unit, which you allude to in your question, completed 53,000 examinations last year, a large proportion of which related to child sexual exploitation. This was 8% more than the previous year, which, together with an exceptional increase in the data held in devices, places real pressure on the unit. 70% of telephone examinations are completed in ten days. Non-urgent computer examinations are completed in three months with an effective prioritisation process in place to fast-track urgent cases.

A key part of how well the MPS perform is the introduction of an innovative kiosk approach which enables frontline officers to examine phones at the point of seizure. The real challenge facing the MPS is not enough resources in the face of demand. With the policing stretched my concern is that we do not have the resources we need to provide the best police service we can. I must repeat again, I will continue to lobby the Government to ensure London is properly funded in the years ahead and look to you, Navin [Shah AM], and all Assembly Members to come together and support me in doing so.

**Navin Shah AM:** Certainly, Mr Mayor, your lobbying for better resources for London in this aspect is commendable and you have our support. What I do want to raise is the issue about the progress and that is what progress has been made in protecting children and young people since Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) National Child Protection Inspection which was in 2016?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Firstly, the report was shocking and so since the report was published an oversight group chaired by the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime has been established, its remit is to ensure an appropriate and effective MPS response to HMIC recommendations. Group members include key officials from the MPS but also, and it is really important, the National Police Chief Council, London Safeguarding Children's Board, the Office of Children's Commissioner and the College of Policing. Extensive work is being carried out and an area of work that has also been a central feature at the meetings between the Deputy Mayor and the Commissioners has been the area around the issues raised by the HMIC report.

HMIC will reinspect the force in 2017 and we all want to make sure that when they inspect it then they see evidence of a vast improvement.

**Navin Shah AM:** Thank you. I am mindful of time I have a couple of questions but I will write to you about those because there are some serious ongoing concerns but thank you for your answer.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Thank you. A question from Assembly Member Whittle.

## **2017/2281 - London, The World's Leading Financial Centre**

[Peter Whittle AM](#)

*Bearing in mind your commitment to be 'the most pro-business Mayor of London ever', would you join with me in congratulating the City of London on the announcement by the Global Financial Centres Index on 27 March 2017, that the top five financial centres in the world are London, followed by New York, Singapore, Hong Kong and Tokyo. (Luxembourg was 18th, Frankfurt 23rd, Paris 29th and Dublin 33rd).*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** The short answer is that one of the reasons why we are is because we are accessing one market, members of the EU. We have got to make sure, even though we are leaving the EU, we do not stop being the great global city we are. I will let you ask another question because I do not want to use up your time.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Thank you. We are at a gallop, are we not? The thing is that we are still top, Mr Mayor. I take that as a yes, you do join me in congratulating London. Do you know what the other nine have in common with us, the other cities?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** They are global cities like we are. New York, Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo --

**Peter Whittle AM:** Yes, and none of them are in the EU. The thing is that --

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** That is because they are not in Europe, Peter. Can someone give him a geography lesson afterwards?

**Peter Whittle AM:** Even more, they are not in the EU. Would you admit that a lot of it was scaremongering? For a long time you were saying that basically the city faced possible disaster, people going to Europe and all the rest of it. This has been one of the arguments all the way along from people such as yourself who campaigned to remain in the EU. Do you accept that is now not going to happen?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Chair, can I just tell the Assembly Member some news? We have not left the EU yet.

**Peter Whittle AM:** It was said actually by people who campaigned that in fact there would be an immediate recession, it was said there would be an immediate recession we have not had that we have had nothing but quite good financial news.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** To be fair he is now the editor of *The Standard* but I can introduce him to people in banks across London from UBS to Morgan Stanley and others who are actually moving jobs out of London. One of the reasons why we see people coming to London is because of our ability to attract talent. If we leave the EU that will make it more difficult.

**Peter Whittle AM:** We are leaving, Mr Mayor. I hate to break it to you but we are leaving and the fact is you need to absolutely speak up the City of London not just bring it down.

## **2017/2523 - London's economy annual surplus**

[Andrew Dismore AM](#)

*London's economy generates a £26.5 billion annual surplus, which is used by the government to provide financial help to Britain's less well-off regions. Data from the Office of National Statistics shows that only three regions of the U.K. - London, the southeast and the east of England - ran a budget surplus in 2015-2016. Londoners on average therefore provided £3,070 more in tax revenues than they received in public spending. Isn't this a good argument for the Government to listen to you, on behalf of London in the Brexit negotiations; and to confirm investment in London, for example to build Crossrail 2 and to grant a fairer funding deal for policing?*

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you for your question. One of the jobs I do as the Mayor is to talk up London as being the greatest city in the world. We are a global city, the only global city in Europe. One of the reasons why we are a global city is because of our ability to attract talent from not just the 27 nations across the EU but all across the world, and what beggars belief is people who talk down our ability to be a partner, equal partner to 27 countries. For some reason they think we cower to other countries in the EU because they do not understand what a fantastic nation we are.

One of the things I will do as the Mayor of London is make sure we remain open, access to a single market is crucial, but also make sure the Government recognises they have got to stop being so "control freakery". They need to devolve more powers to London, a good London means a good UK: we contribute hugely to revenues to our country but also job creation across the country. It is a symbiotic relationship with London being the capital city. I look forward to working with Assembly Members even those who naively think an extreme hard Brexit benefits London as well as others.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Would you agree that when we contrast the £3,070 per head that London subsidises the rest of the country from our taxes that when, to use a random example, Government spending exceeds tax income by £5,440 per head in Northern Ireland, a figure which will rise by yet another £1,000 a head, is the price the rest of us have to pay for the Conservatives' deal with the DUP who want £2 billion more to keep Theresa May in office but clearly not in power. Would you agree it is vital the Government does not kill off the rest of the country's golden goose, our economy here in London, in their persistence with their hard Brexit

negotiating position on the rights of our fellow Londoners, EU nationals and the migrant talent, on which we depend, on the single market and Customs Union and on passporting rights?

Are you also concerned about the wall of silence from the Government over Crossrail 2 which was not in the Conservative manifesto nor in the Queen's speech, and are you also concerned that despite the disingenuous fake news press release story from the Home Office about the merits of funding, yesterday in the Chamber the MPS Commissioner confirmed to the PCC Committee that the MPS was still facing a funding shortfall of £400 million and that even with further efficiencies, including closing more police stations, without extra Government funding cuts in the number of police officers are inevitable?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Can I say this? The Conservative Party can no longer claim ever to be the party of law and order. The evidence we have seen over the last seven years of the lack of investment in our police services is frankly disgraceful. I will not apologise for speaking up for London and I would hope all Assembly Members would speak up for London in our campaign to get the funding we need as an international capital city.

In relation to Crossrail 2, Crossrail 2 benefits not just London, it benefits the country in relation to wealth creation, in relation to jobs, in relation to improved transport links outside of London into London and that is why councils outside of London support Crossrail 2 and the politicians support Crossrail 2. By the way, if you are going to have a high speed train coming into London at High Speed Two (HS2), any journey time made up in the speed is lost by the disruption caused at Euston. Euston, Victoria, Waterloo have to close down because of overcrowded stations. It is in the country's interest to invest in Crossrail 2 and I hope the Government supports our plan. By the way, we are contributing 49% of the funding for Crossrail 2. You tell me which other city contributes almost half the cost of a major infrastructure project.

In relation to the country needing London to do well, what surprises me is people who talk about an extreme hard Brexit outside of London do not recognise that London's ability to contribute to our nation's prosperity, and I believe in the nation state by the way, is because we have access to talent where members have access to a single market, members of the Customs Union. If you think we will continue to be able to be as prosperous and successful outside the single market and Customs Union, think again. It is in all of our interest to recognise the difference it makes having access to the single market, the ability to attract talent and also being members of the Customs Union and I am hoping the Government recognises the verdict of the British public at the general election and avoids an extreme hard Brexit but recognises there is a sensible course. Yes, we are leaving the EU but there is a way of leaving the EU without causing us maximum damage.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** OK, right. It is just past 12.30pm. I want to thank you, Mayor, for your answers and regret you have to leave us but we understand you have to attend a memorial service. Thank you.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Thank you.