

**Police and Crime Committee - Wednesday, 21 June 2017****Transcript of Item 9 - Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Metropolitan Police Service**

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Welcome very much this morning to Cressida [Dick CBE QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis] and Craig [Mackey QPM, Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service], who is a regular attendee and Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] Sophie Linden.

The first question that I will kick off with, if I may, is around protecting London from terrorism. It is direct to the Commissioner. Following the recent terror attacks, particularly the London Bridge attack and indeed the very recent Finsbury Park Mosque attack, would you kindly provide us with an update on the current counterterrorism investigations, if you can?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, indeed. Thank you very much indeed, Chairman. I start first of all by of course, as we have acknowledged with our minute's silence, recognising the dreadful loss of life and the number of people whose lives have been turned upside down by the events in London and indeed in Manchester over the last several weeks.

Secondly, I would also of course like to pay tribute to Craig [Mackey QPM, Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service]. Since you last met I started and the Deputy Commissioner, as he now is again, performed a fantastic role in the interim between [Sir] Bernard [Hogan-Howe QPM, former Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis] and me and indeed in his support to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and to Bernard for many years before. A huge thank you to Craig and, as you would know, I am thoroughly enjoying working with him. Our ability to respond to the various incidents of course is in no small part to the very hard work that has gone on over many years before.

Turning to the terrible events at London Bridge, as you know, a number of people were arrested. They have all subsequently been released. We do have a very large investigation that continues. This might be a moment for me to pay tribute again not just to officers but to members of the public who were so extraordinarily courageous on the night. You will be aware that we had many hundreds of officers there and well over 1,000 in fact at the scene or in the immediate surrounds subsequently. As an example, the Counter Terrorism (CT) Command for seven days had 600 officers every day. It is not just police officers; it is also members of our forensic staff, for example, lots of police staff engaged in various different ways.

It remains a very large investigation. We are of course working very closely with the Coroner and to the Coroner. If I give you an example of scale, we have incurred to date overtime of about £1.2 million and that will increase. We have seized 4,100 exhibits. You will be aware that we carried out a large number of operations in the days afterwards. That is what I might start by saying about Southwark. There may be follow-up questions, I understand.

In relation to the terrible events just a couple of days ago in Finsbury Park, I do need to be careful, of course because, as you know, we have somebody in custody. He is a person for whom a warrant of further detention has just been obtained and he is in custody for section 41<sup>1</sup>, which is of course a terrorist offence and includes

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<sup>1</sup> Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

murder and attempted murder. This incident was declared a terrorist incident seven minutes after it happened. Very sadly, as you know, we have one person who is deceased and we continue our investigation to establish exactly how he came to his death. We have carried out a special post mortem and we are working very closely with his family and indeed with all the people who were injured and their families.

You will be aware that between the first event and the second we have, of course, had the Grenfell [Tower] fire and that is a further very significant major incident. As you know, we believe something like - but it will not be exactly this - at the moment 79 people may have lost their lives. Five of those people have been identified and we are carrying out an investigation which consists of us, the London Fire Brigade and the expert independent buildings examiners. Again, we have very significant Family Liaison Officer deployments to that incident. Everybody whom we believe may be deceased, their families we are working with and also very closely with the 12 who have been in hospital, together with much support to the wider community.

On that investigation, we currently have 260 officers dealing with the main investigation and the disaster victim identification. On the night, we deployed well over 150 into the scene. Every day we have a very large number on the cordons, hundreds. It started at a couple of hundred; it has come back down.

These three events were absolutely ghastly for London and very large-scale. We are progressing large-scale investigations. We recognise entirely that in their different ways they have caused enormous concern to communities. We are doing our very level best to work closely with all our communities, with our local communities, to be engaging and speaking in every forum we can think of. Also, we have a very big prerogative now to protect London going forward. As well as normal business, if I might call it that, it is the summertime and we have lots of events, we have had the elections, we have the opening of Parliament today, we have protests and demonstrations and of course, we are coming up to Id. We are fully alert to all of this.

I will finish by simply saying that it has been a whole-MPS response, supported by our communities and supported by all of you and other politicians in other ways. We have been overwhelmed by public support and, if anything, I would just describe the MPS as steely in its determination and full of resolve. People want to do this work. They wish it had not happened but, if it has happened, they want to be there. I can speak for all of the retired community as well because they are all contacting us and saying, "How can I help? I wish I was there". There is a lot to do but you have a fantastically capable police service and we work incredibly closely, as you know, with the agencies and with the Government.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Thank you, Commissioner. That is very reassuring and you can be assured of the support of this Committee in your work. I am also agreeing with your sentiments at this difficult and busy time.

You talked about how it is a whole-MPS response. I would be interested in your co-working with, for example, the City of London [Police] and the British Transport Police (BTP) as well because it is part of the same footprint. Can you give us some feeling about how that is working at this time as well?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Absolutely. I am conscious that I am here in support of the Deputy Mayor but, nevertheless, forgive me for not mentioning the BTP and the City of London Police, which have been absolutely integral to our ability to respond and of course in relation to London Bridge in particular, but not just that. They have been absolutely up at the front end of the response and in our Gold control room setup at all stages. In terms of the first initial response and secondly how we now protect London, it is a totally integrated set of operations. The Commissioner of the City [of London Police] and the Chief Constable of the BTP and I are speaking all the time. We are very content with our

interoperability and our co-working. Of course, you will be well aware that, sadly, probably the most seriously injured of the officers was indeed a BTP Officer.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Indeed. There will be some questions later linked to resources and funding of resources.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Of course.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is coming along a little bit later, but I want to look at and ask some questions around investigative resources, in essence, post-event - detectives doing the work after the event, the resources with these extreme events and the ability for that piece of work to be carried out - and then, secondly, connected but separate, your resources around intelligence-gathering in preventing events. It is the post and prior pieces, both around resources and both, I would suggest, heavily under pressure at the moment by the nature of events. Could you comment around your satisfaction or confidence that you have resources in both those separate spheres?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** As a Committee, I know you are very well aware that the MPS flexes and surges all day long tactically and indeed every week, every month, every year, we change shape a bit. We are very capable of doing that and we are very capable at knowing where our people are and what their skills are, what the priorities are and where we are going to put people.

We work incredibly closely, of course, with the national police CT network. This set of events, in terms of our processes, if you like, is being dealt with in a similar way. However, of course, they are very large scale and I have given you some idea - and I can do more on that if you like - of the scale. These are very large-scale responses for us.

We have done this against the background, as you know, of some rising demand in terms of our emergency calls, crime more generally, knife crime in particular and indeed, in the last two months, a level of homicide that is higher than was the average last year, for a start. We have to look very hard at who is doing what and what effort and which of our most skilled investigators we are putting into which aspects of each case.

I mentioned, for example, that the Grenfell fire is taking 260, in essence, detectives. That is needed. It will not be like that forever, but it will be there for a long time and that is a big demand.

The CT network is certainly stretched. Before 12 weeks ago, they had a set of people and they still have that set of people across the country, in essence. They have now had four major attacks to deal with and have also disrupted a number - I think five - other plots. Those all take, as you say, a great deal of backward-looking investigative resource and takes potentially, away from some of the proactive and forward-looking intelligence work. We have supplemented the national CT network from some of our crime resources nationally and in London and we need to do that.

We are shifting resources across and people across the MPS. This does have an impact on other, for example, investigations. We have had to pause some; we have had to slow down on some. That is just a necessity.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I guess, as you said, the MPS has been malleable to the degree that it moves where the demand is within its capacity.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I guess the worry here that concerns us is that it becomes a tipping point where, because of the pressures, you just do not have that capacity to move and to cover as well as you can and, with this level of events, that might be an issue.

The other part of the question, which you have touched upon, is the preventative piece, which is about information that the public are giving not just to the MPS but also to MI5 and MI6. One of my colleagues - I think Andrew Boff [AM] - asked that we ask the question. It was around the recent attacks. There has been anecdotal evidence of information given previously. We will not go into detail and name names, but there was concern raised in this Chamber about the capacity and the ability of the services, shall we say, to absorb and act upon information given to them by the public.

In the context of what you have just said, would you like to comment on that strain and test?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I would continue to say to the public: please contact us if you have any concerns at all. Be vigilant. If you see something that worries you, if you see somebody's behaviour changing, if you are concerned about an individual or an event, you must tell us. We do respond and will continue so to do to every single - for example - call to the CT hotline and those are thoroughly investigated and dealt with. We cannot always tell the person what happened and sometimes, of course, it will not result in, for example, somebody being arrested because it will fit into a wider picture of intelligence.

It is also the case that the Government has made it clear that there is going to be a good, long, hard look at the whole terrorist strategy. We are working really closely with the Government and we are looking forward to what comes out of that. Also, because of the various attacks, we will be working with the agencies to ensure that we can give a good account of what was known and what was not known and what happened, for example, to the Intelligence Security Committee, to a Coroner's inquest or to other judicial inquiries. I know I can say that both the police CT network and MI5 are looking at our machinery, if I can put it that way, to ensure that we have the best possible ability in our technology, in our analysis and in our risk-based decision-making to try to deal with all this information in the most effective way.

However, as my colleague Mark Rowley QPM [Assistant Commissioner for Specialist Operations, MPS] has said on more than one occasion, when you are dealing - as we have been some of the time recently - with people who may be lone actors, people who are quite alone people, to know when something has changed in their heads so that they are now prepared, not just expressing views that you and I would say were absolutely vile but actually they are now going to do something violent or murderous and they are going to be happy to be killed, it is often very hard to know that.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We understand that. It is that speed of movement from when it is really just a thought in an individual's mind to that person taking action.

My last question before we move on to the next set - and it may be that Craig might want to comment on it - was on the tactic used across the way about 'run, hide and tell' that was operating very much on the night of the London Bridge attacks. Craig, do you want to comment - or anybody comment - on the effectiveness of that and how that worked?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** By all means. It is a tactic and it is a decision made very quickly. On that night, it was done quite quickly in the control room. It is about the safety of the public. We have done a lot of work on this in the last number of years and I know a number

of Members have seen some of the exercises around these sorts of attacks that we have done and run through. It really is taking the learning from those to ask, "What is the most effective thing people can do?"

We saw some really good examples of that, some of it out on social media with people putting out stuff very quickly about what was going on. With all the attacks that we have seen over the last couple of months, we have seen that advantage of the presence in social media very quickly and the ability to get messages out and also to get information back from the public. The public, as the Commissioner has covered, are just incredibly willing to be involved, be part of it and try to help. That is a real strength from these events.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Deputy Mayor, just briefly, were you ever sighted on this tactic? Is it something that you support in the way that was carried out with that particular attack?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes, absolutely, in terms of the plans and the operational emergency planning, absolutely, yes, sighted on that. However, on the night, these were operational decisions taken, rightly, at that stage.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Thanks very much. The next set of questions?

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Thank you, Chairman. Deputy Mayor, can I ask you about the report by Lord [Toby] Harris [*An Independent Review of London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident*] that was published last year in October [2016]? We were told that there was a formal response to the report and its recommendation. Why has the response not yet been published?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** You are right. The Harris review was published last October and, in terms of getting on with implementing the recommendations in the report, we have absolutely been getting on with that. About a third of the recommendations have been taken on board and have been implemented.

In terms of publishing the recommendations, we were on track to publish one and then the general election was called. Since then, I am sure you will understand that we have been really focused on the implementation of the recommendations. We are looking to publish an annual report in October [2017] about how far the recommendations of the Harris report have been taken.

Of course, you will know also that there were many recommendations, the majority of which were focused on other organisations as well as the Government. We have been actively pursuing those and making sure that they are taken on board.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Sorry. Could I just get this right? There will be an annual report coming out in October, did you say?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We hope to publish an annual report in October. We were on track to publish an interim report on how far we had got, but the general election was called. We have been focusing on implementing the recommendations. As I am sure you will understand, that continues to be our focus. We have activated a third of those recommendations. The majority of the recommendations were not for City Hall but for other organisations including the Government and we are actively pursuing those as well.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Can I just move on? Lord Harris also had something to say about the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). Can you explain to us the structure of MOPAC in terms of who has responsibility for issues related to CT as things stand at present?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I chair the CONTEST Board, which brings together the agencies looking at our response and our position in terms of CT with Prevent, Protect and those elements. Ultimately, in terms of that, that would be me. I chair the CONTEST Board and I get advice from the Chief Executive.

We have a lot of expertise within MOPAC on CT and on the relationship between CT and the whole system of policing because of course CT is not just about the CT capacity and capability of the MPS but also about the system including neighbourhood policing and - you have asked previously about intelligence gathering - how that intelligence can come from the communities into the police and into CT as well.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Lord Harris was very specific. He felt that dedicated CT advice to the Mayor and MOPAC outside the police is lacking. One of his recommendations was for an advisor on CT to be appointed to sit within MOPAC. What do you make of that?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In terms of that specific recommendation, we are still looking at that. We have extremely good expert advice on CT not just within MOPAC but also from regular briefings from [Assistant Commissioner] Mark Rowley QPM, the head of the CT Command in the MPS. We are looking at that. If we feel that that would add value to the structures and expertise and advice that comes in, we will take that forward.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Good morning, Commissioner. Congratulations, by the way, on your appointment.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Thank you.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Can you tell me, with the state of the threats, what kind of difference this is going to make to large-scale events in London? We have just had one. I went to watch the Trooping the Colour, for example, on Saturday, but we have things like the Notting Hill Carnival coming up imminently. What are the particular changes that we will see as a result of the new and intensified threat?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have a delicate balance to draw here. On the one hand, those of us who have lived and worked in this city all our lives, pretty much, are very proud and hold very dear the fact that it is extraordinarily resilient and we carry on and we do not give in to terrorists who want us to get us to change our way of life.

After the London Bridge attack, as you know, on the Monday morning, London Bridge Station was open, visitors were flooding through London and people working likewise, and we were keeping them safe. There were some visible changes; for example, the protection on the bridges that came in in the following few days. The Queen's Birthday Parade that you mentioned went ahead. The election went ahead. The Cricket World Cup went ahead. I could go on. Everything carried on and the vast majority of them were enjoyed in exactly the same way as they always have been with relatively little extra disruption to people.

However, there was some extra disruption and a change in some ways to the look and feel. For example, in the Queen's Birthday Parade down the Mall, this year for the first time - and I do not say it will always be like this - the [Police] Officers who were looking at the crowds were all dressed in their full protective equipment with their batons and CS [gas]. In previous years they have been in their tunics and their white gloves. This was a

decision by Gold, entirely hers to make, based on her understanding of the potential threat and what they might be called upon to do.

There are some changes and you can see signs of increased armed patrolling, increased officer patrolling and in some places different search regimes. We do that on a case-by-case, event-by-event dynamic. What is the current threat? What is the intelligence? What do we think?

Clearly, we are all thinking about our big events in London when we have large gatherings of crowds and one of those is Notting Hill. I am working very closely with the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] and also with the Mayor on our preparations for the Carnival. We have a CT security advisor, who is working pretty much fulltime on how we secure the Carnival and what measures need to be put in place. We put some in place last year, which were different and very specifically CT measures, and there may well be others this year.

**Peter Whittle AM:** That is very reassuring to know. The public as well would probably quite like to see some reassuring signs of an increased presence or whatever, but what I was thinking was - perhaps I could ask you, Deputy Mayor, as well - in terms of these big events like Notting Hill particularly coming up and also the [Queen's] Birthday Parade.

People are coming at the event from everywhere. There is no entry point, as it were. When I went there on a Saturday, I was with a friend who had a big bag and at no point was it searched or whatever. You might say, "How could it be?" Would there some sort of way in which there could be formal entries to these things so that people would have to go through, if you like, a police entrance, even to big informal public events such as this? Is that a possibility?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I can tell you that there are some public events where we have already gone from no searching to searching. That is certainly something we will consider and do. In fact, we did not in our introduction mention the move to 'critical' after the Manchester attack, which of course did change the look and feel rather a lot in London because we had, for a very short period of time, soldiers replacing some of our armed officers and the public could see them. Throughout London at that point, institutions - no doubt including this one, if I can call it an institution - were putting in place extra measures. They were out the front here. Regimes were tightened up.

What I am saying is that that is a possibility, but we have to look at the current threat, the current intelligence, what will keep people safe and whether whichever thing we are thinking of is a practical tactic in these circumstances. Absolutely, searching is one thing we often put in place and will do in the future.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Can I just ask one more question? It might sound a silly question but, given the nature of the particular terrorism at the moment, is it true to say that big public events such as we are talking about are on pretty much a par with almost any other public situation? Are they particularly targeted by these terrorists? I would have thought not. It tends to be quite random.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** In the past, certainly, some large public events in other countries have very clearly been targeted and what we do know is that a large public event by definition usually provides a large crowd. Even for the type of threat that you are talking about - and of course we do have a multiplicity of threats, although we are very focused at the moment on what has happened in the last few weeks, of course, and the people we know about who have caused those attacks - 12 weeks ago, the CT network was already working at a very high state of alert and looking at a wide range of threats. We need to look at the current picture all the time but not forget some of the threats that perhaps people would have been thinking about a few months ago. They have not gone away. We need to protect

against all of them. In essence, a large public event is a large crowd and it does appear from these ghastly things we have seen in the last few weeks that a crowd is potentially vulnerable.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Thank you very much.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Before we go on to the next question, over the summer the Committee will be seeking probably from you, Craig [Mackey], some private briefings in anticipation of Notting Hill and that is something we can arrange to give reassurance.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Yes, thank you. First of all, I would like to thank the police for everything you are doing. I went to Finsbury Park last night and met the community and they were grateful for what you did on the night and also your response since.

What I want to understand is that you have said, Commissioner, that you are dealing with people who appear very volatile and unstable and are using low-tech methods. Going forward, what implications do you think this changing nature of terror has for how the police and other services work to prevent extremism?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I have mentioned the review that the Government has announced and a very large focus of that will be on prevention. I do not mean preventing the attack; I mean preventing people becoming violent extremists and intercepting them as they are beginning to think about actual serious violence.

The key to this for me is absolutely within our communities. The Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] has already mentioned the wider part of policing that plays such a role in countering terrorism. I know that Craig [Mackey] has said this before but it bears repetition: after an attack, at least half and usually two thirds of the people who are deployed to deal with it are not from the CT network; they are from general policing. I would say the same about the preventative work. It is very hard to measure. It is very hard to put a finger on. The vital importance of what our Neighbourhood Officers and our links with the communities provide we need to build on. We need to get messaging out to communities. We are seeing in many communities people being absolutely outraged and standing up and condemning in a way perhaps they might not have felt able to do in the past. We are having people calling the hotline more and more. We are getting more information from our communities. We need to work harder and harder at that.

I do not want to start a great debate here. I know that the Prevent programme itself is quite controversial in many respects. However, it has had some fantastic successes with some individuals, not least right-wing extremists. Something like 30% of Channel referrals are domestic extremism referrals, which is something that people in our wider communities do not always know about or hear. They have had some great successes. For me, the big work has to go on in our communities.

There is then some stuff around, for example, how we constantly put out advice around things like the precursors people might have used for creating an improvised explosive device, how we regulate that and how we get people to give us information if somebody does something odd there. We are thinking at the moment - and it is very hard - about how we can deal with van hire. We have sent a message to the hire community to say, "Please be careful. Think who it is. If there is anything suspicious, let us know". Should that be regulated in any further way?

There is a whole big review to be done. It might require some legislation. I do not know. It might require some tweaking of legislation. However, for me, it is in the communities.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Thank you for that. Reviewing the Prevent bit is really important. We did some work a year or two ago on this Committee which we might want to revisit because there were some recommendations there that may feed into that review.

You mentioned - and the Chairman touched on it earlier - the anti-terrorism hotline. I understand that there were more than twice the number of calls it has had in the previous 12 months with 22,000 people making contact. However, questions have been raised about how that information is used. You said that they respond to every call to the hotline. With that sort of volume, are you really able to do that?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We absolutely log every call, keep a record of every call, assess every call and take action. Clearly, as I said, we cannot always tell people what that action was. I do not want to discourage anybody at all, but sometimes it is actually repeat information or even information that, as soon as we look at it, we realise is completely misguided or the person who rang us has got in a complete muddle. That is rare and basically, yes, we do deal with all of them. We do that at the time. Sometimes it is that vital information that is actually going to influence today's operation and so we must do that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** What about the allegations with the recent incidents that members of the public say that they made contact about recent attackers and it was not used?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** There will of course be thorough reviews of what has happened, but my information at the moment is that the calls that were made were, as far as we can possibly tell, logged properly, assessed properly and dealt with properly. I probably should not say any more than that at this stage. There will be further reviews of everything, I am sure.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** That is helpful. Thank you very much.

**Len Duvall AM:** Can we turn to the world of encryption and social media and the police's view on that and the stances they may take, whether it is the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) or whether it is a MPS view? I have asked you, Craig, before and so just remind us. What is the police stance around the debate on the use of social media in radicalisation and moving from passive support to being prepared to take an act of violence? Our views have changed over the years. What would the police be asking of the Government? Is there an official line?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** You will be aware that it is back on as a very current debate again at the moment about where it should be. When we talked about this before, we spoke about some of those issues with companies and with organisations and getting that right balance between the freedoms that we expect as a society and also those powers and the regulatory framework we need as a police service to carry out investigations. There are challenges for us with that increasing level of encryption and modern technology. It is the part of the work we have talked about before about making sure we are in the right position to be able to tackle those issues. One: we have the technological capability. Two: we have a legal framework that allows us to do them and actually is technologically capable of being able to do it because, with some of this encryption, it is not. That is the bit that we are working on at the moment to develop that position.

We have spoken before about the challenge with working with some of the companies that have worldwide footprints and our ability to influence from within the United Kingdom (UK). The debate is moving. That would be my sense from everything we are picking up. That debate is moving with the organisations if you look at some of the stuff that has been reported quite recently about how some of the technology companies

are responding and recognising those issues. Out of some of these terrible events may come some real opportunities to say, "We need a different debate about how we work in that space".

**Len Duvall AM:** Is it going to happen fast enough? If you are in crisis and you are fighting ever-changing moving challenges around CT and some of those issues, is there not the need for speed?

Let us separate out the issues with the role of social media. There is an element of the right to free speech, but we know that individuals, particularly those lone wolves, if we can call them that, have access to those bits, never mind the dark web but some of the mainstream social media, about either something that radicalises them or how to make weapons that can hurt and wound and cause destruction.

Where are we? Take us through the social media bit. How quickly do you think we could move, in terms of the incidents we have had, to a sensible response from the operators of those sites in terms of dealing with those aspects if there is an official representation that says, "This is not right, this should be dealt with and this should be taken down"?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I do not have that data with me. We have previously discussed it and I have shared it with you before. To reassure, we do that at the moment. There are teams of people when stuff is reported to us. I do not have - but I am quite happy to share with you in writing afterwards - the number of sites we and other parts of the organisation take down when they see stuff. That debate has moved and some of the big social media companies, certainly in the last month, have started to talk much more about how quickly they will take these things down as they are identified.

However, there are two distinct parts to the question that you identify. There is the issue of communication in social media between people and there is the issue of what I would call promotion videos, how-to books, cookbooks and those sorts of things. We have an awful lot of work going on about how we take that down.

The communication bit is the next challenge. As part of the review the Commissioner talked about, part of the work that will go on across the UK Government is about how we properly operate in that space, what the legal framework is and also what the levers are. With some of this technology, it is very difficult to get into that communication bit.

I would just encourage people. If you are on a social media site and you see stuff on there that is wrong, they all now have a 'report' button and things do happen. We spoke before about some of the work we have done with the Digital 101 pilot. When we stepped into the social media space, having a virtual police officer on that 'street' moderated behaviour. You will see us increasingly doing that as part of the prevention work and tackling this.

We will come up against some legal challenges with some of these global companies, but if ever there is an opportunity, now is the time to do it.

**Len Duvall AM:** If we can go back to the issue of the communication then between individuals or groups that want to cause harm to us, in that sense, will we be seeing - or is this going on - lobbying and representations to the Government about the powers the police may need and maybe the intelligence services - or maybe they are as one - to make us safer?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** We talk all the time about those powers. You will be aware that with some of the recent Bills that came through under the last

Parliament there was a very big debate about how far we can go and where we can go, but then there is also that bit at the end that is quite frustrating. We might want to go there but do we have the technical capability to be able to do that? That is a very live debate and we have people, both in the CT world and elsewhere, who nationally all the time are saying, "This is what is happening and this is what is going on".

As I said, the other bit with that is that that technology is moving far faster than legal frameworks. You have heard us talk in the past about the challenge of - we use the phrase - 'going dark' when there are bits of information or intelligence that we literally cannot access. That will be an increasing challenge. Technology moves faster than the legal framework in which we operate.

**Len Duvall AM:** Thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We are going to move away for the moment from the specific subject around terrorism, although clearly the Committee will be here to scrutinise and support you as we continue.

Now we are moving to priorities for you, Cressida, as the new Commissioner.

**Len Duvall AM:** Commissioner, can you set out your vision and priorities for the MPS under your tenure?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes. I have come in as Commissioner, which I would say is the best job in the world. I am incredibly privileged to be doing it and I am taking on an organisation that faces challenges, of course, on a number of different fronts but it has - and has shown over the last few weeks - incredible people, incredible professionalism, wonderful values and a very powerful history of learning and learning and learning from what has gone on. I do believe, as I said, that this is the greatest global city and it is served by the best police service in the world. It is not perfect and there are many things we need to improve and indeed to change.

My three priorities are, firstly, under the banner of public confidence. Public confidence is very high in the police. Support from the public is generally very high and even more so after the last few weeks, as I have said. However, I am conscious that we have parts of some of our communities that have lower confidence and I want to reduce that gap, particularly amongst some of our minority ethnic and most deprived communities and, secondly, amongst some of our young people. I want to improve the confidence of young people in their police service.

Within public confidence, of course, are the operational priorities. For me, this is primarily about violence. We have the Police and Crime Plan and we will be working to that, but within that terrorism, obviously, and it has come into even sharper focus in the last few weeks; knife and gun crime but in particular knife crime is a very big challenge for us at the moment that is simply too high and I want to bear down on; and violence against women and girls, if I could put it that way, and vulnerable people more broadly. In all cases, it is about reducing the crime and the threat - and terrorism is a crime, of course - and, secondly, trying to support people who become victims as best we possibly can as the police and we have only a partial role in that but to give them as good a service as we can, and of course bring people to justice whenever we can.

I want to move us towards prevention and to get, as they say, upstream as far as possible. A lot of the work we are doing around, for example, vulnerable people and victimisation is about trying to get upstream. Therefore, that is my first category.

My second category is about my people or our people in the MPS. I want them to feel that they are as well led, as well equipped and as well supported as they can be, that they have discretion, that they have the

agency, that they can take their assessment of risk and get on and make decisions and, when they have done that in good faith, that they feel supported.

Thirdly, we need to transform for the future. We have some financial challenges, but we also have a requirement to transform in a variety of different ways, not least to become a 21st-century police service, making the best of technology and data, and we have a lot going on in that at the moment as you know.

When I spoke to my Management Board when I started and to several other people, I have said consistently that, events aside, this five years - which I hope it will be - will be defined by our ability to create the MPS of the future and to transform. Of course, we have a lot of events, ghastly events, and a changing understanding of the terrorist threat, but I still stand by: we must push forward with our changing for the future, our transformation programme, and we have to do that within our financial envelope, whatever that ends up being.

**Len Duvall AM:** On your tour of the boroughs - and I know that you have done many and I was there at your first one at Lewisham - what do you think has been the central theme that has come back from the workforce about the job? Is there a central message that has come back or a number of messages that have not shocked you but have made you say, "That is interesting. I never thought of it like that", or, "I did think of it but not in those terms"?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** On the one hand I should not be surprised, but there is incredible pride in what they do and in what we do and in what their colleagues have done, not least the amazing courage and professionalism in the face of events and the ability of the MPS to just get on with it. Pride is strong.

If I am honest, having been a candidate and talked to people, I was quite surprised on the other side of the equation by the enormous sense of demand that officers have, particularly in relation to emergency response and handling calls. You will be aware that that has gone up 30% in the last two years. It is a very big stretch for them.

Also, it is just such a professional service compared with 15 years ago or when I joined 30-something years ago. The expectations across the board of high-quality performance are very high and bear down on people when they are managing a multiplicity of demands and risk and they feel that they have to reach this platinum standard or otherwise they are going potentially to be investigated or dealt with in some way. That is pushing a lot of pressure on them. I am concerned about that.

Finally, I would just say that they are so keen, despite the fact that this is a busy city and there is always a lot going on, they are just so keen to continue having, genuinely, a highly effective relationship with the public and they want us to do that.

**Len Duvall AM:** In terms of what the police exist for, that response, that emergency, that is what you do and you do it really well. As an organisation that has to transform and change, do you think it is a listening organisation?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** In what sense, sorry?

**Len Duvall AM:** Managers listening to managers and managers listening to various levels, and we can talk about leadership at various levels if you want.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Sure.

**Len Duvall AM:** In terms of circumstances, everyone has that sometimes when the boss does not listen, even probably at senior level, in terms of conversations with each other, but some of the mixed messages over the years that we have had about the MPS on some of the issues and some of the communication problems, or when we are introducing change that do we really pick up, is the imperative to make the change happen regardless, when we say we are going to make this change and then we never come off because of what the evidence suggests or we come off a number of years later and we reverse the trend that we were moving into?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** There are a number of things happening here. Firstly, it is a very busy organisation and people admire its ability to do everything it does, as you say, and to respond and to change in a tactical way to what is happening now or to our biggest challenge right now. It is a very operational organisation. That is for sure. Getting people really excited about the changes for the future when they are actually slogging away and dealing with today's multiplicity of calls is quite hard, potentially, anyway.

Secondly, I do not make any criticism of where we have been or where we are but, in my second thing about my people, I want them to be as well-led as possible. I do want us to be really, really listening. I do want people to feel that they can challenge a lot more. I do want to get away from a lot of the hierarchy. I cannot just click my fingers and say, "All right, no more hierarchy", but I want officers and staff to feel that they can influence how they do their jobs not just today but in the future. It is a big beast with 40,000-plus people, but we can improve the listening and we can improve our communication in all directions and we can flatten the hierarchies quite a lot so that more people feel more engaged with the change programmes and where we are going for the future. That starts at the top. We need to get out there and be listening and we need to be coherent and consistent in our understanding of what is required in some quite uncertain times.

**Len Duvall AM:** One of the key issues around dealing with the job, if I can say, is maximising the use of the resources you have. The MPS has taken some steps of trying to push that to whatever the front line means in terms --

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, absolutely.

**Len Duvall AM:** -- of tackling policing. I have an interpretation that sitting behind a desk is the front line of tackling policing as much as being out on the streets and we should not forget that. As much as warranted Police Officers are important, the support that you get in delivering your jobs is equally important --

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Absolutely.

**Len Duvall AM:** -- and is an effective tool in tackling crime. In that sense around maximising those resources and reflecting those issues, one of the issues -- and can I just say on behalf of the Committee and I think the Chairman would say this: we welcome two issues. One is the issue about the emphasis on tackling violence - and we have raised it for a number of years in terms of that trend - and also about the preventative issues because some parts of the MPS do have the time and the resources to do some of that preventative work. The pressure is on. I accept that. On Territorial Policing, increasingly, from talking to people on the ground, they say, "We do not have much time to do some of that longer-term problem solving because we have lost some of that capacity and preventative work is becoming increasingly difficult".

In our times, is there any discussion going on at senior level to start thinking that through? My colleague will raise issues about borough mergers, but what can we do particularly around Territorial Policing and getting that prevention bit right in terms of some of that problem solving and interventions that stop harm to people?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The short answer is, absolutely, there is. In fact, just yesterday, we as a top team spent quite a lot of time, as a whole top team, talking about this subject.

Within Territorial Policing: (a) there is a lot of pressure; and (b) also, some of the proposed movements towards, for example, bringing all our work to protect and support and deal with crimes against vulnerable people together is highly preventative. It is about trying to make sure that you do not have somebody being dealt with by ten different Police Officers and four different agencies but we bring it together in a one-stop approach and look really seriously at, for example, repeat victimisation. There are areas where we are already shifting quite strongly towards a preventative approach.

We are also working very hard to try to take demand of all sorts out of the system, whether that is in calling handling by doing more online and so forth. We will need to do more of that and we will need to be quite bold about some of that.

I do recognise that if you go out on patrol with a response officer now, they will say, "I do not get as much time for proactivity as I once did". However, if you speak to a Dedicated Ward Officer, for example, particularly in our Pathfinder sites, they are saying, "Yes, actually, I have time to really solve some problems here and I am really enjoying that". It is not easy but that is the way we want to go. It is particularly not easy given the first conversation about the sheer scale of response to events, but that is where we want to get to.

**Len Duvall AM:** Let us move on to, then, issues around notifiable offences. They have started to rise. Some of the trends are there. What do you think is driving some of the change? If we could concentrate on violence, which this Committee would probably welcome, what do you think is driving some of that trend and the rises? What is the thinking?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is quite hard to know. We are not out of step with the rest of the country, as you will be aware. In fact, if anything, the rise in London is rather lower than the rest of the country. There does appear to be, over the last financial year and into this one, definitely a rise and particularly in some categories.

We have, as an example, very high-profile and really of concern, the huge rise in the theft of mopeds and snatches and sometimes robberies and violence to people by somebody sitting on a moped. In a number of different boroughs, that is a huge issue for us at the moment. I would describe that as a trend. It is a trend in both senses of the word. It is primarily young men who appear to get a big thrill out of doing, who are seeing it as an easy source of income, who find it too easy to steal mopeds. I could go on.

It is not very different from - as you will remember, Len; you and I go back a very long way - the theft of cashboxes ten years ago.

**Len Duvall AM:** Yes.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We designed it out. We need to design that out and of course do a lot more intelligence work and lots of work with the criminal justice system

and diversion and whatnot. We are bearing down on that and we need to. Why has it suddenly exploded? Some people started doing it and it turned out to be easier than they thought, probably.

Knife crime is a very dispersed problem. This is not about gangs, primarily, although there are knives used in gangs of course and we are working very hard against our most prolific knife-carriers, most of whom are in some kind of gang or some sort of semi-organised setup. We also have a lot of other young people carrying knives, some of whom, of course, are saying they are carrying one because they do not feel very well protected. We completely get that and we may come on to that as a separate issue. Unless Craig is going to help me --

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No, it is not one thing.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** -- I do not think we can put our finger on something. What we can say is that nationally crime was going down and seems to be going back up.

**Len Duvall AM:** My last question, really. We talk about the violence. We have the Mayor's Strategy, which I welcome because it is the first time we have had a policing strategy that mentioned that. I can go back to policing strategies where we never even mentioned drugs in the past and their impact on crime. For a long time, we have not talked about the role of alcohol, except we know that there are drivers of that.

Is it time that we dust down and relook at some of our activities around issues of that drug market that may be - not always - leading to some of these knife crime activities, deals that have gone wrong, issues that have not gone quite right and/or also looking at the role of alcohol? Not that I am going to stop everyone having a drink, but there is a propensity in certain violent crimes that drives them. I am thinking of domestic violence but not in all. These are not excuses for that crime, but they are a factor in it in some ways. Somehow, in times of reduced resources, how does the MPS start to hit some of these levers to try to put a pause on the trend or send some signals around some of those activities?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Len, before I turn it over to the Commissioner in terms of some of the operational responses, that is exactly what we are looking at in terms of the Knife Crime Strategy and also in terms of the Police and Crime Plan around what we need to do in terms of prevention and intervention and how far down the line we can get to try to make sure that we are not just dealing with the symptoms, which is what the police are having to do at the moment in tackling it and bearing down on violence. We are looking at what that means in terms of drugs, what it means in terms of alcohol and also what it means in terms of mental health issues and the trauma and the issues that we really need to get to understand about what is driving people to be violent. Unless we get to the drivers of that violence, we are always going to be tackling the symptoms.

It is hard. It is hard to find the space. Policing cannot do it on its own. It really cannot do it on its own. It has a particular role. There is the preventative aspect of policing and there is a role for the police to play in that, but everybody else has to play their role. That is what we will do from MOPAC in convening and driving partnership working around that with local authorities, with the National Health Service and with the criminal justice system as well to make sure not only that when there has been an arrest the right sentencing gets put in place, but also that there are the right mechanisms to try to tackle reoffending. We absolutely have to deal with the drivers once people have committed the offences as well and how we help them not commit another offence. That is really how we are going to tackle repeat victimisation. We have to also tackle the offenders as well.

**Len Duvall AM:** Do you want to add anything in terms of what the police need to do to implement that community safety plan around alcohol and drugs issues? You could say it is more of the same, but actually it might need something a little bit different or a slightly different emphasis. I would say thank you to Sophie Linden because I know what she is doing behind the scenes.

There are the mixed messages of a Cultural Strategy that says we want a vibrant night-time economy, which I agree with, but that does not mean we go soft on poor landlords, irresponsible club-owners who think drugs are all right to go around willy-nilly and it does not really matter if people hurt themselves because it is up to them and they are responsible people, or people who keep feeding people drink knowing full well that they have had enough and should be turned away before trouble begins, whether it is in the home or on the way home. It is those issues that I am looking to the police. Whether it is a revamped licensing effort - because there are all sorts of good stories around licensing from the police because there are also some horror stories - there is not a consistency across London about the police's enforcement role in licensing that needs to be brought in. It might well be about experience; it may well be about that. It seems to me, if that is your prevention strategy, that is what it should be about. That is what we are looking for.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I entirely take those points, Len. What we are finding with the violent crime problems - and let us take knife crime as an example - it is very dispersed and it is very different in different boroughs, different places and different sub-areas, really. Absolutely, a lot of it comes back to just drugs markets and in some parts a lot of it is alcohol-fuelled.

All of the boroughs, as you know, have their local priorities as well as the most significant priorities. All of them are looking very hard at how they do their thing in relation to these. However, at the same time, we need to have a consistent approach across all of these issues and I am not going to say you are wrong because I am sure you are right. We need to be more consistent.

**Len Duvall AM:** Thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I agree completely. There is often a tension around encouraging the night-time economy, which is the Night Czar's mission for London, and also a tension around keeping those evenings safe for Londoners. That is something that we need to be very conscious of.

Before we go into the next set of questions, which is particularly around preventing serious violence, you touched upon earlier your aspirations for your workforce, Commissioner. We already had a question but Onkar would like to pursue a little bit further your thoughts around the workforce.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Yes. Commissioner, I just want to concentrate on the workforce. First of all, let me on record put my gratitude for all the hard work that the MPS has done over recent months.

In 2016, 62% of uniformed officers in the MPS said that their morale was low. That puts you lower than 38 of the other 42 workforces. You rightly said that morale was very low and you wanted to work on the morale. What particular measures do you have that you want to put in for making a better working environment for officers and to lift the morale up?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** There is a multiplicity of things. I do not want to trivialise this, but I have been a Police Officer for an incredibly long time - one of the longest in the MPS - and in some respects, it has always been the case that if you ask a Police Officer how things are they will say, "It used to be a lot better and it is not great", or a ruder version of that. Therefore, I do take that slightly into account.

However, there are some things that have happened that have affected Police Officers in particular and have affected their morale about which I can probably do relatively little right now. London is a very expensive place to be and there are issues around pay for some individuals and some cohorts in particular and pensions, as you will be aware, which actually still rankle with people. They feel that the job they joined and the contract they felt they had is not now the one that they are working to. As with other parts of the public sector, they will have to work longer and their pension arrangements are not what they once were. Therefore, there are some things there that I do recognise will be extremely hard for me; I cannot wave a magic wand.

However, we do have great people. We have fantastic people coming through the door, incredibly capable and diverse and really super recruitment. We still have very high retention and the job gets done to a very high standard.

I mentioned various areas - leadership, equipment, welfare - and we are rolling out some really good technology, thanks to the previous generation of Commissioners and others. They are all getting body-worn video this year if they are on uniformed patrol work. They love that. People will be issued soon with mobile devices so that they do not have to keep coming back to a police station. They are going to love that. It is going to be a really good bit of kit. I just made an announcement yesterday that we may come to about Taser and my desire to protect the public and also the officers more, something I had been very focused on before I became Commissioner, even. I was asking what we were doing about that.

At the softer end of things, if you look at the occupational health response to the incidents we have had over the last several weeks, it has been excellent. People are feeling cared for and taken seriously. Then there are the issues that I was discussing with Len [Duvall AM] about how we improve the leadership capability more generally and in particular try to listen to our officers more. I take any reasonable opportunity to try to both listen and respond to what people think they need and to try to give people a really positive working environment. I want people to feel that they are really thriving, not just turning up and surviving, if you like. Again, Members of the Committee will have ideas about how we can do this, but we have a whole series of things underway.

I mentioned my issue around externally the difference in confidence between some of our public communities and their confidence in the police and I would like to reduce that. I am also somebody who - some of you know me well - has spent the last 20 years or probably more than that, actually, very heavily engaged in how we make a workplace more inclusive. Diversity and inclusion is incredibly important to me also. I do not think that the MPS is full of problems in that respect, personally, but there is a lot more we can do to make sure that we get the best out of everybody and they do feel included and they can really thrive.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Can I also just mention as well a group that we often do not talk about when we talk about morale? That is our police staff. If you look at the last four or five years, when you talk about changes in the rest of the country where officer numbers fell and a whole range of things, in our police staff we lost about 4,500 posts. When you talk to people in the organisation who are on their third or fourth time of reapplying for their posts, it does make you think differently about the organisation you are in.

A lot of the work we are doing as well is saying that the total organisation has to work. That has been a big challenge for people. When you are manging through this level of uncertainty around your financial envelope two, three or five years out, it is always going to put strain into the system.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** That is what I was going pick up on. One of the things that has struck me about this discussion is that - and I know we are probably coming on to budgets and finance; I hope we are coming on to budgets and finance - yes, you can do a lot of transformation and you can do the supporting and the listening and there is really good work that is happening and should happen in the MPS.

However, if the context that the officers are working in and the police are working in is absolute pressure and when we are talking about pressure we are talking about diminishing resources - Craig touched on the police staff and that was where the cuts were taken over the last years to get the £600 million coming out - there is massive pressure in the police at the moment. When I go out talking to frontline officers, when they talk about pressure, the demand on them and their ability to respond is constrained by the budgets and by the number of officers they have.

They are also constrained when you talk about problem solving. The police can problem solve and they can work as far as they can on problem solving, but to really solve a problem you need all of the other partners to get around the table as well. If those other partners are under immense pressure, that puts extra pressure on the police as well. We really have to think about the context that the police are working in and that is about resources and massive pressure. That does contribute to low morale and it does contribute to problem solving not happening in the way it should happen. We really have to get on to that issue around what resources the MPS needs and how we ensure it gets the resources it needs whilst, yes, continuing to be more efficient and transforming the service for the public because we do need a transformed and modern MPS for the new demands that the years are going to bring us.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Thank you very much for those responses. I know that my colleague will pick up the finance issue later on and so it will not get missed.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes, thank you, Deputy Mayor, particularly for that. One could not disagree with you.

One point I would make is about the increasing trend over recent years of neighbourhood officers having to deal with issues with residents with, for example, mental health issues. There are pressures on local teams about issues that perhaps should have been dealt with or should be dealt with in partnership with other organisations that are then shunting that responsibility on to the MPS. That is an issue.

On a slightly lighter note, you made a point about neighbourhood teams parading and moving out to their neighbourhoods. This is an opportunity for me to plug something, basically. One of the issues is the amount of time that the teams are taking to move from their place of parade to where they finally get out in their wards. Len [Duvall AM] has brought that up recently. They may have to meet at 8.00am somewhere - and I will say New Addington for no particular reason - and then have to travel an hour on a bus to get to their ward. This is replicated all over London. I believe that some of the commanders are happy for them to meet and parade put in the boroughs, but one of the issues is around the body-worn video kit. They have to go back to dock the kit at a central point and that is a technology issue.

Therefore, just for you, Craig, because I know you understand these things --

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Thanks.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** -- more than I do, certainly --

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Fair point.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** -- Craig has been living and breathing these issues for some years. If you could take that one away?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I have been aware of that challenge. Some of it is about network capacity with some of our partner agencies. It is certainly something we are looking at.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes. We have finally got to a position where partners, the LFB and the local authorities are happy for officers to go out there, but they do not have the kit.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** There has been some amazing goodwill from partners about how this can work better for London collectively.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That helps morale, of course.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Absolutely.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is my tenuous link to it. All right. Fantastic. The next set of questions is about tackling serious violence and the Deputy Chair has a question.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you very much. Before we start asking the questions we had prepared I want to ask some questions about the announcement yesterday on Taser deployment. We will ask about the reasons for it in a moment but if you can quickly outline for us what the increase is, the number of new officers and which officers in which teams? I understand there has also been a change in the operational rules for how they can be deployed. If you can tell us what that is as well that will be really good.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are going to train over the next two years an extra 1,800, roughly, officers. They will almost entirely come from our emergency response teams. There are some specialists but that is a small number. We are also changing the rules, as you have said. In the past you would always see in an emergency response team two Taser-trained officers together. Potentially there will be one person carrying a Taser accompanied by someone who does not have Taser and is not fully Taser trained, although they will be 'Taser aware', as we call it. That will, as well, increase the availability. We are also saying that Sergeants whom have previously been trained, if appropriate, can also book out a Taser to have with them.

This means that as well as all our specialist officers, in things like firearms who all carry Taser as a less lethal option, we will be doing a considerable uplift amongst our emergency response officers. It is not dedicated ward officers, those working in the neighbourhood teams, as an example. It is those who are most likely to have to respond to a call or come across an event in which serious violence is being used.

It will, in effect, double the numbers of availability in a Borough at any one time of the day or night. We are doing this in parallel with a likely change in the actual device we will have. I can say this now, can I?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are moving from the current Taser to a different Taser because that has been licensed by the Home Office. It is an improved device with better data recording and also if it does not fire properly, or have the required effect in the first instance, it can be fired again. Essentially it is one that the Home Office now approve. We would anticipate that over the coming years the old Taser will no longer be supported. We are moving to the new Taser. That requires a lot of extra training. We are going to do that over this two-year period. I anticipate the new officers should all be trained within a year of when we start.

Of course, you will be aware that by the end of this year they will all have body-worn video. It is already highly scrutinised and highly accountable; it will be even more so.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** A couple of follow-ups on that. I believe the total number of officers with Tasers will be 6,400. You said they would primarily be in the response teams.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** The new ones, yes.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** What proportion of people in response teams will therefore have Tasers?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I did know that yesterday. I am so sorry; I will have to come back to you. I have a number in my head but I do not want to just say it.

There are all these firearms officers, for example, standing outside Parliament. The specialist firearms officers and the armed response vehicles all have Taser. There are a number of other specialists who already have Taser. In any one borough - let us take Southwark - there will be two double-crewed cars, two people in two vehicles at any one time with Taser, potentially more but only if they are double-crewed. We are going to go to the position where anybody who is on duty who is Taser trained, and can be accompanied by another officer, will have it. It adds up to, in effect, a doubling at any one time of the numbers. It still means that a large proportion of our response teams are not Taser trained.

Not everybody will agree with that. This is the sort of decision a Commissioner has to take. This is my view of what is the right level to have to protect the public and staff. I am looking for it to continue to be our best decisionmakers, our fittest people and experienced officers who really want to be carrying this piece of equipment. It is an excellent piece of equipment but it is a grave responsibility.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Will the operational guidelines be published? I have tried to find them today and I am not sure I have been able to.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I am very sorry. They most certainly should be. I cannot imagine why they are not.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** OK. As long as we can have a link sent to us, that will be great.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I think so, yes. Colleagues here are welcome to come and look at the training, which I know some of you have done before.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Will the operational guidelines for their use on children be changed?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** They will not be changed. They are very clear. It is an important part of the training. It is very demanding training. I have not been through it

but I have witnessed the whole of it. They are put through a number of scenarios, including where people may have mental health issues, health issues and, indeed, with young people. Every use has to be justified. It has to be necessary and it has to be a proportionate response to the degree of force or threat offered by the other party.

The vast majority of times, as you very well know, 80-something per cent of the time an officer draws a Taser, it is not fired. It is only fired really very rarely, about 200-something times in London last year. The vast majority of times the sheer pointing of the weapon, or the red dot which is the next stage, takes the heat out of the situation and allows people to be arrested safely. Of course, it is generally very much safer in these sorts of situations than another option would be. In the most extreme cases, I am utterly convinced the lives of both members of the public who are victims and suspects have been saved by the fact we had a Taser.

In terms of young people, they are very well aware of the potential risk and also the community impact of using a Taser in relation to a young person. It is very rarely done and is a big part of the training.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** That was my next question. They are disproportionately used on younger age groups. A disproportional use on black and minority ethnic (BAME) Londoners as well has been found in the past. The Children's Rights Alliance has made it clear that children do feel quite frightened by Tasers even when they are not used against them. Being threatened by them seems to have a strong effect on children who are already carrying knives because they feel a level of threat on the street. Are you going to do anything to mitigate the potential impact that would have in trusting the police?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We already have some quite extensive engagement more generally and engagement around Taser. Across all our boroughs, as we speak, we are engaging with our local communities and talking to them about Taser. We do a lot of work in schools and elsewhere. We do need to talk further with young people about Taser. I do not want young people to be frightened of their police officers - that is for sure - for any reason.

I do want people to understand just how restrained officers are in the use of Taser. Every single time it is used is looked at very carefully. If somebody uses Taser inappropriately or disproportionately they will be investigated and they will be dealt with. It is taken very, very seriously. However, I understand why people might be frightened of it, of course.

You are going to the point of how do we explain and engage. The community can help with this. The Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] and other key stakeholders can help us with this. We do not want young people to be frightened.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** We will be following this up with questions once it comes in.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Sure.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Finally, in terms of the justification you are giving for this. In the reports and the announcement, you have linked it partly to terrorism. However, I believe these changes were already in train in response to knife crime. Can you outline what you think a typical scenario might be where this would help with preventing knife crime?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I did not link it with terrorism but it was in the reporting, if you like.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Yes.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** This was something I felt strongly about before I started as Commissioner. The first management Board I attended was before I started. I specifically asked it – back to Len’s [Duvall AM] points really – to be about how are we supporting, protecting and equipping our officers, and in particular where we are with Taser. You will be aware, as we have just discussed, that knife crime had been increasing and violent crime had been increasing. A survey by the Police Federation indicated that a number of officers felt more officers should have Taser.

This is primarily about protecting the public. We have more knife crime. We have more violent crime. Every day there are examples of Taser not being fired but being actually able to stop somebody from being violent, stop something from getting worse and stop somebody from getting hurt. That is what I wanted to achieve. I felt – and there is not a pure science here – the availability was insufficient. That is why I have increased it.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Thank you for your reassurances, Commissioner, about this. The MPS has issued a police report this morning that officers attended near Regent’s Park Mosque and Tasered somebody who was apparently armed with a shoehorn. Nobody else was hurt. That does seem rather peculiar. I presume you do not want to particularly comment on it and you may not know the details. However, it does seem to me, going back to the reassurances you have given, something you might want to be looking at.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I have heard of the incident. I have not had a review of it. I do not know what the full circumstances were. Rest assured every single one is looked at. We should not jump to a conclusion that that was an inappropriate use. We do not know. It is not always that somebody is armed with a weapon when we use it, far from it. However, sometimes it is.

Perhaps I should just say to Sian, I did not say this was in response to terrorism. However, I have said, of course, there are some arrests we have made recently that are terrorist arrests where Taser has been used – in Parliament Square as an example – and it has been an extraordinarily powerful response. Who knows, in other circumstances something terrible might have happened either in terms of the suspect coming to more harm or members of the public injured. There is a whole variety of violent incidents in which Taser is entirely appropriate and is the best tactic to use. There are others where it is not.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** You asked for some ideas of examples. In this current series, the MPS documentary, you see a few real examples where people are using it to contain a situation in a completely different way without having to use excessive violence or have eight people piling on top of someone, as it was in my day. It offers a completely different opportunity and approach at times in those highly-violent situations that patrolling officers, particularly emergency response teams, are often the first on.

The other point around the policy change is really important. All that has done is bring us in line with national policy. We were outside national policy.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I was not necessarily questioning the need to have more Tasers and the rest of the policy you outlined, Commissioner. I was concerned that you give very clear reassurances. However, with this incident – I accept we only have the MPS’s press release about it – as nobody else was hurt in the incident that is something you might want to look into.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We will certainly be looking at it. As I say, I cannot comment any further.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** No, and I do not expect you to.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** What I can say is we have used Taser in this force since 2003. It has been heavily scrutinised. I believe we have used it safely. I believe we have used it to very good effect. As Craig says, on occasions the individual who is Tasered would otherwise have had an Asp, which is a very blunt instrument and is likely to kill people all too easily, or eight burly police people jumping on top of them, which also has had sometimes disastrous outcomes for all concerned.

I would really invite you to come and look at the training. It is extraordinarily extensive. The officers who use Taser are very, very careful and very restrained.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I am sure Members may wish to take that up. For the sake of balance - speaking for myself as opposed to the Committee - I think these changes are appropriate in response to some very difficult challenges and the violent crime, particularly, that Londoners are facing. That is speaking for myself at the moment. Sian, you have some more questions?

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** My further questions are about prevention. Some of the answers you gave to Assembly Member Duvall earlier on, particularly from the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime], have covered a lot of the ground I wanted to ask about.

When it comes to knife crime I wanted to ask about any new initiatives that might be coming up within the Knife Crime Strategy around prevention, also whether there are any new communications policies planned. I do not know if that is more of a police or a MOPAC question.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have been working really closely on this very closely, but it is probably better for the Deputy Mayor to start off.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are going to be publishing the Knife Crime Strategy shortly. I am also coming to talk to you tomorrow in a closed session around the development of the Knife Crime Strategy. We are looking at prevention. We are looking at, as I have said before, intervention. When we publish we will be able to give more details around what that looks like in terms of working with schools, working with communities and working with families, as well as continuing to work really closely with the MPS.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Can I ask about the communication policy specifically? Will there be a new communications policy? We have talked before about how people are made fearful of knives, and the reason people are carrying them is because they do not feel safe. The MPS are still releasing - and they have done it this week - pictures of huge knives which then appear in the newspapers and are very frightening pictures. Will there be a new policy for communications within this prevention strategy?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Craig might pick up on the MPS policy. However, in terms of communications we have done some really quite extensive consultation with communities, families, young people and the stakeholders you would expect such as the criminal justice system and the voluntary sector.

The real message coming through is about communicating with young people about the dangers of knife crime and how you get that communication through. We are looking at the best way of really getting those messages through; whether that is through social media or some programmes going into schools on what the

problems are around carrying a knife. A lot of young people have said to us during the course of this consultation they are carrying knives because they are fearful. We are really trying to get the message across that to carry a knife does not make you safer. You may feel it makes you safer but it will actually put you in more danger.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** To pick up on that, I was fortunate enough to be part of one of the consultation events. I applaud the work MOPAC colleagues have done because it was an extensive event with previous gang members and a whole range of other agencies.

On the issue you raise - and I was very conscious that you have raised this with me a couple of times before - it is fair to say there were mixed views from all the consultees. There was quite a strong message from some about showing police effectiveness and showing that action is taking place. There is bit of a belief that nothing is happening, the stop-and-search has all finished and we are not doing anything. I found that quite powerful. Similarly - as we discussed before - there is some stuff around bespoke communications for young people, what that could look like, the role of other advocates in that space rather than us and the strength of the police message. We are probably rehearsing some of the stuff you will go through tomorrow but I was impressed with the work that had gone into the strategy, the basis for it and some of the work that is coming up in relation to it. It would be useful to see that.

On a practical note, we are doing Sceptre again this week in terms of the work around knife crime and that drive. That is on again this week. That is the rolling commitment we have made in terms of that relentless energy and focus. The consultation is extensive and, as you would expect, there is a range of views.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** One of the things I was very supportive of, and the former Mayor did support funding for, was youth workers in accident and emergency (A&E) departments, particularly the major trauma centres. Given that we have a wide range of A&Es in London, will you be looking at potentially supporting that being rolled out further? At other A&Es you may have someone with a relatively minor cut from a knife, but at that crucial point you can hopefully support them away from getting further involved.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** To be brief, yes, we are looking at that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Fantastic. Great, thank you.

**Susan Hall AM:** If I may. First of all, if I say, Commissioner, I absolutely welcome the increase in Taser. We must look after police officers and the public. We talked earlier about morale if the police officers feel they have more to support them on safety issues.

A question, please, to the Deputy Mayor. We have heard that the Commissioner - and I listened to what you said avidly - believes and knows that stop-and-search is a really good tool, which it obviously is. With the increase in crime, can you tell me whether you are supportive towards this stop-and-search? One minute the Mayor is saying it is a good thing and the next minute there seems to be mixed messages coming out of MOPAC. Can you confirm that if there is an increase in stop-and-search as a reaction to what is an increase in knife crime, MOPAC would be supportive of that?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** There have not been any mixed messages coming out of MOPAC or from me. Stop-and-search is a useful tactic for the police to deploy, especially around knife crime. We support their intelligence-led use of it. The Commissioner has been very clear that officers should

feel confident in their use of stop-and-search. That is the position we take as well. We support the police to use stop-and-search in the community to take knives off our streets.

**Susan Hall AM:** Therefore, if it goes up, we are not going to hear any complaining from MOPAC?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We support the use of intelligence-led stop-and-search. There will be transparency and accountability of that and we understand that. I cannot be clearer, we absolutely support that. It is a useful and important tactic that the police should use. Officers should feel confident in using that.

**Susan Hall AM:** Good. If it increases, you have got --

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We expect it to increase.

**Susan Hall AM:** That is good. That is positive.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The Commissioner has been clear about this as well. We expect there to be increases. Whilst this is increasing, and there is intelligence there to support the appropriate use of stop-and-search, we would expect there may be some increases in it.

**Susan Hall AM:** That is very good news. Thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** In fairness, the debate we have had in this Chamber is about the ineffectiveness of stop-and-search and the volumes against the percentage of effectiveness. There is a disparity. That was recognised by the previous Commissioner. One of the issues is that the pendulum may have corrected too far that way and so there needs to be a re-enabling of the use of appropriate targeted information-led use of stop-and-search. Londoners would probably understand that.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Just to expand on that, one of the first things you did, Commissioner, when you came in was say that you wanted to bear down on knife crime and gun crime. I was very struck by your robust approach to stop-and-search. I do really want to explore a little bit more about what Assembly Member Hall has just said about the difference between what MOPAC might think on the efficacy of stop-and-search and you. I have a headline here in the *Evening Standard* from the Mayor, "I will do everything in my power to cut stop-and-search".

The first thing I want to ask from you, Commissioner, is: do you think there is any possible merit in making more use of section 60 in relation to stop-and-search?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** In brief, yes. I take the Chairman's point and I pay tribute to my predecessor, [Sir] Bernard [Hogan-Howe, former Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis].

Let us very briefly go back much further. I completely understand that in the history of London, the history of London's police and their communities, stop-and-search has been historically a difficult and contested issue. If we go back 20 or 30 years ago some of us will remember the so-called 'sus laws'. This was a difficult issue. There was a perception from some - and from people who are still alive now - that it was used in a rather random fashion, if I can put it that way, and that caused resentment. I pay tribute to Bernard because he recognised that there was considerable concern around disproportionality of outcomes and low - your point, Chairman - arrest rates. During his commissionership the arrest rate went up a lot and disproportionality

reduced, by which I mean that if you are a, let us say, young black man walking down the street and you are stopped and searched the same proportion of those young people, whether they are white or black, get arrested. That tells you something quite positive, if you are concerned about disproportionately, about the way we conduct our activities. During that time period, the volume of stop-and-search reduced and you have touched on that.

Secondly, the volume of section 60<sup>2</sup> usage reduced very considerably. As we know, the current Prime Minister and former Home Secretary was very concerned about some of the issues. There was a lot of focus on stop-and-search and some best practice guidelines were produced by policing, including in relation to section 60.

I am assuming Members are broadly aware of section 60. Its use in London is now very rare indeed, or has been until the last few weeks. My view is that, for example, if I was - and some of you will have seen the MPS documentary - the senior person in the Hyde Park scenario or a number of the other scenarios you have seen in that documentary programme and I had seen disorder or violence take place on that scale I would then want to have section 60 as a possible tactic to use, if I can put it that way, and power to enforce for a short period of time, in a prescribed area, because of my professional judgement. It is usually the duty officer, a role many of you will be familiar with. The duty officer is an experienced person and they say, "I feel I know. I do not have specific intelligence that something is definitely going to happen next but it may". I believe, as the law says in those circumstances they should be able to have a section 60 imposed, we should support them doing that. There should not be a higher bar if the professional judgement is that there may be serious violence. I do not expect it to be used a very great deal. There are times and places where it is entirely appropriate and will keep people safe. It needs to be for short time periods, in small areas, and accountable, justified and lawful. I do support it in some circumstances, yes.

**Tony Arbour AM:** That is very encouraging. Did I hear you - by way of a sort of throwaway line - say "up until the past few weeks" when you were talking about the incidence of knife crime? Are you telling me that since your coming and your change in attitude to stop-and-search, you have been able to reduce knife crime, possession and related matters?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** No. I am not even saying - which some people might have interpreted, sorry, as it was a rather careless line - that section 60's usage has gone up hugely in the last few weeks. What I am saying is that I know what it was for the last financial year. Section 60 usage was very low and knife crime was going up.

Knife crime, of course like any other crime, fluctuates. It was very high in March. It is slightly lower at the moment. I do not describe that as a trend. We are working very, very hard. I want to be judged in the next three months, six months and a year. I am not saying that knife crime is now on the way back down but we are working very hard to take it down. I have made it clear to my officers that, within the law, when they feel they need to use section 60 they should. It is a hugely powerful section and needs to be used carefully and with discretion.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I have no doubt that the police would use it with discretion. Therefore, can I ask the Deputy Mayor if you see a greater incidence of section 60 being used in prescribed places and in the limited way the Commissioner has spelled out? Is it something that is going to be supported by you and the Mayor?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Section 60 is like stop-and-search; it is about the appropriateness of its use, the transparency and accountability of that, and the engagement with the

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<sup>2</sup> Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

community as well. Yes, absolutely, if section 60 is used in the appropriate manner, and as the Commissioner has set out around its lawfulness, and it is not used on a long-term basis or across over too large a geographical area, yes, we will be supportive of that. We support the police in using all the powers they have in an appropriate way to tackle knife crime. The violence on our streets is unacceptable. We have to protect our young people and we have to protect our communities.

I have recently spoken to a Borough Commander who did put a section 60 into a small area of the local community. I have also spoken to the local community about that and they were very pleased and happy. They were content that that had been put in. By putting that in they found a number of very large knives, but also through the process of the section 60 going in they had engaged with the community and told the community leaders why that was going in. It was very transparent, accountable and absolutely appropriate.

**Tony Arbour AM:** That sounds like a kind of post-hoc thing. You cannot consult the community before you are bringing in a section 60, can you?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is not about consulting before; it is about engaging with the community and making sure they understand why a section 60 has been put in place. Actually, you can quite quickly talk to leaders of the community. Borough Commanders, as we all know - and we have had many discussions in this Committee about it - know their community leaders and have that quick ability to talk to them. That is important and should continue.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I am hugely encouraged by that. I was particularly struck by a statement you made right at the very beginning, Commissioner, as a result of the events that there have been, about the huge - I cannot recall precisely how you phrased it - expressions of support for policing. My guess is as far as section 60 is concerned, a sensibly used section 60 will be something that again the public would want to encourage. I would like to think that there is no equivocation and that MOPAC would in fact support this.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** There is no equivocation.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Thank you, Chairman.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is fine. That is a good debate around section 60. Partly to refer to Tony's comments, you can brief the community. I was subject to a briefing on a potential section 60 in the north of one of my boroughs with the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and it was positively responded to by those leaders. Thank you.

We are now moving on to the last section. Thank you, Members and everyone, for the timings. We are doing very well. It is a very important issue around challenges for policing in London, particularly in the aspect of resourcing. Andrew, do you want to lead these questions?

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. Perhaps we could start off by working out exactly where we are on funding because we have talked about the £400 million shortfall. I think it was today, actually, that it was reported:

*"The Metropolitan Police will not have to find cuts worth hundreds of millions of pounds over the next three years, the Home Office has announced, following calls for the force's budget to be protected in the wake of two terror attacks."*

This is a report in *The Independent* of a press release from the Home Office. The report goes on to say that a spokesperson for the Home Office said:

*“The Government is not reducing the Met’s budget by £400 million. Police spending was protected in the 2015 Spending Review and the Met has had a broadly flat cash budget since then including precept - in line with every other force in the country.”*

It seems to me that the £400 million cut still is there because of the pressures on the MPS’s budget from inflation, pensions and all the other things. Where are we?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** If I start as probably the least expert on this, my understanding is that the statement from the Home Office yesterday, together with other information, indicates that the police funding formula review may not happen. We of course did not know what the result of that review would be, but it is perfectly possible that it would have or could have resulted in less funding for the MPS. That was one of our uncertainties. If the funding formula review is taken away, that uncertainty goes.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** That was one of the known unknowns.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Exactly. I was once a baby accountant but I am not an accountant, by the way. However, what that leaves us with is an MPS that has already, as has been noted, taken £600 million out of its budget over the previous years and out of its spending over the previous years, not without some difficulty, which is at this stage still planning to be a smaller MPS.

In relation to the £400 million, as you say, that is our current prediction, not taking into account any changes in the National and International Capital City (NICC) grant, so-called, which is another uncertainty.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I was going to come on to that.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** If we forget that for a second, we believe we have £400 million of pressures and extra costs - which Craig [Mackey QPM] is supremely expert on and you too perhaps - that will bear down on us in the next few years unless there is further resourcing coming in. We have been talking with the Government in light of the terrorist attacks and the background context about what our resourcing might be in the future. You are right on the £400 million.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** In fact, nothing has changed and that is effectively fake news from the Home Office. I would not expect you on comment on that, Cressida, but Sophie might.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is factual.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** If the reports are correct that they are dropping the funding formula review, we would be pleased with that because it takes away that uncertainty and also, frankly, a lot of work in lobbying and trying to make sure that the funding formula review did not disadvantage London. That is one thing but, as the Commissioner has said, that was just one part of the issue for the MPS. There was the funding formula review.

The second bit is that the ‘flat cash’ that the Home Secretary describes as protecting the police budget is not a protection at all because what the MPS needs and its budget needs are real-terms increases. We have real increases in demand, real increases in cost and real pressures, which mean we then get to the £400 million worth of savings in order to be able to deliver the service and protect London in the way that we need to.

Then there are two other bits as well. There is the NICC grant. The MPS is seriously underfunded on that despite the Home Office agreeing the amount of money that the MPS spends because it is policing the capital city. It is £174 million underfunded on that grant. Then we have --

**Andrew Dismore AM:** That is based on the Government's own numbers, not based on the MPS's numbers, which are even higher.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** That is based on its own numbers. It is 62% underfunded. The Home Secretary, who wrote to the previous Commissioner when this was agreed, accepted that there was that underfunding. That was a political decision because they were not putting more money into the overall policing budget. That is basically what needs to happen. We need to see real-terms increases. If we do not see real-terms increases - we have talked about the pressures on the MPS already around CT and increases in violent crime - it is going to be really difficult to secure the safety of Londoners.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. I will come on to the NICC in a minute but, just to be absolutely clear, when the Home Office says, "The MPS will not have to find cuts worth hundreds of millions of pounds over the next three years", the Home Office is not telling the truth?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** You are right in your language. They are not cuts. The way I have used it internally with colleagues is that it is like saying to someone you are taking home £1,000 a month and in four years' time you will still be taking home £1,000 a month. Will you feel as well off? No, you will not. Inflation is running at 2.9%; you have pay pressures; you have a whole range of other things. This is £400 million of pressures that are sitting there in the budget that are real and are based on a current set of assumptions. If those assumptions change, those pressures could get bigger or they could get lower.

There is the pay one. Can we keep pay at 1% for another four years? Pay puts on about £25 million of pressure for every 1% you put in. If you can find no other way of doing it, it is 500 police officers. Every 1% on the pay bill could be 500 police officers out unless there is new money to support it. Those are all choices we have to make as we build the budget and present options to the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime].

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. We have the £400 million cuts to come as things stand.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We do have that.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** We have £400 million of pressure.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We have to take £400 million out of the MPS budget. The Home Secretary can continue to say, "We have protected the MPS budget". That is not protection in my books and I do not think it is protection in your books or in Londoners' books either if you are taking that amount of money out of the budget.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Exactly. Can I just go on to the NICC briefly as well? It is a smaller sum but still significant. I understand from what Craig has told us before that it is always paid after the event. We spend the money and then we try to get it back out of the Home Office. Correct?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes, and we have not had a review. We are working on, as you say, a media release at the moment. The other bit, as the Deputy Mayor covered, that we need clarity on is what is happening to the NICC for next year. We are nine months away from a budget. Is it going to be the same? Is it bigger? Are we going to get the full amount? We do not know that yet.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Bearing in mind what has been going on in London, certainly in the current year, one could expect that the amount we are spending that would be reasonably attributable to NICC is going to be significantly more.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes. We touched on in the Budget and Performance Committee last week when we had some time around this. The point that we have emphasised a number of times is that it is really important when we see the response for London that we understand this is a system response. It is not just ringfencing parts of it, while I absolutely understand why people do that. I used the figure at the Budget Committee that for the events at Westminster Bridge, from our early analysis, for every £1 we spend in the CT budget we spent £2 in the wider MPS budget. If you are going to have a system response, that is the sort of gearing you need.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. Assuming we have to find £400 million cuts/savings/not funded in the MPS budget, plus whatever extra the NICC is, Commissioner, how are you going to bridge the gap?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have been planning for a smaller MPS. We have been planning in the longer run to be more productive and more efficient. We do think we can do that and must do that, as the Deputy Mayor has said, but in the light of the increasing demand and in particular the extra demand brought upon us by the terrorist attacks - looking back, as you say, over time and other spend but looking forward, dealing with that threat and providing protection and security - I have to say that it will be very difficult. That is why we have been talking with the Government, and not just me but other police chiefs. We are working with chiefs across the country.

I do believe London is special. I would. I do believe it is different. There is the capital city and the degree of threat and risk that sits in London. We are talking to colleagues, to the Home Office and to the Government about the future because it will be extremely difficult, even while becoming more efficient and taking more cost out, for us to provide security and reassurance to the public that we can provide the services that they reasonably think we should be providing with that budget in the future.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** What options are you looking at?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We are certainly looking at how we, as I said, take demand out of the system. We already have a large number of programmes underway, for example around estates, which I think we will continue with, and around using technology better, which we will continue with. We have a whole series of programmes within our transformation portfolio. In the current climate they will not be sufficiently transformative, if I can put that way, and sufficiently money-saving for us. If we do not get any further money it will be very difficult for us to provide some of the services we currently provide.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** What we are talking about is a reduction in police officer numbers. From what you are saying, if all these other options do not bridge the gap, we are talking about cuts in police officers.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** It is inevitable. You will be aware that we have taken £600 million out and in this force, unlike many others, we have largely protected the police officer numbers and taken the savings – terrible word – from other areas. That has involved enormous numbers of police staff losing their jobs, for example.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in particular?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** PCSOs, of course. We have looked in an awful lot of our cupboards. We have improved our contracts. We have taken excessive cost out left, right and middle. It is inevitable that without further assistance our police officer numbers, in my view, will drop. I do not like to talk about specific numbers as, “That is the right number”, “That is what I want”, or, “That is what I need”, because that is not helpful. It is about choices at the time. Right now, we are undoubtedly facing a reduction in police officer numbers.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Thank you for that. Then you also talked about the estates.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Presumably, from what you are saying, that means more police station closures.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes, it does. How can I put it? I am long in the tooth and I am a sentimentalist. However, I do not see police station closures per se as necessarily a bad thing. Indeed, if we were not facing the budget pressures we are I would still say that to provide a 21st-century police service I want in fact to have even fewer expensive-to-run, inefficient buildings and I want my officers more mobile. That is the way I want this police service to be. Of course, we will retain and must retain some buildings both to operate from and for the public to come to, but our footfall in terms of members of the public wishing to attend a police station is getting less and less and less. The vast majority of people want to speak to us on the phone, now increasingly online and of course, where we can, face-to-face in their local area or where they are working.

The short answer: we will be reducing the number of police stations, yes, and we would be even if we were not facing these budget cuts, in my view and the Deputy Mayor’s view as well.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Two issues come from that. One of the issues is the one that Tony [Arbour AM] flagged up about the time it takes officers to get to where they are supposed to be patrolling from a central point. If there are fewer central points where they are supposed to parade, then we have to look at other options. One option might be looking at partner organisations using it.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Sure.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** That is one issue. The other issue is the various phone numbers and I have heard a lot of complaints, particularly from people in Camden, about the length of time to get through to the non-emergency number. In fact, I have put some Mayor’s questions down for tomorrow about that. If we are going to stop people being able to go to police stations to report crime or a lost dog or whatever it happens to be, particularly if they are non-emergency numbers, then it has to be an efficient system. The evidence I have been getting from quite a few people in Camden is that it is not.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We will go away and look at that. I take your point entirely in principle, though. Of course, whatever way we encourage people to contact us and whatever way they want to contact us, it must be an effective and efficient system.

You have heard though about the very large increase in demand and increase in calls. Right now, I would have to say and actually do say to the wider public that we are a very busy police service for all the reasons you can completely see. We are still having a very large number of contacts that do not really need that call. They really do not. That is clogging up our systems and causing a lot of wasted effort.

We want to educate people more and more about how to contact us efficiently and how we get back to them quickly, and that will be more and more online, and more and more people of all generations and all communities want to do that more than we currently have. We will also be trying to, if you like, switch off some of the less efficient methods and try to deter some of the unnecessary calls.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Are we going to finally kill off the 'contact points' idea? That was the fig leaf when we closed the police stations before and it simply has not worked.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In terms of your wider question about the options around getting the savings out because of the cuts in the police budget, we are looking at the whole of the police estate. We have to look at the whole of the police estate because we have to get that money out. Yes, we are having to come out and we will be looking at these things. The wider question is around what it is that the MPS budget needs. We have to be more efficient. We have to be more effective. The MPS needs to be more efficient and effective.

Even with that transformation, without the change to the MPS budget we are talking about police officer numbers. We are talking about reductions in officer numbers. That does concern me and it concerns the Mayor because without the right level of policing service that London needs, the officers that London needs, we are going to find it very difficult to keep London safe, to tackle violent crime as well as CT. The only way of doing that is - yes, no funding review - getting back to real-terms increases in the policing budget for the MPS. That is our bottom line. Otherwise, we are going to have to take some really difficult decisions and we are worried about the safety of London.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Thank you for that. I do not think anybody - certainly on this side of the chamber - would disagree with what you have had to say. Inevitably, we are getting to the end of the cuts that can be made without biting into police numbers. The Commissioner has made that position very clear. I am just exploring the bits and pieces that we still have left before we get into the bone. That is why I mention the question of contact points, which have been a complete waste of time and I think most people would agree they were a complete waste of time. They were an invention to try to cover up the last round of police station closures.

I want to go on next to borough mergers, where we have got to and when we are going to hear more news about that. Certainly, the feeling I am getting back, particularly from the Camden side, is that it has not been entirely a success as far as people in Camden are concerned. We can talk about that without me going into the detail now.

What system of evaluation is there going to be for the two - I have forgotten what they are called; not 'pilot' - Pathfinder mergers? First of all, what is the system of evaluation of the Pathfinders? The feeling I have had back is that it is the evaluation will be what we want it to be rather than any hard evidence-based evaluation. I am concerned that it will come up with a result that people want to see rather than an evidence-based result.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I have been out on patrol in Camden and Islington. I went out on night patrol with some response officers. I have also been to the newly formed East Space Command Unit and talked to officers around the work they are doing around vulnerability, looking at rape cases, child protection and domestic violence cases, and there have been issues of the implementation of the Pathfinders. There have been teething problems. The MPS are working through those issues.

I can absolutely tell you and I hope you feel confident that the evaluation is not going to be evaluating it and getting the answer we are expecting. It will be an evaluation based on data. It will be an evaluation based in terms of response times, making sure that the fundamental contract the MPS has with the public around ensuring that in an emergency they are there, to make sure that that happens. There will be a robust evaluation. We are looking at what the issues have been, how they can be worked through and then there will be decisions that will be taken once those issues have been worked through. We are having those conversations with the Chief Executives and the Leaders as well so that they understand where we are on this.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** You are giving me assurance that it is an evidence-based evaluation?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Absolutely, yes.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Will the evaluations be published?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I cannot see why they would not be published because you have to have some confidence. Where it can be published, we should be as transparent and accountable as possible because this is a restructure that everybody is very interested in.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** I am coming in rather new. If I might, just to say they are Pathfinders. They were started probably in a way that people would not think was ideal, for a variety of reasons. There are some hard yards being done in those Pathfinders. Undoubtedly, some of the challenges they have faced, if we go to the next stage with others, they will not face those. They are being used as Pathfinders to iron out the really big challenges, which is not to downplay the challenges that the officers are feeling in parts of the Pathfinders because it is hard work, but they are Pathfinders.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Thanks for that.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Sorry, one other thing I would also add is that with the officers that I have talked to, one of the key issues we have to understand and drill down on is: are the problems and the pressures that the officers in those Pathfinders are facing because of the model or because of the demand and the capacity that the MPS has as a force? That is what we have to iron out. At the same time as the Pathfinders and working through the challenges, we are seeing an increase in crime. That is not only for the Pathfinders, it is across London. We are seeing an increase in demand. There are issues that every bit of London is feeling and then there are specific issues and challenges around that model.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** There are only two particular things I would mention. The first is community engagement, which does not seem to have been as effective as it used to be. Certainly, looking at the community engagement with music in the recent incidents, I have had a far better response and information feedback from Barnet than I have from the combined borough, Camden-Islington. I would have expected probably something quite similar.

The other thing is on response. I probably only get the complaints when you do not respond rather than compliments when you do but, again, that is something that needs to be looked at.

There have also been reports, Commissioner, that suggestions are the police will not be doing things that you have done in the past or doing things differently. Would you like to comment on that?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Not very much, only to say that is obvious. We have always changed. We have always moved on. We have always tried to keep up with the outside world. As an example, we are getting more and more things online. Most people will really like that. Other people will say, "No, I absolutely do not want to do that". We cannot potentially do everything, of course, and we have talked about this. Lots of demand, increasing. Lots to think about. Keeping London safe. There may be some things that we choose, decide and announce we are not going to provide that service to that level in that way that you have become used to. In the face of the terrorist threat and with the other challenges we have, and with a new Commissioner, people should not necessarily be surprised by that. I do not have, right now, something that I am saying is stopping.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** You do not have a list of things? For example, it has been suggested that burglary may not be investigated if there is no obvious chance of catching somebody.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We have not said exactly that. What I said - and I am afraid again maybe I put it slightly clumsily - was that in the future breaking into a shed, as I understand it, will be classified as a burglary. Literally breaking the lock on a shed will be an attempted burglary. In the past, we always sent a police officer to any burglary. In my view, when a shed lock has been broken and there does appear to be absolutely no other information available, I am not going to guarantee - it is likely - that you will always get a police officer. The public will understand that kind of decision.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I can understand that. What about where somebody has had their house broken into rather than their shed?

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** We need to work through all these things. Burglary is an incredibly disagreeable and sometimes hugely impactful crime and we will need to look right across our crime types on a case-by-case basis. Vulnerable people who need our help will get it. Serious crime will be dealt with seriously. At the moment, I have no intention of not sending a police officer to the burglary of a house but it might be that a forensics person is a better person to send and so I am not going to give a cast-iron guarantee on that. We need to look at how we provide our services in terms of what we think is an effective way to cover a very broad front, as we have discussed this morning, within the resources that we can see we have.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Just to wrap up this section of the questioning, the bottom line is that if we do not get more money, we are going to have fewer police officers in London?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Potentially, yes.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Yes.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have now reached the end of that set of questions. Thank you, Andrew, for freestyling at the end and covering lots of important subjects.

Certainly, it is pleasing that the Government has withdrawn the review but clearly - and Craig put it perfectly well - the flat cash of that £400 million or, in Craig's example, £1,000 to pay for four years is a great concern to this Committee. We are on record, we have written to the Government and it is a settled view of the Committee and indeed this new Committee, hopefully, that we will be lobbying on behalf of the service.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** If the reports are correct that they have withdrawn the funding review, I would welcome you writing again to say, "That is one thing but we still have these issues around the budget". It cannot be spun that this has protected the MPS budget because it will not have.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I will certainly be consulting the leads to pursue that.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Thank you. That would be very helpful.

**Cressida Dick CBE QPM (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis):** Could I just add, Chairman? Quite clearly, the world has changed in the last 12 weeks. When you last met, you were concerned about £400 million. The world is now different. Everybody knows it.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes, absolutely. Thank you again for the answers.