

**Police and Crime Committee - Thursday, 20 July 2017****Transcript of Item 6 - Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Metropolitan Police Service**

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We now get to the main part of the morning. Again, welcome Sophie [Linden] and Deputy Commissioner [Craig Mackey QPM]. We are going to slightly change the order of the areas for questioning items and we are going to move Notting Hill towards the end of the question and answer session. We had a very good informal briefing yesterday morning that some Members benefited from. We will ask some questions around that later but there are some pressing matters for Londoners that we thought we would bring up the agenda. Hopefully you are happy with that.

On that note, the first set of questions we have is regarding something that clearly is right at the top of the priorities, which is the Grenfell Tower fire. Andrew will be leading the questions on that.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. Thank you, Chairman. Craig, obviously, we all pay tribute to the professionalism and courage of your officers and indeed the other emergency services at the incident. Could I begin by asking you to outline where we are with the recovery process of the fatalities and what particular obstacles and difficulties your teams may be facing?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Thank you, and thank you for those comments at the start. I would certainly echo those comments. I would also echo those comments in relation to many of the communities and the remarkable resilience they have shown.

We are absolutely clear the investigation around Grenfell is absolutely a priority for us. Every officer who works on this sort of investigation wants to find answers for families. That is what is motivating people. That is what is driving them in terms of the work they are doing. You and many people will remember the incident vividly, and then this debate around the actual number of fatalities. When I talk about numbers I am very conscious, as we go through this this morning, that while we are talking in quite large numbers, each and every one of these are people with families and friends. I do not do it in any way that is disrespectful at all. It is to help illustrate.

From the work we have done post the incident, we assess that there were 350 people living in Grenfell Tower. That is based on the 255 who escaped, 14 who were not at home that night for whatever reason and the figure we have used of 80 people dead or missing, who we must presume are dead. I think we have spoken about this before but we have spoken to at least one person from 106 of the flats. The sad reality is, for the 23 flats that are left, we have spoken to no one in those flats. We must presume people have died and lost their lives in there.

This is one of the most complex recovery operations certainly many of us in the United Kingdom (UK) have seen in our time. The people we are taking advice from, which gives you an idea of the scale and complexity of it, are some of the people who worked on 9/11, the fall of the towers on 9/11. It is an extraordinary size of crime scene and extraordinarily complex. I do not want to be too graphic but I hope it helps to explain. From what we have seen and what some of the experts are telling us, the fire in some parts of that building burned at over 1000°C for a considerable period of time. We are now working through floor by floor and it is literally

a case of sifting and working through the debris, the remains, to try to desperately identify, sadly, parts of people so that we can reunite them.

As of last night, we had identified 39 people directly from what we have done. That work continues. There are about - it is an estimate - 15 tonnes of material on each floor to work through and we think we will be working probably up until Christmas time in terms of working through that scene, gathering all the evidence. As I say, its absolute heart is trying to return and give certainty to those families affected.

As you know, alongside this we have an investigation running that is looking at the full range of the criminal law in relation to what may or may not have taken place, both on that night and the building. We have a number of officers working on that investigation and we have begun the process of gathering material, seizing material and bringing material in to that investigation. It is probably going to be one of the largest and most complex investigations in our history. We will obviously work alongside the public inquiry in terms of that and, as I say, we will work through looking at all the material we recover and then look and see where the evidence takes us.

If I can give you an example of the size of it, there has been a lot of talk about individual companies and organisations. At the moment, there are about 60 companies and organisations around that block and everything around it. From one alone, we have four TB of data. For those not *au fait* with that, that is 20 million boxes of A4 paper. Some of you will have seen this week some of the challenges around things like disclosure. You cannot just look at a box with X sheets of paper or a file with X number of attachments and say, "That is all right, we do not need to look at that one". You actually have to look and see what is in them. It gives you an idea of the size and scale of the job as we work through. That is not uncommon now. We have spoken in relation to other questions here before around some of the challenges of digital data. That is not to negate the work, it is just to say how complex it will be.

We are working through witness statements from all those who survived or were there on the night, the police officers who were there on the night, and the firefighters who were there on the night. Like you, as you started the question, I never cease to be humbled by some of the individual acts you hear members of the public did, as well as certainly London's firefighters and the other emergency services.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Thanks for that overview, Craig. A few specifics. You talked about 350 people in the Tower. How robust do you think that figure now is?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** It is robust, from everything we know at the moment and what we have. As to how that has been arrived at, as you know there have been a whole range of things, everything from what you recognise as normal databases, what local authorities hold, all the way through to looking at things like fast food delivery records. We have done all sorts of things to try to ascertain who was there at that particular time. We have some anecdotal information from contacts in the local community that there were other people in the Tower who were out. I know Martin [Hewitt, Assistant Commissioner, MPS] and others have made this appeal before and I would just repeat it. We are not interested in immigration and subletting issues. Please just let us know if you were there. Tell us and we can reconcile the various databases we have. So, it is as accurate as we have at the moment and the team are not expecting that to move much at all.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Thanks for that. I know the Government have said they are not interested in immigration status and so forth and that is an important message to get over, but inevitably people are going to be suspicious.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No, no, I am not naive. People absolutely are worried, and at a time when people do not necessarily have complete faith. I know people are worried. I am just giving that reassurance: that is not what we are here for.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** You say you have identified 39 victims so far. Are there any human remains you have removed who have not yet been identified?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I do not know the answer to that. I can find out for you if that is in the public domain.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** It would just be useful to know, I think, if the reason people are saying, "Why is it taking so long?" is because you have not actually recovered the remains or because the remains have been recovered and it is proving difficult to identify.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** It will probably be a mixture of both, with that level of material. If you can imagine 15 tonnes a floor of hand sieving, that is a considerable period of time. We are working with everyone you would expect to see. There are anthropologists, orthodontists, you name it. We have people working on that in terms of the specialisms. As I say, the role of disaster victim identification - we use a terrible shorthand of DVI - is actually something that UK policing has built up a level of knowledge in over a number of years to be able to access specialists to help us in this. The only comparable advice we can find particularly is around the challenge that was 9/11.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** OK. How far up the Tower have your teams been able to get?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I do not have the exact floor. I can get that for you.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I think that would be useful as well. Could I move on to the criminal investigation? You said quite clearly you have seized a lot of digital records and presumably paper records as well. How many interviews have you conducted?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I have details of witness statements. This is where I have to be careful. You might interview a witness. Can I assume in your question you are talking about interviews with people who may have a different status? I do not have the numbers of that at the moment. I would not expect, at this stage of the investigation, when you look at that volume of material, you will be getting to that very quickly.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The question was going to be, "How many interviews under caution have you conducted?"

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Right. I do not have that, but at this stage in an investigation I would be very surprised if you were in a position to assimilate all of that data, understand it, understand the involvement of an individual and then interview them under caution at this point.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. How many officers do you have working on the investigation?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Across the piece, there are about 200 officers. Some of those are in the disaster victim identification. I have a breakdown for you and

perhaps if I can circulate that I can tell you who is doing what in which part of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes, that would be helpful. Obviously, there is a lot of pressure from the community about getting on with the criminal investigation, which I am sure you appreciate.

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

**Andrew Dismore AM:** When do you think you will be in a position to say whether or not there will be arrests and interviews under caution?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I would be guessing if I did that for you. There is an investigation team on that. I am not going to speculate. I genuinely do not know what will be in that data. Let me do a hypothetical. It is probably easier if I do a hypothetical. You could come to something very early in a disclosure process that makes you realise an investigation is taking a different turn, if there is something in a disclosure process that makes you go, "Actually I have really found something here and I need to move very quickly now to X or Y", or it could be much more staged. It will entirely depend on what happens as you gather that information and piece together the 250-odd survivor witness interviews, probably 600-plus firefighter witness interviews, 300 police officers, others, and material from everyone. Once you piece that together, you then start to hone down on who you need to interview and who you need to see. I would not tie the investigation to a timescale. We can probably be much clearer on that come the autumn. Finish the block. The investigation is running in parallel alongside that.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Come the autumn you will have a better idea?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I will be able to give you a clearer picture.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** That would be helpful. You have mentioned the experts you have helping with the identification of remains. What other technical experts have you engaged to assist in the criminal investigation side?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I know the team have been working with a number of people around fire safety and a range of organisations around that. It will literally change as they go through the investigation. At various times they are going to need colleagues and obviously independent advice around fire, around building materials. All of those specialists will come in as they are needed in the investigation. I do not have a list of who they are but they are working with the team.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** OK. It would be helpful if we could have those details as well. That would help reassure people that the technical sides are being looked at as well.

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

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The last question is: how does your criminal investigation relate to the public inquiry? In other words, will your criminal investigation hold up the public inquiry or vice versa, or are they completely independent?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** In theory they are completely independent. Obviously at the edges there is always a read-over between the two. I obviously cannot speak

for the judge chairing the public inquiry [Sir Martin Moore-Bick PC] but if you look at the experience of other public inquiries - it depends on the timescale and so on, obviously - they can do bits in parallel as it is going along. You do not have to wait for everything to finish but there are clearly parts of it, particularly if you get to an issue around suspects or behaviour, that sort of thing, where you literally have to wait for the criminal investigation to finish. Those are the debates that have started already in terms of the work, about how you run the two things in parallel.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** OK. Are you doing the investigation work for the public inquiry as well as the criminal investigation?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Ours is the criminal investigation. It is then entirely in the gift of the public inquiry whether they want to use that or whether they want to look at other things and take evidence from other people. That is clearly a freedom for the public inquiry.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Will the material that you have collected for the criminal investigation be made available to the public inquiry or do they have to do their own --

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No, it absolutely can be. It gets quite technical - it depends on the rules of the public inquiry, the nature of the documentation, a whole range of things - but as a general principle, yes, absolutely it is there and available.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** There is no restriction from the Police and Criminal Evidence Act [1984, PACE] or anything else that would stop you --

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Well, you could have some stuff that might be legal privilege at its margins but I would be guessing, really. All you have to do is go through a proper process with the public inquiry about what is disclosed and why it is disclosed, and then it is disclosed. As you have seen with other public inquiries, it is not a case of us sitting and hanging on to stuff. That is not what we are there for.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The four TB [of data] will go to the judge if he wants them?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** If they need them, yes.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** OK. Thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Deputy Mayor, did you want to add anything briefly to the Deputy Commissioner's comments?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I do not have anything of detail to add, just paying tribute to the emergency services, particularly the fire service on the day. It is important to remember - you have asked a question about how many officers are involved in the inquiry and the investigation - that significant resources are on this and will remain on this for months and years to come.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Thank you. Again, the Committee would echo our appreciation for the work that is going into it and the complications and the intricacy of that.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** One last question. I think it is in the public domain that you have said that the recovery process is going to take until the end of the year. Is that still your estimate?

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

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Again, thank you for that. Obviously, we will be talking to you further in the autumn and looking at that, as you have suggested earlier.

Now we are going to, as I said earlier, move Notting Hill slightly further down the agenda. We are going to turn now to the Mayor's Knife Crime Strategy, which has been published recently in the context of knife crime growing significantly over the last couple of years. We have some questions around that.

**Susan Hall AM:** The Strategy sets out a great deal of what we already know about knife crime but the night-time economy has been highlighted in the Strategy as a possible link. What will the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) be doing to analyse whether this is actually the case?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In terms of the Strategy, we will continue that analysis in looking at where there is violence and what is driving that. We also have in place the [London] Information Sharing to Tackle Violence [programme], which is in nearly every accident and emergency (A&E) unit, which analyses where violence is happening to enable local strategic tasking. That is part of the analysis that will continue but it is also part of the analysis around the night-time economy and I am working closely, as do the MPS, with Amy Lamé, the Night Czar, to look at how we can make the night-time economy - visitors, staff and those going out - safer.

**Susan Hall AM:** What are you doing to look at other drivers that are causing knife crime? Clearly, it is an increasing problem. What other methods are you using to find other reasons for it?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** As part of the development of the Knife Crime Strategy we did quite extensive consultation around what is happening, in particular talking to young people about what their views were, why some young people were, in particular, carrying knives and what we could do to try to ensure that they did not feel the need to carry knives. That will continue. We are setting up alongside the MPS, working together, continuing to talk to young people and look at those drivers.

The work that is in the Strategy will continue in terms of looking at what is causing the violence and what can tackle the violence. We are working with schools in terms of tackling violence and looking at how we can work with families, looking at what is driving some young people to pick up knives and carry them.

**Susan Hall AM:** Thank you.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** I have read the Strategy. I really was keen to see this but many of the commitments are just a continuation of work already taking place. There is nothing revolutionary in this document. For example, you are expanding the use of Safer Schools Officers. Every school in London will have access to a Safer Schools Officer. Does this specifically mean more Safer Schools Officers or that the existing ones will be spread over more schools?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In terms of the Strategy, I make no apology for the fact that it looks at what has been working and has commitments within it to continue what works. You know this and your own report has said this: there is no one solution that is going to absolutely drive down knife crime. As we have set out in the Strategy, police cannot tackle this alone. It has to be in partnership

with schools, with families and communities. Yes, there is that continuation of what is working already but there is also the amplification of that as well. We are investing extra money and resources into tackling knife crime. That includes increasing the amount of resource and investment that is going into supporting victims of knife crime.

Yes, there is a continuation, there is an amplification and there are new elements in there. We have been told and part of the consultation was very much, we need to help communities to work and tackle knife crime themselves, and support and empower them. Within the Knife Crime Strategy, we are investing in seed funding to enable local community groups that want to tackle knife crime and can tackle knife crime to start up and do that work.

In terms of the Safer Schools Officers, we are committed - as are the MPS - to increasing the actual number of Safer Schools Officers so that we can increase the reach of Safer Schools Officers, increase the number of secondary schools, work with primary schools and also continue to work within the Pupil Referral Units as well.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** How many Safer Schools Officers do you currently have and how many are you going to get to?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** There are 300 Safer Schools Officers at the moment. The commitment is to increase the number of Safer Schools Officers. We are a little bit dependent - I am sure we will get to this at some point today - on what happens with the budget and what happens with funding. We are committed to prioritising that but it does mean at the moment I cannot put a number on it.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** You do not have a target? OK. You said there is amplification in some areas in here and there are some new elements. What does this Strategy do that was not happening before?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I have already talked about the seed funding and empowering communities. That was not happening before. There is significant work that will be taking place in working with schools and families. We will be launching in the autumn a media campaign to get through to those young people who are carrying knives or who may pick up knives. That will be a new campaign to target those. My view is that if I see on the social media I look at or the media I look at, it is not necessarily getting to the right places. I hope you will see it. We will definitely brief you, if that would be helpful to you, about how it has been targeted, but in my view it has to be quite a sophisticated campaign to get through to the areas and people that are really at risk.

The other thing that I think is significantly new in this Strategy is the work that we have done around the criminal justice system and the criminal justice service, the work we have done with the Youth Justice Board, the courts and probation to really look at what is happening. There is a continuation of that so that we can understand what the outcomes around arrests are, what works, and what is happening to young people. There has been a significant gap in that information and that understanding, and this Strategy and part of the consultation around the Strategy are going to be putting that right. We are also looking at what we can do around ensuring there are better community sentences for those where it is appropriate, and what we can do around tagging and electronic monitoring. That is new within this Strategy and I think could make a significant difference.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Some of these initiatives, are they proven to work elsewhere?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We have looked across the country around good practice. Some of this is development of good practice within London and we are always looking at good practice across the country.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** To the Deputy Commissioner [**Craig Mackey QPM, Metropolitan Police Service**], is there anything that you would have liked to have seen in the Strategy that is missing or does not go far enough?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No, I do not think so. We have spoken before about this. I was impressed with the consultation process and the way the Strategy was developed. The principle of your question suggests some of the challenges. If there is a new magic solution, I do not think I have seen it yet and I did not see it during the consultation. The message I took from that consultation, the message I took from talking to people, is that the consistent application of these things in a systemic way does have a long-term benefit and a long-term effect. Get the work around 'pursue', if you like - the stuff we can do, the interventions, the arrests, the high-end stuff - right. Have proper channels for people where you can divert people. Have programmes - I do not like the phrase 'education', information probably is a better way of talking about it - that inform people and allow people to make choices.

It goes all the way through to some of the debates we are starting to have. We have spoken here before around the need to take down video content online that relates to extremism or terrorism. How do we get that across into ones that glorify gang behaviour, possession of knives and those sorts of things? How do we get companies to be as serious about that as they are starting to be around terrorism? The Strategy has all the parts now. The challenge for us, collectively, as you rightly say, is that we have to deliver it and we have to deliver this in a consistent way. What I have learnt over a number of years, the sad reality is that once your focus shifts away from this it pops back up.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** The last point you made is very interesting because on my reading of the Strategy, it does not cover the impact social media has on the increase in knife crime, the idea of these videos online that are encouraging young people and that also show that if you have an altercation with another gang, it is going to be broadcast widely. That is not addressed at all in this Strategy, even doing research into it.

The other area that I am concerned about and perhaps the Deputy Mayor [Sophie Linden] can respond to is that the *Evening Standard* has run a really powerful series of articles, one of them talking to a former gang member in July. He talked about a very interesting area, young people coming here in the last ten years. To quote him, "In the last ten years since Somalis and Congolese came to London, they taught us a whole new level of violence". Is there any research you are doing looking at how people who have come from war-torn countries and seen absolute horrors have come here, perhaps gotten involved in gangs and upped the violence level? Is that some work you are doing? It is not mentioned at all in the Strategy.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In relation to your comments about social media, it is in the Strategy, looking at what the responsibilities of the internet companies, Google and Facebook, are. The Deputy Commissioner has already talked about that today in terms of looking and making sure that they take their responsibilities seriously. It is around YouTube as well, taking down material that is making an impact on violence. I know and you know that if you look around Facebook you can see videos and films that are egging people on to cause violence. That is in the Strategy around social media. We are already talking to Google about that and we will continue to talk to them about that. There are also issues around the sharing of those films. It is creating a little bit of money for those that put it up. We are having those conversations to



start to tackle that. I do not accept your premise that the Strategy does not look at social media because I think it does.

In relation to the issues around what is driving higher levels of violence, we are very clear in the Strategy part of this is the trauma-informed approach. That is around understanding what is driving some young people, whether they are new arrivals or not, to commit some really significant crime. The impact it has is terrible. That is in the Strategy and that will continue to be in the Strategy. We have been discussing that work with mental health trusts and with consultants in hospitals as to how that can be taken forward.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK. I just think it needs something more specific around that, given that young people who have been involved in this have commented on that. That was not something I had ever picked up before.

You talked about the sharing of information, something I have long, long gone on about. There are still three A&E departments in London who do not share data. When will they be sharing data?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The last time I looked at this there was one A&E department - I can double-check that - that was not up and running. My understanding was that it was not because they did not want to. There were some technical barriers. I will have to go back and look at exactly what the issues are around that one A&E department. I think there are 29 in London and 28 of them are sharing that data.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK. Thank you for that. How are you going to reach young people with this new media campaign, your prevention campaign, and who is going to deliver that?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I am not the person to be able to give those solutions. I do not have that expertise at all. We have also recognised that that expertise lies outside of City Hall so we have gone and put a tender out to get the right people, who do understand and do understand how to get messages through to young people. That is out there at the moment. We have not yet had anything back. We are asking the experts on that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** When you have that, you will be able to brief us on what the campaign is going to be and how you are going to engage?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes, very happy to. Absolutely.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** That is great. Thank you. I wanted to also ask - and I did try this at the [London Assembly] Plenary but I did not quite get the answer - about the fact that you are talking here about every borough developing their own knife crime strategy. How are you going to do and how are you going to make sure it is not a top-down approach, as many of us felt some of your recent target-setting was? How are you going to engage the whole community in setting that strategy?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** These are plans that the Borough Commanders, alongside their stakeholders in the boroughs, are developing, and it is being overseen through the MPS.

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

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are expecting them to do that engagement around local community groups and stakeholders. I attended one of the Crimefighters that had knife crime as

a priority on the agenda, as it often does or probably always does, and the very clear message that was going out to Borough Commanders was: policing enforcement is absolutely part of that action plan but you need to have, as part of your action plan, “What work are you doing with schools? How are you getting the messages out? How are you working with communities?” That very much is one of the principles of the development of those plans.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK, that is good to hear. Deputy Commissioner, is there any specific evidence where there has been a knife attack, a knife incident, that young people in that area then are more inclined to carry a weapon because they fear for their safety. If so, what are you doing to try to tackle that?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** There may be evidence. I have not seen empirical evidence. Could I show it to you now? No, I could not. What you do see, and we have talked about this before, is that there are knife crime hotspots where it tends to cluster, which would suggest there is something. In one Borough it is an issue around the night-time economy, in another borough it is where transport infrastructure meets. If we take Croydon - we often talk about Croydon - the issue is around transport and lots of people coming together. If you look at the action plan for Croydon, a lot of the knife crime action for Croydon is around 3.30pm to 8.00pm. That is one of the pinch points in terms of time, particularly around young people and schools.

In another Borough the profile will be quite different. As the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime said, that is why these action plans are borough-based, so you can actually address those issues on the Borough. Your point is well made. Is it top-down? Do we drive it from the top? It is a bit of both, if I am honest, as it always is with these things. There is a lot coming up that meets in the middle. It meets in the middle at about the borough level in terms of knitting it together. If we do a tactic, we make it up in the Yard and say to all of the 32 London boroughs, “Do that”, in some boroughs it would have no impact. It is very much about particular things for particular areas.

There was some research on gangs a few years the Home Office. We looked at some of what works. I have not seen the detail - it may be there - about what actually works around knife crime and whether there is a causal effect. Anecdotally, young people are saying that. If it affects and impacts on the safety on someone, do they make a different choice? If you timeline the issues around knife crime, that is probably one of those critical intervention points. That is what we hope with the work around schools at the point there is something that happened. If you look at the last sector week, I think we did well over 150 schools in terms of inputs. It is getting those inputs in at the right time.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** One of the specific things in here is about A&E departments and the youth workers in there. You say you are going to extend support. There is no timeframe. Is there any more detail around that you can provide?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are working that up at the moment in terms of the budgets and our budget. We will be extending it and we will be able to let you know in terms of how many. We are not going to get to the point where every A&E unit has this support because we do not have the capacity. We will have to prioritise those A&E units where they are probably in the hotspot areas. Obviously, the four trauma units already have them but we will be prioritising those.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Is this a consultation document or is this the final Strategy?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** That is the Strategy. We will be developing an action plan and overseeing that action plan.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Having some sight of the Croydon strategy, I have been quite taken by the breadth of the partnership working, the media aspect and particularly working with young people and their families. I am quite impressed with that work in progress, I have to say.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** If I could go back to schools and Safer Schools Officers. As I understand it you are running a pilot whole-school scheme in Croydon, which I was interested to hear about, and your Strategy talks about something called a Safer Schools standard, which is described as allowing schools to evidence that they meet best practice around student safety. I wanted to ask a bit more about that. Is it an educational standard or is it to do with mainly security? How does it work with the school pilot and when will we see the results of that? Is that going to be rolled out?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The commitment is to development that Safer Schools standard. It came out as a result of one of the consultation sessions that we held, talking to schools and pupil referral units. One of the schools said to us, "We have standards for Healthy Schools, why don't we have a standard for a Safer Schools?" We recognise that some schools do not wish to put their hands up and say they have a problem because they are worried about the reputation and possible stigma that that attaches. We are trying to turn that around and say, "You should be proud that you are keeping your children safe and you are putting the right things in place to keep your young people safe." That is what that is about. We are setting out to develop it at the moment. It came out of the consultation.

As part of that consultation also, we discussed with the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) what they are doing as part of their inspection framework. Do they ask the question, "How do you know your young people are safe? How do you know if your young people are carrying knives?" We are continuing to discuss that with Ofsted. I hope that they will put that into their inspection framework as part of their safeguarding. They have a very good framework for safeguarding. I think they should have specifics around violence and knife crime as well.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** To reiterate my question, this is about educational work that the school is doing around safety, around crime and violence, not just about security measures?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes. We are going to develop the criteria. Healthy Schools criteria is not just about the food on the on the plate, it is also about education, so I can see it being both.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** And the Croydon pilot?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I think we are just about to go out to tender for the second phase of the Croydon pilot. It was approved for concept. It was the beginning of it in Croydon and we either have or are about to go out to tender for the second part of that. That will be continuing. We have committed the resources for that over the next two or three years and we are going to continue that.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** You are going to pilot it for three years before you roll it out?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is there and we will take the learning from it and we intend to see what learning is coming through all the time. We are not going to just set it off and not look at it over the years. It is a whole-school programme; it is a different way of working. I went down to the

school in the initial phases of it and what I was really impressed by was the commitment not just of the staff and the teachers, but the real commitment of the young people and the excitement of the young people and how important they thought it was to not just be talking within the schools but also working with the families.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you. On the prevention, the education campaign that you talked about, that is launching, in your term. I am assuming that within the brief of that there will be that this must be done without increasing fear among young people. This will be an absolutely key part of how that will work.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Absolutely, because that would be counterproductive. We have discussed on many occasions, that young people are saying to us that they do not feel safe and that is why they are carrying the knives. Therefore, we have to do it in a way that is not counterproductive.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** The learnings from that and the message from that, will that be integrated with the communications around Operation Sector, because that is being done more often now? I am seeing again - obviously it is social media I see - more and more pictures of knives, of weapons, on social media, on television. There was table full of knives the other day on the BBC that was terrifying. How are we going to make sure that different parts of police communications are integrated together in this respect?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is not just this part of the Knife Crime Strategy that will be integrated. The whole of this Knife Crime Strategy is an integrated Strategy. We have and will continue to have regular meetings to ensure that it is integrated. You do not want one part doing something that is counterproductive or not in liaison or working together. Therefore, the whole of this Strategy is integrated that way. That includes the communications and it will include the enforcement activity with the MPS as well.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** That is very good to know. We will talk a little bit more later on about acid attacks, but hopefully the research and learning that goes into developing the campaign will look at whether a focus on weapons is the right thing to do or whether a focus on violence might be better because then that incorporates all kinds of uses of weapons.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes, and we did say in the Strategy; it is obviously focusing on knives, but part of the Strategy says that we will continue. Acid attacks are very high profile at the moment and very worrying and it does say that we will continue to look at where there are other weapons being used and what we need to do around that. The Strategy is around the drivers, is it not, and we have been talking about the drivers. Part of the Strategy is to tackle the propensity to violence. I think in the short, medium and longer term that the Strategy will have an effect on other forms of violence and other weapons because we are trying to get to the root of some of the causes of it.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Great. Obviously, we do not want to simply divert to another weapon on choice. That would be a waste of time. Moving on to the goals and the delivery of the Strategy, in the Strategy itself there are some goals for how you will measure progress but is there any implementation plan where we can measure and monitor the progress and delivery of the things it is supposed to be doing?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are developing an action plan and the effectiveness of that will be monitored. Ultimately, the effectiveness of this Strategy is going to have to be reductions in knife crime. Everybody will be monitoring that on a regular basis, and monitoring it not just over all in London but monitoring it borough by borough to understand what is working and where to spread good

practice but also to ensure that where there are some boroughs with emerging issues, that that can be quickly got on top of.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We will need targets to help us judge performance, will we not?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We have set the overarching Strategy as a reduction in under-25 knife crime. We have not put a figure on that but we are looking for reductions.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** You are not going to put a figure on it?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We have not in the Strategy, no.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** You have indicated in one of your previous answers that the delivery of some of the things will depend on funding. Obviously, you have short-, medium- and long-term goals, some of which are not funded yet, and you do not know if you can deliver them. What are the short-term goals in terms of delivery that we should be keeping the closest eye on?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In terms of the funding, that was in relation to Safer Schools Officers. I am not saying right now, "This is the number of extra Safer Schools Officers that will be delivered" because we have to understand what the budgets can allow. It does not mean that there will be an increase in Safer Schools Officers; we are just not putting a target on that at the moment.

In terms of other aspects of the Strategy, we have put the funding there. From our point of view, around £7 million worth of funding around serious youth violence and knife crime is there. We do have the funding and we have prioritised the funding around victim services. For the first time there will be victim support services for young people who have been a victim of a knife attack, because at the moment the only victim support that goes in - and quite right because it absolutely needs to go in - is when there has been a murder. Rightly, the families of murder victims get very, very good support.

However, if you are a young person who has been a victim of a knife crime, you are not getting the right support. We have increased that funding to £1 million to ensure that that victim support is there. We talk about the drivers of violence. We know that often - not always - where a young person has been a victim of crime, they can go on to be an offender as well because of the violence and the trauma and the difficulties that that provides. Therefore, that is there.

In terms of some other elements of that, we will continue in terms of the delivery. Some of the funding may mean that the amplification may not be as great, but we are doing that. Short-term I have already set out victim support, the extra money going in and seed funding. That is absolutely funded. I do not want you to go away thinking we do not have the funding for this Strategy. We know we have the vast majority of the funding; my comments were specifically around the Safer Schools Officers.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Your action plan will outline what things we can expect when and which things are funded that we can monitor?

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

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you. The Mayor put out a very good press release and made specific reference to the closure of youth services. As you know, this is an issue I have worked on. We are up to at least £36 million taken out of youth services across London now since 2011. Can I ask the Deputy

Commissioner what your view is on the impact of the closure of youth services on the challenges of engaging with young people and on youth crime?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Clearly, decisions about services in a particular area are issues for local authorities and for other partners and I recognise some of the challenges they face around funding. The reality for us operationally - and that is the only way I can answer the question - is we need partners to work with on a local level who we can work with, who are effective. What sector they come from is really an issue for others. We have heard a bit and spoken a little bit about Croydon's work and the partnership work. You need effective partnerships and reach to be able to do and deliver some of these things.

We have spoken a lot before, and you asked the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime about some of the things that are being done initially. The development of the individual Borough Plans, the work around Sector, that is all up and running, that is going, but we need other people to work with us to do the other parts of that process.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you very much. Deputy Mayor, you mentioned seed funding for community groups. There are a lot of community groups out there who need - I do not know what you might call it - reliance funding, funding to keep going. They are already doing good work. Is that something you will consider as well?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We cannot step into the space that has been withdrawn. You published a very good report around youth services and the money that local authorities have. There have been some really big decisions that they have had to take. They have had to take out of youth services because we know what the situation is in the public service. We will continue to fund those organisations that we are working with in terms of voluntary groups and work that they are doing around the London Gang Exit. Some of the money that flows through the London Crime Prevention Fund flows out from the boroughs and working with the voluntary and community groups, but the specific commitment in this Strategy is around seed funding to enable the community groups to get up and running and then they will have to look at how they become sustainable.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** There was a call in the Mayor's Statement for the Government to step in and fill the gaps. One of the issues around youth services is that they are not a statutory service so local authorities really do struggle. If no government money comes in, is there anything the Mayor can do to try to plug some of those gaps?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is very difficult. You said already about £34 million worth of funding has come out.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** £36 million.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is not going to be possible to step in and plug that gap. The real issue is to ensure that local authorities - and public services are so crucial to tackling knife crime - have the resources that they need. That really is for the Government to make sure that it provides that.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Is there anything this Committee can do to help with that? I know the Mayor has written to the Government. If we did the same, that would help to put the pressure on?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I think that would be extremely helpful to look at in terms of not just youth services. In particular, the other issues that we have come across in terms of developing the Strategy are around the mental health services and the absolute pressure that mental health services are under, the real difficulty to get appointments, to get young people to have the right level of support. We have had that in the papers recently. We need them to be able to provide the support and treatment for young people. It is not there in the way that it should be because of the pressure that they are under.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** There is a lot of evidence that we have seen in previous reports that would back up something if we did that. Are you doing anything to work with other cities to increase the pressure on the Government? Presumably other cities are seeing the same kinds of issues.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** As part of my role, I have been discussing with Police and Crime Commissioners what the overall situation is around policing and crime and we are working with them to put together submissions to the Home Office around budgets.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We appreciate very much that you are not able to step into the shoes of youth provision for boroughs, that is absolutely correct, but I think it is right that you supply some targeted funding, particularly around the knife crime agenda. There are groups out there, not just existing groups, but I have been stuck by emerging new groups, particularly parents, mums, banding together to say, "We are deeply unhappy about this". We have an excellent Chief Inspector, Craig Knight, down in Croydon doing the engagement stuff and we have a meeting with some parents in a couple of weeks. We certainly will be bidding towards the £625 million extra funding for that. That is to be welcomed. It is not a special pleading.

**Susan Hall AM:** Deputy Mayor, do you not think it is important to have specific targets when you bring out a Strategy like this?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We do have the target of reducing under-25 knife crime year on year. We are not going back to taking figures out of the air and putting targets that can create perverse incentives. Numbers we have seen through the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary have not been welcomed and have not provided the ability to really tackle the vulnerability that needs to be tackled. We know what the priorities are and the very, very clear direction of travel and we will be assessing that.

**Susan Hall AM:** Do you think just the word 'reducing' is a bit wishy-washy?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** No, I do not.

**Susan Hall AM:** OK.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I have to say I disagree with you on that from a personal level. I feel the need for local communities to hold their local officers to account, for Borough Commanders to be held to account and other lead officers. Only by having numerical targets, indicated performance targets, can I believe that we can do that properly. We disagree on it, but that is the position that some of us hold.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In terms of holding to account, absolutely, the transparency and accountability, not just for the Metropolitan Police Service but also of MOPAC is incredibly important. I do not think putting a numerical target enables that to happen in any significant or useful way, because local committees and Safer Neighbour Boards all have the dashboards, are trained on the dashboards,

and can see the figures going up and down. There is the accountability and the ability of the community as well as the Safer Neighbourhood Board to challenge and to hold us to account for that. It is there.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We shall see. Next set of questions. Clearly - I was going to say it is a new phenomenon - acid attacks have been around in London as long as criminals have been around in London. However, we are seeing an alarming rise, particularly in the East of London.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** This debate quite rightly has acquired a sense of urgency over the last few days, particularly since the five attacks in Hackney last Thursday. On Monday there was a parliamentary debate and the Home Secretary has announced a review of various options. I want to start off with you, Deputy Commissioner. I want to look at this issue in stages. The number of acid or acid-related attacks on Londoners is rising. Is this part of a national trend? Can you give us your thoughts? What do you know about these types of attacks, who are the likely perpetrators and victims and what types of crime is acid used for? I want to come to specifics later, but if you can just give a general picture.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Just so you know, in 2016, 455 offences. That was up on 2015. In the way you phrased the question you put it in exactly the right way. That is acid or the use of a corrosive substance. Some of the shorthand does not fit with what we actually see on the ground. When we talk about acid attacks, we talk about those things we saw last week, and we have seen before, where someone has attacked with them. Only about 63% of the use of acid is in relation to assaults. 23% of it is around robbery and the rest is around things like criminal damage. I will not say people will be familiar with it, but you will have heard examples where someone pours acid or a similar corrosive subject over a vehicle. That will be included in those figures.

What do we know of them? About 80% of the victims and about 82% of the suspects are male. It is predominantly a male-pattern behaviour. East London is a hotspot in relation to the mapping of this, although there are offences right across London. As I say, about 23% of those offences we looked at in 2016 were personal robberies, with 63% linked to assault. About 30% of victims in 2016 were Asian, and the key victim group is 15 to 29 years of age. We are seeing some links - although it has to be treated with caution because it is not a very big data set - a growing feature, between named suspects in acid attacks who also feature on our gang matrix. Please do not read that as gangs have all moved lock, stock and barrel into acid, but we are seeing some move across. When we look at a crime sheet that has a named suspect on and check it against the gang matrix, we are seeing some read-across. We have a hypothesis for this and we have tests. We think it is something around a focus on knives and knife crime sentencing, but there is no evidence to support this yet. That is just an emerging thing we are looking at.

You mentioned the work that is going on in Parliament. We absolutely support the work and the debate in there. I think Members will know it is the MPS that has put forward a Superintendent to work on this nationally. Why are we doing it nationally? Because, at the heart of your question, this is reflected across the country. We have seen acid attacks moving across the country.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** You said that East London is a hotspot. Is there any particular reason or is it a case of more reporting? I have been asked this question by the media and various other people. East London in that sense is not different to other parts of London but the statistics do bear out your observation.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes. I think everyone at the moment would be guessing if they tried to answer that question for you. Part of the work we are doing at a national level is what we can do with both colleagues in the National Health Service (NHS) and elsewhere to better understand some of the things that lie behind this.



**Unmesh Desai AM:** By way of reassuring the Chairman, I think I should report what the Commissioner said in the *Evening Standard* last Thursday, that this is a serious issue and the statistics are depressing, but these attacks do not happen all the time all over London. You have said that.

Just moving on, again, Deputy Commissioner, I was going to ask you about the Knife Crime Strategy vis-à-vis acid attacks, but I think that question was asked by Sian Berry AM and you have already answered that aspect. If I can concentrate on you, Deputy Commissioner, what would you like to see MOPAC and other partners do to help prevent attacks?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Colleagues in MOPAC, colleagues in the fire -- I would separate that out. There is some initial response stuff. When one of these things actually happens, we are working with colleagues in the London Ambulance Service (LAS), the Fire Service and our own staff around what the initial response is. There is some really good work coming together there. There is then work with the NHS. Walking through the process, there is work with the NHS around the support people get, and the support people get as victims of these.

I do not need to emphasise to you. You have seen some of the horrific stories and pictures on television and the media. The impact this sort of attack has on people is extraordinary. Many of us have been unfortunate enough to see quite a bit of violent crime in our service, but acid attacks are really extraordinary and strike at something quite horrific in people's psyche, certainly from the conversations I have, working with victims, commissioners and others in that sort of space.

Then there is the work around prevention. I think that has to be done, as we are doing at the moment, nationally with colleagues from the Home Office, looking at whether the sentencing is right. I know some of the proposals that were discussed in the [House of] Commons debate about acid being in the same category of offending and therefore sentencing as carrying a knife; the licensing of this; whether there are other ways you can restrict sales with age-restricted sales; whether you can do trace activity. Therefore, I think we, unusually, have an open door with many colleagues in both the legislative space and at local authorities who are saying, "We want to work around this". We just have to get on and do the work now.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I was going to comment on that point, what the Government can focus on in its action plan. You started talking about sentencing and about licensing. There is a particular issue with online sales. As I understand, again from the *Evening Standard* last Friday, suppliers, if they have any suspicions about any particular sales, have a duty to report to the relevant authorities.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes. Some of that is looking to change in terms of what you can do. You will be aware with the issue around knives, there has been a change in terms of purchase of knives online in terms of how you collect them and what you do. There is some learning from that we can take across into this space around acid. We have to be careful, though, as I think you know. I know the keen interest you have taken in this in your area. I think when we talk about 'acid' people imagine a bottle that says, "Sulphuric acid". These are some of the industrial cleaners that people will find in their home. Therefore, it is going to be quite complex getting that bit of legislation right, but I am absolutely confident that the right people are working around that at the moment.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Much has been made of the fact that there are legal difficulties here. As I understand it, for carrying a knife you have to have lawful authority or a reasonable excuse. What are the legal difficulties with making this the same sort of basis for carrying acid or acid-related products?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** That is one of the things, as I said, they are actively looking at. I do not work in the cleaning and industrial industry but you can understand why some organisations, as you would expect, when you stop a vehicle, may have acids or something in them. If you are doing a recovery you may have batteries with battery acid but other people should not and will not. I know part of the stuff is looking at how the legislation and framework can work for the future to get to that sort of scenario.

Then you look further down the line. You get the legislation and framework in place and then look at things like sentencing guidelines; you look at the use of victim personal impact statements, where in an offence like this a victim personal impact statement is absolutely critical.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Can I come in here? Sophie, you might wish to come in here as well. My next question is: what is the current level of support offered to victims of acid attacks? I have written to the Victims' Commissioner [Baroness Newlove] about this on what her thinking is in this field, but perhaps if I could have your view, Deputy Commissioner, and yours as well, Sophie?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Obviously, as with all victims of violent crime, they get the support of the Officer and the investigation teams. They get the Victims Code compliance, i.e., telling people what is going on and explaining how we are going through the process. The more serious the crime - when you get up into grievous bodily harm - the more support and the longer that support will take place for.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** MOPAC obviously commissions victims services across London and, as Craig has set out, that is what is there. We are looking at those services around how effective they are in relation to victims of acid attacks, but we do commission those services already.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I will finish on this note: the role of social media. One of the problems I think is the way that people put stuff on various blogs. I monitor some of the blogs in East London and there are about four or five blogs in Tower Hamlets that I keep an eye on. Just this morning someone - and I do not say there is any basis to this - said there was an acid attack on a housing estate. Someone pretending to be a delivery person knocked on the door and squirted acid over the woman who opened the door. Is there any way we can look at putting on some positive messages? These are the sorts of rumours that I think cause anxieties. There is no control. It is very hard, obviously, to counter such messages, but certainly there is something at a local level - and I will discuss this with various Borough Commanders in my part of London - on how we can give out positive messages, reassurance messages.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** That is a really good example. I will speak to the Borough Commanders on that one, but that is the sort of thing where, if that did not happen, we get it out on our Twitter feed that this did not take place, it just did not happen. Officers are out there. I saw one on the overnight logs last night where they had arrested someone carrying a bottle with acid in. They are out there doing it day in, day out. We are out there, intervening, stopping and searching people, seizing stuff and making arrests.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Just to pick up on that point about reassurance, I think that is incredibly important, especially as in previous weeks there has been a lot of unease and fear among the Muslim community, Muslim women in particular. We do need to get out that reassurance: report the crime, it will be taken incredibly seriously and action will be taken.

I did write to all the leaders of local authorities the week before last around acid attacks to put it into context, to say, "This is what is happening. Please can you disseminate this information to all your contacts and ask people to make sure that they are reporting any of the attacks that are coming through?" I absolutely take your point around it is really important to get some messages about how serious this is and how seriously the police are taking this.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Two more points, Chairman. I think it is important to put this on record. Regrettably, there has been a rise in hate crime and also there has been a rise in acid and acid-related attacks, but there is no correlation between the two. Mayor Sadiq Khan at the [Assembly] Plenary [meeting] went out of his way to emphasise this point. Over the last few months or last year, only two acid-related attacks have been treated as hate crimes. I think it is important to put that on record.

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

**Tony Arbour AM:** You have told us, Deputy Commissioner, about the impact of these crimes. Can you tell me something about the sanction detection rate?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I do not have that data in the exact form. What I do have is some data that relates to what I call clear-ups in terms of that 455. It ran at just over 20% in 2016 for all of those crime types. That is not just assaults.

**Tony Arbour AM:** There is quite a close analogy with that and the sanction detection rate for knife crime, is there not, which is around 20%?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** It is different in different types of knife crime.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Indeed. The point I am getting at is it does appear to be quite an easy offence to get away with.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** In those numbers I go back to the fact that 63% of those are assaults. Criminal damage in the middle of the street in the night is really hard unless someone sees it or witnesses it.

**Tony Arbour AM:** We only have substantive figures in relation to knife crime, and I am looking at the figures where there is knife crime with injuries as opposed to knife crime. It does appear that sanction detection rate is falling.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Sorry, are we on knife crime or corrosive?

**Tony Arbour AM:** What I am suggesting is that there is an analogy in terms of the sanction detection rate for acid attack and for knife crime in general. You have drawn my attention to the fact that not all acid attacks are an acid attack on the person, just as not all knife crime results in injury. What I am trying to suggest to you is that we are not terribly successful in clearing these matters up.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I would like to be better. Gosh, yes, absolutely I would like to be better.

**Tony Arbour AM:** You would like it to be better but in fact it has been declining, the success rate, in clearing these matters up, has it not?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** We have to be really careful here because we are quoting two different sets of figures. The knife crime with injury figures and detection rate, by their nature, will always have injury. Some of these we are talking about a pool of 455 crimes that are mixture of crimes, some of which will have injury, some of which will have damage, some of which will have threats to individuals, and they will each have different or slightly better investigative opportunities depending on where they are and how they take place. Of course we can always be better and that is what we strive for all the time.

**Tony Arbour AM:** The figures that one clearly is going to be quoting for acid attack are going to be broken down in the same way as we break down knife crime. I have the figures in front of me. About a third of knife crime only - and I say 'only' as a term, not to seek to minimise it - is a third of all knife crime. As far as acid attack is concerned, what proportion of acid attack relates to injury?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** About 63% of that.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Much, much higher, therefore, than knife crime.

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

**Tony Arbour AM:** Again related to this spate of reported acid offences, there has been a kind of kneejerk reaction saying that punishment should be higher. The debate in the House of Commons, I think it was in Westminster Hall, said that the sanction should be greater and that there is somehow an intelligence among criminals to say, "We are more likely to get away with it or we will get a lighter sentence, in the unlikely event of us being caught, if we use acid." Is there not a problem with increasing the possible punishments, that in fact the courts may not do it? Can I draw your attention to the fact that it used to be two strikes and you were out for knife crime? If there were two knife offences you got a custodial sentence, no messing, and of course that never happened.

I wonder, if there is going to be a suggestion that we crack down hard on acid attacks and that there should be a stiffer sentence - by which I read custodial sentences - do you not think it likely that those sentences will not be actually be implemented, in the way that they were not implemented with knife crime?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** It is not my role to do judicial outcomes. In terms of the point you made, I think it is entirely appropriate that when a new or emerging or a change happens in crime patterns, that one of the things you do is keep open the chance that you might need to review legislation in the same way that we have talked about with things like social media and those sorts of things. Otherwise I do not, as a personal view, see the law as some sort of ossified thing that sits here, often decided in the 1800s, and cannot change for the 21st century. There are some things and substances here that are not even defined by law. At least we should have a look.

It might be that when the review is done people say the sentencing powers are there, the legal framework covers this, you do not need a code around sales, or if it is, it is a voluntary code the industry wants to do. That is entirely appropriate. But when you get something like that happen as a spike that captures people's attention, in the same way we are doing work with the moped industry around moped-enabled crime in London, it will be somehow personal, and I think we ought to do that. That is part of what we are here to do.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I accept that and I am pleased to hear it. On a related point, Assembly Member [Susan] Hall asked the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime about the fact that there was no quantifying in terms of actual figures in relation to dealing with knife crime. Do you think it would be appropriate - and then I will ask the Deputy Mayor this - to have a hard figure for setting a target for increasing sanction detection rather than simply saying, "We hope to increase sanction detection"? The only figure that we have given to us does relate to what seems to me to be a steep decline in sanction detection for knife crime, particularly as the volume of knife crime has increased. Do you think it would be appropriate for there to be a numerical target for increasing sanction detection for these kinds of offences?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Do I think it would be appropriate? The difficulty you get - and you have rehearsed this well and truly --

**Tony Arbour AM:** I am going to.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I think you have well and truly rehearsed this. What would you set? Is 1% better good? Is 10%, 20%? You have to keep striving to make these outcomes get better, get better outcomes around all of these offences and raise sanction detection rates. There is not a target for them. Some of the things, particularly around sanction detection rates, you then get into the vexed area - and it is really important on this - can I include cautions in that? Can I include other alternative disposals, with a young child who sprays acid over a desk at school and then they are dealt with through a disposal? Does that count?

**Tony Arbour AM:** That is the kind of discussion we have had over the definition of sanction detection for as long as I can remember.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Therein lies some of the risks around it. The classic one that most police officers will know is cannabis and cannabis street possession. It is one of the quickest ways to drive up sanction detection rates across a force.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Of course, but I am relating this to a specific crime. Can I ask you, Deputy Mayor, on this one, a very simple one in relation to this is to say that you would restore the sanction detection rate - and we seem to be not precisely sure what it is in relation to acid attacks - on knife crime to the figure that it was three years ago? That would be a very simple numerical thing and, on the face of it, quite easy.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** What I am interested in is ensuring that the police are doing absolutely their best in catching the people who are causing knife crime and committing knife crime in the streets. I am interested in it not just in terms of sanction detections but what the outcome of those prosecutions are. That is what I am interested in and what we will be analysing and assessing going forward, that we are not only reducing knife crime but we are increasing the numbers of those who are perpetrating knife crime on the streets and making sure that there are successful outcomes to that. With sanction detection rates, as I am sure you have rehearsed many times at this Committee before, there are inherent difficulties and there can be perverse difficulties in that as well.

**Tony Arbour AM:** What you have said is motherhood and apple pie, but the man in the street, precisely as Assembly Member [Susan] Hall has said, actually understands a figure. Simply, as I have suggested, going back to what indeed was not an awfully good figure three years ago for sanction detection for knife crime, but at least was a lot better than it is now, is quite an easy one for people to understand and would be quite an easy target, irrespective of the nuances of what is sanction detection.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** What I am interested in is making sure that the police are doing as effective a job as possible in catching those who are perpetrating knife crime and making sure that that, in terms of successful outcomes and prosecutions, increases. I think that is what people will understand on the outside as well. There are inherent difficulties and problems around some of the issues around sanction detection rate setting, plucking numerical targets out of the air. We are not going to agree on this and I am going to make sure that we hold --

**Tony Arbour AM:** No, we are not.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I think we have rehearsed this two or three times.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I gave it a go.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Let's move on. I wish, when I was in the commercial world, I had a boss like you who was a progressive about targeting, because I had lots of figures! Let us move on quickly. Andrew.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Going back to acid attacks specifically and talking about social media, one thing that strikes me is perhaps it might be an idea for the police, the LAS and London Fire Brigade together to put out some first aid advice if people are squirted with acid. I understand that to douse everything with water is the basic advice but that might be helpful, because either if you are victim and you do not want to do it or you may be in a panic, or you may witness it and be able to do something. It does not have to come from the police, it could come from all emergency services, and I think that would be important.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** That is a good idea. That is one of the ones that people are doing but I will check for you, because it is a really good idea.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The real risk is that we have something that is turning into a fashionable crime, like moped crimes went through the roof and so forth, yet you make the point about this being a domestic item in the same way that many knives are domestic items. There is a perfectly legitimately reason to have this stuff around home.

One thing I was going to ask you was whether, when you come across these crimes, people are decanting the chemicals into other containers. I know when I try to get into the bleach at home, you have these press-down things and it takes forever to get into them. If you are a victim, you would have run a mile by the time somebody had the top off. Are people decanting the chemicals?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Usually it is carried in something other than the thing it would originally have arrived in.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Therefore, one aspect perhaps you ought to be looking at in terms of law is whether there is a lawful excuse to take something out of its official container, which will have all the safety warnings on it, into something else. What excuse can you have for pouring bleach into a squeeze bottle or something, particularly if you are on a moped?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes, that is some of the area to be looked at in terms of the legislative work, even down to it going to show an intent if you move it from one container to another and it starts to help to build the picture of what its use was for.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Again it comes down to the design of the official containers. If they are large, you cannot carry them around anyway. The other question is to what extent the assailants are known to the victims?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I do not have the data on that. I will try to see if we have it for you in the data set.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** That may fit into gang crime or it may fit into so-called honour crime, which we know has been an issue in relation to certain interfamily attacks with acid.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** I am just checking my breakdown of 2016 and I do not have it. I will find that for you.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** It is important that we try to dig down into this as much as we can, because if it does suddenly become a fashionable thing instead of knives, we could end up with an epidemic, which we do not have at the moment. Although 400-odd crimes is a lot, compared to the scale of some of the other crimes, like the way moped crimes have gone through the roof, or knife crimes, it is still not a huge number. People should not get too alarmed in terms of the numbers but it is something we want to make sure does not get out of hand.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** As you covered in the opening point from your colleague, this is a crime that we have seen. While the focus on it is new at the moment, this is a crime that we have had there for many, many, many years.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** There is a suggestion of almost an alignment between two phenomena, which is the moped crime and the acid attacks. They are not mutually exclusive but there appears to be almost an alignment of both those crimes to a degree, on mopeds using acid as the weapon of choice.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Some of the ones we have seen recently have involved the use of the moped. Certainly, from the data I have seen, they are not all linked with two-wheel vehicles. But, no, I get the point.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** If you have a squeazy bottle on a scooter, you might just squirt it on yourself as somebody else, I would have thought.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I am conscious of the time and I will try to make it as quick as possible. There are three or four points, again mainly to you, Deputy Commissioner, although, Sophie [Linden], you may wish to come in as well. Firstly, we should let you know that the Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP [for East Ham] sent us his thoughts on this issue with reference to the debate in Parliament. He stressed two points, two specific changes in the law. Home Office Minister Sarah Newton [Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability] showed him that the review by the Home Secretary would take both points into account.

The first point we already touched upon about making carrying acid an offence. The second point I do not think we touched on, so perhaps I could have your thoughts. For sulphuric acid in particular and some of the stronger stuff, one should require a licence to purchase such items. That is the position of the British Retail Consortium and the Association for Convenience Stores as well. Would you consider adding the weight of the MPS, and also Sophie [Linden] as Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, to this review by the Home Secretary?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Absolutely. I am more than happy to consider that.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I will grant it was the Commissioner who said in the *Evening Standard* last week that she could see no reason why a normal person would want to buy sulphuric acid, which not only can dissolve skin but can also dissolve bones. Secondly, you did tell me that Commander [David] Musker [North London, MPS] has been tasked with co-ordinating --

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** He is co-ordinating it particularly across the East boroughs at the moment.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Absolutely. I wanted to get that in the public domain just to send a message back to Londoners, particularly East Londoners, that the police are taking this seriously. I know you are. That brings me to my third point. The local Commanders - I can put on record Chief Superintendent Sue Williams [Borough Commander for Tower Hamlets] and Chief Superintendent Ade Adelekan [Borough Commander for Newham] - have been meeting community groups and have been doing a really good job.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Thank you. I will feed that back.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I have been at public meetings with Ade Adelekan last week, a packed public meeting, and he brought his whole team along, including the Investigating Officer who is leading the investigation into the Beckton attack. I think it is important that the message does go out to Londoners that the police, particularly in East London, are taking this very seriously.

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

**Unmesh Desai AM:** My last point is we talked about the role of social media in promoting rumours, or how social media is abused. I do not know how many people tune in to watch us debating this issue. What message can I take from you, Deputy Commissioner, when I get on to my phone at the end of this session? What positive message can I send out on my Twitter to Londoners, and particularly East Londoners, about what you are doing about these attacks?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** That we are taking this seriously, that there is a focus from officers at both a local level but also at a national level to try to look at new, long-term prevention solutions on this problem. We are absolutely focused on dealing with it as it is now and making arrests and dealing with it through the criminal justice process. We know the long-term solution and this is a problem that can be designed out and prevented.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Thank you very much. That is a long tweet.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** It is a rather long tweet. I cannot get it in 140 characters.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Sophie [Linden] follows me and perhaps you might wish to follow me as well.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I also am reassured that Commander Musker is getting involved in it. That is reassuring for East Londoners that Commander Musker is involved.



**Unmesh Desai AM:** If you could send our appreciation to the Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP [for East Ham] as well for taking the trouble to send us a note. I am sure he already got that.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Moving on to the next set of questions, if I may, which is the Public Access and Engagement Strategy, which I added to the agenda in the wake of the consultation on the Strategy, which was only issued last week. The community and others have until early October to respond. This is quite early in the process but I think is something that we really wanted to exercise ourselves around today. We all have a clear interest in it. I certainly have an interest from the previous administration. That is why I wanted to lead some questions around that. There are two aspects to it. It is public access and then engagement with the community; it is two parts to the whole.

My first question to you, Deputy Mayor, is that in the consultation you are quoted as saying that the direction of travel is broadly settled. Can you briefly give us a context of that, bearing in mind you are putting it out for consultation? How do those two pieces sit together?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In the introduction of the Strategy, at the bottom, we do say that the direction of travel is broadly settled. By that we mean that we have to, as everybody knows, find significant savings. We are prioritising frontline and frontline officers, prioritising keeping those numbers as high as possible but also the support and the equipment that they need. In order to do that, we have to find significant savings. As part of that, the direction of travel is around looking at the police estate and looking where we can make savings to ensure that we are prioritising the frontline.

This is a consultation document. We are consulting with communities around the proposals within it, around closing a significant number of front counters, around some of the swaps. There are five boroughs where there is a proposal to swap the 24-hour station. That is part of the consultation that is there. Also a consultation around what is the best way to improve and increase public engagement with the police, via the Safer Neighbourhood Boards and the work panels being there and the structure that we are committed to, and committed to in terms of continuing, but how do we improve that what else do the public feel is necessary to improve that engagement with the police.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I sense from the Commissioner's comments also that, notwithstanding the financial challenges, they are recommendations or suggestions that likely would have taken place in any case to improve the way that you engage with the community. Is that fair to say?

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

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Therefore, we would probably move towards this, notwithstanding the pressures around that.

Talking about engagement, I am pleased to note on page 33 that MOPAC has developed increasingly strong and effective public engagement processes. I take some pride in that. We are in a relatively good place already, but I want to talk about Safer Neighbourhood Boards. Earlier on you mentioned, Deputy Mayor, some phrasing that I used and got into trouble with the then Commissioner about holding the local Borough Commanders to account, one of the reasons for Safer Neighbour Boards. On page 37 in the five key aims of Safer Neighbourhood Boards, it does not mention that. We seem to, in a way, have dropped that aspiration.

This is probably one for the Deputy Mayor. Do you still see the future of the Safer Neighbourhood Boards as a mechanism to hold the local Borough Commanders to account around performance and activities in the borough?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes, I do, and in terms of this consultation, if that is something we need to look at, we will look at that and we will discuss it with the Safer Neighbourhood Boards.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** It is not specific in the key aims, which was quite interesting.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** That is out for consultation.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is fine. Good, and I will probably contribute towards that. Something I am very interested in particularly is about the demise of the contact points. I think we would all agree and I would put my hand up and say I do not think contact points have worked and the evidence is there. You are moving away from the contact points and to Dedicated Ward Officers (DWO) hubs. You are committing to two officers and one Police Community Support Officer in each ward, which is to be welcomed. On the back of that increase in numbers, your way of engaging those teams with the local community, and also those teams that I would say are parading in the morning - which is an issue Andrew [Dismore AM] often picks up upon about the distance they have to travel - is the evolution of hubs. You talk about 150 new hubs across London, which in my arithmetic is about four or five or six a Borough. Those hubs are going to be out in the local communities, which I support, but I would like, either Deputy Commissioner or yourself, Sophie [Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime], a little bit more detail on how you see that evolving.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** This is something I know we have talked about before, and probably three or four years ago this issue came up, about how can you get to scenario where local ward-based officers can work. Probably on their patch there is a fire station, there is a community centre, there is a whole range of facilities and buildings, some of which are underutilised. If we just look at the three emergency services, we have done quite a lot of mapping in London across how the three emergency services could work differently together. Those are the sorts of opportunities that you can use to create some of these hubs.

We have discussed - and Assembly Member Andrew Dismore raised this before: simple things like just making sure you can download your body-worn video in a place other than going back to the police station. That is the desire and aspiration to get to things that are shared, that have a shared usage and we can actually operate from with other groups across London. It will be different in different boroughs.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** You will remember a conversation we had going back four or five years. We had opportunities then to do that and at that stage the Metropolitan Police Service pushed back against it.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes. You will remember during what I would call the first stage of estates transformation we were pretty flat out doing a whole range of other things. Some of this is also about bandwidth to be able to actually deliver them. Sometimes it is easy to say, "Of course, yes, we will do such and such", but actually there has to be some work behind it to deliver that in a way that works.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I am also pleased to see quite a strong narrative around Ward Panels. Again, to declare an interest, I chair my local one. I wish I did not, the community should, but there you are. A lot of this is predicated around strengthening Ward Panels, I read. How do the officers see that extra support around Ward Panels? What is your vision for Ward Panels?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The structure of Ward Panels to safe neighbourhood Boards is one that works. It is not consistent across London. There is some really good practice. There are some fantastic Ward Panels that have really good engagement and there are some other that are pretty moribund. What we want to do through this consultation is continue that structure, but understand what is working and how we lift everybody up to a much better level. That is what I want to see. We need to discuss with Safer Neighbourhood Boards and representatives and the community about how that happens and how we can make that work better.

I genuinely think we should not just think about community engagement being about meetings, about Ward Panels and Safer Neighbourhood Boards, because the police and Dedicated Ward Officers are constantly engaging with the public. The question for me is: how good is that and how much is that fed back into the service in terms of service improvements or any gaps in service? Also the question for me is: how do we really engage particularly with the young people? I do not think I have been to a Ward Panel where we have had young people turn up. There are some questions around the diversity of some of the Board panels and the Safer Neighbourhood Boards. So, the question for me is: yes, keep those structures, how do we improve them and also what else do we need to be doing and how else do we ensure that there is that really good community engagement?

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** It is certainly the improvement and your ideas around information technology the fact that the wards are on Twitter. That is a way hopefully we can move forward towards engaging younger people. Again, as Andrew [Dismore AM] has pointed out, there is an issue about the diversity of Ward Panels. My borough is a prime example, because of the demographic. Certain parts of the borough have Ward Panels that are pretty representative. In other parts of the Borough, the wards are not well populated and they do not work. It is going to need some significant support around that. Just on Boards again, you are talking quite strongly and positively about the Safer Neighbourhood Boards, which is good, what other extra support will you be offering to those Boards, if anything?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are already committed and I have signed off the decision of £1 million of funding for Safer Neighbourhood Boards. That will continue. I do not think this is all about resources. This is also about effective engagement locally. It is also around really good use of some of the social media that can be used, really just long-term engagement with the public. This is not all to do with the resources. This is about ensuring that we understand what works and how to get through to the community.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I would say this, but I think the Boards have been a success. We have had a whole new generation of Londoners getting engaged and giving of their time. That is a good thing. My last point before I bring Andrew [Dismore AM] in is going back to the front counters, please, about the commitment for one 24-hour in most boroughs. There are two or three boroughs where there are two. But there are some closures around that. I get that. This will mean that some people will have to travel quite a long way to do that one thing. I know less and less people use front counters, but how would you answer that charge: if you only had one in larger boroughs, there is a lot of travelling time and particularly some older people who may not be social media savvy will want to make that trip. How do you answer that charge?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are out to consultation on closing front counters. We make no bones about that. We have to get those savings out. Alongside that there is a very good strategy around improving access to the police via the telephone and via the internet. Only 8% of crimes in London at the moment are reported over front counters. Other channels and other methods of reporting are being used and are increasing all the time. The MPS's website has been relaunched and revamped and is extremely user friendly. Without any publicity, communication or driving of people to use the website, the

numbers of reports of crimes online has already really increased. The work that has been done to talk to Londoners about, "How do you want to access the police?" shows that many people do want to access the police and report crimes online. I have always been slightly concerned around some of the more vulnerable groups and what their access will be. It is not showing that the elderly are much, much less likely to report online. They are saying, in similar volumes, that they want to use online services, as we do in lots of other aspects of our lives, and as council services are also doing. We have said in this consultation document that the vast, vast majority of Londoners will be within about 45 minutes' travelling time to a 24-hour police station. That does leave about 3% that will not be. The consultation document asks the question: is this a serious concern? What might we be able to put in place alongside the telephone and the internet? Do we need to do something about --

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Londoners will use the telephone and the internet and they will not go to the station. I had a station closed in my ward and I did not get one piece in my mailbox about it. My last point, you are going to close down virtually all the Safer Neighbourhood bases, some dozens across London. There are some complications around that, because they will be on leases. Are you just going to, on day one, close them, depopulate them and mothball them or are you going to allow the leases to run? It is not quite as simple as that, is it?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No. The detail of how you would do that is, for obvious reasons, not in the Strategy, because they are all at different points on the lease. At various points there are a number of options open to us on those. Around the Safer Neighbourhood bases, one of the decisions might be around where it is in the lease and the ongoing costs. You can reduce some of the running costs. While absolutely we would do this and we have been quite clear this is absolutely the way to go, there is the issue that we are trying to get the money out. That big picture stuff is still about £175 million of identified savings over the next four years, of which about half is around our estate. We have to keep driving those costs down. That will be part of that debate and trade-off around those individual leases and when they are up for renewal.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** It is good tactically to move them away as quickly as possible, because otherwise you are going to have these police on and nothing -- that is not helpful.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** As you know, we have been in that place before and that is not a good place.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Indeed. Andrew, did you want to come in?

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Yes. Can I start off with neighbourhood Boards and Board panels? I sit on both of the neighbourhood Boards in my two constituencies. One of the issues that has come up regularly is their ability to advertise conventionally as well as on social media and the money to do that. Take Barnet, for example. We have public meetings every so often, but there is no way we can advertise it beyond social media, which becomes a self-fulfilling problem, in that if you do not know it exists, how do you know to get involved with their social media output? Is something going to be done to enable Safer Neighbourhood Boards to use conventional publicity for their public meetings as well as social media?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I have had that raised with me by Safer Neighbourhood Boards as well. What I have said to them is that we are not going to be providing a specific advertising pot of money within the allocations to Safer Neighbourhood Boards, but we are willing to be flexible about how the allocations are being used. They need to come and talk to us about that. I have said that to the Safer Neighbourhood Boards and they should have had that message.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I am not sure they have.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** No.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** It is a problem that the Safer Neighbourhood Boards are not going to succeed in attracting a more diverse membership or attracting better audiences to public meetings or public discussions or consultation meetings if they cannot tell people they are happening.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** There is an issue around communication and how they can do it online. We have said to Safer Neighbourhood Boards we are willing to be flexible about the money that is being allocated. However, we allocate the money for projects and programmes and they have run some incredibly good projects and programmes to prevent crime. Some of them have done programmes around knife crime as well. That is really where the money should be spent. I think part of this discussion and I would hope comes out of this consultation is how can Safer Neighbourhood Boards work more closely with other organisations in the Borough, such as the local authority. Everybody is engaging in different ways. How can some of this be brought together, so that we can actually get some of the Safer Neighbourhood materials out with the local authority possibly, materials as well as the policing materials. I do not think some of this is just about developing a pot of money. It is about co-ordination and working a little bit differently.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Certainly, there are a lot of very good projects going on across London, not just in my two boroughs. The problem is people do not get to know about them. If resources are not available for advertising conventionally then you end up in that situation where people are just talking to each other. That is my main concern about that. Going on to more panels, in particular in relation to the merger in Camden and Islington, one of the issues that has come out from feedback I have been getting from the merger on the Pathfinder is that the Ward Panels, especially in Camden, feel somewhat disengaged. They have not been able to communicate well with senior management and more importantly one of the things they have found is that the response team priorities are not matching the local ward priorities. There seems to be a bit of a disconnect there as well. That is another thing that has come out of the issues around the Pathfinders that needs to be addressed. I raised before with Craig the problem about engagement with senior officers. It is not just senior officers, it is also a disconnect between the priorities setup and the Ward Panel level and borough/response level.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I will take that back.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** On the front desk closures, how long do you think is reasonable for someone to have to spend getting from where they live to a police station?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The question for me is: how do people want to report crime and when do they need to come into a 24-hour police station? What we have said in this Strategy is that through modelling we have mapped how long it takes on public transport to the one 24-hour police station that is open in that borough. As I said earlier, the vast majority of the population and community will be within three quarters of an hour. There is about 3% of London that will be within an hour. That does concern me. This consultation document is asking the question: is it an issue? If it is an issue, what might we be able to do to overcome that? We have raised that as an issue within the document itself.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I think it is an issue, particularly in outer London, particularly in Barnet, as the Barnet Police Station is up for closure. Following on from that, you talk about reporting crime and 20% of crimes are dealt with on the phone or online, which means 80% is not. Equally, what we have not seen are numbers of

people going to the police station for things other than reporting crime. People do go to police stations for all sorts of other reasons as well, apart from reporting crime. Is that featuring in what you are looking at?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes. The discussions that we have had around the police stations and the proposed front counters, absolutely we have that analysis of what else people are going to police stations for. Some of it is for directions, lost property, things that are not police matters. I am afraid it is just one of those things. We also need to understand that part of the discussions is to make sure that these proposals do not impact on custody, any independent visitors going through, on the legal profession and how that might impact them. That is part of the discussions and the conversations that will take place and have been taking place.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** Take lost property for example, if somebody finds a wallet in the street, the good thing is to go and take it to a police station and report it. What else are they supposed to do with it, other than pocket it? If it is a choice of going to the local police station, which is 20 minutes away or spending an hour that is something of a disincentive.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Even with those types of things, when you look at the footfall on the front counters it is very, very small. Those front counters are not taking in lots and lots of lost property. Daily averages are under five. We do have to make decisions based on the viability of keeping front counters open for a very, very small footfall. The numbers going through front counters has been decreasing. We have to take decisions to get the savings out, to protect the frontline. I think the public will understand that and be able to think about, "Well, what are the other ways that we can report crime? When we do go to a front counter, what is it we need from that front counter?"

**Andrew Dismore AM:** What advice are we going to give people, for example, about how to report lost property?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We will have to look at that.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** It is the example you gave.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes. We will have to look at that.

**Sian Berry AM:** Take it to Transport for London (TfL).

**Andrew Dismore AM:** It has nothing to do with TfL. If you find something in the street, what does that have to do with TfL?

**Sian Berry AM:** Yes --

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I use that as an example - it is the example you gave - but there are all the other things that people go to the police station for.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** No doubt that will figure strongly in the consultation.

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

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** As a really good example of how quickly service can move, up to the end of 2016 for a road traffic incident you had to go into a police

station, get a piece of paper, take it away, fill it in, take it back to the police station and we would post it through internal mail to our place at Marlowe House. That went online in March this year, two-thirds of that has moved online, with no publicity, no push, no big campaign. It has just gone. Reporting is going up and as a result more people are ending up with outcomes, i.e., something happens from it. There are real examples to move services in a different way. We are all alive to the fact they do not always work for everyone. I do not know, how many 24/7 local authority points do you have in your borough?

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I do not think we have any.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No one can access the local authority in your borough, and we have an argument about they should be able to access the police in more places.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That is probably - unusually, for you - one of your weaker arguments, Craig, to be honest, but --

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I can tell you how many fire stations I have, 24/7 fire stations.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** All right, let us move on now. Go on.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The last point, Chair --

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** It is not a weak argument, because the reality is most of those services that they usually access, as the Deputy Mayor said, have moved to online. Certainly, if I look at the borough I live in in London, they have moved online. I cannot go and have a face-to-face conversation about those services. They are online or they are a telephone help centre. Actually, I get a better service than I would have had driving up to the Town Hall and trying to ask about it.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** We will wait until the consultation.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Let us move on, come on.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** The last point I was going to make is about the Ward Officer hubs, and this is following on from the question I asked you before. You have now come up with this, not now, but this is the response to that, about where people parade from. Is the idea that the DWO hubs will start before the closure of the other systems? In other words, you will not cancel the old system until the new system is in place?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are clear in the Strategy that unless there - there is another issue about leases - are really prohibitively expensive leases, we will not close the Safer Neighbourhood bases until the local hubs have been put in place.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** That is important reassurance.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** I just had a few small bits. With this, is this a continuation of the work under the previous administration? I recall the previous Deputy Mayor [Stephen Greenhalgh] talking about his aim for one 24/7 police station in every Borough. Is this really continuing that work?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We have had to continue looking at the estate because we are having to get the savings out, so yes, we have that. Some of it is a continuation of reviewing

the properties of the MPS to make sure that we are using the resources efficiently and effectively. That does mean that we have had to come out with this consultation around closing a significant number of front counters.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** This information, Craig, that you have pulled together in your document, was this information that was before the previous Deputy Mayor?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** There is new data. It is new data. I think when we spoke, gosh, way back in 2012, we were talking about an Estate Strategy. There is another iteration we worked on, an Estate Strategy. These are continuations of proposals around how you get from a situation where we had an organisation with lots and lots of buildings and estate all over London, to something where you can get the stuff that we all want to keep for the long term fit for purpose for the people who work in and use it, and fit for purpose for Londoners.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK. In terms of the consultation, I recall the last Deputy Mayor going out on a big roadshow to every borough in London, doing two meetings per evening. Is that something you are going to be doing, Sophie, as part of this consultation?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The consultation is going to run for 12 weeks. The MPS are putting in place plans to do local consultation around that and do local public consultation where the public and communities can come, see what the proposals are and discuss those proposals. MOPAC will be part of those consultations and we are also making ourselves available for anybody who wishes to come and discuss that as well.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Will you be going out to each of these borough consultation events?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I will go to some of them but I will not be going to all of them.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK. In terms of the hubs that I talked about, when I look through the list of places you are going to be trying to dispose of, there are a number of them that are called partnerships. You already have places in things like libraries, hospitals, shopping centres and stations. They are exactly the sort of place I would have thought that these hubs would be. Will you not be picking out some of these and make them your newly-branded hubs? It seems strange. You are closing a lot and then you would be setting up new ones.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** No, we are not closing everything wholesale and then setting up new ones. Absolutely, where there are already places, contact points, where it is appropriate to be using them and they are close enough to the wards, they will continue to be used. We are not closing every single one. Some of them are there for the DWO to start the day and end the day at. We are not doing a wholesale change.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Some of them in this list will not close, they will become hubs?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** No. The list will be those that are up for proposal for closure.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Right, so there are other ones that you are keeping that are not listed?



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

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK. Have you had this document looked through in terms of best practice and consultation? Because I have to say, there are leading questions. A question says, "Do you agree it is right for the MPS to prioritise police officers over poorly-used front counters?" I mean, there is no objectivity in these questions. Do you not think that is a bit unfortunate? You make your case and you then say, "Do you agree we have the right priorities?" Do you not see these as leading questions?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** They are appropriate questions and there is plenty of scope for people to put comments on in terms of responding. They are questions that have been put there. Throughout the consultation we will be going and talking to people about it. It is a consultation document and we want and are encouraging people to give their views on what they think about the proposals.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** I am sure it does not really meet best practice guidelines. My final question is a specific one. I notice in here Southwark Police Station is up for closure. Only a few years ago Southwark had huge investment in their cell provision at the back, linked to terrorist suspects. What is going to happen to that provision and that huge investment that went in in the last few years?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Part of this is around the fact that closure of a front counter does not necessarily mean we are closing the whole building. The majority of the buildings where there are front counters will be closed and sold. I would have to look into Southwark in particular. Whether it is up for disposal will be the issue. It is the front counters that we are talking about closing here.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Yes, I think it was, from memory. I am just looking.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No, that is the closure of the front counter. It has not got a cross against it to be disposed of.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** Right, so it is not going, it is just the front counter is closing, but you are still going to have it as a police base and you are going to have those cells?

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

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK. I just thought that was so recent.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** No, fair enough.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** I just thought it seemed a strange --

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Your question raises a really important point. Some of the conversations we have had with London media have been around that point. It is why this is important. This is around access and engagement, because there is a danger sometimes when you talk about closure, people think the police are leaving the area. It is not. This is some of the local service that is through the front counter.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:** OK, thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We have one more question. My only point, as someone who joined the Deputy Mayor on his roadshows, and Craig, you were there --

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

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** -- I do commend, Deputy Mayor, that you do get out and join the consultations and then you can talk to the community face-to-face.

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

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Deputy Mayor, the Chairman asked you about the challenges of policing what he called the larger boroughs with one 24/7 police station, but I do not think it is just a question of geography. There is also the issue of demographics and population growth. Now, I know this is a difficult point because every borough will make its own special case, but look at a borough like Barking and Dagenham, which geographically is quite a huge borough, a very large borough. Look also at the developments that are taking place along the river, Barking Riverside, 10,000 homes - that is just one development - other developments, Beam Park, going all the way out into Essex, and huge population growth projections. What element does that play in your thinking, looking into the future?

John Cruddas, the local Member of Parliament (MP) for Dagenham, has lodged a campaign to save Dagenham Police Station. I am sure you will be getting representations from lots of people, but surely there is a case somewhere for looking ahead over the next ten, 20 years, because once decisions are made, they are made, and people are left regretting, with hindsight, what should have been done. Population growth, demographic changes, huge developments -- Stratford is another example. Stratford is the busiest transport hub in the country and probably one of the busiest in Europe.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is part of a wider question, is it not, what do people use police front counters for and how often do they go? We have had that population growth, London has been growing and we know in the east of London that we have had that population growth, but we are seeing a decrease in the numbers of people that are going into the front counters to report crime. In terms of it being a principle that you have a 24-hour police station where there is population growth, that is not how people are reporting crime. The increase in reporting is coming over the telephone and online, the 24-hour police station. As we have discussed already, in a borough for me it is a question of what is appropriate in terms of travel distance, how accessible it is, and to make sure that those are the things that have been factored in, in terms of the principles in taking the decisions around which front counters should be put up, as part of this consultation, for closure.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Just if I may, to pick up on that point and reassure, as part of the development of the wider Estate Strategy the ten, 20-year horizon that comes from colleagues in this building is fed into that. Where is the population growth going to be in London? You highlighted a few developments. Other people will talk about Nine Elms and the bit just south of the river. We do plot all of those and then look at services, as I know colleagues in fire and elsewhere do. How can we service that? I suspect as you go forward, probably five, ten years out, you will be looking at new locations in parts of East London where you will want to grow services. That is a reality. I am not sure you would want to grow front counters again. It seems to be a service that people have, by choice, started to step away from. You might grow some different services.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** Right. I am conscious of time. We are now moving to the last question, the rescheduled last question, which is Notting Hill Carnival. It is timely, because this is the last question and answer session before the carnival.

**Andrew Dismore AM:** I will withdraw, Chairman.

**Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman):** I know you are withdrawing. We had a very helpful briefing yesterday morning - some Members were there - which was very useful, an informal briefing. Clearly, this is in the context of the independent study and the crowd management report, redacted, that had been issued to us. We wanted to satisfy ourselves as a Committee about where we were on the Carnival. Susan [Assembly Member], you are leading these questions.

**Susan Hall AM:** This is to the Deputy Mayor. Last year you commissioned a study of crowd dynamics at the Carnival, which was completed in March of this year. It was, however, supposed to be completed in January [2017]. Can you explain to us why it was delayed?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** From the start, it was the Notting Hill Strategic Partnership Group that commissioned the study. It did go via MOPAC and the decision was on the MOPAC website, but it was a joint decision of all those partners who were part of that Strategic Partnership Group to commission the study because of the concerns that came out of last year’s Notting Hill Carnival about crowd safety. The final report was not until March [2017], but as Members will have heard from yesterday’s briefing, that does not mean that they went away, squirrelled away, wrote a report and then produced it in March [2017]. It was an iterative process whereby they analysed the evidence, went back to the partners, went back to the police and the local authorities to say, “Look, this is the way that we are going. Is this going to work? Is it going to make a difference?” It was in the development of the final report there was those discussions to make sure that it was the right direction; that it was going to work and there was that discussion taking place from the experts as well and those delivering it.

**Susan Hall AM:** You do not believe that the delay has caused any problems with the organisation?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** We are in a much, much better place in the development of the plans to ensure safety of those visitors that are going to the Notting Hill Carnival than we were this time last year. Because of the iterative process of crowd dynamics and because of the strength of the partnership group in being committed to driving through changes, we are in a much, much better place. There is an event management company that is in place, working very closely with all partners, the Notting Hill Carnival Trust, the police and the local authorities. No, I do not think that the final report being delivered in March [2017] means that we are in any way behind in terms of preparations for this year’s Notting Hill Carnival.

**Susan Hall AM:** OK. Do you know the reasons for the delay?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I have explained that it is not that there was a delay, it is just in terms of developing the actual report that Crowd Dynamics went back and forward to ensure that there was the expertise and it was going to work. It was an iterative process.

**Susan Hall AM:** I accept that but it did say that it would be through in January [2017], which is why I asked the question. The report highlights the data gaps in the understanding of the carnival and the behaviours that occur within it. What impact has this had on planning for safety at the carnival and how do the partners intend for this to be addressed?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** As I said we are in a good place in terms of planning to make the carnival as safe as possible. In terms of the data and elements that may need to be put in place, this report is not just for the 2017 Carnival, it has recommendations going forward which will be put in place as well. There will also obviously be, after the Carnival this year, through the Strategic Partnership Group, a very good look at this year's Carnival and what else needs to happen to make sure that the safety of those visiting is always being improved.

**Susan Hall AM:** Of course, the police, yes. Based on this work, what is the big difference at this Carnival that will improve safety?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The recommendations within the crowd dynamics report are looking at a reduction in the number of sound systems, some changes to the carnival route and some timings of the carnival to increase safety. A major part of the recommendations that has happened is there being an event management company being put in place to ensure that those recommendations are driven through. The management on the day will be much stronger and more robust as well.

**Susan Hall AM:** You have confidence in the management company?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is important that in terms of the management of the Notting Hill Carnival, this is an issue for all those that are on the Strategic Partnership Group. The Chief Executive of MOPAC does chair that Strategic Partnership Group and my understanding is that the MPS are satisfied in terms of the preparation that we are in a much better place than we were last year.

**Susan Hall AM:** OK. Deputy Commissioner does this report adequately deal with the concerns and fears that the MPS has in respect of the Carnival?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** As the Deputy Mayor outlined, it has made a big step forward. Let us not underestimate it. It is still a very challenging policing operation. That is why we put 6,000 to 7,000 people out on both the Saturday and the Monday. We do that because it is a huge event. When you look at it, there are four key areas we always look at. There is the work around crowd dynamics and the issues around violence at the event. The counter terrorism threat obviously has changed quite dramatically. We have done a lot of work around vehicle mitigation and those sorts of things and the involvement of security officers and security advice.

Then probably the new one for this year that we are all trying to work through, and people generally are trying to work through, is: what is the impact of Grenfell? It is just off the footprint of the Carnival. How will that affect both the event and people coming to the event? We are all trying to work through what that means. That presents some opportunities to remember what took place. Absolutely we are looking at all of those and I am comfortable that really good people are sitting around a table talking about where this goes.

On the wider point, as the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime covered, this should be seen as one step on a journey and 2017 is one step on a journey. This is not an event that looks like New Year's Eve yet. It does not have that sort of control around it. When you look at the comparator events, we have to get to a position where we can see this as one step on the journey. As I absolutely say, it is a really good step forward. The strength of having an event management company is some of the really good stuff they are doing around marshalling floats and being very clear that if you are not there at this time, you are not joining the event. That is good practice stuff that they are putting in place.

**Susan Hall AM:** Yes. The report I see did not consider crime at the Carnival. Do you think that would have been helpful, to have considered crime at the Carnival?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** To some extent we are doing that. It is the particular expertise we had here. If you remember last year, one of the things we discussed was the challenges of crushing and just the sheer volume. Crowd dynamics is their particular area of specialism, looking at how crowds manage, how crowds move and that sort of thing.

The crime challenges, we are absolutely clear, are ours. That is part of it. We have a much longer crime plan that Martin Hewitt [Assistant Commissioner, MPS] and the team are doing in relation to the lead-up to the Carnival. No, that absolutely remains a challenge for us. If you remember last year's events with the impact of particularly gang activity and stabbings, that is what we are trying to mitigate.

**Susan Hall AM:** Yes, OK. Thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That was the challenge that we informally placed in front of Martin [Hewitt, Assistant Commissioner, MPS] yesterday, because he was reassuring us about the plan that the MPS have in anticipation. My challenge was, "Well, if we had this conversation a year ago, you may have said the same thing". Last year's Carnival we saw increasing amounts of violence, but we were reassured that there is a --

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** There is a comprehensive plan, but - I am sure Martin [Hewitt, Assistant Commissioner, MPS] was - you have to be realistic about what guarantees you can give in an event like this. I go back to the point that when we deploy 6,000 and 7,000 officers, it is because we know we are dealing with a risky public situation. Now, we want it to be absolutely peaceful, we want it to be a safe and peaceful event and we are making huge progress in that direction, but we have contingencies.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Talking about the Grenfell influence, we heard yesterday that there may be an aspiration to acknowledge and respect Grenfell, without going into detail, during the course of the Carnival.

We are moving now to the event management company.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I had a number of questions but Assembly Member Hall raised those issues so I will just stick to one specific question, which is under-reporting of crime, and particularly crimes of a sexual nature. Last year the Chairman and I walked around the Carnival with the then MP, Victoria Borwick, and we met two or three women, for instance, who are local residents and who made a number of allegations. Now, I know it is very difficult but there is no excuse at all for what we heard; allegations of groping and so on. What can we do to encourage more reporting? The focus remains solely on gang violence and I am not dismissing that, but as I say, just because there are large movements of people, we cannot simply allow that as an excuse.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** No, and we spoke quite a lot last year about the groping, the unwanted sexual touching. I urge people to report it. That is why we have officers there --

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Perhaps in your messaging.

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

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

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

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** To make sure. No, that is important and we will make sure that happens.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We heard again yesterday morning that the messaging going out to the officers would be not to pass on by, even though the offence is a minor one. It was raised by Andrew Dismore [AM] yesterday morning, because he is a resident there - that is why he has left us - that there is an enormous amount of antisocial behaviour and low-level crime that is very dispiriting for local residents. It is reassuring to hear that the message is going out that you need to attend to that almost as much as the more serious offences. That was reassuring. OK, great.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** I have one tiny question about the movement study. One of the recommendations was to carry out a street furniture audit. Obviously, the unnecessary street furniture is of enormous interest to walking campaigners and people who are interested in active travel, and I wondered if that could be published when it is done so that people can see what has been found in terms of unnecessary street furniture and what plans are afoot to remove anything or rationalise it. That would be of interest to other groups, I think.

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

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you. My questions are about the event management company. We have a copy of the MOPAC decision for commissioning the crowd management study but there is not a similar decision given for the procurement of the event management company. I know that the Strategic Partnership also procured that jointly, but money went in and there is not a decision published. We have a couple of questions about how the decision to appoint London Street Events was made. We know they are a new company and they feature as a previous advisor to the Carnival. We are just wondering if there was an open tender process there?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** That decision was taken by the Strategic Partnership Group. As you know, there was a decision around the funding that came from City Hall for that but it is not just funding from City Hall that has supported that procurement of an events management company. Westminster City Council and [The Royal Borough of] Kensington and Chelsea have put money in as well. That is joint. Through the Strategic Partnership Group, that is how that decision was taken. It is not a decision that was taken by MOPAC.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Where is that decision reported in terms of --

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** There was a mayoral decision around the money that City Hall was putting in. That will be reported through the usual mechanisms for reporting mayoral decisions. The Strategic Partnership Group are the people who took the decision around the event management company.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Is that procurement decision public anywhere for us to examine?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** I do not know if they put it on their own website. It is not the only time that we will have funded people in terms of public decisions around giving some funding. Those who are recipients of that funding have made some decisions around the procurement and what they need in order to deliver what they are being funded for.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** As you know, things around procurement are quite sensitive issues at the moment.

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

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** It was explained to us yesterday that because of speed of movement --

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** I think that is the main issue, is it not? Yes.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** -- there was a limited procurement process, whatever that is.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Yes. My next question, as a result of that, is: will there be a more open tender process, longer in advance, for the event management company for next year if that approach is still going to be carried on?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** What we have to do after the Notting Hill Carnival - and the Strategic Partnership Group have already factored this in and timetabled this in - is look at what lessons are learnt, not just in terms of what happens in Notting Hill but the event management company. Did it deliver on what it said it was going to deliver? It will be the Strategic Partnership Group that will need to take a decision around how they go forward for the next year's Carnival around a professional event management group.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** OK. No reason to doubt that they would not be effective but, obviously, we want to make sure this is all done above board.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** No, I understand that. Yes.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Can you outline the total cost of the event management company and roughly what they are going to deliver for that?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** They are already delivering in terms of the preparations and the discussions that we have had already about what is going to be different around the Notting Hill Carnival. I think the figure was £265,000. I will just double-check that.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** That was the figure, yes.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** Yes, it was. It is £265,000 for the event management company.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** OK, thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** All right. We talked a little bit about the responsibilities that they are taking on. What was reassuring again for us was that an issue last year was who was responsible for the carnival. There was not one group or individual. There is the good people of the Trust, and we have

Pepe [Francis MBE, Director, Notting Hill Carnival Trust] and others here. It is a good step to have a company that is hired by the Strategic Partnership as trustees. That was one question that I had, really. Are we moving in a better direction regarding responsibility for the carnival? We may not be in the exact place, but what would be your thoughts? You know the debate around that. What are your thoughts around that?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Literally, as you summarised it, this is a first step, it is a big step and it is moving in the right direction. I think the Strategic Partnership have worked really well over this year to have those sorts of debates. I think it was Tuesday - they probably mentioned this yesterday - they did some table-top exercises. We used some of our exercise capability to take people through, "What would you do if --" because those are really important, that they do focus the mind. People go, "Right, so X has happened. What does that mean and who is the lead authority?" No, it is moving in the right direction but, as everyone is being realistic about, there is still more work we would all need to do going forward. This is absolutely the right way to do it.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** We heard again yesterday that obviously the management company are taking over some key controls and some key actions, but they need very much the buy-in of the community behind the Trust.

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

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** There was a decision-making process where they would have the meeting and then Pepe [Francis MBE, Director, Notting Hill Carnival Trust] and others will go back to their groupings to get that.

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

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Has that worked so far OK with the community behind the Trust? This is a change of working practice, is it not?

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

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** It is. I mean --

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Do you feel it is working?

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

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The outcomes have been the outcomes that have been needed, and as Craig said and I should reiterate, this is work in progress.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Indeed.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** As I have said, we are in a much better place than we were last year, but it is still very challenging and it will be challenging as well. In terms of how that has worked, I think the outcomes work is challenging. That is the only way to put it.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** OK. We are bound to ask this last question.



**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Just this final question. The Minister for London has written to the Mayor to suggest that the Greater London Authority takes over responsibility for the Carnival, in conjunction with the Trust. Is the Mayor minded to accept this proposal?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** He also wrote to say that the Carnival should be moved and we are very clear that it should not be moved.

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

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** In terms of responsibility for the Carnival, at the moment lots of different organisations are responsible. We, certainly from MOPAC, take responsibility for the safety of Londoners, as do the MPS. We will continue to chair the Strategic Partnership Group and after the Carnival we will have to take stock as to what is the best way forward to make sure that we can ensure that the Carnival becomes safer and safer every year.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Sorry, Chair, very quickly, I am just going to come back to the point I raised earlier about the under-reporting of some offences. It is not just about positive messaging and getting the message across to report all such allegations. I suspect many people do not bother reporting such offences because they feel nothing can be done about it. Can you take this aspect of the Carnival into your operational planning as well?

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

**Unmesh Desai AM:** I am sure you do, but again, I want to raise this. I know it is a difficult situation, tens of thousands of people and so on, but it is about how you can operationally deal with it, amongst many other priorities as well. Yes, reporting is important, but people, as I say, may not be reporting such serious offences because, of the huge crowds and so on, nothing is going to be done about it. Difficult. Deputy Commissioner, I really have to put this record.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes. No, no, absolutely on record, and also to reassure people you can actually, in an environment like that, do something about it. With closed-circuit television (CCTV) areas coming in, they are detectable crimes, so please, please tell us about them.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** The CCTV covers the entire area.

**Susan Hall AM:** Deputy Mayor, given that it is such a huge event in London, the Mayor is responsible for London and it is, to quote you, Deputy Commissioner, "a risky public situation", do you not think that the Mayor should stand up to the role and say, "I will take responsibility for this"?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The Strategic Partnership Group has worked very well and is delivering the outcomes that are needed.

**Susan Hall AM:** No, I know. I heard --

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** There is the Notting Hill Trust. As I said, that is working and it is --

**Susan Hall AM:** You do not think you should?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** What I think is that the Strategic Partnership Group is working and the Notting Hill Trust is working with --

**Susan Hall AM:** No, I get that.

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** -- the Strategic Partnership Group. MOPAC will continue to play its part in the Strategic Partnership Group and chair it.

**Susan Hall AM:** The Mayor is supposed to be the leader of London. Should he not stand up and say, "Yes, I will take responsibility for it"?

**Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime):** The Carnival is a fantastic thing that happens in London. There is the Trust that is co-ordinating this and there is the Strategic Partnership. That is working and we will continue to make sure that that does work.

**Susan Hall AM:** Can I ask the Deputy Commissioner to remind me, please - I have forgotten - just how much does this cost the police to deal with?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Last year - I would be guessing the exact figure for you, so I will get you the figure - it was in the region of £6 million to £7 million. It is one of the biggest calls on our overtime budget through the year, again, just on a practical point, because it is a bank holiday.

**Susan Hall AM:** Thank you.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Yes, the cost is around £7 million.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** About £7.2 million, from memory, last year.

**Susan Hall AM:** £7.2 million?

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Something like that, but I will get you the exact figure.

**Susan Hall AM:** That would be helpful, thank you.

**Unmesh Desai AM:** Chairman, when we did our study and published our report, one of our recommendations was that the Trust actually become much more commercially astute, professional, and look at ways of maximising income. Some of the evidence that we heard, I certainly found it -- it is the second biggest carnival in the world and I think a lot of it was, with due respect to people who are volunteers, amateurish, and so the potential for maximising income is there. I am stating the obvious, but --

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** I am pleased yesterday it was commented that many of our recommendations were the basis of the review. That is a very fair point because one of the strong recommendations was for the Carnival, which is a brand of itself, to be better at fundraising. I do not sense that has happened in time for this year but that may well be for going forward. I would say very much obviously we look forward to a peaceful and successful, happy carnival. Then, once that is achieved, others will then sit down and look at what went right, what perhaps did go wrong, how again we can improve and

take up other recommendations, not least the one that was referred to earlier. I think we have finished on those questions.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** Can I put in an opinion?

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** Please do.

**Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair):** One of the conclusions of our report was very much that it was a community event and should remain such a thing. In terms of professionalising and all of that, there is something very unique about it. We will see that again this year, I think.

**Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman):** The flipside, if I just may add to that, is one of the issues about legal responsibility. Whilst we embrace the fact it is a community event, we still have a failure to identify someone who is legally responsible for things going right, and indeed for things going wrong. That is something we need to look at after all this. OK, thank you very much, guests, for your questions and attending.

**Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service):** Thank you, Chairman.