

Police and Crime Committee – 6 September 2017

Transcript of Item 5 - Antisocial Behaviour in London

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I welcome the guests this morning. In July [2017] we met a set of guests, housing associations and others, but today we want to talk to you as key professional practitioners. Welcome to [our guests from] the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), Commander Julian Bennett and Inspector Nick Fallowfield. Natasha [Plummer], welcome, from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), and welcome also to Shirley [Holmes] for the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) in Brent, Andy Opie from Croydon Council and Lee [Hutchings] from Parkguard Ltd. Thank you very much for your time this morning.

We have some questions for you and I will start with the first lead question, if I may, which is scene-setting. First of all, a question to all of you. What do you see as the main antisocial behaviour (ASB) concerns within London?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): In Brent the main concern we have is that there is a predominance of open drug markets on the street with young gang members mainly, but not exclusively gang members, openly dealing in large groups, dropping litter, intimidating passers-by and generally bringing an unsafe feeling to our residents. They are a noise nuisance. Vulnerable people are a big concern in terms of ASB. They come into conflict with local businesses, off-licences, betting shops, pubs, McDonalds and so on. We get a lot of calls around that. Rough sleeping is also a concern. We have a street coordinator who looks after that. Fly-tipping as well. We would say they are the main ones within the London Borough of Brent.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. The MPS definition splits ASB into three categories, personal, nuisance and environmental, and they have a sub-list of about a dozen. Anything that sits outside that probably is around criminality, but we will get to that later.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): I will probably just add in terms of those at this point that when we break down the calls in to the MPS, the personal is a very small number. That is probably the riskiest ASB, directed at individuals. We then have the environmental, which again is a small number, and roughly 90% is the nuisance. Again, it varies a lot across all the boroughs but a lot of it is around youths. Some of it is just around noise. Drugs and young people tend to come up frequently across many boroughs. Of course, it is broken down very locally among the individual Safer Neighbourhood Teams who would review all of this on each of their wards, but again, when you look at the priorities they set with their ward panels, ASB, particularly by young people and involving noise, comes up a lot.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Yes. They are the figures. Again, we will get on to definitions and "What is ASB?" but certainly the nuisance, which is general, affecting not the environment but the locality, is the majority of what we see. We will also get on to the debate about how it is reported because you are reflecting on MPS calls as opposed to how other partners respond. Andy, any thoughts around Croydon?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): Yes. I would agree with both my colleagues in terms of the general theme. Certainly, the highest volume we see is lower-level nuisance around noise and things like that, youths hanging around. In terms of some of the more problematic things we see, street drinking is an issue but it is a lot more complex than just street drinking. We are finding that there are all sorts of different vulnerabilities that are associated with groups of people street drinking. We are going to come on to things like information sharing and intelligence later on but we are finding that through improving intelligence gathering, the sharing of information and what have you, there are links into all sorts of other areas: more serious crime, things like gangs and drug dealing but also things like child sexual exploitation. There are people who are on our offender management cohort, etc. Street drinking is a big, complex area for us. The other area that I would highlight as a specific issue is around mopeds. That is related to ASB, riding mopeds in parks and through estates and what have you, but there is a connection there to robbery and more serious crime as well.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is, as we say, where ASB then spins into other criminality. Natasha, when you were doing the work around the Police and Crime Plan and going out to the boroughs what sort of responses were you getting in that context?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): It echoed much of what has been said here today from both ends, in terms of what local partners were telling us, fly-tipping and noise nuisance, but also some of those higher-end concerning issues like moped-enabled crime and the nuisance that causes to people. From the public, about 10% of people who come back through our surveys tell us they have been a victim of ASB. It is a concern to people in the local area. They were more likely picking up things like drug dealing and the kind of nuisance and concern that causes in communities.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Did you see a variable across London, from inner to outer London?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): There does tend to be a variation, with more environmental and noise nuisance happening in some of the outer London boroughs and then more concerns about things like drug dealing and higher-end issues in inner London. That is a matter of the context in which those people are living in those boroughs and the other things that happen there.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): OK. That is helpful. I touched on a point around calls to the MPS because much of the information and statistics that we have are based on calls to the MPS. From the evidence we gathered earlier, that can tend to skew the actual picture. Housing associations particularly talked about that. Really what I want to talk about is the ASB data that others get. We have the MPS information and others, particularly the boroughs and perhaps Parkguard. Could we just have a debate particularly about that, Andy, the MPS information but also the information that you garner through other partners and how you work around that?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): Information comes into the local authority in lots of different ways. We are quite complex organisations and often have many different data sets. The obvious ones that we look at are things like the internal ASB team and the number of cases, reports and what have you that come in. We get lots of useful information from housing, working very closely with people like tenancy officers and so on. We have responsibility for noise so we can look at lots of information around noise, as well as looking at information in things like youth offending services, outreach teams and things like that. There

are multiple different ways in which that information comes in. It is not necessarily straightforward to get to the bottom of what it is telling us. It does require effort and analysis to get meaningful action out of it.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): How does that sit with you, Shirley, in Brent? How does data-gathering work in your local authority?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): We are very fortunate in Brent as we have a senior crime analyst within our team. He looks at all data from the MPS and also coming in to the local authority as an organisation from the areas that Andy [Opie] mentioned but also from adult social care and our mental health colleagues. We gather a lot of information that way. What I would say is we find that there is a gap in the MPS data, not a gap so much as an inaccuracy around computer aided despatch (CAD) calls in which they do not identify specifically where a situation has taken place. For example, we have Harrow Road that runs all the way from Harrow right into town. It is hard for us. We create hot spots on the calls that we get from the MPS and that helps us to target our certain areas and identify what is going on.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Do you have a relationship with the housing associations, gathering information as well?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): Yes. Our own arm's-length association provides most of the information. The others are quite good but not anywhere near on the same level.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): OK. Lee, did you want to add to anything that we have talked about so far?

Lee Hutchings (Managing Director, Parkguard Ltd): Yes. We work across quite a few different boroughs and what we find is that the degree of data that is collated is very inconsistent. It is not just from borough to borough, it is also within boroughs as well. The way that our system works there is a lot of focus on doing the things that are filling the gaps within what everyone else collates in order to enable other agencies to operate and take work further with enforcement action. Our focus has always been very much on evidencing the impact. Because we are not emergency-call-driven, it means we have time to sit and record a much broader range of data. There is a lot more work to be done around the level to which people record information, trying to get a more standardised model across the boroughs. That ultimately is what the police then action. All the community safety units then take that civil enforcement action against persistent repeat offenders.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): OK. Lastly, on data, I mentioned earlier that there is a reliance, quite properly, on MPS data that we are supplied. We can comment on that. That MPS data suggests that recorded ASB was in decline over a period of years but has seen a spike coming up over the last 12 or so months. That is dictated by your data, which is the predominant data. Is that trend reflected in either MOPAC or borough data as well? Is that reflected there as well? Would you agree?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): Yes, it is, yes. I spoke to our crime analyst and he said we mirror that in Brent.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Just for context, we get about 150,000 calls a year, we record 75,000 ASB incidents on our system called Airspace, and that number is about half what it was, say in 2010 and 2011. There has been a very strong downward trend. As you say, in the last 12 months it has gone up but

in fact it is coming down since May. I wish we knew why but we do not. There are seasonal peaks in the summer months.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We are finding that from Andy, but until you find out why you cannot really address it. Until you get the full picture you cannot address it. The critique that has come out is that there is an over-reliance on your figures, which are the majority for the teams. There are clearly people reporting ASB in other mediums that may not get referred. Andy, you were about to comment on that, I think.

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): Certainly, the data in Croydon reflects what you have highlighted, Steve, in terms of a dip and then a small spike. I wanted to make a slightly different point, which is about just being cautious about what it is telling us. I am going to give a particular example. I was at a community meeting a few weeks ago in Croydon where there was lots and lots of anxiety about ASB going on around a park but when you looked at the analysis there were virtually no calls about that at all, either on police or council systems. The feeling from the community was, "What is the point in reporting it? You are not going to do anything about it". A lot of the meeting was trying to build up that confidence and trying to get people to report it, because unless people do report it we do not know about it and we are not necessarily going to act on it. There is a confidence issue here, I think, in terms of making sure that people are reporting issues. That then gives you a more accurate picture in terms of what is going on.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I would say though that that sort of overt behaviour I would expect the Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to be aware of, whether or not it was reported, and then trying to solve that as a problem.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thanks for that. We are now moving on to - we have already touched upon it - the definition of ASB and talking about support for victims. We have had some evidence, particularly from David Millar, Chair of the Hammersmith and Fulham Safer Neighbourhood Board. His comment - David always has good comments - is that one person's ASB is another person's minor annoyance. It is a perception issue.

Peter Whittle AM: Good morning. Do you agree that we need another definition or a definition of antisocial behaviour in London? I am looking at the background and, obviously, it seems that there are two Acts in play, the 2013 Act and the 2014 Act. It seems to be pretty amorphous. What is your view? Do you think that we should tighten the definition, or widen the definition?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): From my point of view the definition is broad and I can understand why that perhaps feels amorphous but I think that is helpful in some respects. As we discussed today, there is such a broad range of things that could be ASB. One person's ASB is not another's, for instance. If you tried to be really specific you might end up excluding things that you would want to be included. You could not have an exhaustive list. That would be difficult.

What the definition does do is speak to the point about the harm, the harassment, alarm and distress, which is an important factor in that too. From my point of view, a broad definition is helpful. Within that, obviously being able to break that down - for instance in the way the MPS has by understanding that some of it is personal, some of it is environmental and some of it is about that wider community impact - does help to give you some categorisation, which you do need at some level.

Peter Whittle AM: Does it not make your job even more difficult? I would be interested to know because just looking at it as a layman, on the one hand you talked about open drug dealing, for example. To most people that would just be a crime and not ASB. What is your view on that?

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): We have a lack of clarity and understanding by the public. You have those who suffer in silence because they do not want to add to the burden of the police when in fact they are experiencing either non-crime ASB or actually crime. Then you have, on the other hand, those who are reporting every time they hear a twig break. It is getting a common understanding about how and when people should report so that we understand. It is about the impact on the quality of their lives. It is about the nuisance, the annoyance and the harassment that they are suffering locally. It is that sort of threshold. It is not crime, it is everything that is below crime that is causing them to be alarmed and distressed and impacting on them. I think that is not clear to the public. The legal definitions, as you say, are wide. It is not helpful sometimes, as Natasha said and I agree, to start trying to define that further for professionals because that can lead to a bit of a silo and remit culture. For the public, an educational process would be a useful exercise.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Although in some ways it does not matter to me that the public may not be able to classify something as either a crime or ASB. The public call the police, for example, because there is an incident of concern. If they phone up and say, "Look, I am really concerned because people are smoking cannabis in the local playground and I cannot send my children there", you have both a crime and an antisocial issue. They tell us and we would then deal with that problem. In some ways the nuance of their understanding does not matter as long as it has reached a threshold for that individual to then pick up the phone and call one of the agencies, probably the police.

Peter Whittle AM: What is your view on the rough sleeping aspect? Is that ASB? It comes under the definition of ASB at the moment. Do you think it should remain under that? This is a social problem, is it not? Is it an antisocial problem?

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): It is not the rough sleeping itself, it is whether there is ASB accompanying it. You can have people who are rough sleeping and are not causing direct issues to anyone else. Then there are others who are involved, and there may be associated issues, whether it is through drink or drugs or just behavioural issues. It is not as simple as saying whether homelessness is in or out. There is ASB associated with some people who are homeless and rough sleeping, not with all, and therefore it is having some legislation or some tools to tackle that. I know officers and partners work together closely and they will go down the preventative route and diversionary route but there are some who wilfully want to stay on the streets and they are impacting on quality of life and frightening people. Having some legislation and effective tools is useful in that regard.

Peter Whittle AM: Could you give me a definition as well? One of the definitions we have is personal antisocial behaviour, towards the individual. Could you give me an example of that? What would an example of that be?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I suppose children deliberately targeting a vulnerable person in their home by persistently banging on their door or kicking a ball directly at their window. It is specific to an individual. Those are obviously of real concern, the greatest concern to us.

Peter Whittle AM: Do I take it therefore that you are happy with the definition as it stands at the moment?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Yes.

Peter Whittle AM: Yes, OK. When it comes to the response to ASB, do you think that there is a chance that people fall between the gaps at the moment because it is so broad?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): One of the issues is information sharing. It is a challenge for us and for all the agencies. When we get together as partners and try to solve a particular problem and do share the information, the response is obviously significantly better than if we work in isolation.

Peter Whittle AM: How do you support the victims? Can I ask you how you support the victims at the moment, the victims of ASB in all its forms?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): All the victims of the 75,000 reports are assessed for their vulnerability. There is a victim-centred approach to the investigation of the ASB from the outset. That is the starting point and then it depends on the number of calls, if there is a repeat caller. About 6,500 of the number that we record are from repeat callers and of course the reason why somebody may call several times could be varied, often associated with mental health but not always. Those types of people have a real concern. There is a big demand pressure on the police and other agencies if they persistently call so we are doing quite a lot of work particularly around repeat callers.

Peter Whittle AM: I see. Sorry, examples clarify things. For example, if I am in my flat and there is just someone who keeps having night-long parties or something in the block, really noisy, I call you. What do you do then with me?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Probably the local authority would take the lead on that.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): If it is directed against the individual, what we do is that every report has a standard risk assessment, which is across all of London. You go through a set number of questions, it asks all the things that you should be asked, and it comes out with either a low, medium or a high risk. If it is a high-risk case that goes to the duty inspector for immediate action. If it is considered that maybe a partnership response within a day or two is more appropriate, then people work in partnership and do it that way. Sometimes it may just be, "Let us send the Safer Neighbourhood Team around the next day". In our Grip and Pace rooms we talk about every borough in London having partnership vulnerability desks. It is a neighbourhood officer. They are looking at the ASB cases. They are helping in the first instance to assess the vulnerability.

If a response team officer has not been sent direct by MPS Command and Control then our vulnerability desk are looking at those cases, often calling those people, speaking to them and assessing what the quick time risks are. Should something be done now? Can it wait for a Safer Neighbourhood Team later on? Further down the track, all the Safer Neighbourhood Teams are expected to work in partnership with whichever appropriate authority they should be with, whether it is adult social care, mental health services or housing agencies. At that point we expect the partnership approach to take over.

Peter Whittle AM: You know quite recently the Deputy Commissioner, Craig Mackey [QPM], said that the police are going to start prioritising people that they answer calls to. This was to do with crime. Does that affect you too? Would you start prioritising different groups, call out --

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): As Nick said, there is a severity assessment of the risk. The higher the risk --

Peter Whittle AM: No, but this was specifically different groups: older people, people who did not speak English, etc. It caused a lot of fuss in the press. Does that include the way that you would do it in your response?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): There is no reason why it should not.

Peter Whittle AM: No reason why it should not?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): At the moment age, for example, would be one of the factors.

Peter Whittle AM: OK. What kind of training do your people get in this particular context? These are very complex issues, are they not? They are incredibly wide.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Yes.

Peter Whittle AM: What kind of training do they get?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I think this is very positive, actually, because the MPS at the moment is in the process of putting two dedicated constables in each of the 629 wards in London, plus PCSOs. We have dedicated officers and those dedicated officers are in the process of being trained on a number of modules, including community engagement, crime prevention and specifically on ASB. In addition to that, they will already have done computer-based training on the legislative side of ASB. We are in the middle of a widespread ASB training course and problem-solving approach to their role.

Peter Whittle AM: I see. I just wanted to reconfirm. You were saying that when it comes to support of victims who call you with ASB, your approach would be roughly the same as what the Deputy Commissioner recently said about crime generally?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Yes.

Peter Whittle AM: There would be certain groups that you would prioritise?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Yes.

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Could I add something there, Assembly Member Whittle? Just to come back to your original question about what kind of support services are available, the other thing I should just add is that where it meets the criminal threshold there are obviously commissioned services that we commission as the Police and Crime Commissioner for victims of crime. They would be asked by the police officer if they wanted a referral into those support services and if they did they would be referred to Victim Support, who I know came to your last session, for additional emotional and practical support for them in dealing with the crime associated with this, if there was one.

Peter Whittle AM: Thank you.

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): Could I just make a further point? This is not about victims necessarily but about witnesses because that is probably an area that we could look at and do more for. We very much rely on witnesses to provide information to us in order for us to take action against perpetrators. We try to support them as much as we can but often people are very reluctant to come forward, stick their neck out and give us the information. Some of that aftercare support is required as well, after a case has gone through the system, particularly if there is no further action or the case has fallen down for some reason. We do need to be more mindful about the support we can give to witnesses moving forward.

Peter Whittle AM: I am just a little bit alarmed about this prioritising. I am very alarmed about it.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): I would just add that we are in the business of trying to manage harm, risk and threat to the community. The balance is about identifying that risk to people whilst acknowledging that there are pressures and stretches on the resources of the MPS and all our partners at the moment. On one hand we have done some analysis and seen that there have perhaps been a lot of unnecessary calls that have come into MPS Command and Control. We have also seen response teams get deployed constantly to a lot of calls that they should not have been deployed to, at times when we cannot really afford to do that. Then the other side is making sure that when there are is a good, genuine, risky call, when someone is vulnerable and they do need help today, that we identify it. It is getting the balance right. That is a challenge going forward.

Peter Whittle AM: OK, thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Yesterday, on that point, Susan [Hall AM] and I were at the London Ambulance Service (LAS). We were sitting with their call holders and they deploy a filtering system, judging the risk and how they handle that immediate risk, whether it is an immediate loss of life.

Going back to that, however, it is of some concern because we heard Craig's [Mackey QPM, Deputy Commissioner, MPS] comments last week. The comfort I would get from this is the extra ward officer. In every single ward you have two DWOs and a PCSO and you would expect them to understand the vulnerabilities in their ward, to understand the families that are particularly at risk and do some work around that with the local authorities. I share Peter's concerns about that.

Peter Whittle AM: There is a difference here, is there not? Trying to assess the risk of someone who says, "My rabbit is up the tree and it will not come down. Please come and help me", we can all assess that risk. The very troubling thing that worried people, quite understandably, and it does have a bearing here, is this idea that certain groups would be prioritised in the response of the police in all areas to a call out. Whoever thought of telling him to say that, it is unbelievable, frankly.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I do not quite understand what the issue is. Surely if somebody phones up and they are elderly, they are suffering from a mental illness or they are a child the response is going to be different because of their extra vulnerability. I do not see what the problem is around it, as a part of the overall assessment. I do not understand your concern.

Peter Whittle AM: Just simply that the law should be enforced whatever. My call should be exactly the same as --

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): It is, but it is according to need. It is not one size fits all. The more vulnerable the person, you would expect a speedier and a fuller response, would you not?

Peter Whittle AM: What would you say is more vulnerable?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I have given you several examples. Somebody with a mental illness, somebody who is very elderly or a child on their own, for example.

Peter Whittle AM: Someone who does not speak English, for example? Is that vulnerable?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I think we understand the point that you have made. I understand that. I understand it is --

Peter Whittle AM: This is very important.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): The point has been made well, Peter, and it has been registered. I think, Julian, you have tried to answer. You have answered it.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I hope so. It is according to the needs of the individual. The greater the need -- and it could include that they are more vulnerable because of a particular characteristic. That is the point.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): OK. I do not think people would necessarily completely argue with that.

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): In my experience, quite often the victims are selected as victims because they are vulnerable. That is why they are victims. That is how they are targeted. In Brent, the way that we help victims is that if somebody has a vulnerability - and again it would be mental health, physical disability, learning disability, anything like that draws the attention of perpetrators and has made them vulnerable - we would assess that. They would come to the community MARAC and the support that they would get is that they would have a full and holistic assessment by a multi-agency group to check that they are engaging with mental health, they have a social worker, their benefits are in order and their property is suitable. We would do all of those sorts of checks. Quite often they have disengaged from all of that and that is what has made them vulnerable. When they become a victim and they come into the process, we assess all of that on behalf of the victim and get it all in place as quickly as possible. That is bringing the needs of the victim back into the middle of the picture.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you. On the subject of victims, Unmesh, you had a question about the commissioning.

Unmesh Desai AM: A couple of questions, Chair, thank you. The Mayor has just appointed a Victims Commissioner, whom I met recently. Can I just ask you, starting off with you, Ms Plummer, how you see her working in this particular area of victim support?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): The role of the Victims Commissioner is to bring the voice of the victim back into the heart of everything that we do. There is a particular emphasis in that in terms of how we work with the criminal justice system and so she does have a strong emphasis in that space and will be conducting a review of things like compliance with the Victims Code

of Practice and also a needs assessment, which will look at the types of services that we need to be providing for victims in London.

Now, there is quite a strong emphasis on that in relation to victims of crime because that is what we are funded to deliver in terms of the Ministry of Justice and we have a strong focus there, but I have no doubt that through the work that we do around the needs assessment we will bring forward concerns about victims who fall outside of that threshold, particularly in terms of the ASB space, which we have already talked about today. We will be looking at what that tells us in terms of that needs assessment and thinking about what more we need to do in that space with partners.

She will absolutely be a champion for victims and she is looking at how she brings that voice in and also thinking about how we are funded to deliver those services for victims. We have certainly been lobbying the Ministry of Justice and the Government to look at the definitions around the funding criteria, which actually exclude us from supporting victims of ASB who are not victims of crime. She will be picking up that point also.

Unmesh Desai AM: You talk about funding and, as I understand it, there is going to be a three-year £47 billion investment programme.

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Yes.

Unmesh Desai AM: Can you give this Committee an idea of how this money is going to be spent? I am more concerned about how it actually gets to people on the ground and I have given my thoughts to the Commissioner about what I see for her role especially with working with local councils at the grassroots level.

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): There are a number of things. That particular funding relates to services that we will be commissioning from here in City Hall: our Multi-Crime Service that supports all victims of crime and also a number of specialist services, things like Rape Crisis, havens for victims of sexual violence, services for victims of hate crime and services for children and young people who are victimised. In addition to that, of course, we do also have our London Crime Prevention Fund, which we give out to local authorities who can spend that on their local priorities as they see fit. Some of them are indeed spending that on work that relates to ASB, which is one of their priority areas and about £4.4 million over the next two years will be spent particularly through the London Crime Prevention Fund on ASB.

Unmesh Desai AM: I would like all of you to come in here in terms of what specifically can be done to support victims and who should provide it. I am looking here for good concrete examples. We have talked about causes and definitions and so on but I now want to focus much more on the practicalities. What more do you think can be done that is not being done right now to support victims and who should provide it?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): There has been a strong emphasis in the discussions today about the multi-agency nature of this work. Actually, you need lots of people to be working in this space and providing support in different ways and, indeed, they do. Clearly, we are providing funding and support in terms of victims of crime specifically and also for those wider victimisation issues through the London Crime Prevention Fund, but you will need other agencies. The police are providing support and other parts of local authority services will be providing support in all sorts of ways. ASB is a complex issue and often the people who are victimised - and indeed the people who are perpetrating - have

complex needs and things that need to be dealt with and addressed. You absolutely need a multi-agency response that tries to address all of those issues.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I was going to say that the MARACs were mentioned and representation is at the right level. I find them particularly effective once it gets to the right level and the partners work together. That is when it can really work.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): Just to point out, the community MARACs are probably in two-thirds of the boroughs of London. All the others have partnership ASB meetings and the challenge there is making sure that, yes, it is at the right level so that all agencies are doing their bit. The important bit is that often the discussions centre around who is actually the best placed to impact and support the victim and it can be different agencies depending to each case. You have your generic victim support scheme and, yes, different boroughs have had victim champions providing support. It is done on a case-by-case basis and it is just making sure that all the boroughs are regularly meeting. Normally it is at least every month; sometimes they are meeting more frequently if the case requires it. It is just about reviewing that case and seeing who is best placed to support the victim.

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): I would just like to echo that exactly. The importance of these community multi-agency meetings is key and doing that risk assessment at an early stage for both victims and perpetrators. Do not forget the point that Natasha made that a lot of the perpetrators that are doing this are vulnerable and have very complex needs as well. Sharing that information - and, really, you are trying to find out who is the best placed to deal with this, whether it is a bit of carrot or stick - is incredibly important to try to manage these issues. I have nothing specific to add, really; just to echo what colleagues have said.

Lee Hutchings (Managing Director, Parkguard Ltd): I would just like to add that I do think that once victims and vulnerable people are identified, the support package - it has been in our experience where we have worked - is actually quite good and the targeted work around individuals to support them is actually very good.

The weaker area is the early identification and having people on the ground who recognise signs and identify people who have not actually come to notice yet, especially in areas where you see a lot of regeneration projects and things like that. There is often a lot of people who have not come to notice and the only way that you identify those people is through having a consistent person out and about to meet the community, understand what the needs are and identify those people and what their vulnerabilities are.

Unmesh Desai AM: Both of you, Ms Plummer and Mr Opie, if I heard you correctly, talked about perpetrators having complex needs. Am I right?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): Yes.

Unmesh Desai AM: What are these complex needs? In the part of London that I represent, there are noisy night-time parties and people, not just on council estates, live a miserable life with music being played at 2.00am or 3.00am, and street drinking. Give me an example. What are these complex needs that perpetrators have? I do not think that the people who suffer from ASB see it the way that you see it.

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): I could give you a specific example that we have experienced in my borough, which is around street drinking and ASB in a local park. Street drinkers may be alcoholics and they may be drug users and so they have that kind of vulnerability, as well as things like housing issues and mental health issues. Within the wider group of people who are associating with this group, we have identified people who are missing from local authority care and people who are at risk of child sexual exploitation and other things as well.

Therefore, the picture of information-sharing and data-gathering is not straightforward. It is not just about going to one or two different agencies. You really need to have a good network of contacts and access to information to really understand what is going on because it is not necessarily up to the police or one of my ASB team to go and deal with an individual who is at risk of child sexual exploitation. That may well be their social worker or it may be someone else in terms of going in with a slightly different approach. You really need to analyse each particular issue and find the best approach to them.

Unmesh Desai AM: I do not disagree but let me come back to street drinking. I am glad you mentioned it earlier, Mr Opie, because that is one thing that Ms Holmes did mention, street drinking, which is a particular issue in parts of east London. There is some sort of connection to betting shops, for instance, in local high streets. People bet and come outside. Over the years, we have tried to get the betting shops to take some social responsibility but that is another story.

In parts of our diverse communities, street drinking is actually seen as a cultural thing. If you just go down East Ham High Street - and I was talking to Newham's Director of Enforcement yesterday about this - it is actually seen as basically part of day-to-day life. You see the local bin as a bar, especially with the weather that we have had recently for a month now. That is the day-to-day stuff that I am more concerned about. I really accept that there are complex issues, especially with mental health and so on, but we need to be much more robust in our thinking about how to tackle some of the behaviour that I have talked about.

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): I would agree. We have similar issues in my borough to the one that you are giving the example about. I suppose the point that I am trying to make is that you need to look at each issue separately. There is not a magic bullet for any of these issues. It requires information sharing --

Unmesh Desai AM: We are talking about victims here.

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): -- from lots of different people. Sometimes, in that particular case, it is about enforcement and it is about taking a harder line, but in lots of other cases it is a lot more complex in terms of what that solution might be.

Unmesh Desai AM: I am looking at it through the prism of the victim, which is what this session is all about.

Another thing, Chair, that has not come up - and certainly if it has I have failed to pick up on this - is we still have not talked practically about how we put the victim at the heart of this whole process. Right now - and I said this to the Commissioner - I do not belittle the work that a lot of good people are doing in the third sector, Victim Support and so on, but the experience of a lot of people who suffer from crime is getting a letter from Victim Support, sometimes a very badly photocopied letter, which I got when I was burgled some years ago, "You have been a victim of crime". I know it. You do not need to tell me that. "We are here to do A, B, C, D and E", and that is the end of the process.

What I am looking at really so far, which has not come up in your answers, is how we actually put in practice the victim at the heart. I have given my own thoughts to the Commissioner, by the way. I am just looking at ways of working with councils to put that into practice.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is a really good point made and it is good that you met with the Commissioner. The Committee wants to also speak to and address the Commissioner as well. That is the lead that is given by the Mayor to support victims and we need to take an interest in that, also, but that exchange shows the complexities around it. Ultimately, we need to be thinking about the victims in the boroughs and the effect of ASB, but these cases can affect it.

A very good case that was brought up in the earlier session was the noise nuisance by someone with mental difficulties making a noise, playing very loud music, having a very detrimental effect on the neighbours. That needed to be addressed, clearly, for the benefit of the neighbours, but that person had some serious issues and needed some support. Just that one case study showed that the complexities.

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): We have a lot of problem with nuisance properties. They can be brothels or crack houses or a mixture of both, but quite commonly they are a vulnerable person who has been targeted by other people and they have moved into their property and taken over. The whole of the block or the street or the community becomes a victim of that situation because there is a high footfall going in and out, there is bad behaviour, there is drinking, there is drug use and whatever. There is a victim in the property who has been targeted and there is also a victim which is the community around it. Sometimes it is a very slow process to change that situation. Now we are being more robust in our closure powers to close these properties, but when you go to court, if there is a vulnerable person in that property - and there will always be one - the judge does not like to close that property. That is the issue that we have. Also, how do we help that particular victim because it will just set up in the next property and the next property?

A very effective way would be, when we do a property closure for three months, instead of having that vulnerable person on the street for three months or going into a bed-and-breakfast (B&B) and then going back to their property or moving on and perpetuating the cycle, we should have safe spaces for victims where they get a three-month intervention so that we can quickly access the victim, we can let them visualise what is going to happen, "We are going to take you to a place of safety. This is what will happen. Your property will be closed"; and during that time, we use our already commissioned services. We are not paying for anything extra and so we use the drug services in that area; we use the sexual health services if they need sexual health engagement, nutrition, emotional wellbeing, mental health; and all of those professionals can visit that particular property in any borough where these people are being kept safe for a period of three to six months while we work on the issue around their property. That sends a very strong message to the public. If they see this sort of behaviour in a property, bang, the person is gone and the property site exit is closed for three months. We do not tolerate this sort of ASB. That is the way that I would like to see it going.

What is slowing that down from happening is the victim in the middle of the situation. Sometimes they are coerced, sometimes they are complicit, but they are still a victim because of their vulnerabilities and they are often in need of a lot of medical attention and lot of health, a lot of substance misuse, mental health, everything. If we can stabilise them through that period, they reach a platform whereby they can view their life slightly differently. We then rehouse them through their same housing provider in a managed transfer but

with a package of care if they qualify for that and move it forward that way. That would be my gold standard of victim care in terms of ASB in London.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you very much for that.

Susan Hall AM: Hello. Good partnership working, in my view, makes such a difference. If I ask you firstly: what do you think London is like? Do you think all the partners work well together?

Lee Hutchings (Managing Director, Parkguard Ltd): Again, I do feel that it is very inconsistent. It does depend on what borough you are in, what existing services are in place and the skillsets of those individuals. Through people being more mindful of money over the recent years, we have seen a lot of diversifying of roles and people taking on additional roles that perhaps they are not always suited for. There needs to be potentially more localised reviews, "What would we change? What additional roles are we adding to those teams? Are they suitable for that role?"

Generally, as partnership work goes, there have been a huge improvements over the years. It is a lot more commonplace. It is a lot more fluid in the way that people work. It is standard. I remember 10 years ago when some of the things we were doing were just unheard of because you just did not work together. Those days are long gone.

It is also about people identifying where their true values are. There is a little bit of crossover in terms of what their goals are but just re-evaluating, looking at what is not being done and what is not been not very well, "We will focus on that. You focus on that bit because you are better equipped to deal with that". We are also seeing a lot, particularly our services, where instead of being standalone we are doing integrated services where the council might deliver the bulk of one element of that - it could be an ASB response team or a pastoral team or whatever - and then we will deliver the key bits that either they do not do very well or are not operationally viable for them to deliver. Then, together, that delivers a much better outcome. We have seen a lot more of this collaborative working.

We are also similarly seeing that with registered social landlords (RSLs) where they perhaps do not have a huge footprint on a borough or they do not have a lot of stock but they still have issues and still need a service and it is not viable for them to fund an independent community warden or a caretaker or other form of capable guardian. What they are doing is they just buy into an existing local service or we bring them all to the table and they all contribute an equal amount to that and then we develop a service around focusing on their priority needs. We are finding that a very efficient way of tackling the issues they have.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you. If I ask all of you, what do you think the strengths and the weaknesses are of partnership working?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): For me, the strengths are around getting a fuller picture and sharing the information and dealing with it according to the many needs of many of these victims. There are pressures on all partners. It is not just about money but some of some of the interventions do cost money. If you want to redesign your adventure playground I was talking about where there were complaints of drugs, there is a cost to the local authority for that. The impact and costs around mental health are huge. If you have a drug problem or a drink problem, diversion activities cost money, and housing and all of those issues. They are not directly police problems but they play an impact in the way that the police would try to assist to solve a problem.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): Certainly, I would just add that when we are sitting around the table in the partnership meetings, people will bring a lot of tactical tools as to how we could solve our ASB issues: mobile closed-circuit television (CCTV), youth workers who work on the streets. You are predicting where your ASB problems are going to be and you are going, “All right, we need people in these areas perhaps on a Friday and Saturday evening. We need resources when school finishes. It may be in the town centres or transport hubs”. Having some of those youth workers and other partnership resources, not just officers, was really helpful. We are seeing just a general reduction in that. Yes, the partnership processes are still in place, but there are just fewer resources and fewer tactical options.

There are often then the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and the PCSOs who are the ones out there, but we still very much rely so heavily as there are mental health and various other support services, particularly adult social care, that play such an instrumental role in problem-solving the issues.

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime): In terms of the range of partners that have been engaged, over time that has improved in some respects. Certainly, I remember about 10 years ago housing organisations were not always engaged in that multi-agency work in the same way that they are now and that is better.

One of the things that came through a lot through the Police and Crime Plan consultation and just our general discussions with partners out in boroughs is that health partners and engaging them in this kind of work is still difficult. There are some areas where we have had more success, but that is not universal. Even where health partners are engaged, the thresholds for accessing their services and those kinds of things can often be barriers to getting people into those services. That is still a difficult area.

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): I agree with everything that has been said. I have a couple of points.

The partnership or the partners that you need to work with need to be very wide. It is not just statutory partners. There is a key role for the voluntary sector. We work very closely with the immigration services in Croydon around tackling ASB. Crystal Palace Football Club, which is in the borough, is very active in terms of helping with things like youth activities in particular areas. Making use of those facilities and those opportunities is really key.

The other point I would want to make is that what is also essential in all of this is having the right processes and not to rely too heavily on individual relationships, which can be the case. You need to make sure that you have the right processes in place so that when people do move on or when things do change you still have some resilience to fall back on in terms of, “This is the way that we do things here”. That would be my issue.

Susan Hall AM: Shirley, anything to add to that?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): The strengths are phenomenal in multi-agency working because you get everybody in a room and everybody works together and comes to understand each other’s role, their service, the capability, the resources and the challenges, and then really begin to understand holistically how something will work. That is the main benefit of multi-agency working.

I would say the weakness would be that everybody has a part to play and whilst everybody might be willing to play their part, there are staff turnovers and changes and things like that. When you are problem-solving any issue, there has to be somebody who is orchestrating and leading and keeping an eye on everything else, and people do not particularly want to be that person. I would say that that is where the weakness is.

Susan Hall AM: That is interesting, yes. Thank you. Commander Bennett, you mentioned that sometimes you have problems with information sharing and, Andy, you mentioned it as well. Certainly, when I have been involved, health has been the one that does not come to the table. Have you experienced any other agency that is an issue or perhaps you do not find health an issue?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): If there is a meeting to discuss an individual case, the information can be shared, but there is no routine, automatic, single database where all the information is shared. That is the gap.

Susan Hall AM: Anybody else? Any other gaps that you have recognised?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): I would not want to pick out any particular organisation. It goes back to the issue that I mentioned about having the right processes and agreements in place, making sure that you have information sharing agreements and that they are agreed at the right level because then you have something to fall back on in terms of making sure that you can move forward.

It is also about being clear with people about the purpose of sharing information. There is information that is nice to have, but we want information that we can do something with. You have to be really clear about the purpose of that information sharing, why you need it and what you are going to do with it.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you. How would any of you or all of you think that the Mayor could assist with best practice being shared across London? There are certainly really good pockets and some areas - and you have identified that, Lee - where it is not so good. How do you think the Mayor could assist us with sharing all of these very good ideas and different ideas that come from different boroughs?

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): Sadly, the obvious ones are the ones that come with money as well. When you are talking about information technology (IT) and if you have that ability to say, whatever agency you are from, you are concerned about a particular case and you are able to enter it onto the system and that comes up and is shared with all your partners and people can then add their information, that is quick-time information sharing. At the moment, yes, let us say there is one agency for them and they have only a small bit of the jigsaw and they think it is low-risk and it is not a priority for them. They are not automatically going to be disclosing that information. It is how to improve that. Yes, we have our partnership meetings; yes, we come together; but we prioritise the high-risk cases. Sometimes you do not know that something that is medium-risk should be high because other people are holding those important bits of information. Speeding that process up would really assist.

Susan Hall AM: If you are talking about that, sometimes within those meetings, we all know that it is highly confidential and so you cannot put things like that down. However, if you look more strategically at it, the way in which you do things could be shared as opposed to specific issues. Sometimes people have groups together that really work well and they work well because of a reason, not because of particular cases. As I

say, we all know you cannot share an awful lot that goes on in those particular meetings. How do you think the Mayor could inform all the boroughs of the best practice around London?

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): At your last panel in July, Paul Dunn [Chair, London Antisocial Behaviour Advisory Service] talked about how he used to do the London ASB Case Managers' Forum. Even just hosting a forum on ASB where all the relevant agencies can be invited and talk about best practice. It is just making people aware. It is that communication. There are people doing outstanding work in different pockets of London and that needs to be advertised and promoted more effectively. Let professionals talk about it and ask the questions and, when they are reassured, then that is a model they can adopt. It is more helpful if you are doing it in a multi-agency environment like that.

Susan Hall AM: Absolutely.

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I could just add a couple of things to that. That is an interesting thought about that because we previously had a forum. Of course, we did not run it by ourselves; we did that in partnership with London Councils, which is actually quite important in this space because local authorities have a lot of skin in the game in respect of ASB. We certainly would not want to unilaterally make a decision or do anything like that. We manage all of this work through our London Crime Reduction Board and our partnerships there and, certainly, this would be a conversation we would want to have in that wider partnership space.

When we were going around to boroughs and talking about the Police and Crime Plan and ASB came forth as a priority that everybody wanted to have included as one of their local ones, I have to say, on the issue of the broader governance and good practice, none of that came through in that conversation. Therefore, I was interested to see that it was coming out from your last meeting.

The other thing that I would add to that is that, also, there is a wider role potentially for the Home Office in some of this space because there was a lot of discussion at your last meeting about the tools and powers and whether the legislation works, whether they are the right tools, etc. There is a bit of national work that we could usefully have done in that space that the Home Office could do because there will be good practice outside of London also. There is another layer to this that could be looked at.

Susan Hall AM: I am sure we can all learn all the time. That is right. Shirley, how do you think that the ASB MARACs have helped with information sharing?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): They have helped with information sharing because we do have set protocols and agreements. They are all very clear and people sign up to them at the right level and that is fed down to the people who attend the meetings. We have positioned ourselves as being a rapid response to any situation around a perpetrator or, in Brent, we work mainly with the victims, who are often perpetrators as well, as my colleagues have said.

The sharing of information there works well because over time - we meet monthly - people have seen the outcomes from a community MARAC and working to that model. That has given individual agencies confidence to share the information. The purpose of sharing the information is to resolve the situation and make it better for the victim and they can see that happening in a short period of time, unlike domestic violence (DV) MARACs where they do not come back every month. Professionals really have bought into community MARAC models and they know the value of bringing information along and they do challenge each

other quite a lot - the professionals - within the meetings. Therefore, it has moved safeguarding and information sharing forward quite a bit. People can see the outcome of their work and so they are willing to share the information to get the job done.

Nobody likes to carry risk alone and that is what we try to tell people. The purpose of information sharing is: you cannot solve a problem as an individual agency, most of the time, and by sharing the problem you are sharing the risk, the risk is documented and assessed in the meeting, and any decisions or actions taken from that meeting have been agreed by a group of professionals, not subjectively by one individual. That is where it has really made a difference, Susan.

Susan Hall AM: Thanks very much.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. All right. We are now moving to the newish legislation, which is the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The new powers replaced, in essence, the existing powers against ASB with a range of others, including the community trigger and the community remedy, which may or may not have caught the public imagination.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Just from you all, what impacts have the new powers in the 2014 Act had on tackling ASB in London?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): It has simplified it and tidied it up and made it clear. The police are probably more likely to use the criminal behaviour orders because we are more often involved in in the criminal environment than the civil courts. Of course, there is a whole range of injunction capabilities as well, but that does come at a cost. Overall, the orders and the new powers are clearer and do address the problems.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Have you been getting good results using them?

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): Yes. The ones that are particularly popular with colleagues across all of London, as you say, are the Criminal Behaviour Orders because that is easier for officers to obtain than going to a civil court. The dispersals and the closures have been bread-and-butter powers and they have found those relatively easy. The dispersals particularly, with an inspector's authorisation, that is a quick-time power that can be put into play and so that has been extremely useful. Again, we are seeing more use around the community protection notices (CPNs) at the moment and, again, that is a good tactical tool.

Overall, it has been well received. A lot of the powers are being used a lot, but not all. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) again there is a more consultative approach and it is local authority-led rather than police-led. That is, again, a useful tool which people are still learning to use. Overall, officers have said it has been fantastic to simplify the legislation.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Is that feeling reflected by other partners here? Has there been a good impact from this legislation?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): Yes, we have used them widely and we have found that they have had a very good impact in the borough. We currently have eight PSPOs in place. Six are drinking pilots and they were commissioned in small pockets where our intelligence showed us that the problem was most prevalent. We commissioned that for councillors so that they could take a view to making a borough-wide PSPO on drinking in public.

I would say that also there is some need there for some community awareness because, with emerging communities, their culture is often to stand on the street and drink. They do not understand that they are intimidating anybody because that is their culture. The wider public need to know that that is a cultural thing for them and then they need to know that is not an acceptable thing in London. We are doing some work around that.

We have two PSPOs in place for casual labour where we have coaches coming into the borough to drop people to feed the cash-in-hand work market. We have got PSPOs for those two as well. We plan to use PSPOs in the parks to replace the park bylaws by next month. They will also supersede the Dog Control Orders by next month.

We have found that it works really well. We have closed a lot of shisha bars using the new tools and powers in the borough and using the closure powers more robustly with multi-agency evidence. That is when we gather the multi-agency evidence from different teams within the organisation and we build that information on E-CINS which is a multi-agency platform whereby we can share this information. It cross-references everybody and everything and so that gives us a really good picture.

One of my favourites of the new tools and powers is -- I gave a 90-year-old lady with vulnerabilities a CPN. She had schizophrenia and she had been causing a lot of problems for her neighbours. She would not engage with older people's mental health, a GP or anything like that. We tried absolutely everything and then we decided to give her a CPN because she had worked well to a previous warning from police. What we did is we got mental health in advance to document their approval of this course of action and say that it was in her best interest because a lot of people who cause ASB also have personality disorders. They are not well managed by mental health; they are seen as a lower order. These are the people acting out on our streets and causing problems, vandalism, ASB and things like that and we are actually doing them a favour by giving them a CPN because they need very clear boundaries and consequences. By giving them a CPN, they know where the line is and if they can, if it is within their capacity to do so, they will stop at that line. We are using them in that respect around some problematic people in the borough.

Also, the tools and powers were used to quickly quench a situation with young drug dealers who were congregating outside a Tube station. Yes, the drug dealing is criminal, but it is getting the evidence and time to satisfy the public, who are afraid to come through the station on the way from work. Also, we use the housing providers to work the parents to try to control the situation but, again, that is slow. They need evidence in order to do that. Again, we use CPNs on the ASB, the noise they were making, the litter they were dropping, blocking the pathway and that sort of thing. We managed to reduce the problem. We have not solved the problem but we have reduced the problem down to one or two people who keep going back to the area. Where there were 15, there is only one or two.

We find the combination of criminal and ASB tools and powers works really well together if you have a good group of people problem solving and looking at the issues. Yes, it is working for us.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: That was really helpful. It gives a really good picture there of how you are using the different aspects. Andy, do you want to comment from Croydon?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): Yes. I would agree that it has helped in terms of simplifying what was quite a complex area. We are using the various powers in variable quantities. We are only

just going out for the first PSPO. We are out for consultation at the moment in Croydon and so we have no direct experience of using that power at the moment.

I would echo everything that Shirley [Holmes] has said about CPNs. That in particular, probably, is the standout success story for us in terms of the new tools. They are incredibly helpful and flexible. We are using them in a very wide variety of circumstances; things like the examples that Shirley has given, but we are also looking at them for things like environmental problems as well, untidy front gardens and alleyways, sometimes abandoned vehicles or unsightly vehicles, noise issues, a whole range of different things. They are a really useful first step in terms of a formal process to try to get a solution. We find very few of the initial warnings actually then go on to any kind of other formal action and so they are quite a quick remedy.

The other issue that I would raise that has not been picked up is around the positive requirements element for Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO)s and injunctions, which when it came out we thought was fantastic but there have been some issues that we have experienced in terms of trying to carry those through. We have applied positive requirements, whether that is attending a treatment service or whatever it might be, but the enforcement of that and the enforcement of breaches has been problematic in terms of the information sharing from the drug service or whoever it may be. It is a fantastic idea and if it worked in practice it would be great, but the actual implementation has been a challenge for us.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I can see that. Lee, do you want to add any other examples of what is working well with the legislation?

Lee Hutchings (Managing Director, Parkguard Ltd): In terms of CPNs, especially with the warning side of things, we are finding that they are very effective because it is giving you an opportunity to go and engage with an individual and address their behaviour. The delivery of that is key, but we are seeing in one borough that we work in that 92% of people have not reoffended and it is because of that contact. Instead of it just being, "Please do not do this", there is a consequence to it now. That is what this legislation has enabled.

There is also an element to it as well that, because it can be reported by anyone, it almost creates an environment of social surveillance and that in turn regulates behaviour. We are finding that a very effective tool, particularly on the warnings and not even having to progress to the notice.

For longer-term or sustained reductions, we are seeing that injunctions are very effective but in a lot of cases it is the data that you have and it depends on who is out getting the data and to what standard that is being collected. We are also finding that they are very effective tools as well. Where it stands at the moment; a lot of our patrolling elements will do a lot of the evidence package, spending the time in the area, looking at the impact the address is having, documenting that, building up that nice case file and then putting it over to the Safer Community Team, who then have everything they need to effectively and promptly deal with the address or take out the injunctions.

We are also seeing a lot of cases where we have offenders but there is not enough evidence for a criminal action, particularly maybe more organised drug dealers where they are not handling the drugs and they are not in possession. Everything is association. We will be tasked to an area where there is something not quite right. They have identified that young people are not playing out in the park anymore even though the weather is good. Acquisitive crime types are starting to increase. There is paraphernalia being found. There is clearly something going on. Then you identify an address, you identify an individual and start identifying vehicles, but at no time is there enough of an incident to call the police in to warrant things like searches and stuff like

that. Then it is just that constant evidence of the impact that it is having on the community, getting to a stage where everything is identified and then putting it back to the police so that they can do something that is a lot more intelligence-led and a lot more efficient use of their resources as well. You are using a non-emergency response service to identify and spend the time there for them to do the targeted work, put the two together and then look at things like injunctions where there has not been an arrest made. We are finding them quite effective, particularly in west London.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Very good. Thank you for that. What training is available? This is newish legislation. It is very different. Has there been training across London through London Councils or the MPS?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I said it briefly earlier, but all patrolling officers will do the computer package. All neighbourhood officers in addition are getting bespoke modular training on ASB probably in the next six months until they complete it.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: They will be fully up to speed. What about officers and others in housing associations and boroughs?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): In Brent, they have done it within the organisation, within the department, and so I would say that that is a gap. We do not see any providers of that on the horizon and so I would say that there is a gap there around the use of the tools and powers.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: That could potentially be MOPAC?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): We learn most about it from the ASB Forum that was mentioned that Paul Dunn [Chair, London Antisocial Behaviour Advisory Service] runs. That is where we learn from our colleagues through trial and error what is working, where the problems have been and how it is best applied.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: There could be through MOPAC some sort of London-wide bit of training, but then also hearing from boroughs where you are being innovative. Your thing about casual labour was very interesting and I am sure lots of boroughs will have places and would not have even considered that. Did you want to add something, Andy?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): It is exactly the same picture in Croydon. Previously we have engaged in the ASB Forum, which has been useful. We have bought our own training in for officers and, when the Act came in, we did some multi-agency training for local police colleagues and whole range of other partners in terms of what it did, but basically it is managed in-house at the moment. Some kind of regional resource would be very helpful.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: In terms of measuring how effective these new tools are, it sounds fantastic, the examples you have given, and I am sure there are plenty more across the capital, but how is that being measured? Is that something that MOPAC is doing a piece of work on?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): We are not specifically doing any work on that at the moment. What we will be doing is - as ASB is one of our local priorities, obviously - we will be monitoring that as we go through on a quarterly basis and annually. What we

are looking for in local areas is year-on-year reductions, but we are not doing anything specifically in terms of those powers.

I suppose the other way in which you might measure that is looking at repeat victimisation and whether or not people are coming back through the system because, if they are, that means whenever you have put in place it is not actually an effective response. Therefore, we do look at repeat victimisation also.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: You can assess the numbers and that might be what you are doing for your targets that you are measuring, but actually, unless you are putting in place potentially training, if you are not showing that best practice and then actually seeing how effective a year or two years on different boroughs have done these different things, how will you know if it is being effective and also what is triggering what happens to your target around ASB?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): That is probably a fair question. For us, though, from our point of view, what we are trying to do is create the right conditions for local areas to be able to do some of that themselves. It is a mandatory priority. That means resources follow that. That means the MPS align their resources to delivering that and the DWOs who oversee the resources they put in place for that, and that we make money available through the Crime Prevention Fund for people to be able to do those things at the local level, whether that is about training their staff or how they use the powers. We see ourselves operating in that space as opposed to necessarily directly providing training and making that happen.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: What about the MPS? What are you doing to see how effective these new tools and powers are?

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): We have a meeting, which is quarterly at the moment. We have the 32 boroughs of London from the MPS side there. The Chief Inspectors that lead attend. Mr [Julian] Bennett chairs the meeting. We review a whole variety of performance data from the amount of calls they have to the satisfaction levels. We go and micromanage quite a lot and so we can look exactly how many cases they have and what they are doing with them.

Beyond that, we then do the sharing of best practice. I am aware that some of you will be going after this to Tower Hamlets to look at a property they have done there using some ASB warnings. Hackney as well has done a project around repeat victims and callers and that has been very effective. We have had other people dealing with specific ASB issues and they have had success and they come and present. We do review. We look at all 32 boroughs. We look at them. We have analysts that provide us the data and so we go into that and we talk about the use of the powers as well.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: It just seems to me that that may be in our outcomes from our work, but actually there is a gap there. If this is a target for every borough in London, what really is MOPAC doing to drive this down and share best practice? I am not clear.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): That is a fair point, yes. All right. Unmesh, you wanted to come in there?

Unmesh Desai AM: Chair, sorry, but if I can just very quickly come in on that because Assembly Member Pidgeon has raised a very important issue about training and the consistency across the whole of London. Very quickly, Chair, I attended the all-day training session that Newham police organised with Newham Council's enforcement service. Every single DWO, all of Newham's enforcement officers and the

people who have to work together in partnership were there. It was a very practical exercise of intelligence sharing and also how to use powers but, much more importantly, something that I was worried about and I asked the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] about this: the obligation on each borough police force now that ASB is down as a priority for each borough. Basically, who does what to avoid duplication of resources and of work and who takes ownership of the drive?

Can I ask you, Commander Bennett? Would you consider looking at the new model and seeing if each of London's 32 boroughs can do something similar?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): ASB is a priority for the MPS and it is a priority --

Unmesh Desai AM: I know --

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): -- for every borough. About three months ago I did an hour's session on performance and some of the high-level strategic issues on ASB with each Borough Commander, 32 of them, and so they know and they are responsible for reducing it and dealing with it on their borough.

Tony Arbour AM: I would like to ask, please, how the new rules have assisted you in dealing with the antisocial problems created by Travellers and if you could give me some examples of how it has assisted.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): We have existing legislation already, but I am not aware of any specific examples of how it is being used to deal with Travellers.

Tony Arbour AM: Do any of you know how this has helped you in dealing with the problems created by Travellers? Pretty well every example of ASB which we have in our list of what is ASB is created simply by the existence of a single traveller site. That is a multi-agency thing and these regulations ought to have helped you in dealing with some of those. Are you able to give me any examples, any of you?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): A traveller site itself is not antisocial. It is the associated behaviour.

Tony Arbour AM: No, precisely. I am talking about the ASB created by traveller sites.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I cannot give you specific examples. I do not know, sorry, but it --

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): I cannot give you an example but I know that Oxford City Council has used the tools and powers on a traveller site. We heard about this at one of the ASB forums where they gave a presentation about how they used the tools and powers to address ASB by Travellers. I cannot remember it all, but they did say that they had come up with a strategy. The children were used to target the police and any other agencies when they went onsite and they were CPNing the matriarch and patriarch of the site for the behaviour of the children. If any of the children interfered with their engagement then they were being breached for CPN, but that is all I can remember. I could see lots of things going wrong with that, though.

Tony Arbour AM: Commander, if I can, you said that you have discussed this with each Borough Commander to deal with this. Kingston has recently had a problem. All of the boroughs on my patch - I represent Hounslow, Kingston and Richmond - have had Traveller problems.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Can I just clarify? I had a long session on ASB. I did not discuss Travellers during that session.

Tony Arbour AM: Are you suggesting that perhaps the problems created by Travellers are in a completely different category and are not ASB?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): No.

Tony Arbour AM: You would agree, all of you, that littering, noise disturbance, various other environmental matters, trespass and things like that are matters which legitimately fall in the ASB purview?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): They could do. It depends on the threshold. London as a densely-populated capital city of course is different to a more rural part of England --

Tony Arbour AM: No, clearly, I am relating this to London. During the summer, I have had problems with traveller sites in all of the boroughs that I represent. My guess is that all of my colleagues who are constituency Members will have had difficulties with Travellers.

We know how expensive it is. In Kingston, for example, it has cost them £20,000 a day to clear up and to manage a site where there were just 11 traveller caravans and other associated vehicles. This is an extremely expensive thing. It is extremely high profile. Many of the things that we have been talking about are personal matters of ASB and so on, but this is something which impinges on large numbers of members of the public. There is a belief - hopefully it is anecdotal but I do not believe that it is anecdotal - that the police and other agencies really are frightened of Travellers.

I am very interested in the point you made about what was happening in Oxford. Certainly, I have experienced this business of the children who suggested to local authority workers who came onto a particular site to deal with problems created by Travellers. The children, clearly very well briefed, suggested that the people who were taking photographs of the litter and the rest of it on the site were paedophiles because this was the way that they had been briefed by the streetwise Travellers.

The upshot of it is that I can think certainly of the events which have happened this year and there have been no charges relating to ASB caused by traveller sites across my patch. I would like to ask whether or not you think, therefore, that the existing legislation is not strong enough or that the new legislation failed to take these matters into account.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): Certainly, we do not have the specifics to give you today around any case examples, but certainly the police are not frightened of dealing with these issues. They tend to use the legislation that they have and move people on. What we will do is take this away, come back and give you perhaps some more information.

Tony Arbour AM: Can you give me any kind of statistic at all as to whether or not there have been any prosecutions of Travellers for offences caused by Travellers right across the MPS area?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): You can write to us if you do not have that information because, clearly, this was not part of the particular briefing.

Tony Arbour AM: No, this is major ASB. We all know it. We have all experienced it. Does MOPAC have any figure on this?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): No, we do not. The data that we have is relying on MPS data. We do not have --

Tony Arbour AM: Would you accept that it is a problem, unlawful traveller sites?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): It can be a problem and, clearly, there can be ASB associated with it.

Tony Arbour AM: No, not that it can be a problem; that it is a problem in London. It is avoiding the issue, saying it can be a problem. Those of us who represent know that is a real problem. I am sure that Shirley [Holmes] would accept that even in Brent Travellers create difficulties.

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): In Brent, we have a traveller site that does not particularly cause us any issues.

Tony Arbour AM: I specifically said "unlawful".

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): Yes. Unlawful ones we seem to get rid of very quickly. I cannot tell you how because I have not been involved but --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): The points are very well made. Importantly, yes, unlawful sites are a serious issue. I am a constituency [Member] for Croydon and Sutton. I spent a whole year removing Travellers from a field. One of the weaknesses of the legislation is not the legislation in front of us but the legislation required to remove the sites, which is another debate altogether. This Committee should add to its work programme this particular issue so that we can have witnesses come along, including representatives potentially of the Traveller community. It is clearly an issue in the constituencies and often there is ASB; often, not always. These new powers are there to address those examples of ASB. It has been raised and this Committee can continue to do some work around that.

Len Duvall AM: In doing that, there are some peripheral issues that really have not come up in the debate. Sorry, I have had to leave for part of it. It may have come up. It is the same issues applying to Travellers, albeit about the law and about moving on, when it becomes ASB, when it is a criminal act and the enforcement of trespass and the issues, but the same around licensing laws. It is very interesting around ASB arising out of a licensed establishment and how often that does not come up at some of your partnership meetings, even though local authorities have responsibility for licensing and police officers have responsibility for enforcing the law. Somehow, in terms of that ASB bit that arises from that, which is some of the persistent ASB having an impact on neighbourhoods and individuals collectively, I would like us to do some more follow-up work around that.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We have examples that I will not cite now. We have heard about good partnership working, but often you can have a breakdown in partnership working sometimes between police and local authorities around that particular issue. We can pursue that separately.

Len Duvall AM: It is of a similar nature to the Traveller issues. There is an ASB element but there are also other laws that deal with it and sometimes it gets compartmentalised, if that is the right word - I tripped over my tongue - if you understand what I mean, in terms of the silos that we sometimes work in with local authorities.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We can pursue the point made that sometimes there is an impression that potentially Traveller communities may or may not be treated differently. That we can pursue in a separate meeting.

Unmesh Desai AM: I was just going to say this quick point because, in the context of street drinking - and I only speak from my own experience - Newham has done some work around withdrawing the licences of supermarkets and off-licences which sell single cans to street drinkers. There is some imaginative work in partnership with the police and there are some good examples.

I would just say to the police, by the way, in terms of your answer to Assembly Member Arbour's questions and points, that perhaps you might want to look at Newham and Barking where the police and the council have done some imaginative work in terms of unlawful sites because it is an issue, yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Good. We will just carry on there. We have sucked that lemon dry, as Boris [Johnson MP, former Mayor of London] used to say.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: The 2014 Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act was designed to put the victims first. This is a question particularly for you, for starters, Shirley [Holmes]. Do you think that the community triggers right and the community remedy orders have been successful in doing that?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): We have not developed the community remedy in Brent. That is something that the manager is looking to work on, but we have not actually gone down that route at all in Brent with community remedies.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: How about community triggers?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): We had a number of community triggers, not many. We have had about seven, but I do find that they are not discussed widely. I do not have any information on them.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Have local authorities brought this to the attention of their residents?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): I do not believe so.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: We heard at the Committee in July [2017] that it was not in the interests of local authorities to bring this to the attention of the residents. Why would you create a stick for your own backs?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): We publicise it on our website, on the Brent Council website, and so it is there. All the information is there. We find that the community triggers that we have come through the councillors of the borough when they are working with residents. Members tend to put them on the path to community triggers and then we address the concerns of the residents. They are mainly the triggers that we have had.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Andy [Opie], have you had any experience from Croydon?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): I have exactly the same experience as Shirley, although we have actually had less that have formally come through the community trigger. I think we have had two and neither have been accepted in terms of the definition of what would trigger a community trigger.

There is an issue of public awareness and following that route. We, likewise, have information available on our website. If you go to report ASB, you can find information in terms of how to do it, but we have not - certainly not recently - done anything proactive in terms of encouraging that route. We do get lots of inquiries via MPs and local ward councillors and what-have-you where people are not happy with the level of response that they have received. Sometimes that is because we have not done things well and we need to look at that, but sometimes it is about managing expectations and being clear about it.

It goes back to what we were talking about at the very beginning of this, which is about managing risk and getting to the bottom of what is actually happening. With some of the issues that get raised to us, people have very high levels of expectation. They think we can respond immediately and they think we can throw resources at it, but actually it may be fairly low impact in terms of the officer's assessment.

In terms of the community trigger, that has not really landed for us locally and we are not doing the community remedy, either. I do not feel like that is --

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Is there a London-wide consensus of when a community trigger can be triggered? Is there a criterion which is agreed across London?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): My understanding is there was a London-wide definition that was --

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): There are specific criteria but I would agree with what has already been said. There is a lack of public awareness around it in general.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Do you think this is an area which MOPAC, particularly the Commissioner for Victim Support, should be raising the profile of these orders? Is this useful work that you think that the Mayor's Office can be doing, letting the residents of London know these orders do exist and how they can trigger them?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Certainly, when the powers were enacted and implemented we did some of that work and we did work with partners to develop that London threshold so that we had a common trigger level. At the time, we did some publicity work and those messages were pushed out. We have not done any in recent years - I would agree - and certainly we rely on local areas to be publicising it locally, which mostly they are and probably most of them are doing it through their websites.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Looking at the evidence we have heard through this Committee, it seems like this has been a well-kept secret and it would be very useful if the Mayor's Office did go out of their way, as part of the victim support initiative the Mayor is taking, to make sure that the people of London are aware of these orders,

they know how to trigger them and to hold people accountable, which was the spirit of the legislation. I hope that that work can be done.

Also, why is it that community remedies are so little used in London? We have heard so far that they are not really being used at all. Why do you think that is the case?

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): There are elements of the community remedy that have been used but it is not the community remedy being acknowledged as something on its own. When you look at what was on the menu that MOPAC gave us to start with, you have various things which are more under restorative justice and those elements do take place. We have people trained and they do that. Where again there is the similar stuff, the points that were around the positive requirements on legislation, and some of those are down there on the community remedy to address people's behaviour, courses to deal with drugs or alcohol or whatever it is. Those we have not been able to get to. As a whole, the community remedy on its own is not known or widely acknowledged. Elements within it are definitely done.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: I thought the community remedy was engaging with the local community to see what remedy they wanted to see. Are there examples of any London boroughs having a meeting with a community group and saying, "This ASB is taking place here. What do you see as the remedy?" Has any of that been done at all anywhere in London?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): I am not aware of any specifically, but there are two elements to that. Partly, this is about the individual. If you are committing ASB against me, what do I want? It might be an apology or whatever it is. You could use it, I guess, in that broader sense. Some boroughs - places like Westminster - have used more broadly those measures for communities and the wider impact, but I do not know how widespread that is.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: It says here that the community remedy gives the victims a say in an out-of-court punishment of perpetrators for low-level crime and ASB. There is a list of actions that victims can choose from when a community-set resolution is being used. What I am seeing is that there is no evidence of this being used at all anywhere in London.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Sorry, there is because we are telling you that it is with the elements that colleagues have just outlined. Sometimes an apology is all that is needed, sometimes an understanding and seeing something from somebody else's point of view, but of course that does not always work in much more hardened cases. Sometimes there will be reparation to the victim for the cost of minor damage. That would be part of a community remedy, just as mediation would. There are many components. The difficulties come when it might need to refer an individual for additional treatment and there is often a funding implication with that.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Great. Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It is very clear that the trigger and the remedy have not been used to any great degree across London and, in our conclusions and recommendations in our report, we need to shout out loud around that because they are available to residents. If we asked, for example, Safer Neighbourhood Boards, even those clued-up people may not be completely aware of them. Clearly, to my mind, a community trigger being triggered is a sign of potential failure of the authorities because the community is just fed up that they perhaps are not being listened to. It could even be used as a tactic by councillors and councils will go

along. I remember a conversation myself a while back, "Do you really want this to be your first community trigger in a particular borough? Get your finger out and do some work around this". It is important that they are used but people just do not know about them. Onkar, you made that point very strongly.

No discussion about policing would be complete without funding and resources.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): I have some questions about resources. If I can start with MPS resources first, some of the evidence we have had from councils has highlighted the ways that they think potentially MPS cutbacks or changes in where they are putting resources have affected them. We have had a council telling us that they have lost the police officers on their ASB units. We have had more generally feedback that the cutbacks in neighbourhood police officers compared with several years ago have had an impact. It seems to me that prior to the consultation that went on when we went out and asked what your priorities would be, ASB was not a particular priority for the MPS. Are the MPS officers able to comment on that, potentially, that the resources were taken away from ASB because it was not a priority and has that had an impact?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): MOPAC and the MPS are actually making a huge investment in neighbourhood policing and that is why we have the two DWOs --

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): I am thinking about the past, though. I am thinking about up to when you were told that this was a priority for safer neighbourhoods. Up to that point, was it under-resourced? That is my question.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): There were officers working in neighbourhood policing but they were not dedicated and one of the issues was that they would get abstracted to go to police a football match or a march in another part of London. The DWOs are ringfenced and they are monitored in joint monitoring with MOPAC so that we can look at what the abstractions are. I have not set an 80% or 90% target because I want 100% if I can get it, but of course there will be legitimate abstractions like training and holidays, etc. There is a huge investment in neighbourhood policing and ASB is a key element. We consult all 629 wards to establish their priorities and it is probably about 97% or 98% where ASB is a priority on those wards. I would say that it is a real priority for us.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): That is in contrast to previously?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Yes, it has developed probably since 2010. The creation of airspace and a system to assist us to match it has been a great improvement. The situation this decade is different than it was previously.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): I would just add that in addition or as part of the neighbourhood resource, every basic command unit is going to have a partnership and prevention hub. That is 19 officers whose sole job is to be looking and joining together ASB with licensing and other issues; specialist officers with specialist skills, looking at how we reduce demand on the organisation and how we deal with the riskiest areas. That is an essential part in binding it all together. They will be able to look at the most difficult and protracted cases and, again, make sure we are linking in with all our partners that we deal with. If it is licensing and ASB and other bits of the agency, they can go in and provide support to the individual Safer Neighbourhood Teams and get all those agencies to help problem-solve issues.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, that problem-solving type of approach seems a big improvement. I think you said before that mainly it has been just ordinary response officers who are sent out to cases that pass the test when people call about ASB who might not have local knowledge or links to the council or any of those things. Yes, you can see why people might have thought it was neglected if somebody who is used to dealing with bigger crimes turns up and dismisses their concerns. Hopefully, the new partnership teams will take ASB more seriously.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): In the process of change, people do not like change. When we go back to the old 1-2-3 model, that was popular and people liked that. We then moved to the Local Policing Model in 2013 when that reduced in size but then we had flexible officers working across a neighbourhood area. Again, even though that was an increase in total resource, people were unhappy at the time because they considered their own individual teams shrinking.

Now we move forward. We are going to a different system with properly ringfenced officers with a partnership and a prevention hub providing specialist oversight. Therefore, I would be optimistic going forward that we are going to have a resource there specifically dealing with ASB.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): If I can ask Natasha [Plummer] a question, earlier on you talked about funding things potentially through the London Crime Prevention Fund. One of the councils has fed back to us that they are concerned about MOPAC's decision to top-slice 30% of the London Crime Prevention Fund and that has reduced their resources that they are able to put into this. Can you explain what has happened there or what that is?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): The top-slicing has been about creating a co-commissioning fund because what boroughs fed back to us in respect of their crime prevention work was that sometimes they wanted to be able to work across boundaries. There were issues that were bigger than their borough and they wanted to be able to have the conditions in which they could do that joint working. That 30% has been put into a pot that is available to boroughs and we are in the process of people bidding into that now so that they can do cross-borough work and joint partnership work on whatever issues they think they need to do that work on. It is still available to boroughs. It is available to them in a different way.

However, from that London Crime Prevention Fund, as I said, certainly over the next two years, boroughs have allocated £4.4 million to working on ASB and they are using that for things like supporting their community MARAC that deals with those ASB cases.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): The London Crime Prevention Fund has not grown overall. The top slice does have to come off some existing projects and that might be the borough's decision to reduce it.

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Yes. For them, what we asked them to do, they were able to tell us what projects they wanted to do and to manage that money in the local areas and for them to determine what things they wanted to spend that money on.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): Has MOPAC put any new resources specifically into boroughs or working with boroughs as a result of the new priority to focus on ASB?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Other than the London Crime Prevention Fund in terms of funding, no. However, one of the things, as I said before, was that in terms of creating it as a local priority, what it does do is make sure that the MPS and others proceed to align their resources to those priority areas. It helps to shift resources around. There is still always a finite pot.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): It is principally around alignment rather than new resources?

Natasha Plummer (Head of Engagement, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): Yes.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): Can I ask the borough representatives now? Earlier on, I cannot remember which officer mentioned working with youth workers and how that was a good thing. I know that councils have faced austerity restrictions in the ability to raise council tax and things as well. Have you seen over previous years a reduction in your ability to focus on this issue and has it been a priority for you as well?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): With the issues that we have experienced, we have become more reactive in the way that we deal with things. Things like universal or youth provision has reduced, therefore, there are less youth centres in the sense that we had a few years ago. It is far more targeted now and we still do have a very active and targeted youth outreach function locally. We have to work very closely with the voluntary sector but that in itself provides challenges in terms of coordination because there are all sorts of fantastic projects and opportunities out there. It is about making sure that people know where they are and people are working together. Coordination is an issue, coordination and prevention.

On the preventative work, one of the gaps that we have seen - and this relates to ASB but also work we are doing around things like serious youth violence - there is a bit of a gap in terms of early intervention. It is not just about the universal prevention, it is about intervening and supporting young people or their parents at an early stage.

If people are in the criminal justice system or they meet social care thresholds or whatever, then we generally have a grip on them and there is support and services available. For people who are falling below those thresholds, who we know in a year or two years are likely to be causing issues, we do not necessarily have the resources or the processes in place at the moment to grip on that. We are probably not preventing things as well as we could do.

The other pressure for us in the local authority is around funding for physical measures. An obvious example of that will be something like CCTV for which we get dozens of requests. "We have ASB on our street. Can we have a CCTV camera?" Managing that kind of capital resource becomes an ongoing challenge as well as a lot of the problems that we see. Some of the environmental ASB can be solved by things like CCTV or lighting or fencing, gating; a whole range. Removing benches, whatever it is. That kind of coordination and money to design out crime is an increasing pressure for us as well.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, thank you. I am a local councillor as well. I see a lot of requests for those kinds of physical measures. There is a queue. There is a really long queue. Can I ask about Brent's approach to this?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): Brent used to have a £30,000 budget for diversionary activity for youth through the ASB team. That has been reduced to nil and that £30,000 is probably going to be spent mainly on new signage around PSPOs, dog signs, controlled drinking areas and so

on. We have to replace all the signage that we had before but we do have 20 deployable CCTV cameras which are allocated in accordance to need through our local joint action groups. We are being more proactive around the ASB offenders in that we are developing a risk matrix for ASB and gang non-minors. We are proactively preparing evidence in advance to enable Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) to be issued at court when they are finally convicted. All that evidence has been built concurrently.

We are fortunate in that the Brent Council have funded six Metropolitan police officers and the MPS have match-funded those. We now have a team of 12 officers in the borough which we target for our priorities around ASB which is very useful. We have two police officers in the team who work solely on closures and nuisance properties. That is the way we are going at Brent.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): OK. That is really interesting to hear. Can I ask Lee [Hutchings] if the work that you do is a way of maybe using local authority resources a bit more efficiently?

Lee Hutchings (Managing Director, Parkguard Limited): Yes. It has been our experience that we have seen a much clearer drive of putting more into responses, especially the early intervention on the ground side of things. We have seen a steady increase over the last couple of years consistently in putting more services out on the ground. What I think this whole process has achieved is it has made people be a lot more efficient in what they do and a lot more sensible in the way they spend, do more with what they have got and then, at the point of saturation where they cannot do any more within what they are already doing, then looking at being more realistic in what we do and do not need. It has made people be quite creative in freeing up different types of funds and using different types of pots of money more focused towards ASB.

For example, things like gate-locking services. They are usually tied in within grounds maintenance contracts and they are usually overpriced because it is an unknown when they first contract for it, but a lot of places do not need to be locked. Where a lot of boroughs do not have the evidence base to prove that, other boroughs do. Those boroughs that can do work-sensitive plans and say, "There are no issues here", you can then knock some of those locks off. That then drops the price of that overall locking contract by half. That can then be reinvested into something that is more tangible and more focused around ASB or supporting victims or whatever. We are seeing a lot of that type of behaviour but again, it is having that internal base to show where you can make those savings. It is also about having flexibility. If the problem does re-emerge there, then we add back the lock, take another off that you have now evidenced does not need it and so on. There is a lot more of this intense management of specifics of delivery which is then freeing up money and resources to do more.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you for that. The last set of questions is about what more can be done to tackle ASB, particularly around the Mayor and MOPAC.

Len Duvall AM: If I can start with you, Natasha, MOPAC. What does the Mayor's commitment involve in the Police and Crime Plan to deliver a police service that is better equipped to deal with crime and ASB locally? What do we think that is?

Natasha Plummer (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): That, particularly, Julian [Bennett] has mentioned. It is focused around those additional resources in the neighbourhoods and those DWOs who are working on the ground in those local communities and will know where these problems persist and that they are working in partnership obviously with others in those localities to address these issues because that partnership piece is really important.

The Police and Crime Plan is talking about delivering a better police service but it has a strong partnership focus, too, and that partners, certainly through the London Crime Reduction Board, are also signed up to this as a local priority and that will also put their resources and their working behind that particular priority. In terms of local focus, it means that we are all agreed that this is an issue that we should all be tackling, that we realign resources accordingly, therefore, there is resource to deal with them. Obviously, our London crime prevention funding comes in behind that to provide some practical financial support to that process also.

Len Duvall AM: Are we clear then the locally-based ward officers' mission is clear within the police service, what they do or do not do amongst the many things that were asked of these locally based resources? Let me give you an example. Are they just engaging with the public, which I have had some police officers tell me that is all they do; or are they an asset deployed in tackling crime, which I think you have to say yes to? I have to ask this question because I am not sure if the MPS is consistent across London. Tell me, what is it?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): I would very much hope it is consistent because at the beginning of the training I have talked about there is a video from Assistant Commissioner Martin Hewitt QPM and Sophie Linden, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, just saying how important this issue is and describing their role. There are a whole range of activities that we expect ward officers to do and they will need to prioritise them. Making the lives of that community better, of which ASB and bad behaviour is a key element, is absolutely what they are there for and problem solving in a partnership way is absolutely their core function.

Len Duvall AM: Do you think the MPS sufficiently, attitudinally and culturally understands where ASB can lead? I can give you the over-the-years development of the attitude of the MPS towards domestic violence, of "This is just a dispute between two parties, which we would not get involved back in the 1960s, 1950s and developing on", whereas we know domestic violence leads to murder. Are the MPS officers and the training sufficiently clued up that the victim here is facing probably great mental health, distress and, in some cases, ASB that can lead to violence and murder?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): In short, yes.

Inspector Nick Fallowfield (MPS): Can I just add to that to comment on the journey the MPS has gone on in terms of ASB which specifically answers that? When we go back to 2010 or before, we were managing some high-risk cases of ASB on our crime system. We did not have capacity to manage any more. Back there, there was always the potential for cases to slip through the cracks because we would not have known all the background.

We then move forward and we managed some on spreadsheets. It was not very joined up. We could not share the information. It was the local policing model in 2013 when we launched our Airspace system for the first time. Every single ASB incident should be reported on to Airspace the way crime is on to our crime system. That builds a rich picture. The first job that officers have to do is search for any previous linked incidents, and you combine it all together. That brought us forward light years in terms of where we are.

Combine it then with the partnership processes which are in place in every single borough of London and we have a much better grip and a much better understanding of where the ASB is taking place, particularly around vulnerable victims. If you bring it forward to now and the training that is taking place, yes, we are not perfect but over that period from 2010/11 we have seen the amount of calls for ASB halved and the amount of repeat victims halved as well. If you talk to the public they may give a different picture of whether it is a success.

Maybe some other agencies have had an increase in demand go in their direction, but genuinely I think we can say there has been significant improvements and gains in the last seven years. There is plenty more to do, as we have heard today.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Last year, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary rated the MPS "good" for ASB and I think we are better now. I am not saying we are outstanding but we are on a journey.

Len Duvall AM: Good, OK, and then there were two things that were said very early on in this session. Julian, you said the figures might be going down but we do not know why?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): It is all down to great policing or partnership working, I wish I could say that but I cannot.

Len Duvall AM: Equally, I was taken by something that Andy [Opie] said. "I have gone to a meeting. There is the public. There is all sorts of mayhem and misery going on and actually the public are not recording it". When we go back into some of the realities of those issues, if I make the calls there are other bits of the MPS that need to come into play, are there not? It is like our hierarchy. It is a bit like silo working. If I make the calls to 999 and they lob me over to 101 or what, how far, in terms of our training and mission, are we picking up people's issues of ASB? Are they are not being left off? The feeling is people give up or, on the grapevine, which is not always right, that no one in officialdom is interested in what is seen as a minor problem.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): The call handlers, whether it is 999 or 101, are trained. They will make a record of it and then eventually it will get on to the Airspace system and be dealt with by the ward officers. It is possible, as Nick [Fallowfield] was saying, that sometimes the small components can create a big picture and that is why the information needs to be joined up. An individual call of a relatively minor nature, it is possible that the significance of it would not be appreciated at the time, but hopefully it would be when they start looking at repeat calls and so on.

Len Duvall AM: It is getting that follow-up to those initial calls and how we respond to the public, which will obviously do us great favours. We are going to get on to partnership working later on and how we respond to people, to reassure them that we understand what is going on and something is likely to happen, or, if we cannot resolve it -- one-off incidents are interesting. I would like to think we could resolve those. It is the high level of repeat. Quite frankly, the level of repeat calls is becoming quite large in terms of casework you are dealing with. That is what is coming across.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Yes. It creates a big demand on us. There must be an issue for the person who is calling, whether it is legitimate calls or not, so we need to engage. Those of you that are going to Tower Hamlets later, do ask specifically because there are some quite astonishing interventions. They took their top ten callers, people may be called 50 times over a period, and the graph shows that when they put their intervention measures in it absolutely bottoms out and drops out, which is --

Len Duvall AM: Response is key. Response is key to whoever is doing it, whether it is partnership working or the police in terms of dealing with these issues. That is key to resolving.

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): Yes.

Len Duvall AM: Lastly, let us go back to the attitudinal and cultural thing within the MPS, particularly on drug-related issues around ASB. We have the local resource doing its bit. I have a group standing in a corner of 20 to 30 at various times. It gets bigger at different hours of the day. They are not really acting up but it is a pretty uncomfortable environment and a few people, visitors, caused the acting up that frighten my family. "I am on to you." It carries on and on. When it gets pushed up into the system, all right --

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): That is exactly the sort of scenario that I want ward officers to deal with because those do affect quality of life. It is not just the illegality of the drug dealing but, as you described it, it affects people's quality of life. That is exactly what I want them to do.

Len Duvall AM: Do they sufficiently get the back-up within team MPS, within their borough resources, to deal with issues like that?

Commander Julian Bennett (MPS): The situation you described, if there is 30 people causing an issue on a ward, that is beyond the capability of those particular -- yes, they would need assistance from within the borough or beyond.

Len Duvall AM: OK. We need to work harder at that because I do not think those officers feel there is sufficient back-up in raising it and the level of threat, the risk assessment of dealing with issues like that are not quite there. We might want to return to that, Chair.

Can we go to partnership working now? We will still start with MOPAC first. What is new about this mayoral administration in terms of its work with local authorities, housing providers and other agencies to strengthen London's local response to ASB?

Natasha Plummer (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): What we have done is reviewed and refined some of our partnership work and the governance structures around this and broadened out some of those partnership meetings. We had the London Crime Reduction Board. That still exists. It has refocused so that it is aligned to the things we committed to deliver through the Police and Crime Plan and that work we do with partners. Those partners are also engaged in that structure.

There are a number of groups that sit beneath that, that look at specific things, things like reducing reoffending and so on. Those boards are quite broad in their membership. The Violence Against Women and Girls [board], for instance, has some work that it does with housing providers. Where necessary and appropriate, we are bringing in wider partners and we do quite a lot of work with the health sector, which is where we have been talking about thresholds and how you get people into those services.

What we have done is broadened out those partnership functions. Over the last few years, we have established ourselves as having a strong role in convening partners and bringing people together. Local partners recognise that and appreciate that we can do that in a way that sometimes they cannot. We use that where we can to support local work, quite effectively, I would say.

Len Duvall AM: Local government partners. Do you want to comment on that?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): I do not know that I have much to add. The Police and Crime Plan is helpful in a couple of areas. The emphasis on vulnerability is clearly a good one for us. We have talked a lot about vulnerability and victims this morning. The emphasis on that is good and the emphasis on

dedicated ward officers that we have heard is a really positive move for this particular area as well. Getting to the heart of those community issues is crucial and we have many, many good examples where we have great dedicated ward officers who have been instrumental in sorting out some really difficult problems in partnership and taken that local lead.

For us, that is a positive and if we can keep those consistent and avoid abstractions and things like that and have that bottom-up approach, that will be really good. The one area for me that we have not covered where there are further opportunities is maybe through the ward panels and really making sure we are getting the most out of those. We have some great ones. We have some that are not functioning as well as they could and if they are functioning well, they are a really powerful tool for that community engagement and a way to flag up issues, making sure that the local authority and the other partners are engaged in that.

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): In terms of repeat callers, we do a lot of targeted work around repeat callers and our crime analyst will look at all the calls coming in. We also work with the London Ambulance Service quite a lot around repeat callers and vulnerabilities. He will scan all the calls and that will be what develops our hot spots and we will look in there for perpetrators and places and vulnerable people. Then we proactively go and engage with those. We send those out to our local joint action groups to be worked on by the police and the multi-agency and, with repeat callers, it runs very similarly to children who experience neglect. That is like the neglect of ASB, is the repeat callers; the ones that have got reporting fatigue and things. We very much like to target that in any way that we can and get to the bottom of it. I would say that is how we work around the repeat callers.

Len Duvall AM: Lee [Hutchings], is there any comment you want to make?

Lee Hutchings (Managing Director, Parkguard Limited): It is good there is a focus on partnership working now because in the future it is going to become even more vital. Generally, if you ask a lot of people, they feel that ASB is rising. The stats are showing it is reducing. In our experience, it has been the nature of the behaviour that has changed. The gap between traditional ASB and more serious crime is closing. The response to challenge is changing, the numbers in groups. What we are finding is we used to find lots of little groups doing silly things like a little bit of noise or a little bit of underage drinking. What we are now seeing is a group of 30 and it is down time between other activities perhaps; moped-enabled crime or something like that, and it is that return to their estate before going back out again. For us, what we are finding is we have always had very strong partnership working practices in all the areas that we work but now it is becoming more advisable because there is a lot less we can do independently, especially operation on the ground.

Len Duvall AM: I suppose one of the issues, just listening to the evidence we have had in the past and proved over the years, is the fragmentation of some of the housing issues. I am not saying all ASB takes place on council estates; that is not true. It takes place throughout our boroughs and whatever areas. But, in terms of dealing with those housing providers, it is an honest question about partnerships. If one of your partners is not performing in the way that you want to perform, can you have that honest conversation around, "Actually, you are not doing your bit and you need to do your bit because we cannot tolerate or carry on"? Part of the prevent thing, you said, Andy [Opie], at one stage, "We cannot carry on with the situation because it is only just going to get worse and worse" and bringing people to play. Do you think you have sufficiently got the power or the arrangements in your partnership working that allows for those conversations to take place, to say, "Come on, we need something more"?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): As I say, the processes and the arrangements are there but it is an issue. I hear from my neighbourhood inspectors of exactly those issues playing out and the frustrations they have in holding other agencies, sometimes, to account and getting those actions done. Something like the Community Risk is a good model because that enables it to happen but there are other times when definitely they are going above and beyond that and asking the Borough Commanders if they could meet to have their conversations at a chief exec level to try and get these things happening. The build-up to that might have taken a month or two months which is far too long for a victim.

Len Duvall AM: Yes but it does take time. Is that the same sufficient leave within the local authorities that you can escalate up if you feel that one of the partners, or some of the partners, are not playing out, they are not coming to the table in the way that you could in resolving some of your problems that may be arising?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): I think there are some blockages there, definitely. We have good working partnerships but there are definitely some blockages and some challenges but we do face the challenges head-on but I would like to see further improvement there.

Len Duvall AM: Sorry, Natasha [Plummer], I will bring you in. Are some of the blockages partly caused because people do not understand their role and what they can do in contributing to making things better, or do they just not see it as their responsibility?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): A lot of it is to do with safeguarding their budgets, in all honesty, and reaching, having access to people at the right level when you need to solve a problem. It may be many steps down that you are dealing with when really they do not have the power or authority to do what you need them to do in the timeframe that you need it to be done. That is where the difficulty is. I try to overcome this by doing a cost benefit analysis on most of our cases, retrospectively, where they have not played ball. Then I present that and say, "This is what we did before. This is the route you chose to go down. That is a cycle. You have done it before and this was the outcome and it is still the same. This is what we suggested and this is the cost of the two models". Once we overcome that, then they tend to come to the table more.

Len Duvall AM: It seems to us on the Committee, in terms of our conversations we have, we can either continue along more of the same or a shrug of the shoulders, "This is life and life is difficult". For all your successes that you have, I suspect every borough will have five cases that are outstanding and they are just not going anywhere and everyone is getting frustrated. While those five cases are getting longer and longer, we have another ten coming through the door on whatever the period or issues. What is the role of MOPAC in terms of really emphasising this? If we know that response works for everybody and we know there is an element of prevention around the nature of this ASB work and getting that response right, how can we overcome that particular problem and some of these barriers that are not across all our part? Consistency is not our watchword, whatever we may like to see, even with procedures about some of the responses that we get. What is the role of MOPAC?

Natasha Plummer (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime): There are a number of things and I would echo some of what the colleagues have said. For us, partly people do see us as a body to which they can elevate issues. Certainly, when we went out through the Police and Crime Plan consultation things were coming up through those discussions where people were telling us, "Well, at the local level we have been trying to do this for ages and it is just not working". We were able to take some of those things away and make some

higher-level representations to get some things moving. I think people now see us in a space where we can do that and we do that within the forum.

Also, other partners, in terms of our convening power, even where we do not necessarily have any authority over them, as such, to hold them to account, recognise the value that we can bring and will come to the table if we ask them to. If we think about health partners, for instance, we do not have any jurisdiction over them but they are quite well engaged in the work that we are trying to do and we have some improving routes into those organisations which helps us at our level but also can help at the local level, too.

One of the things that is really important in this space is about being able to show people that evidence base. The data is important and we use that a lot in terms of the crime data but we talked a lot about the picture not being entirely just about crime; there is other data they can bring into these conversations to evidence to people why they should be doing certain things and making that cross-benefit argument. That has been quite powerful in lots of ways. We have done that quite a lot in terms of some of our relationships with other criminal justice agencies, for instance, in terms of being able to demonstrate that if you do this, it will have a direct benefit to what you are trying to do or what you are trying to achieve. Then they can understand what it is you are asking them to do and we get on board. That is really quite a powerful way of doing that.

Len Duvall AM: OK. I think that is it, Chair. We might want to follow up with some further written questions around the space but I think I have exhausted --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I have probably a last question to the borough representatives. We have heard the work with MOPAC and the MPS. This is the perennial question I always tend to ask, but is there anything more, particularly from the boroughs and also Lee, that you would like the Mayor or MOPAC to do in addition to what we have heard about today?

Lee Hutchings (Managing Director, Parkguard Limited): The training aspect that was mentioned is quite key because the problem we had is that when this all started, you had people who were implementing it and you had people who were going to be enforcing it and the training was very mishmash, especially externally. There could be a standardised package and that would be a lot better.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you. Andy, anything?

Andy Opie (Director of Safety, Croydon Council): Nothing further to add other than what we have talked about.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): OK. Shirley?

Shirley Holmes (Community MARAC Coordinator, Brent Council): No, I do not have anything to add at this stage.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): OK. It has been very thorough. I certainly agree. There have been some recent comments about ward panels. I am a great advocate of ward panels. When properly constituted and properly representative they are very strong, but they do need the support which we have already talked about. Housing partners, particularly. Often the only sanction that some families and people listen to is their domesticity and if they are under threat because of the behaviour of their children sometimes that is the only thing that will bring them to the table and that is really important. Again, I thank you very much for your work

today. If we need to, we will write for further evidence. We will be putting this all together over the coming weeks and we shall copy that to you and publish some work around that.