

Police and Crime Committee – 20 September 2017**Transcript of Agenda Item 4: Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and Metropolitan Police Service**

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Can we welcome our guests to our monthly question-and-answer session? We understand, Mr Mayor, that you are having to leave at around 12 o'clock. We will try to work our questions around that. If we have any other questions thereafter, clearly, we have the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] and Assistant Commissioner (AC) Hewitt to help us.

First of all, I shall lead off the questions. At the top of the list, the top priority, clearly, is protecting Londoners from terrorism. We have had only very recently the incident at Parsons Green. First of all, I would like to turn to AC Hewitt to provide us with an update on the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) investigations into that recent incident, please.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)): Obviously, you will understand I will not go into any specific detail, but Members may have received the update just before coming into the room this morning. Two further people have been arrested in Wales and so that brings us to a situation where we have five people currently in custody. The search that was taking place at Hounslow has now been completed in the commercial premises, and we have two searches still going on at the two addresses in Surrey and two searches now going on in Wales in relation to the individuals who have been arrested this morning. After the response that everyone will have seen on Friday, it is still a very fast-moving and national investigation. The Counterterrorism Command here is working very closely with the Welsh Counterterrorism Unit and the forces in Wales and obviously with the Surrey Police as well. We are in the midst of the investigation. You will understand I cannot go into any more detail around that, but it is progressing and progressing at speed.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. Clearly, physical measures have been and are being put in place to attempt to prevent terrorist incidents. Does the nature of this particular incident change any other way that you need to address prevention at all or tactics at all?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): We have seen for some time with the attacks that have happened around the world that they are various in the methods and the means that the attackers are using. There is a lot of thinking that goes on within the counterterrorism world as to how you can better protect individuals, communities and places from potential attacks and we have seen a range of tactics being used in London in the attacks we have had most recently, but of course Friday's event takes us back to the issue that we had at North Greenwich Tube Station in similar sorts of circumstances. We are looking at all the available means that we have to prevent these kinds of attacks. Clearly, in open spaces and crowded spaces there have been various physical mitigation measures put in place and that work continues to look around where we have crowded spaces. The proactive work with the intelligence agencies in relation to those people who will seek to do attacks similar to the one that we had on Friday, will continue.

Of course, it fundamentally takes you into the space, when you look at the attacks that have happened in London, in terms of how we are active in terms of preventing people being radicalised and dealing with those people that we fear are being radicalised. An enormous range of activity is taking place within the Counterterrorism Command here and, as you will be aware, Mark Rowley QPM [AC, MPS) has the national lead

for the Counterterrorism Network and is working very closely with all the other agencies that are involved in trying to prevent these acts.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Turning now to you, Mr Mayor, at the weekend the level was raised, in fact, to 'critical', temporarily, as it turned out, and this caused Londoners great concern when they read and saw about that. They may have sensed that things were moving, literally, to another level. In that context, it was reduced back down again by the Prime Minister [the Rt Hon Theresa May MP].

Are you, as a responsible individual, satisfied that in tackling terrorism London is protected in the context of AC Hewitt's remarks and also adequately prepared for any future attacks?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. It is good to be at the Police and Crime Committee. Can I respond with the first part of your question about the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) analysis of threat levels?

JTAC is an independent body, no political interference, no involvement from politicians at either national level or London politicians. It looks at the threat levels across the country and for the last few years now, since 2014, it has been at 'severe'. That means an attack is highly likely. There have been two occasions - and Martin will correct me if I get this wrong - in the recent past when it is gone from 'severe' to 'critical'. That means from highly likely to imminent. The two occasions, Chairman, when it has gone to 'critical' were the short period after the Manchester bomb attack, the Ariana Grande [concert] bomb attack, and for a short period, after the Parsons Green attack.

I have to be careful what I say for the reasons that Martin alluded to, but in general terms the reason why it tends to go from 'severe' to 'critical' is if the experts believe that in general terms, there are still other people who could be around or, for example, the bomb-making factory has not been dealt with, speaking in general terms. I attended the COBRA¹ meeting chaired by the Prime Minister on Friday and was reassured by the expert advice around the table, including from Mark Rowley QPM [AC, MPS], that everything that could be done in that period of time, was being done.

The second part of your question is: in general terms, are we as safe as we can be? We are doing all that we can do within the resources that we have to keep our city safe. I say this, though: we cannot sub-contract to our 30,000 police officers and our intelligence services the job to keep us safe. All of us have a responsibility to do our bit to keep ourselves safe. If you bear in mind 30,000 to 31,000 police officers is good, but 8.7 million Londoners assisting the police is much better. Look at the last year alone. There has been an attack on a concert; there have been attacks in Tube stations, there has been an attack on two bridges, an attack on a market, an attack outside a mosque. The attempts terrorists make are to kill, injure and maim civilians and wherever civilians we have to take steps to keep ourselves safe. With the resources that I have at my disposal and the team working for me, I am reassured that we are doing all we can to keep our city safe.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you, Mr Mayor. Talking about the prevention aspect, you commissioned Lord Toby Harris, a former colleague of mine on the Metropolitan Police Authority, to provide a report around London's capacity². That was, in essence, a year ago and we are awaiting publication [of your response] very shortly, I suggest. Would you like to comment on the parts of that report that have been implemented and give us a feeling about when we may see the full report issued, to give us some confidence and reassurance?

¹ Cabinet Office Briefing Room A (COBRA) is the Government's emergency committee.

² *London's preparedness to respond to a major terrorist incident*, published on 28 October 2016.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. Thank you. One of the first things I did as Mayor was to seek reassurance around the preparedness of us to deal with a terror attack on London. Lord Harris was sent away to do that piece of work and came back with a number of recommendations.

The good news is that more than a third of the recommendations he made have been implemented. The bad news is that a number of recommendations were not for me or for London but were national things; they were to do with the Port of London and other bodies. The good news is that we are making good progress in either implementing the other recommendations or having a response. This autumn – I would expect next month – we will publish a response in relation to the recommendations and where we are on implementing those. Some of those, for example, are to do with schools, some are around airports, some are around the River Thames, and are not directly the purview of the Mayor. However, I would hope Londoners will be reassured by the collegiate way the government family and the security family have been working together to make sure that we are as safe as we possibly can be.

I tell you this. There are cities around the world that come to us for advice and expertise and assistance because of the recognition that we do a remarkable job keeping the global city that we are, as safe as we can.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Of the 118-odd recommendations, as you say, many were outside the purview of this building, but it is good that you are committing to publish the report in, say, October, hopefully, and we can see those that are being implemented, those that are in hand and those that perhaps were too much of an ask. We look forward to that and commenting on that as a Committee. It is pleasing that you are saying that, in your estimation, London is prepared in that respect for any future terrorist event.

AC Hewitt, you have given reassurance that AC Rowley has the resources available to him, again, to protect Londoners.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Can I, if I may, Chairman, just make one comment on that? It is much more than just the resources that Mark Rowley has with him and it really is important that the response to terrorism both in a preventive sense and then very much in a response sense when there has been an incident is a whole-policing system response. Those people who are badged as working within counterterrorism have very critical roles, but the rest of the organisation comes into play and has a very vital role in the response. When you look at what happened on Friday and, sadly, over the summer period, we have become very practiced at how we respond to an incident, but the work that then goes on in every community in terms of reassuring at iconic sites and, in this instance, at travel sites and then going and working directly with communities that will be particularly impacted or particularly concerned; the work that then kicks in around how we deal with potential instances of hate crime as a result of events; and then the ongoing work, in this instance, when we went to ‘critical’. It is a whole-organisation response and, again, in this one we have seen it on a national level as well. That is an important point when people talk about responding to terrorism.

Of course, at the very base of it all is that day-to-day engagement that we have with communities in terms of understanding what is going on in communities and giving people that confidence to come and talk to us about issues that are concerning them.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): Exactly, and we are going to ask one or two questions around that to the Mayor?

Unmesh Desai AM: I have two questions. Good morning, Mr Mayor. The Harris report came out sometime last year, September, I think.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): October.

Unmesh Desai AM: We have been told for quite some time now - and the Chairman has already asked you about this - that the report will be published soon, sometime in October. Do you have a date for publication of your response to the report?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The report has been published.

Unmesh Desai AM: Yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The response to the recommendations is what I am talking about. I would expect to publish the response to the recommendations in October.

Unmesh Desai AM: You do not have a date? October is just around the corner.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. If we printed it today, things are so fluid in relation to other implementation, but we think October.

Unmesh Desai AM: All right, but your response will be published sometime in October?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The progress made will be published in October, yes.

Unmesh Desai AM: Secondly, Mr Mayor, you talked about other cities around the world looking, quite rightly, to London and the work that both you at a political level and the MPS are doing to combat the terrorist threat.

The Mayor of Nice, Christian Estrosi, is calling a conference of leaders of cities across Europe to look at ways of responding to such threats and particularly better safeguard against vehicle attacks. This was reported in the press last month in *The Guardian* and in *The Washington Post*. In language that must have seemed very familiar to you, he said that some €30 million had been spent on protecting potential target areas in the city from possible vehicle attack since last year but cities needed more money to cope with the new threats. He went on to say - and this could be interpreted in different ways but I know but what he meant from the press reports that I read - and I quote, "We will not win the war with the rules of peace", but he very specifically made a plea to the French central government for more resources. As I say, that is language that will be very familiar to you. At this conference, apart from European counterparts, there will also be in attendance, as I understand, European Commissioner Julian King, who is in charge of European Union (EU) security matters.

I did mention this conference to your Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] and, if you recall, I mentioned it to you in the lift last week going up from the Assembly. Are you aware of this conference? Will you be planning to go to it or send someone to it? It is only around the corner. It is on 28 and 29 September 2017.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. Let me answer that. I am not going but let me answer the question this way. I have personally and we have lots of good co-operation with our colleagues across Europe. I met the EU Commissioner Julian King when I was in Brussels and I also met the mayors of various cities across Europe. However, you are right to remind all of us that the shift in attempts by terrorists to attack us is one that has been seen across Europe: Barcelona, Brussels, Paris, Stockholm, Rotterdam and other cities across Europe. This initiative from the Mayor of Nice is one I welcome.

We do lots of cross-border work all the time. One of the things we do is give advice on best practice and we are ready to do so and also to learn from other cities across Europe. AC Mark Rowley QPM regularly visits other cities across Europe and across the world to get the best advice, to pinch good ideas, to see what others are doing. One of the things we will continue to do is to do that.

That particular conference I will not be attending, but we will make sure that we get a good read-out in relation to any ideas from the conference and things we can learn.

Hostile vehicle mitigation is one of the things that cities across Europe are doing. One of the things the Chairman alluded to was the work around Prevent. We are, imperfect as we are, a world leader when it comes to addressing the issue of preventing radicalisation and so ideas we can give to other colleagues across Europe we will do so regularly.

Unmesh Desai AM: We have some questions coming up on Prevent and radicalisation and extremism programmes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure.

Tony Arbour AM: Mr Hewitt, were you in any way limited by a lack of resources in dealing with the incident at Parsons Green?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): No. In terms of dealing with that specific incident, I am confident that we had the resources available. Clearly, the initial response was conducted by both MPS officers and British Transport Police officers because of where it occurred and we were able to get control of that scene very quickly and deal with what inevitably was a very chaotic and confusing scenario. As soon as that situation had been declared as a terrorist incident, which happened very quickly after the initial reaction, then the Counterterrorism Command swung in with all the resources that they will bring in to start to conduct the initial investigation. Therefore, in relation to that particular incident last Friday, I am comfortable that we had enough resources to deal with what we needed to deal with. It was, in a sense, very self-contained in the geography of it. It was a very self-contained incident. It becomes an incredibly large investigation and then, as I alluded to earlier, we kick off a whole range of activities all over the city, but we were able to deal with that one comfortably on Friday.

Tony Arbour AM: Thank you. You referred to "in that incident". Are you suggesting that there have been occasions when you have not had sufficient resources?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I am suggesting that some of the incidents that we have had have clearly been far more complex and far more spread and we ended up in a situation where we have a more fluid response that is required. We have responded very effectively to all of the terrorist incidents that have occurred in London over the summer period or since March and, for that matter, as have the Greater Manchester Police in relation to the incident with the bombing up there. We have responded very well. We have been able to put the right resources - be that counterterrorism resources, armed officers or general police officers - to deal with the situation, in place, but it would be untrue to suggest that that does not stretch the organisation. Of course, it would stretch the organisation. They are very large operations, they are very complex, they move fast and they endure for a considerable period of time, but we have been able, I think, to respond very effectively to all of the incidents that have occurred in London.

Tony Arbour AM: You suggested that when counterterrorism swings in, I would not say you are going from famine to feast but are you saying that once the thing has been declared as a terrorist incident, instantly more resources become available to you?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Of course, because what they bring is the specialist teams that are there specifically to deal with terrorist investigations. They have a range of capability that is used exclusively to deal with terrorist incidents. Once we know that an incident is of a terrorist nature or is suspected of being of a terrorist nature, then it brings those resources, in the same way that we would bring specialist resources to any number of other incidents.

Tony Arbour AM: Thank you. In relation to counterterrorism, has there ever been any suggestion that it has been under-resourced either in terms of finances or manpower?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I suspect that if AC Mark Rowley QPM were here he would always say that he could use more resources and there are always additional things that we can do, but it is an area where there has been a focus for resourcing. As I say, I guess I go back to the fact that we have had probably the most challenging period that we can remember and that we have coped adequately with both the response and the investigations into those incidents.

Tony Arbour AM: Yes, I do not think there is anyone here who would suggest that you have not coped well. In the public service people will always say they could do with more, a bit like Oliver Twist. You can always do with more.

Can you think of anything that London is lacking or counterterrorism is lacking that resources could provide?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I do not really. There is not a specific area that I would go to and I would say that this is an area that Mark -- and as you would imagine, within the counterterrorism world, it is not an area that is openly discussed across the piece.

One of the single biggest challenges that we all have - and this would go across for policing generally - is our capability to deal with digital evidence and the amount of digital evidence now that exists in almost any investigation that we undertake. It exists in low-level volume crime investigations because so much of what is happening with people will be happening on their phones and so on. Particularly in terrorist investigations, there is an enormous amount of digital forensic work that goes on.

Tony Arbour AM: But that has nothing to do with money.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Everything has something to do with money because we only have the resources that we have.

Tony Arbour AM: Yes, but what you were describing is something you would need to train people to do and have them able to do it.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): It requires resource and assets.

Tony Arbour AM: To your knowledge, has there ever been an occasion when the MPS has had to request extra resources and it has been denied to them, in relation to terrorism?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Not to my knowledge. As you will be aware, the terrorism network is a national network and, as we have seen over the last couple of days, the arrests that we have done in Wales have been supported by the Welsh counterterrorism unit as well as officers from the local forces. I cannot think of an example when we have not been able to really have the asset provided to assist where it has been deemed necessary for that to happen.

Tony Arbour AM: Can I ask you, Mr Mayor and the Deputy Mayor? Can you think of an occasion when you have asked for money to assist in terrorism matters and it has been refused?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I reassure you? One of the benefits of the COBRA system is that the Prime Minister chairs the meeting and what has been remarkable – and I have observed now for 16 months, I am afraid, too often – is the collegiate way the government family and also the security family comes together.

I will give you an example. The Secretary of State for Defence will stand up – this is something called Operation Temperer; it is not a secret I am giving away – and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) will offer up skilled officers who are – I do not wish to cause offence to them – backfilled, basically, in relation to some of the buildings and people that the police look after, the protection team, and that allows the police to then front-fill to make sure we are safe.

What is remarkable about that – and I say this as somebody who is relatively new to the COBRA system when it comes to counterterror – is the collegiality not just cross-country and across departments but all those silos disappear and there is a real sense of grown-upness when it comes to a terrorist act. I have been impressed at all the COBRA meetings at how everyone just gets on with it. What was remarkable on the two occasions when it went from ‘severe’ to ‘critical’ was the planning and preparation. You just press a button and, just to reassure Londoners and also those around the country, our response to counterterrorism is something we should be really proud of.

Tony Arbour AM: It would be wrong to say, would it – and I am simply referring to terrorism matters and security matters – that you could ever claim that it is under-resourced and that the Government in terms of your collegiality would ever be backwards in providing the resources to deal with the matter adequately?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are two separate issues which we cannot blur. One is the response to a specific attack; two is terrorism generally. Experts like Dave Thompson QPM [Chief Constable, West Midlands Police] from the National Police Constabularies, Craig Mackey [QPM, Deputy Commissioner, MPS] and others have talked about the fact that you cannot disaggregate counterterror policing from policing. The example Craig Mackey gave at the last Police and Crime Committee³ was that you could say radiology has fantastic funding but that does not mean the National Health Service (NHS) is well funded.

To give you a simple example, the Chairman referred to Prevent. I know we will talk about this later on, but the ability of us to have good community policing allows the counterterror teams to receive the intelligence because of the confidence the public has from that. To give you another example from the response to the Westminster Bridge attack, some work was done which showed that only, roughly speaking, one third of the officers who responded were from the counterterror team; the other two thirds were from mainstream policing. At the Manchester bombing, it was far higher and we provided support there as well. There are specific examples of immediacy, brilliant teamwork and good collegiality.

³ This refers to the meeting of the Committee on 20 July 2017.

People phone in. Police officers phone and say, "Can I come in and help out?" People cancel their leave. People go up above and beyond. You can do that for a short period of time but it is not sustainable.

Therefore, in general terms, as far as terrorism, I rely upon the expert advice from Craig Mackey, Dave Thompson - who is a Chief Constable - and others. For specific incidents, my personal experience is that we are very good.

Tony Arbour AM: It would never be appropriate in your experience to say that, in terms of a response to terrorism, it would fall short because of lack of resources?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I can answer it again if you want.

Tony Arbour AM: No, I understand what you are getting at. You are saying - and indeed Mr Hewitt has said - that in responding to an incident ordinary police officers are taken off their ordinary duties to deal with the matter. I do understand that, but I am talking about the response when the incident occurs. It could never be said in your experience that the response by the police and the security service was lacking because of a lack of resources?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In, unfortunately, the four incidents we have had in London since I have been the Mayor, the response has been fantastic. I have no criticisms at all.

Tony Arbour AM: All right. Thank you very much.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I am going to bring Len in. The point here to be thinking about is the response to an incident by the emergency services has been incredibly effective post-incident and there is no doubt around that. There is a separate debate, which we are getting on to, around the Prevent piece, is preventing terrorism with the assistance of 8 million Londoners. There is an acceptance around abstraction --

Len Duvall AM: That is what I want to talk about.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I will not steal your thunder but there is an exception - well, I will do a bit - there is an exception around abstraction from our ward teams for specific events. That has just been highlighted. Len, I do not want to completely steal your thunder.

Len Duvall AM: I am glad we clarified. When we talk about extra resources, it is about redeploying the people that you have. You do not have extra teams. It is taking people off the day-to-day tasks in times of woe, to do it. It is not extra. It is actually redeployment and the right priority in times of woe.

What we really want to understand is on the abstraction issue - because that is one of the challenges. Life does not stand still while we deal with terrorism acts and crime carries on - that you have the suitable focus and challenge internally in the organisation to make sure that we have a sensible abstraction policy that is used in times of woe for the right purposes and they go back to their day jobs as quickly as possible. Can you give us that assurance that that is the case? In times of woe, it is very difficult and we all support it because that is what you need to do. It is about the capacity of policing that we are talking about.

There are two dual aims, it seems, on military support in terms of - and the Mayor said it - backfilling roles or freeing up other people to do other issues. It is also about a Prevent activity there. I can see that. Equally, I can see a time when the MPS is going to call on - and you have probably called on - some specialists in other

constabularies to come in and when you may need to call on more mainstream resources to help the policing of London.

Is that constantly under review? Can you give us assurance that there really is a sensible way that you are carrying out abstractions? We have made some terrible mistakes in the past and it does depend on the leadership who is seeing that. Who is holding the ring on that? Is that at your level or is that somewhere further down the food chain? We just want to be assured that someone is keeping an eye on this.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I can assure you that someone is keeping an eye on that. If we take perhaps the sequence of events and what would happen in one of those particularly difficult scenarios, you will get something like Friday that will happen. It will become fairly clear fairly quickly what we are dealing with and, as I said in response to the last question, it would be declared as a counterterrorism issue.

There is a group that sits routinely, but will sit as a special case if we get an attack, which is the Security Review Committee. That is internal meeting, chaired by a Deputy Assistant Commissioner. In response to what we think the incident is telling us we need to do, that Committee will start saying, "We need this level of resource". You understandably have your immediate dealing with the scene. You then potentially - and if you think of the events that we have had - have a number of other scenes. You may have hospitals; you may have a man-hunt; you have a whole range of things. That Committee, at which there will be senior representation from the rest of the organisation and particularly my bit of the organisation, which has the majority of the staff working locally in boroughs, will fund what the requirement is.

As you rightly point out, what that will also be doing is setting a requirement nationally because every terrorist incident has an impact and so the same discussions will be going on around the country. We then end up with two things. We end up with how we are going to respond to the actual incident and where we need to put people, and then what we would describe as what our policing posture is going to be for the rest of normal policing while we are dealing with this particular incident. As I said earlier, we would be dealing with all the community reassurance and all the other factors that we would be playing with.

That meeting will routinely sit - and by that I mean probably twice a day - reviewing what we have to do in terms of resources and how we are managing resources. I can absolutely assure you, that from my side of the table - because what will be sitting above that will be the Management Board with the Commissioner [Cressida Dick QPM], Mark Rowley and us lot - from my side of the table I am pushing continually about how I want my people back because they need to be back doing what they are doing because it is putting increased pressure on the officers and staff where they are, so we work through that process.

Clearly, if you get, as we had in Friday's incident, a movement of the threat level, 'critical' has a number of things that happen with it; but we are very measured - and we have become, sadly, much more experienced at this over the last six months - we are very measured in the way that we respond because of course it is great jumping up to things but it is actually quite hard coming back down. The Mayor alluded to the fact that we work with other countries. We had very interesting discussions with both Paris and Brussels about the difficulties they have had with coming down from a really high level because it then becomes a public reassurance issue. We are very measured in the way that we do that. The Security Review Committee meeting is routinely deciding and then from my side we will be pushing, saying, "When can we release?"

Just on the final point, we will bring people in from the counterterrorism network and we will occasionally bring in expertise for an incident into London. I know we are going to talk later about the Grenfell [Tower] Fire but we have bought a number of experts in for some of the things we have needed to do in relation to that investigation. We are not at a stage where we need to bring in, if you like, general policing and we

certainly have not got anywhere close to that in the last few incidents, but that would always be something that we would consider. What you have sitting in the National Police Chiefs' Council is, if you like, the resourcing hub. Where a force has an incident that it feels is going to stretch it to the point where it may need mutual assistance, they put their bid into the resourcing hub at Victoria Street and they will then bring people in from different parts of the country, but I can assure you that we have a very rigorous process. Certainly, coming in from my angle, we are constantly challenging and pushing about releasing our officers as quickly as you can when it is safe to do so, so that they can go back and do their normal duties.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Just to add, Len, two seconds' worth, on Friday the conversations I was having with senior police was about how we have football matches in London and London Fashion Week in London, in addition to the various needs there are and there is a - small T - tension in relation to me saying, "We have to deal with the terror stuff but there is other stuff, business as usual, that is taking place as well".

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

Peter Whittle AM: Mr Mayor, you are the symbolic head of London and a lot of people listen to you. In the question earlier, you were asked about whether you thought London was adequately protected and you basically said yes. Do not you think, therefore, that people will start to get rather worried that you think it is adequately protected as things stand? It is that complacency, really.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. I understand the point you are alluding to, which is that balance to be struck between being vigilant and alert but never complacent. The language used by Neil Basu [Deputy Assistant Commissioner, MPS] recently was that we are not seeing a spike here in relation to terrorist attacks; we are seeing a shift: Barcelona, Paris, Brussels, Stockholm, London, Manchester. Just looking at the last quarterly figures I have, the last figures we have show the number of people arrested for terrorism-related offences rose 68% to a record 379 in the 12 months before June, the highest number of terrorist arrests since records began, and a number of people have been charged and prosecuted. That is the context. Therefore, the question is: with the resources we have, are we using them the best we can? The answer is yes.

There is a separate point: do we need more resources? Yes. I have been saying for the last 16 months that London needs more resources. The cuts that have been made are not sustainable and our ability to keep our city safe is made harder by these cuts. I have been saying for the last 16 months that the Government has to do a U-turn and reverse these cuts so we can keep our city safe.

However, are we one of the safest global cities in the world? Yes. Do we have the best police service in the world? Yes. Could we do with more police officers? Yes.

Peter Whittle AM: The thing is, though, Mr Mayor, this will come as rather a surprise to people when you say that we are in the one of the safest cities in the world.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Globally.

Peter Whittle AM: Globally. The fact is that you say we have had a spike --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): A shift.

Peter Whittle AM: -- a shift, but these things are going to happen more and more. Basically, what you are saying is that essentially, going forward, it is just going to have to be normalised? Essentially, what is happening is that your response is, "We are adequately protected enough and this is how we will respond

going forward”, but the fact is that there are simply going to be more and more incidents, but your approach will not necessarily change.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Firstly, to be fair, Peter, that is not what I said. Terrorism should never be normalised. Terrorism is --

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): We did not hear that, Mr Mayor. We did not hear about normalisation. I did not hear that. Continue. I was challenging my colleague [Assembly Member] Whittle, sorry.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. What is important is that we are doing what we can to deal with a situation where there is increased activity by terrorists who want to kill, injure and maim. We cannot pretend it is not happening. There is a discussion we are going to have shortly about the Prevent side of this, but we have to take action to make sure we do what we can to deal with the other parts of, if you like, the spectrum, which is the policing side, the security side and the prosecution side. Of course, it should never be normalised but I have to accept the fact that recently cities across the Western world have been attacked by terrorists.

The good news is we are thwarting many attacks. If you look between the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby and March of this year, 13 terrorist attempts were thwarted. If you look between March of this year and now, there have been six terrorist attempts thwarted and, I am afraid, four ‘successful’ terrorist attacks in London. That is 10 in the space of a few months versus 13 in the space of four years. You can pretend it is not happening, but it is happening.

In my job as the Mayor, my biggest priority is keeping our city safe. I will be an advocate, lobbyist and champion in relation to more resources for these guys, but also I will be saying to Londoners that we have a role to play as well. Eight point seven million eyes and ears are more powerful than 31,000 eyes and ears.

Peter Whittle AM: I will just ask you and this is it then. Finally, basically, we have what we have, but would you not think of something, for example, like making sure that many more policemen are armed. In the case of the Borough High Street attack, one of the police officers tried to fend these people off with a baton. Surely it requires a complete shift in the way that we look at this these.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Maybe I will let AC Hewitt answer the question about whether he thinks having 30,000 police officers with guns makes us more safe or less safe.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I do not think that we are pushing at all for routine arming of police officers. As a result - and I can remember - after the November 2015 attacks in Paris on the Bataclan and the Stade de France - we sat down as a management board to look at, if we had a multi-seated event like that in London, would we have enough armed officers to get to the scenes quickly enough to deal with the offenders and we realised that we did not.

We embarked then on a programme of armed uplift, as it is called, to give us considerably greater levels of officers who are patrolling as armed response officers and officers who are also more specialist counterterrorism firearms officers. We have been through an accelerated programme to get those officers in place. They are highly trained; they are very visible. You will have noticed the higher level of armed response vehicles particularly in iconic sites and they are able to respond very quickly. We have seen in all the incidents that we have had, sadly, over the summer, extremely quick responses by those officers and I have to say, in terms of the attack at London Bridge, also with colleagues from the City of London Police whom we work very closely with, which is great, and equally we work with the British Transport Police.

The fundamental issue that sits underneath all of this is our relationship with the communities of London if we have communities that are confident to talk to us about concerns they have about counterterrorism. That relationship is helped by the fact that the police are largely and routinely unarmed. We have about 9% of our officers who are armed. They are all highly trained. They are specific to the role that they undertake. They are in a position to deal with situations. We have demonstrated very clearly that we are able to deal with those situations.

Everyday policing in London does not require a police officer to carry a firearm. It brings with it many more challenges than it solves. We need to have our officers being able to protect themselves and there are a range of less lethal options that we provide officers so that they are able to deal with the kinds of situations that we face.

What you described at Borough Market, was less a lack of armed officers but more about police officers, both off duty and in the case you described of the British Transport Police officer on duty, who saw their duty to go and try and protect people in very, very dangerous circumstances. I admire them for doing that. Those examples do not take us to a place where we want to try and have every police officer walking around with a firearm and all the training and community relation implications that would come with that.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Peter, I am going to move on now.

That takes us nicely into the Prevent discussions. Susan, did you have a very quick question? We need to move on.

Susan Hall AM: It is very quick, yes. We are very honoured, really, in this Committee to know exactly what the police are doing, we know the resources you have, we know the skills that you have and we admire and thank you for that. I believe that the people of London need reassurance from their Mayor. Therefore, do you think it is appropriate that the first things that came out of your mouth after the Parsons Green event are comments upon the funding of the MPS? Do you not think at that time you should have been reassuring the public? The public do not have the amount of information we have about the resources and the abilities of our police. Yes or no? Do you think you should have just gone straight in for the funding or not?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It is a fair question, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is not a yes/no question, Chairman, with respect --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It is a fair enough question. Comment on it, please.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am quite clear that if I am asked a direct question on whether our police have enough resources, the answer is no. If I am asked a question, I like to give a direct answer. The answer is that our police did a brilliant job on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and today. Do I think we are more safe if we have more resources? Yes. Do I believe the Conservative Party is to blame? Yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We will move on, but the point was a well-made one because people out there do not have the access to information that many do have. At that heightened time of worry and concern, the question was whether it was appropriate to say at that particular time, "Is there enough money?" Let us move on to Prevent now.

We have already alluded to engagement with Londoners and getting eight million Londoners to support us in the cause of preventing terrorism. This Committee has busied itself in the past challenging the previous and

this Mayor around preventing extremism and around greater engagement with Londoners. The question is initially to the Mayor and I know Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM] is going to come in with some more questions.

We have recommended that there needs to be greater engagement and openness with Londoners about tackling extremism. Is this something, Mr Mayor, you accept can be done? Over the period of your mayoralty, what have you been doing to encourage it?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Firstly, Chairman, I revisited in preparation for the Police and Crime Committee a report you - in a different composition - did in December 2015. I say this in a non-patronising way: it is an excellent report, with a number of recommendations that hopefully you will see we are implementing. We have taken on board some of the recommendations you made, even though it was a previous Committee before our administration: some of the stuff that Sophie [Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime] has been doing around the CONTEST Board, the work working with the London Crime Prevention Board, the work we are doing around neighbourhood policing, the work we are doing working with those who lead the London Councils response to Prevent; it is implementing some of the stuff you talked about.

However, I am not going to pretend we are not frustrated in relation to the delay in the Government's CONTEST strategy. We are frustrated in relation to the response to [Dame] Louise Casey's excellent report [*The Casey Review into Opportunity and Integration, 2016*] but, by and large, we think preventing young people being radicalised is really important. It is not the case, as much as we would like to think it is the case, that the people who are trying to kill, injure and maim us come from somewhere else to this country to blow us up or to stab us or to do all things they have been doing. I am afraid the bad news is that there are people born and raised in our city who are, if you like, groomed and radicalised and we have to do a far better job at stopping them being radicalised. There is always more work we can do.

It is not simply a policing issue; it is not simply a City Hall issue. There is there is a role for us to play providing leadership. At the moment, that pan-London leadership does not fall with City Hall for reasons you will appreciate. There are statutory duties on local authorities and others. We are in discussions with the Home Office in relation to trying to improve the position of Prevent in London.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I shall bring Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM] in and Unmesh [Desai AM] because there are concerns - and I think Unmesh will comment on this - around things like radicalisation in prisons, which sits outside your purview, and returning jihadists, which again sits slightly outside.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I just want to pick up in terms of one of our recommendations in our report, which was around bringing the Prevent programme to London under you and your office because there was a huge disparity between the boroughs, which we did not think made sense, and there was a huge 'secret squirrel' agenda around this. We have no idea what is going on, what is working and what is not working. I was wondering what progress you had made with the Home Office on trying to bring some of this under your control.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am happy to bring in Sophie [Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime] in relation to the conversations she has been having with the Home Office. It is not great news but it is progress we are making. Just to remind those who do not know who are watching this, the way it works is that there is money that comes from the Home Office directly to councils for specific projects, which is an issue that you would know well about from your contacts with the community. Sophie has been in discussions with the Home Office and I will let Sophie come in to give you an update on those discussions.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I chair the CONTEST Board, which is on pan-London strategic leadership around this, and we have been having discussions with the Home Office. It is not so much discussions around taking the Prevent duty away from local authorities because a lot of this does have to be locally delivered, but we are having discussions about ensuring that we can commission pan-London and we can have a view of what is happening pan-London, of exactly what you are talking about, about what works, what is good practice, how we can make sure that everybody gets up to the standard of the best. We are ongoing with those discussions and we really hope we will be able to come to some agreements around that. Through the CONTEST Board - and actually, one of the recommendations from your report was that we should be more open and accessible - we have been putting the minutes of the meetings onto the website. There are three lots of minutes from January onwards. You will be able to see that we have had discussions around what is happening in each of the local authorities, how that links into the London Prevent Board chaired by the Chief Executive of Waltham Forest, Martin Esom, and what good practice there is. We are having those discussions as well as the negotiations with the Home Office.

Also, in terms of picking up on the prison population and extremism and radicalisation within prisons, whilst we do not have any direct control or levers around that, we have had discussions via the CONTEST Board with the offender management to make sure that everybody around the table understands what is needed and where the gaps are. That is part of the work that we have done through the CONTEST Board. That is pan-London, looking at all the different aspects around prisons, around local authorities and around how we really can prevent radicalisation.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Have you made any progress with the Home Office in terms of those boroughs that are not getting funding when, actually, they are just the other side of the road within communities and they do not fit in the borough boundaries? Have you made any progress there? That was a huge concern.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): That is certainly a discussion that I have had with a number of boroughs and with the Home Office and that officers have been having because that is an issue. As with every issue around policing and crime, it is not a respecter of borough boundaries and people do move between different authorities. It is certainly discussions we are having and negotiations we are having. It is very much on the agenda.

Unmesh Desai AM: I have three or four questions to ask of the Mayor and his Deputy Mayor. Just carrying on, Mr Mayor, speaking very generally, it is important that we do not throw out the baby with the bathwater. Yes, Prevent has been heavily criticised. It does need to be reformed and rethought. I personally believe that any strategy that does not win the hearts and minds of the communities it is aimed at -- and let me rephrase that actually. There is a consensus that radicalisation concerns us all, but you have to win the hearts and minds of the communities that a particular strategy is aimed at specifically.

Having said that it needs to be reformed. Would you agree with me that, so far, the Prevent programme is the only show in town? The Muslim Council of Britain talked two years ago about launching its own version of Prevent. I may be wrong but I have yet to hear from them. It is important that we build on the good points of Prevent and not abandon it completely.

What I am really concerned about is that we do not lose another generation of our young people in particular to the wrong sort of ideology and influences. We have to be courageous here and stick our necks out and sometimes say things that are unpopular. I know over the years you have spoken out on this particular issue. I have. I have been criticised. It is not nice to be accused or whatever language is thrown at one in terms of supporting the general aims of Prevent. However, my question to you is: would you agree that, as things stand right now, the Prevent programme is the only show in town?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. Can I welcome the way you asked your question? As imperfect as Prevent is, what is behind it is something that we should all support. You can tinker and tweak and change things and Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM] has alluded to some of the challenges and some of the problems with funding and who gets what and who misses out, but the idea is a good one, and I speak as somebody who in Government tried to improve the Prevent programme. There are concerns around wording and about guilt by association and all those sorts of things. None of those issues are insurmountable, by the way.

We have to make sure that we understand that if we do not occupy this space, there is a vacuum and there are people in bedrooms in London being brainwashed, groomed and radicalised through the internet. We need to think about counterpropaganda. We need to think about positive role models. We need to think about a sense of belonging. We need to look at the links with deprivation. We need to give credibility to those whose voices are heard. We need to empower them. All these things need to be done.

My frustration is with the lack of pace in relation to the progress we can make with the Government because at the moment all the stuff that Sophie and the team are doing is, if you like, goodwill because we believe in it and stuff, not because the Government has given us commissioning powers and all the rest of it. You are right that it is the only serious show in town.

Unmesh Desai AM: Just to carry on, Mr Mayor, one of the recommendations of this Committee in the past was that you should commit yourself to exploring new ways of commissioning activity to prevent extremism. I am talking here about the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) funding in particular.

I do not know if you have heard of a group called Minhaj-ul-Quran, which is a worldwide institution. Minhaj-ul-Quran's headquarters or the main office in London is in Forest Gate in my constituency. I recall a discussion with the General Secretary some three or four years ago and this is what he had to say, "We support the general aims of Prevent. We support the work the police are doing" - and in fact they work with the police in terms of training programmes and so on - "but" - and these words have always stuck in my mind - "until and unless you challenge the ideological foundations of what these people say about Islam, you will never win the battle". Minhaj does a lot of educational work.

Would you look at ways - and indeed your Deputy [Mayor] - of seeing how MOPAC funding in terms of educational work can be directed or redirected towards groups that seek to promote a positive image of, in this case, Islam but also, more importantly, take on people who put out the wrong interpretation of Islam, as we are talking about in this particular case? A much more proactive educational programme is needed.

As I say, I do agree with this particular individual and the work of Minhaj internationally. The world leader, Dr Qadri, issued a fatwa against al-Qaeda some years ago and has been very outspoken. He has written books in this respect and has spoken all over the world. The Home Office and the police do work with them; certainly in Newham they do. Until and unless we challenge the ideological foundations of the wrong message about Islam - in this case, as I say, we are talking about Islam - terrorism respects no religion and it will be difficult for us to win this battle in the long term.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sophie [Linden] talked about some of the work that MOPAC are doing in relation to making progress on Prevent with the Home Office and the other work City Hall is doing around social integration and social mobility. Matthew Ryder, the Deputy Mayor [for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement], is doing work there.

We have to be a bit careful. I am not sure you were saying this, but it would be unfair to characterise the British Muslim community as a community that has not condemned unequivocally the acts of terrorists and also taken on theologically some of the concerns raised. I remember in 2008 as a Minister seeing examples of British Muslim clerics and others taking on the ideology and the jurisprudence relied upon by those preachers of hate. You will be aware that shortly after the London Bridge attack you had a fatwa from British Muslim scholars saying they would not bury those responsible for the terrorist attacks with a Muslim burial because they were 'outside the fold'.

Look, of course there is more and it would be great if that was amplified and more people knew about that. You will also be aware, of course, of the leader in the Finsbury Park Mosque who stopped the passers-by, frankly speaking, beating to death the terrorists and he reminded them of the Muslim teachings and the work he has been doing there. Look, there is lots of work taking place. If we can use whatever means possible to amplify that good work and to show the minority of individuals who are groomed and brainwashed the other way and what true Islam is, that is a good thing.

Unmesh Desai AM: I would ask you to take note of the work of the Minhaj-ul-Quran. Just moving on, an inquiry was commissioned by David Cameron [former Prime Minister] in December 2015 - this was in response to their then partners in the Coalition Government, the Liberal Democrats - to look at foreign funding of extremist Islamist groups and, in particular, alleged links with Saudi Arabia. This report was due to be published in spring 2016 but the Home Office has since admitted that it may never be released due to sensitive contents.

Do you think the Home Office should publish this report on the foreign funding of such extremist groups and, if so, will you write to the Home Secretary and put all the pressure that you can, using the powers of your office, to ensure this report is published and is in the public domain?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): My problem is that I am not sure if it is sensitive and so --

Unmesh Desai AM: That is what we are told by the Home Office.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It is a Government-issued report and so you can pressurise them to issue it. The question stands but --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The only point I am making, Unmesh, is that there are various theories about why this report has not been published and we know of the concerns people have about contracts with some of the countries that are involved. What I will say is that it is quite clear that there is now evidence of interference from other countries in relation to radicalisation, but I do not know enough about the report and the concerns the Government has around sensitivities and stuff.

Unmesh Desai AM: Perhaps you could look into it. Earlier this year both The Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn MP [Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Labour Party] and Tim Farron MP [former Leader of the Liberal Democrats] called on the Government to publish its report, which allegedly focused on the role of Saudi Arabia in particular. However, as I say - and I appreciate that you do not have direct powers but certainly the powers of your office - add your weight to that of the two leaders, Tim Farron MP and The Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn MP, and see what you can do. I will leave it at that, Chairman.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you. Just to finalise on this before we move on, the Committee recognises the strength of the of the response but also the importance of the prevention and Prevent and the fact that actually at the moment we have not got to where we want to be, based on the earlier Committee reports around working with the Home Office and leading in that manner. We will return to that at a later date.

You mentioned Matthew Ryder, Deputy Mayor [for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement], and again I am impressed by the work that he is doing. I know he is drawing up a plan and a funding budget that is actually about integration and some of the things we are talking about. That is reassuring.

Talking about reports, I had frustrations around the Casey report [Dame Louise Casey, *The Casey Review into Opportunity and Integration*, 2016] because that was commissioned and then appeared to get buried and so I do not quite know where that particularly went.

Now I want to move on, if I may, to the Grenfell [Tower fire]. Clearly, the MPS has now opened a criminal investigation into the fire but, really, we want some questions towards the Mayor around this.

Andrew Dismore AM: Before we go on, I just have one question on counterterrorism and that is this.

We have looked at response after the event. We have looked at 'Prevent' with a capital P. It is a resource issue. It is 'prevent' with a small P. It is the gathering of intelligence. The gathering of intelligence, as we have heard from Craig Mackay [QPM, Deputy Commissioner, MPS] time and time again, starts at the community level. If we do not have the community officers on the beat, we do not get that intelligence coming through.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Exactly.

Andrew Dismore AM: You cannot say whether any of the recent incidents could have been prevented if we had had more police officers in the communities gathering intelligence that way, but is that really where the resource issue bites into counterterrorism?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. One of the reasons why we were so keen to increase the number of dedicated ward officers (DWOs), if you like the bobbies on the beat, was to build up that trust and conference between Londoners and the police. That is what policing by consent is all about. If you speak to any police expert, they will tell you about the importance of that policing. That is why we have been saying this for the last 16 months. I know some people do not like it, but we need more resources. I know some people are embarrassed by it, but we need more resources. I will not stop saying that until we get the resources we need.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We will get onto frontline policing in some other questions.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes, but I thought it was important to put that point --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Yes, all right.

Andrew Dismore AM: -- because it is the third strand of this issue which has not been covered.

Going on to the Grenfell [Tower fire], Mr Mayor, you have raised the question of trust and confidence in the police. One of the issues that has arisen around the incident has been the question of trust and confidence in the police inquiry. How are you trying to ensure that that trust and confidence of the community is built? There was a lot of suspicion at the beginning, rightly or wrongly, about what had been going on, about the number of fatalities and so forth, and all sorts of horses were set running and some people were making rather unfortunate political capital at what has been going on. How are you trying to maintain and build the trust and confidence of the community? How are you going to try to ensure that the Inquiry is thorough and transparent?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Firstly, can I thank you for the advice you have given my office in relation to Inquiries from your previous experience.

Look, when I have been attending the area - Notting Hill, North Kensington - over the last few weeks, what is clear to me in relation to what the residents want is that they want to know what happened in relation to Grenfell Tower in the real sense of the word. They want justice to be done and for those responsible for the lead-up to and what we saw in Grenfell Tower to have justice done and that means criminal prosecutions and I will come to that in a second. Thirdly, they want lessons learned so that it never happens again.

What has happened over the course of the last few weeks and months is a breakdown of trust and confidence between the local community and those in positions of power and influence and I mean that in the loosest sense of the term. People in positions of power and influence in the eyes of the community have let that community down for years. A public inquiry can be a useful vehicle to get to the bottom of what happened, bearing in mind, as you will be aware, that they cannot decide upon civil or criminal liability but the facts are uncovered. We saw it with Hillsborough; we saw with other public inquiries how useful they have been as a vehicle.

The concern the police have - and I will let Martin [Hewitt] refer to it later on - is that sometimes for the best of intentions, in relation to trying to get to the bottom of the truth with a public Inquiry, you can inadvertently cause problems with a criminal prosecution in relation to *sub judice*, witnesses being cross-questioned and all the other issues that I will let Martin allude to. What I do know has been happening between Martin, the Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] and the Chair of the public Inquiry is making sure that good intentions do not lead to an outcome nobody wants, which is - God forbid - a prosecution not being able to take place because of the public Inquiry. It is difficult conversation they have had and I will let Martin respond.

I will say this, though, before I let Martin respond. The reality, is that the public Inquiry terms of reference are not what the public want. They are not what the residents want. There are real concerns with the terms of reference. I have been saying to the Government that if the public Inquiry is not the right vehicle, look into the whole issue of social housing and I have suggested a social housing commissioner to look at the wider issues of the years of neglect that led to the situation in the Grenfell Tower. If we are not careful, we could have the worst of all worlds in relation to not knowing the full facts, not learning the right lessons and justice not being done.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Actually, there is to quite a strong degree - amongst the residents, amongst the survivors, amongst those who lost people in the fire - a level of confidence in the criminal investigation. We were there on the night in responding and the investigation began literally that next morning. I have had overall responsibility for that since then.

We have had an investigation that has run in a number of strands, which is worth just explaining. Clearly, there was the immediate response to the fire on the night. We then have had the operation that is going on at the

tower with what we would call disaster victim identification, which is the incredibly difficult and important role of being able to repatriate all the remains of people that are in that building and bring them out in a dignified way and in a way that allows us, as best we can, to identify those remains and then return them to their families. That has been an extraordinary process, an unprecedented process that we have undertaken at the tower and we are still in the process of undertaking. We should probably have concluded that phase by the end of October.

It is painstaking, as you might imagine, and I am not in this forum going to go into some of the detail of the intensity of what happened there, but it is very distressing and it is a very challenging role for people to undertake, working really closely with the Coroner, Dr Wilcox, and the extraordinary operation that she has created at the Westminster Coroner's Court there. As of yesterday, which was made public, we have positively identified 60 people, which is really positive for those families. We will continue to work through in relation to that.

One of the very first things that we do in any major investigation - and it is important to point out that outside a counterterrorism event, this is probably the largest and most complex investigation we have ever undertaken, an investigation into what is the deaths of probably somewhere between 75 and 80 people - we deploy Family Liaison Officers (FLOs). We have deployed more FLOs than in my experience I have ever known to all the families of those people who potentially have lost somebody in in the building or who were in the building themselves. Those FLOs have developed an extraordinary relationship with the residents. Then we have a broader community engagement process that we kicked off on the day after with the communities in and around, which you know very well and there are communities that are equally impacted.

We have the objective of identifying if there are individuals or corporations or organisations that are responsible for that fire. We are conducting a criminal investigation, which means that we have to produce our evidence to the criminal standard of proof to get us to a point where we are able to present that to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) if a prosecution is appropriate.

One of the unique things - it is probably fair to go as far as 'unique' in my experience - is, in many cases when you start a big complex investigation you might not know at that stage who the suspects or suspect organisations are and that is definitely true here. Equally, in this case we do not even know yet what the offences might be because there are a range of offences that could be in play here. From ones that we have been very public about, the potential for corporate manslaughter or manslaughter by gross negligence in the case of individuals and there will be an entire range of regulatory offences around building regulations, fire regulations and a whole host of others.

We are starting from a situation where what we are looking at in primary terms is the original construction of the building, the refurbishment of the building, the management of the building and then the response by all agencies on the night. That is the core of our investigation. We have identified over 2,500 witnesses at this stage and we have taken initial witness accounts from about 1,000 people. In those four stages that I talked about in terms of organisations and institutions, there are over 330 organisations, companies and corporate bodies who have had some role in each of those stages. We are working through enormous amounts of documentary evidence. That is going to take us time.

Fundamentally, what sits at the centre of all of that is a very large and complex fire investigation and so we have the Building Research Establishment (BRE), which is conducting that with our forensic people, and they are going through that process because there is plenty out there in the media about what may or may not have caused that fire to behave in the completely unprecedented way that it behaved. I guess where we get to at the end will be a combination of a number of factors that have come together at that point to do that. That is

a painstaking process that we have to go through and, as I say, the really important point is that when we get to the end of that process, it has to be sufficiently robust that it meets the criminal standard of proof and it goes into a criminal trial, potentially, which is an adversarial process where, clearly, those we are accusing will be defending themselves. Therefore, it has to be done in a very methodical fashion.

We started the investigation the day after. I have in the pure investigation and family liaison about 180 officers working on this and on top of that are all the officers on a daily basis, the Disaster Victim Identification Officers and the search officers who are in the building itself. It is an extraordinary investigation.

We have had senior CPS lawyers working alongside us from the outset. In fact, the lawyer that we have is the lawyer who worked on the Lakanal House investigation in Southwark and so has real context in relation to that.

We are continually updating the families and all those affected, either individually through FLOs, individually through the senior investigating officers with those who have lost people, in group meetings - we had a meeting at the beginning of this week - and through a whole range of communication mechanisms to make sure that all those who are affected understand what we are doing and understand how we are doing it. It is absolutely clear to me, as the Mayor has said, that the overriding imperative that comes from those family members is that they want people to be held accountable, those people who should be held accountable for what caused that fire and ultimately caused those deaths.

That is the role that our criminal investigation will undertake. I have met personally twice with the judge and the Chair of the Inquiry and his senior team because there is a tension between a public inquiry where, quite properly, his objective is to put all the information that he gets out into the public domain, as you would expect, and our requirement to protect and manage evidence as we go forward. It is really complex because, in one sense, they could say, "Just tell us the bits that are not going to be significant and that is OK", but, as I said at the very beginning, we do not know what is going to be significant as we work our way through over 30 million documents and interview all sorts of people. As you would understand, in any complicated investigation, we would have a very phased process as to when we interview people and how we interview people and how evidence and information is disclosed to those people as we go forward. Therefore, we are working very closely with the team. We recently had his senior lawyers come out and visit the site and go through the site and understand the work that we are doing there. They visited the major incident room to understand the scale and the nature of how we investigate a serious crime. They have also sat with our forensic people to look at the process that we are undertaking with the BRE. We will continue to work forward.

I have absolutely no desire to frustrate the aims of the public Inquiry - of course I do not - and, clearly, there is a legal requirement on me to share everything with the public Inquiry, but where I need to hold the line is in terms of protecting the integrity of our criminal investigation. Those individuals who have been directly or indirectly affected understand what we are doing. It is confusing for the general public when you have an investigation over here and you have an inquiry over there. How does that fit together? We are doing our best to communicate clearly and doing our best to work with the inquiry to communicate that because there are lots of things that the Inquiry will be able to speak about very quickly and needs to speak about.

Just to be very clear, in the very first Prime Minister-chaired meeting that I was at and the Mayor was at, we made it very clear that if we uncover any bit of evidence that has a broader public safety implication, then we will share that immediately. We have worked really closely with the Department for Communities and Local Government in relation to that. We are in a better place.

You alluded to a lot of the speculation that took place in the immediate aftermath of the fire about the number of people who may or may not have been killed, which was very unhelpful and, quite frankly, most importantly, very distressing for people who were affected by that fire. We had some very uncomfortable meetings with family members because I will only work on facts. I am not going to speculate to make a meeting easier or to make people feel better. We have had to stick to the facts.

I am confident that by the enormous process that we have done of basically deconflicting all the information that has come down, it takes us to a point where we now have a definitive number of people that we believe are reported as missing and we have not managed to find them. As was mentioned yesterday in the media, we now have the definitive position on the closed-circuit television footage of all the people that we saw leaving in the immediate aftermath of the fire. It is about 250-odd that we have positively identified. We now, tragically, have 60 people's lives that we have identified as having been lost in the fire and there will be more than that.

There is confidence in that community. There is frustration and anger and hurt, but there is confidence. We are doing what we always do, which is just being very honest and the FLOs are being very honest with people. We at senior level are putting ourselves in front of those groups. There is oversight. When the Mayor meets with the Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] and when the Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] meets with me, this is an area that is constantly raised because, as I say, it is unparalleled in terms of an investigation of its kind.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you for that pretty comprehensive update. I have a few follow-up questions.

I assume from what you say that there have been no interviews under caution so far, but can you give a rough estimate of when you think you are going to be in that position? I remember when we asked Craig Mackey [QPM, Deputy Commissioner, MPS] this soon after the event, he thought that you would be in a position to make that sort of progress in the autumn. Has that timetable drifted?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): It is one of those situations where you are uncovering more as you go through, clearly, and I am loath to speculate. We are moving through fast. As I said, we have taken 1,000 witness interviews. The challenge we have here is that we start with this and we are having to work our way down to get to the points which get to the very core issues around what we think caused the fire to behave in the way that it behaved. Clearly, we are having to be driven by the timescales of the fire, but the fire investigation fundamentally is what is going to come at the end and say, "It is a combination of these factors in this priority that caused the fire to behave in the unexpected way that it did". Therefore, that is a really key point and so we would not be rushing to interview under caution.

What I would say is that that is not in any way a suggestion that this is not moving at pace. It is not in any way a suggestion that we are not thinking in those terms, but we have to do that at the right point. It will still be some months probably before we are in a position to start to identify that, but, as you would imagine, there is a real determination. I pressure them when I have my oversight to start coning ourselves down to getting to the real core point. The other important point about doing that is that those things that we are satisfied become peripheral - and there will be some that we can - are ones that can be left with the public Inquiry to take a lead role. It is an iterative process and I do not want to give a timeline that does not turn out to be correct, to be frank.

Andrew Dismore AM: That then comes to the next question, which is about resources. You have had to pull in a lot of resources from across the MPS and some little specialist units like the Antiques and Arts Team have effectively ceased to operate while you use their offices --

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Not quite true, but yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: -- to do this sort of work. You have had to pull in people from across London. Nobody would object to that; that is the right thing to do. Question one is: do you have sufficient resources for what you need to do?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: Question two is: what has been the impact of bringing all those people in on policing across London to do this sort of work? For example, we know there has been a detective shortage. Has that added to these sorts of problems?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes, it has, inevitably, because a lot of the people who are involved in the investigation are clearly detectives. A lot of the FLOs will be uniformed constables and so it has less of an impact.

The process we go through is pretty similar to the process that I described in answer to the question from Mr Duvall [AM] about how we make sure we are not pulling people away. The team have repeatedly had to come back to me with, "Here is the scale of what we need and here are the particular skills that we need". That is a process that we continually go through.

Of course, an investigation will have phases. We are in a phase at the moment where we need to get ourselves through those initial accounts from people. We need to do that quickly in some cases. We are obviously having to manage the emotional and psychological state of some of those people that we want to speak to. Again, that is another really important point around coordinating with the public inquiry because what we do not want is someone who is traumatised, as everyone will be, being talked to by us and then talked to by the inquiry. We are working closely in how we manage that. We need a large number of people to get us through this initial stage and then that will be repeatedly refined. Then, of course, if you get to a stage later on, potentially, with prosecutions, then you may need to bring more expertise or particular skills in. It is constantly reviewed.

Of course, that is having a direct impact on the place where those people were working the day before I pulled them in and pulled them onto this team. That is just a reality in terms of how we are having to manage our resources. I am sure in later areas we will come on to the whole resourcing issue but Grenfell is clearly part of what I think is a fairly unprecedented demand situation that we are in at the moment. From my perspective and certainly from the Commissioner's perspective it is an investigation the like of which we have not seen and we have to get this investigation right. Therefore, we have to put the resources in that we require.

Andrew Dismore AM: To summarise - I do not want to put words in your mouth - effectively you have the resources you need. If you need more, you ask for more and you get more but that does have a knock-on impact on policing across the capital.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Of course it does, yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Thank you for that comprehensive response. We have in a month's time, I believe, the Commissioner and yourself here, Deputy Mayor, and so we can get a further update at that time. I am conscious we have the Mayor for significantly less than an hour so I would like it if, for the remaining time, we can direct our questions very much towards the Mayor while we have him here.

We are going to move on to challenges to frontline policing now. Within that we are talking about the background of rising crime and rising demand, particularly around knife crime. We touch upon mergers and the engagement process.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): I would like to ask about the development of what has been promised in terms of a knife crime prevention campaign particularly aimed at younger people, what progress you have made with that and what is coming up. We are expecting an update quite soon.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks, Sian. We are, this autumn. From now, you will see four big things happening. In September and October, allocation of knife wands to schools and Safer Schools officers, because of summer holidays. It could not happen then obviously. We have in October the Education Knife Crime Summit. It is really important to get not just the MPS but those who will be involved in the consultation in that. In late autumn, we will get what you are alluding to, which is the media prevention campaign and materials. With the best will in the world, Sophie [Linden] and I are not the right people to carry the message.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): No, nor me.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): As much as we would like to think we have the street cred, we do not. What we are doing is this, Sian. We have recently gone out to tender for the development of a media campaign targeted towards young people and their parents, raising awareness of the dangers and consequences of knife crime and the reassurance role. The commitment Sophie [Linden] made to Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM] at the last meeting was to let you see some of that stuff and that commitment is still there, for obvious reasons.

Then in January, Sian, the last part of the autumn equation is that we will start the community seed funding stuff that I know a number of colleagues are interested in. The seed funding is £250,000 to community groups and anti-knife initiatives in priority areas for 2017/18 and we are working with community groups and experts about what the funding model should be. The bad news is it will not be a replacement for the youth services cut, which I know you have campaigned on in the past. It will be to help communities do some of that, empower them to do some of the prevention work.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): That is useful. Just a couple of questions to follow up on that. You said, "In January you will see the community seed funding". That will be an announcement of a process to bid, will it? That is what is happening in January?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. We are currently talking to community groups and anti-knife crime initiatives about what the funding model should be and we will announce that in January.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): The other thing that I have seen recently was that in August the Home Office Minister said that there was going to be a Home Office campaign on knife crime that was described as 'hard-hitting'. I wondered if you had talked to the Home Office about that. I know we have our concerns in the Committee about the value of hard-hitting campaigns as opposed to more engaging ones.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Do you want to talk about that?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): We are absolutely aware of the Home Office announcement on the campaign and also on a type of community seed funding such as ours, and we are discussing with them at the moment how we might be able to align together for both those things. Those are

discussions we are having with the Home Office because it would be difficult to have two very different messages going out and we all want the same thing. We are talking to them.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): That is really useful. Maybe you could share the funding between them to make it more effective.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes. We will see where discussions get to but, yes, we are absolutely aware of that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You will be aware, Sian, that our process for the Knife Crime Strategy involves a lot of consultation and lots of work. We believe in our Strategy. What we do not want to do is, for the interests of chasing money, move away from our Strategy. That is why Sophie is in delicate conversations with the Home Office about that.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): That is useful to know. Are you any closer to making some guidelines for forces on social media? I continually see images of very large knives still being posted by local forces on Twitter and we know that is something that will increase fear. I know there is a goal there of reassurance, "We have captured some big knives", but my view is that you could do that in words rather than images and we have asked for guidance before.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): If I am honest, it is one that I am quite conflicted about as well. We had the discussion relatively recently when I had all the Borough Commanders together. There is a requirement for us to be demonstrating the activity that we are doing, particularly around taking knives off the street and particularly around the kind of knife sweeps we do to take knives, where people will hide them in communal spaces. Sometimes there is a benefit to be able to do that. The downside of doing it is the one that you identify, which is that it can be quite alarming, particularly with some of the weapons. It is hard to come out with one policy that fits all circumstances, fits all places and fits the context at any given point in time in different places. I know that they are all considering it and giving it real thought before they do it.

You are right that it could create a real concern. It is equally the dilemma, that if I talk about all the activity that we have done under Operation Sceptre over the summer or over the last four or five months, on the one hand I want to be saying to you the number of knives that we have taken off the street but the converse of that is that can be quite alarming when people realise that there are that number, or the number of guns or whatever. We are always in that dilemma. There are appropriate times to do it but we are conscious that if it is done in the wrong way or if it is done too frequently it can cause alarm rather than reassuring people about what we are doing.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): I will continue to talk to you about that. The final thing: yesterday at the meeting in Camden with the Joint Commander for Camden and Islington, she said that the merger between the two boroughs had freed up officers who had now been assigned as Safer Schools Officers and Youth Engagement Officers. Is there an uplift planned as a result of other savings in these kinds of offices or is that just a side-effect that happened in Camden and Islington?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): No, that was precisely one of the reasons for the concept of the mergers. It gives you a greater mass of people together, who you can then allocate in a slightly different way. One of the areas that we wanted to increase was the DWOs to fulfil the Mayor's commitment and potentially greater numbers, and the other one was schools officers. We want to double, if we can, the number of officers that work in schools. It fits into a whole range of preventative activities, quite frankly, not just about violence but also about drugs, sexual behaviour and radicalisation. Certainly, one of the best

programmes we have had in terms of schools engagement has been in Islington. It has been pushed by [Detective Chief Superintendent] Catherine Roper, who also has the lead from me around youth engagement among the Borough Commanders. It is something we are committed to do and it is one of the outcomes we want to deliver through the mergers.

Sian Berry AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We are going to have some very pointed questions toward the Mayor about borough mergers in a minute, particularly on knife crime. Last night in Croydon town centre there was a very serious stabbing incident, fortunately not fatal.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, you need to be congratulated because in your Violent Crime Strategy, for the first time, we have a recognition about violence and the nature of its impact on our communities. It has taken us a long time to get there, in terms of the questioning around this table to the police. I think most police officers recognise that and of course it comes in many strands. I have to commend some of the work because this week in Lewisham we are going through knife sweep areas in all the wards, working with the communities in an open way and confronting some of the issues of where these weapons are stashed and not allowing people to evade, so congratulations on that. However, it is one of many strands. There is an issue about whether in the MPS we need a Violent Crime Strategy. Whether we are successful in getting any extra resources, it is about prioritising risk.

Recently we had a conversation at Mayor's Question Time (MQT) about domestic violence and about the suggestion I made, saying that it is not the silver bullet but one way we could protect survivors from repeats, and also their siblings. There is an interesting report out about the abuse register. The MPS is carrying out an operation called Operation Dauntless Plus which is about monitoring some of these offenders and I wondered whether you could share with us - I know you have not been given notice of this question - where we are on that. Is it ongoing? Is it coming to an end? When is your assessment? The Mayor is about to convene his Domestic Violence Forum. Can you give us a flavour of where you are at?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes. Operation Dauntless was set up across all the boroughs to deal with domestic abuse offenders because it is one thing when offenders are dealt with and they are there at the time when the incident occurs, but others are wanted subsequently. In response to wanting to improve the level of how we were going and getting the cases together and arresting those people, Dauntless was set up. That is in operation around the boroughs, sitting within the Community Safety Units, who will have a team. In various places, we are trialling other activities that get us to not only arresting offenders but also various opportunities around trying to stop offenders behaving in the way they are because, as we all know, you end up in that cycle of continual offending, arrest and reoffending going forward. There are a whole range of ways in which we are approaching that. For me, as you say, that is at one end of a spectrum of violent behaviour that we need to deal with. Dauntless is still going on and still operates in boroughs.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor and Deputy Mayor, I have written to the Commissioner asking for their views about whether an abusers register would help in prioritising risk of those who are - predominantly, not always - men of violence, in those circumstances. Is some of the work that the MPS doing looking at Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) and am I right in thinking that work is rather cumbersome and bureaucratic but could give the same protection to survivors of domestic violence and their siblings, in terms of restrictions? Is that one of the areas you were alluding to? Have you come to a conclusion that you require a change in how those orders work? because they are time-consuming, and we would not get consistency across the MPS because of the time it takes to put into practice?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): There are a range of orders that have been put in place around a number of these kinds of areas and some of them are potentially quite challenging to work your way through. Equally, I would say - this is a theme that we have had in a number of my meetings when I get all the Borough Commanders together - that we have not been good enough at using those orders. I do not think they need a radical change. There are lots of provisions that have been put in place to allow you to better control dangerous behaviour and we need to work better at getting our people to use them.

Len Duvall AM: That is quite interesting because my research led me to the view that it was not just about the abuser's risk, but a number of issues around domestic violence, and talking to people on the ground they welcomed use of that but just thought it was too cumbersome. There have only been, to be fair, one done in the MPS at the moment. I think that is about how useful the tool is; you think there is a smarter way of working.

You said earlier on in relation to counterterrorism, I think, about digital issues. One of the issues that comes back to us, as I have alluded to in the letter to Cressida [Dick QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis], is the use of downloading from phones. If I am a witness and you want what I have, you cannot tell me when you will give it back. You say that it could be up to three weeks, as a potential witness, that I do not have my phone. If I am a survivor of abuse that could be my only network out. It is either because we do not have people trained in doing it, or there is only one machine inside the central hub and that is in use. We are losing out on that. We are losing a chance to bring people to justice through that evidence or corroborating what is going on. There are some practical issues. Do you want to comment on that? It seems to me there is an issue for wider policing, not just in counterterrorism, about some of that digital capture and the nature of that.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): No, that is absolutely a challenge that we face. I said, in answer to the earlier question, it is not just in counterterrorism. In almost all offences there is a digital footprint of some description. We are increasing the awareness and understanding of officers about what to do and how to do it. As you rightly point out, there is only the one centre at the moment but we have a plan to increase the number of centres around London where you can actually do the downloading. It is a constant theme in many offences but particularly in offences of violence and sexual offences where you have a survivor. For most people, our lives are run on one of those devices. Losing that for an extended period of time is one of the issues that, I think, leads toward attrition. We are working through it. This is not an MPS problem, this is a national problem about how you deal with what we would describe as 'digital investigation'. It is increasingly the predominant element of evidence within a lot of offending.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Can I also just pick up on some of those issues that you have raised? We are - I think I talked about this last time I was in front of the Police and Crime Committee - in the process of refreshing the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. There is one today that I am going to on perpetrators. We are really looking at every little bit in terms of enforcement and in terms of support for survivors and victims as well. We are working through these issues around CBOs in terms of enforcement action, why they are not being taken enough by the MPS and what the barriers are. I have recently signed off investment decisions where we are putting much better capacity into local police to download digital evidence that can be shared with the CPS and with the courts in a much quicker time. We are investing in that because it is so important.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think the Commissioner --

Len Duvall AM: We will be looking for a fast track on the procurement issues, to move on those issues, because it will give us a greater impact.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes. We are procuring at the moment.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, we are not in the business of making work for the police. The abuse register is not about that. It is a recognition that police are stretched and that sometimes you have to make priorities and make those decisions, in terms of the risk that the community faces, about individuals. You indicated initially at the Assembly Mayor's Question Time meeting that you were quite interested in trying to take that forward. We now have all-party support on this in the Assembly. We are going to step up some of our conversations in national debates. Will you now put some resources into looking at the abuse register and some of the allied things that I have said? We will be in communication with the MPS. Like I say, we do not want to create extra work. We want to help. It is an aid and a tool to keep people safe, both the survivors and siblings in their community, and it gives the police a chance to prioritise that risk because they go under sexual offences.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Can I move this on? Shortly, if you can, please.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, at MQT I said that it is an idea worth exploring. One of the things that Sophie [Linden] and Claire [Waxman, Victims Commissioner] will do when it comes to meeting the victims, the community groups, is sound them out, Len, because what I do not want to do is impose something that may not be welcomed by the community groups and the victims. Subject to Sophie and Claire speaking to the various groups, let us come back to that.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Good. Let us move back to the agenda on frontline policing particularly. I want these last questions, if we may, directed to the Mayor while we have him, which would be great. This is particularly around the merger pathfinders.

Susan Hall AM: Mr Mayor, you have said that borough merger pathfinders are not delivering as intended. What are the problems that you have identified?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In terms of emergency response, clearly some of the initial findings in the east and north in the two pathfinders were unwelcome. There are four separate things that we were hoping the borough mergers would lead to. Sorry, five. One is to save money, so five things. Saving money is very important. Second is the neighbourhood response that AC Hewitt referred to in relation to Safer Schools Officers and the additional DWO. The response from the neighbourhood response is very important.

The third thing is an area that is unacceptable is emergency response. In the two pathfinders we have east worst than the north where the emergency response has not been good enough. You will be aware that, roughly speaking, the MPS expects 90% of calls to be responded to within 50 minutes, the immediate response, and it has not been good enough in the east and the north with the pathfinders. The police operationally are doing stuff to address the issue of emergency response.

The fourth issue is investigation. Having more detectives doing the complex crime is really important. Assembly Member Dismore referred to the shortage of detectives. A big issue is making sure we can have detectives doing the complex crime stuff.

The last issue is one that has been referred to by Len Duvall [AM] just now, an issue of safeguarding. We need to be much, much better at domestic abuse, mental health and missing persons, and one of the things that I found most troubling about the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report last year was their

conclusion that as a consequence of perverse incentives around the MOPAC 7, vulnerable people were missing out and losing out. If we can bring together that sort of safeguarding issue, it can lead to improvements.

In relation to neighbourhood investigation and safeguarding there has been good progress seen in the two pathfinders. I am afraid in relation to emergency response it has been unacceptable.

Susan Hall AM: You are mainly concerned about response times?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You mean the concerns with the pathfinders?

Susan Hall AM: Yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, that has been the biggest issue and I agree with the concerns raised.

Susan Hall AM: What are you going to do about that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): As I answered at MQT, in relation to the northwest, Camden and Islington, there has been an improvement. It is almost at target rates, between 80% and 90%. We have seen that as a consequence of the changes in relation to improvements there. In relation to the east there are still some concerns around emergency response. Again, the local commanders are putting in more resources. Some of it has led to moving from neighbourhood to response but we thought it was worth it. We are seeing an improvement in emergency response. It is still not where it needs to be, though.

Susan Hall AM: If it is not where it needs to be, what are you going to do to address that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Borough Commanders are taking steps to resolve that. Martin, do you want to come in?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Can I? Particularly in terms of response on both, we put in a programme of activity that kicked off particularly at the beginning of September. The reason it was delayed until September was because there were some information technology (IT) changes that we needed to make. Just in terms of the last week, the week that ended last Friday, the central north was up to 87% response in the emergency calls, which would put it very much on a par with other boroughs across the organisation. On the east it was up to 73%, which is a marked improvement from where it was but still not where we want to get it to. My expectation will be that certainly in three or four weeks' time from now we should have both of them operating at a level that is similar to the levels of all the other boroughs.

There is a point that needs bearing particularly around the east one. Our most pressured area in London is northeast London as a whole and all the boroughs in northeast London are facing very significant demand pressures. It is a combination of that, and then the pathfinder site being put into place and some of the learning that we have had from what we did in that pathfinder.

We are making significant improvements. The pressure is maintained from me in terms of maintaining those improvements and it is certainly maintained by Sophie [Linden], who holds me to account on a fortnightly basis on where we are with the pathfinder sites. All of this would feed into the evaluation that will take place towards the end of the year.

Susan Hall AM: We will throw all that into consideration when we are looking at closing front counters and actual stations where we get response from?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): They are separate things.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): They are separate issues. One is the consultation around front counters. One is the two pathfinders and borough mergers.

Susan Hall AM: Yes, but if you are removing some stations where you have response teams, will that not make a difference?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The consultation is around front counters.

Susan Hall AM: I know, and you are looking at closing some. They are attached to stations that might close.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): As you would imagine, the modelling that we have done around where we would retain buildings and where we would retain patrol sites, as we would call them -- because often the response times are not at a police station that is open to the public, they are in --

Susan Hall AM: No, but sometimes they are.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Sometimes they are but the planning that we have, clearly, is to allow us to have the required coverage of officers across any particular geographic area. Officers do not stay in a police station and wait to respond to calls. The response teams are pretty much out all of the time. Another part of the change programme is providing all the officers with mobility so they do not need to come back to the police station. Their devices will allow them to do all of the responsibilities and jobs they can do. In a sense, the patrol base is where you go, you get briefed and you pick up your car and your equipment. Then they are patrolling. It is not a fire service kind of model of being in the fire station.

Susan Hall AM: No, but sometimes they are attached to.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes, they would be attached to, but we have modelled the estates programme so that we are satisfied that we have patrol bases, bases where response teams are, that are located to allow us to have coverage across the geography.

Susan Hall AM: That will not change. That is good. Thank you.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I agree that one of the big concerns, particularly for the outer London boroughs, is the geographical size. The worry early on and the worry now, in fact, is the response issue. The concern was big geographical boroughs, Bromley, Croydon --

Unmesh Desai: Barking and Dagenham.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): And elsewhere, of course. Hearing about the problems in the east, it does need fixing before you can get that reassurance around it.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. The concern you are expressing is a fair one and one that MOPAC and the MPS need to take on board when it comes to borough mergers, but also reconfiguring front counters and stuff. Just to reassure you, before the consultation began one of the things the MPS did, working with MOPAC, was to make sure that where officers are and where the machinery, the cars and stuff, is taken into consideration. Often the front counters and the police officers are not in the same place, necessarily speaking.

Steve O’Connell AM (Chairman): We will get on to front counters. I am hearing that possibly in those larger geographical areas you might revert back to a semi-borough structure. I will let that be because Andrew wants to come in.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes. First of all, Sadiq, I am very pleased that last week you promised that you would publish and write to me with the objective criteria that are going to be applied to evaluate this and that there will be no roll-out until the problems have been resolved. Those are two very important commitments.

It is not just a question of response times. There have been lots of other problems as well, for example community engagement and so forth. If we look at response times first, I am very pleased if in one week we have been able to sort things out but looking at the figures I have for Camden as part of the Borough Command Unit (BCU), up until the change Camden was performing at or better than the MPS average and ever since the change it has been significantly worse, apart from possibly one week. From the briefing we had yesterday, I understand that one of the ways you have tried to resolve that is to go back to borough mobilisation, which is where we started. Is that not undermining what you are trying to achieve through this?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): No, I do not think it is undermining. When we said that we wanted to do these pathfinders to learn and to test our model there was quite a lot of scepticism from people, but what has actually happened is, we have learnt and we are changing things as a result of that. It has been different in a model where you have a model that has two boroughs brought together and two that are very geographically tight. We have had different learning in a place where you are bringing three boroughs together and with all sorts of other geographic issues. We are not going to carry on with a situation where the response times were not acceptable, and that is not because our model is not working, that is because it is not right for the public. Quite rightly, Sophie was not prepared to accept that either. We have made a change to allow us to understand how we can make that work. It is not a reversal and that is never going to change, but it was needed to get us to a place where we can let other parts of the model stabilise itself. Then we can look at how you can perhaps take that forward. It is about the service we are providing to the public. We could not stay with the response that we had.

Andrew Dismore AM: We have not been given the response calls for S [significant priority] calls. We were given a chart yesterday in this briefing about progress on the mergers.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: Could we have a similar chart to Appendix A for the S calls as well, showing where we have got to with that? That is not quite as important as I [immediate priority] calls but still pretty important.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): It is important.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): For those not experts, that is “significant” priority versus “immediate”.

Andrew Dismore AM: Yes. Going on with this, you mentioned a point about the three boroughs. Representing Barnet, the issue for us has been that Barnet and Harrow we are prepared to live with, but with Barnet, Harrow and Brent we are worried that we are going to end up in the same sort of mess. Will part of the evaluation be looking at the configuration that was originally intended to see if in fact three boroughs are too many, like we have potentially found in the eastern one, and whether we need to look at a different configuration?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I deliberately set out when I answered a question from Susan Hall that there are five big things we are looking at, and one of them is to save money. I am not going to pretend that one of the motivations around borough mergers and BCUs is not to save money, which is why we are talking about going down to 12. Twelve is the number that the Commissioner and Sophie [Linden], have advised, would be the one to try to make these savings we need, subject to the service to the public that AC Hewitt referred to. There is a separate discussion then, about what goes into configuring the 12, but before we get to that we need to evaluate the first two pathfinders. If we are doing it in steps it might be a better way of doing it, but I take your point around the concerns of two smaller boroughs being linked with Brent for the reasons you alluded to.

Andrew Dismore AM: That is another way of doing it, evaluating it, but what I am saying, I suppose, is if the option of relooking at the proposed configuration is not finalised; we can still look at that again, depending on the evaluation.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is a fair conclusion. Yes.

Andrew Dismore AM: Then the next question is, if in the end this cannot be made to work, is there a plan B? If so, what is it?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The plan B is to find other ways to save money. The long and short of it is I have a budget of this size. Roughly speaking, 75% comes from central Government and 25% comes from the precept. Last year I made the decision to increase the precept. I could well decide to do it again this year, bearing in mind how tight money is. You do not need to have a crystal ball to predict I probably will do that. Even if I did that, there is still a massive, gaping black hole in the ability of the MPS to provide the policing London needs. Closing down half the front counters saves £10 million in revenue costs. If we sent off the ones that I am told have the best value for money, another £170 million from revenues, that is spent on IT, which we need to do, by the way, to make our MPS do the stuff we expect it to do. We are trying to reduce savings elsewhere, but at the end of the day there are very few things I have at my disposal.

The one thing I have is human beings. The biggest expenditure we have is police officers. We have already cut almost 3,000 police staff, but at the end of the day, if there are no back-office staff doing this stuff, these guys are going to be the back-office staff. If it comes to a stage where there is only bone left, and the bone is Martin [Hewitt] and 30,000 of his colleagues, I am trying to go for the meat, and the meat is mergers; the meat is front office closures. I appreciate some colleagues from a certain political party want to quibble about process. I am happy to improve process, but the substantive choice I have to make is: how I make the books balance. I have to make the books balance and that means, I am afraid, Andrew, making tough choices about borough mergers and making tough choices about front office closures. I do not want to do any of those things, but I have no other way to maximise the number of police officers. Every £1 I save with a borough merger, every £1 I save with a front office closure, I spend that on a police officer.

Andrew Dismore AM: I do not think anybody questions the fact you are making tough decisions because of decisions made by the Conservative Government --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I am going to stop you there, Andrew. I want to move on.

Andrew Dismore AM: I have one further question.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Just quickly.

Andrew Dismore AM: It is for Mr Hewitt, and that is looking at savings. You have set out this all very well. One saving that was being looked at was the scrapping of Chief Inspector and Commander ranks, and that I understand has now been reversed. What was the rationale for that?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): The reversal?

Andrew Dismore AM: The reversal.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): That decision was taken to be looked at and we looked at that decision. The new Commissioner was appointed and understandably, when the new Commissioner arrived, she wanted to look at that decision. Where she has arrived was that she did not believe - and the decision was that we did not believe - that taking two complete ranks out of the system was the right way to move forward. What we are doing, is delayering the system, so that we can delay the number of leaders. We have already as part of our savings over the last four or five years removed significant numbers of leaders from sergeant and upwards within the structure and maintained the constable numbers where we have. Each of the areas of the business is producing structures that take away that an officer automatically goes up every rank in a chain of command, and then also removing various layers of leadership and management.

The principle behind the original decision was, one: there is a money saving - it is actually not huge if you take those two ranks - but predominantly it was around allowing more empowerment down to people as low as you can down in the organisation to get on and make decisions, so reducing some of that hierarchical element. It also improves communication as well because you are closer to the point of who you are trying to communicate with, rather than again working through. The principle of delayering our levels of leadership in any given area are remaining, but we are not doing it by removing completely two particular ranks out of our rank structure. As an aside that is relevant, nonetheless, legally speaking, the legislation that allows that to happen I do not think has received assent yet anyway. The point is that Cressida's [Dick QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis] approach was she wants the delayering to allow greater empowerment and greater communication, but she wants to do it in a way that we look at each area in a bespoke way, rather than simply removing two ranks.

Andrew Dismore AM: Going back to the Mayor's financial problems, the delayering or whatever you call it is going to save the same amount of money as scrapping the ranks?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Correct. It saves the money, yes.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): If we continue on the engagement process around the closures, many of my colleagues here have attended some of these events. I was at the Sutton one last week where we had the princely sum of about 18 people there. There is some disappointment around the process. Caroline, did you want to speak to this?

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Some of the public meetings on your plans to close police stations and front counters have already taken place. Do you accept that perhaps it has not been MOPAC's finest hour in terms of the notice given for some of these meetings, and what early feedback have you received from these events?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): If there is criticism about the way the local MPS has organised some meetings, we are happy to look into that, but the way people can respond is a number of ways: the website; responding to leaflets; they can write to us; they have already responded by email; they can attend the public meetings. The numbers who have responded on the front counter closures already exceeds the numbers who responded to the 2013 Police and Crime Plan. I make this distinction which is very important. In 2013 the

Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime at that stage was consulting on a Police and Crime Plan which included substantive changes around policing for 20-20-20. It was changing neighbourhood policing from 3-2-1 to 1-1, and also police station front office closures. Our Police and Crime Plan response was greater than all those put together. Secondly, I increased the number of DWOs, but thirdly, the consultation now is just on front office closures. We have already exceeded that.

MOPAC has done the process right, but of course there are things that the neighbourhood police can improve upon. It does not make sense, for example, organising a meeting on the same day, as Keith Prince AM alluded to, as a full council meeting. It does not make sense because ward councillors know their communities really well, and in that area the Borough Commanders agreed to have another meeting. It does not make sense for all the meetings to be at a certain time for those who work in shifts and stuff, but again public meetings are one way for people to respond. There are many other ways.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I accept there are many other ways, but some people want to come along to hear and to understand what the issues are and to have that dialogue. I understand attendance has been quite limited in some of the meetings so far, but will you review the way in which MOPAC conducts consultations in the future - Transport for London (TfL) has been reviewing its processes - to learn from best practice to make sure that enough notice is given and the public can properly engage in such big decisions?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We should always review how we do consultation, and I am always happy to amend and change how we do consultation. What I am keen to do, my vision, is to turn Londoners from consumers to active citizens, and one way of doing that is by trusting them and by consulting in different ways. That is one of the reasons why we are trying to find other ways to involve people. For many people, a public meeting is important, but for many others, they deem it old-fashioned or they do not want to do it and stuff. You make a fair point. Will we learn lessons? Answer: yes, to make sure we can make it even better.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: What early feedback have you had from these first few meetings?

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Just in terms of the consultation meetings, they are varied in attendance. I have been to ones that have had over 200 and [ones that had] 70, but they do vary and some are not so well-attended, but we are getting attendances at them.

In terms of feedback, people are coming. To be frank, people, as you would expect, are worried. It is a change in a service. People do like to have their front counter in the community. We have also talked about the other aspect of the consultation document, which is public access and engagement. It is not just about front counters. At the meeting that both Andrew [Dismore AM] and Sian [Berry AM] were at last night, that I was at as well, they spent a lot of time talking about what information they wanted from the police, how they could engage with the police and how they could work with the police together around Safer Neighbourhood Boards and the panels, but we are getting feedback around residents not wishing to have their front counters closed. I understand that, but we put the figures to them about the number of people who are coming through the doors of the front counter and how the public are already voting with their feet around the numbers coming in. Only 8% of crimes in London are reported over the front counter. We have other methods for people to report their crimes, and we have talked about the 999 response, but there is always that fundamental contract that the police, in an emergency, will be there.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the things that the Chairman and Susan Hall AM referred to is a concern about people thinking that because the front office closes, the police will not be in the area and stuff. That concern is a concern that members of the public have. That is one of the things that, as AC Martin Hewitt referred to, we have to do a better job at, when it is the case, reassuring the public that front office closing

does not mean police leaving. The concern that the Chairman and Susan Hall AM referred to is a legitimate concern that many people have.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I envisage you will end up making some changes to your planned closures, either changing which police stations you might close or front counter, or is it because you have a budget deficit which is --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. The decision to make savings is one that is almost set in stone. The issue as to which front offices close, where the 24/7s are, which boroughs have maybe more than one, that is up for discussion, genuinely, and there is a proper consultation, with a caveat. The money people are saying to me, "This building is worth more setting off than that building", and I have to be frank. That is a factor that I am putting into the equation. What I am told, for argument's sake, £10 million revenue savings by closing half the front office counters, potentially £170 million by sales and capital, I am not going to pretend that is not a factor when it comes to us making decisions. The consultation is genuine, subject to those caveats that I will refer to.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Finally, in terms of your local policing, you have talked about the officers you are going to be putting back in towards DWOs. In Lambeth, how they are structured, they currently have five or six police per ward who work, dedicated effectively, in those wards. A few are able to be abstracted but they are already aligned with wards. Your new plans for two DWOs and a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) are going to mean a reduction in those officers that work in those areas, and those officers are likely to be transferred to response teams.

There is a concern that police will be further away from the wards where they patrol. Have you considered this as part of your plans? It sounds like almost in some parts of London they might see a reduction.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Just to reassure through you those residents, the two DWOs plus the one dedicated PCSO is a floor, not a ceiling. What is happening now is that many, many wards have nowhere near the floor. What we are doing is guaranteeing that floor across London. Some wards will have a floor that is a bit higher, in the high crime areas, but the Borough Commanders will have lots of flexibility around the officers they have and how they use them. Lambeth is a good example of where you have an excellent council working in partnership with the Borough Commander there, doing a good job. I was at Lambeth Police Station not too long ago. I am confident that the residents in those wards will continue to see good service.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: You are envisaging in places like Lambeth these officers will also be allocated to those wards, so they will have as big a team as they have now?

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): This again forms part of what the merger plan was identified to do. As the Mayor says, the two police officers and the one PCSO is the minimum for all of the 629 wards, and then our aspiration is, as I have already said, to double the number of Safer Schools Officers, so we get up to a figure of there or thereabouts, 600 schools officers, to be either in a one-to-one relationship with our more challenging senior schools or Pupil Referral Units, or in a one to a number relationship with less challenging or primary schools. Then, additionally, to put other ward officers in those wards where we feel that the demand is such that it allows you to have a greater number of officers. That is the aspiration, and that takes us to a much larger number of officers in those wards.

That is all predicated on where we end up in terms of our numbers when we know what the financial settlement is, where or how far we can go. There is absolutely no proposal that takes away, particularly in

places where there is a real demand for those officers, and we are completely committed to the value that those ward officers bring in terms of that day-to-day community policing.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Len has a question to me.

Len Duvall AM: To you, Chairman. Can we get this information? That is not the reality on the ground across London. Yes, I do accept what the Mayor is saying that it is a starting block, a building block, but if we could have the details where you think there is an uplift in those wards across London so that we can gauge that and see where they are, because we are not convinced that that is actually what is happening on the ground. The school officers are a very interesting wait-and-see, but DWOs, we would like to see what that looks like and where the uplift is taking place.

Andrew Dismore AM: There is subtext to that if the local authority is making a contribution towards the cost of that. In Camden Town, for example, the local authority is paying towards extra officers and so it would look a bit distorted.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): They sit over and above. In all the calculations, those that are directly funded sit over and above. Just to be really clear, we have not moved to that situation yet. We have the two pathfinder sites that have moved to that situation, but this has already been identified in boroughs such as Lambeth. They are already armed with DWOs.

Len Duvall AM: But that is not the case in the Greenwich Gangs Unit, which you are going to lose, on the merger, resources provided by the Council because that is not over and above. They are actually providing a gangs unit which is funded in the MPS and] in other boroughs. It is all interesting, Chairman. Let us get some facts --

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes. We can do that.

Len Duvall AM: What you are trying to tell us, I take it in good faith, but I do not think that is happening on the ground.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): I shall write to you, because I am also interested in the hubs, which we do not have time to talk about, because that is absolutely key. We will write. I will pass the letter past the party Group Lead Members.

Tony Arbour AM: I have just had the opportunity, Mr Mayor, to read your press release on all the things you were going to tell us this morning. Many of the things you have not got around to and I am sure that is our fault and you intended to do so, but one thing I have picked out is this. You say, "For every £1 of counterterrorism spent in response to an incident, an additional £2 is spent on necessary additional non-counterterrorism activity".

I wonder if you are able to back that up, and I wonder whether Mr Hewitt is able to say that it is true that for every £1 spent on counterterrorism, an extra £2 is spent on other activities.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me respond to that, Chairman. The MPS and MOPAC and AC Rowley QPM [MPS] did some analysis after the Westminster Bridge attack because there was a concern around the presumption being made that because counterterrorism funding had been ringfenced, we had sufficient resources to deal with a terrorist attack. What the work undertaken showed was for every £1 in response to the terror attack an additional £2 was spent from other places, from core funding if you like. The

evidence we have from Manchester is in fact probably more than that. The point of this piece of work is, even though counterterrorism funding may be ringfenced and protected, that does not mean that we can deal with the challenges faced by terrorism going forward. Is that a fair summary?

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Tony, answer that.

Tony Arbour AM: I am sorry you did not get around to that in the thing.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I did, Chairman. To be fair, I did. If you read the transcript --

Tony Arbour AM: No, but you have actually quantified it.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I did before, and so did Martin.

Tony Arbour AM: Yes, but £2 for £1 is the crucial thing. We of course, as was expressed during the meeting, are very sympathetic to see that you absolutely must be funded properly for this. What you are effectively saying here is that there are additional costs related to counterterrorism, significantly, twofold by this. If we were given proper access to this information, you could be quite certain that we on this side, certainly in regard to activities in London, will be happy to support you. I can possibly say this on your behalf, Mr Chairman, as a member of the Conservative Party Group here. We would want that figure to help us make your case in relation to getting more funds. That is why I say I have only just seen this information now.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, can I just say through you earlier on today I referred to one-third and two-thirds. That is £1 and £2. In previous MQTs I have referred to £1 and £2 on a number of occasions and £2 for every £1. Deputy Commissioner Craig Mackey QPM at the Police and Crime Committee⁴ and the transcript I was reading last night has referred to £2 versus £1, but I am of course happy, Chairman, to send to you --

Tony Arbour AM: We want to know how that is calculated.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): It would be nice to quantify it. That is fine.

Unmesh Desai AM: Deputy Mayor, very roughly, off the top of your head, given that 6 October - the deadline for consultation - is just around the corner, how many responses have you had by email, very roughly? I will not hold you to it.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have a figure for that and we will give it to you shortly.

Sophie Linden (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): We have had 531 people online and 255 written responses so far.

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): As you will appreciate, it is towards the end of the consultation where there is suddenly a big --

Unmesh Desai AM: While we have you here, Mr Mayor, and I am conscious of your time, can I just make this point about the messaging of the current situation that we face? I know it is difficult to sell a message about facts, figures and so on, but if you look at the messaging, say, around "London is open", that has been very

⁴ Police and Crime Committee meeting held on 20 July 2017.

effective. We have seen it all around the Tube stations, everywhere. With this argument that you have the issue of dealing with £400 million of cuts to make and more cuts possibly to the police funding formula and so on, it is about getting that message across. I know you said you always look at ways of selling your message, but the issue that I have with police station closures is that people do equate that with losing a police service, which is not the case.

When you get the financial facts over, can you then just look at the way your marketing people work? There are ways, but it is getting that message across. We would accept it is difficult with facts, figures and so on. The point that you made about land values being taken into account, that is certainly true, I have been told, in the case of Dagenham Police Station.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I take on board the issue that was raised by Unmesh Desai AM.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): We will be interested very much post-consultation on the number of responses and we will be probably writing to you around that.

The last set of questions - hopefully, Mayor, you will stay for these - is with Len around challenges for the Police and Crime Plan and other related issues.

Len Duvall AM: It is about the resources. Mr. Mayor, you have a Police and Crime Plan and you are in conversation with the Government about the resources, and at some stage something might have to give around that. The same question to the MPS would be: what are the radical options if you do not get the desired result from Government? I do not want to say that we are giving up now because we should not because there are some very good arguments; but what is the thinking about at what stage you consider that in terms of the relationship to the Police and Crime Plan and then to the MPS about borough merging or is just tinkering? Is it just tinkering on a worst-case scenario?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just answer your question directly, by saying one of the problems around policing is it does not stand still? Martin Hewitt has referred to some of the new challenges around digital, new challenges around online crime, new challenges in relation to a number of issues that were not around. Modern slavery is a big priority for us going forward. I know it is a big passion of your around violence against women and girls, how we deal with these issues, underreported crimes. You have seen in the media legitimate talk about the abuse women suffer on public transport. The point I am making is we cannot simply cut off business as usual like you would in a normal business because our business is growing all the time. Crime is now more complex than it was years ago.

The priorities in the Police and Crime Plan are our priorities. Vulnerability is very important to us. Consulting local communities about their two priorities is very important to us. For obvious reasons, violent crime is a priority for us. Knife crime and acid attacks we have seen in the recent past are really important. These will carry on being priorities as far as we are concerned. I am afraid, even though I would like to wish away terrorism, I cannot wish it away, and that is why it is really important we invest in those services that help the counterterror team do their job so well.

One of the things we want to do, Len, is make it easier for people to report crime. At some stage the police have to triage, and I will not criticise the police when it comes to triaging. In those crimes where the victim is not vulnerable and they are not violent crimes, they tended to deal with it a different way in the past. I, for example, have been given evidence of one police force that deals with 40% of its crimes over the telephone. The detection rates are not bad and the outcomes are not bad. The numbers of crimes we deal with on the

telephone are quite small. I am not going to criticise these guys for triaging early on and then finding new ways to deal with some of those crimes. They can give face time to the more vulnerable victim.

Also, Len, I have to say that one of the things I have been told by the experts is, even if we did not have financial pressures, they would probably be advising us to reduce the number of front counters. Why? Because the figure, as Sophie [Linden] says, is only 8% of crimes are reported via the front counter, 70% by telephones and 37% want to report crimes online. Also, if the expert advice is from HMIC, by merging detectives together, by having safeguarding closer together, you can help the quality of service received by the victim, I am not going to be against that and stuff as well.

In broad terms, what I am not going to do and what would be irresponsible for me to do is to say, "Crimes A, B and C will not be dealt with at all", because crime is crime. Crime is growing, and it is more complex and stuff. Martin, do you want to deal with --

Martin Hewitt (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes. We definitely have not given up in terms of the argument, and there is not only a bit of work that we are doing in London around what we think that demand resources equation looks like, but also working with Dave Thompson QPM, who is the Chief Constable of West Midlands Police, who is doing the national bit of work from the National Police Chiefs' Council. We have a situation where resourcing has been reducing and demand is growing, not only in the sense that there is more of what there was, but there are new things, and we have seen and we have spoken all morning about the other factors.

What are we doing? We are doing a lot around demand reduction at that end of the equation, so there are things where our processes are not as good as they could be, and we are reducing a load of internal bureaucracy to make it easier for our officers to do what they need to do. The whole roll-out and transformation that we are undertaking as an organisation is partly because we have only got a certain budget and we have to save money, but it is equally about making ourselves fitter and better to do the job that we need to do. You go and talk to people in the boroughs where the mobility devices have arrived, which makes the officers so much more productive. It is good.

The merger process that we are going through does not feel like it is a bit piecemeal when you are sitting in my particular chair, but what it does, if we can get that to a place where we have systems that work and we have structures that work, it will allow us to be more much effective and make better use of our resource. We are also pushing a lot more into our digital offer. As the Mayor just alluded to, we are almost the reverse of other police forces in terms of how much gets dealt with in a telephone or virtual sense, compared to a physical sense. We have just opened up the telephone and digital investigation unit literally a few weeks ago. We trialed it a little bit. We have now opened it up. We hope that lots of people will be able to get quick, sensible service quickly without having to -- it frustrates victims when they have to wait around and we do not turn up because something else has happened. As you all well know, our role is quite chaotic at times and events get in the way. All of those, but then when you strip all of that back, you also then are looking at those priorities. For me, and certainly I know for Cressida [Dick], the priority is around violent offences. You described it in your earlier question about where people really are having harm done. That for me is the priority.

I do not want to get us into a place where we say we are not doing X or Y, because X or Y may always have some sort of vulnerability. Everything in our world in crime is two-sided, isn't it? You have the vulnerability on one side and you have the dangerousness on the other, and we need to be focusing our efforts and use all our systems to prioritise those people or those groups who are more vulnerable, and then equally prioritise those people that are more dangerous on the offender side as well. It is working through all of that demand

management, it is all the other transformation stuff to make ourselves more effective and efficient, but fundamentally we will end up with a number of officers that we can afford or the Mayor can afford. In the Plan, the priorities and the high harm point you to those areas where we would obviously have our focal point. Of course, with London you have the additional thing that no other force really has in terms of dealing with all that goes on in this city in terms of protest and events and disorder and all the other things that come with being the capital. That gives us again a priority that sits off at the side that quite honestly for a small provincial force is not there as well. We are constantly trying to balance all of those, but that demand management work and the active work that we are doing locally and nationally around making the case for resources is the combination of what we are doing.

Len Duvall AM: I do apologise for the way that I described borough mergers. It is hard, but it is almost like borough mergers: what is the next stage of change and is the MPS ready for that and prepared to do that? It is about that continual process which the police face. We will no doubt return to that, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Do not forget, Len, the two things coming around the corner are hopefully the positive Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) next year, but we also have the funding formula change. Our answer is caveated with: who knows what the police funding formula is going to be? Who knows what the CSR is going to be next year?

Len Duvall AM: I just think over the next five to ten years the way that policing is done is radically going to change in a way where we need to protect some of those issues that are there. That is not a case of picking and choosing because, Mr Mayor, you are right that you cannot pick and choose, but the way and how you do it is going to change. That is the interesting bit that we will need to return to, and I know there is a discussion coming back. The discussion did start before 2000, early 2000, and then stopped, and is now going to come back. In terms of savings, the savings regime, and operationally where it can be a better outcome, I accept that that may well be the case, but it is hard when the public have an expectation of not understanding what that is about. Unless we get that communication right and that messaging right, there always will be problems.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say this as well in response to what you said, which is very thoughtful? In the context of the recent past, the last few years, crime has been going up in London. Crime has been going up across the country. Crime has been going up across the western world. What adds to your comments and your analysis is the context is also crime is going up. I have studied this, I speak to experts and try to find out about solutions. If, for example, there is a place in the western world that is managing to deal with the issue of increasing crime with limited resources, I want to pinch that idea. No one is doing it. That is the challenge. I would not want you to think it is just a London problem. It is a big problem for everyone.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, for that. Can I just return to the night-time economy in terms of one of those strands? You should be commended in highlighting the work for the London economy. From an aspect of policing and issues around that, some of our problems - the lawbreaking and some antisocial behaviour around violence - arise from some aspects of that night-time economy. There is a concern around this table, and we have had conversations with both the MPS and Sophie Linden, but this is an opportunity where you could say something around us working with decent owners of venues who want to do the right thing and not wait to be done to, who do engage with both the council licence of authorities as well as the policing. The Fabric example - and I know you were looking for examples and I understand that - was probably the right example. I have seen public papers, not private papers, of where I thought two organisations like the council and the police should be commended on the work they did there around Fabric, of an owner or management that did not want to engage with both policing and the council to do the right thing.

In terms of how I can describe it, how do we work within that night-time [economy], the promotion of that, and issues, beyond the right side of the good people that want to do the best practice, want to work with the agencies in making sure their clients are safe, that they minimise neighbourhood nuisance, and they are doing it? I know we are doing stuff on designing out issues, but these are very important issues about where policing is when we have limited resources to put into those issues. What worries me are the mixed messages that may come out, and I do not think we have got our messaging quite right on those issues, albeit I understand about the loss of venues. I understand that. That particular example was not a good one, but equally I just want the message sent out that we are not going to get soft on people who seek to evade, who seek to dodge their responsibilities in making it safe or try to get around loopholes. I know it is adversarial and it is not very pleasant sometimes, and people maybe have some arguments, but we cannot afford to have those mixed messages. Really just about that, thinking about how we are going to go through that over the next phase of supporting the night-time economy, which we should do here, but at the same time getting the balance about keeping people safe. Keeping people safe and making sure that we are dealing with responsible owners, rather than sticking up for the irresponsible ones. Quite frankly, they are a minority but they do detract from police resources and council resources in dealing with their activities.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I will answer that, Chairman, in the context of a Police and Crime Committee, which is --

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): The Economy Committee is already --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Exactly, and that is why I was saying and so I will answer in the context of policing and crime and antisocial behaviour and the negatives. We can sometimes get in danger of associating nightlife with crime, and that is not what Len is trying to do. For somebody reading the transcript, I am answering in that context.

The context is this. The responsible managers and owners of night-time leisure activity work closely with the police and the local council, and they do a good job. Often things do not become a problem because there is that conversation taking place. One of the reasons, by the way, why I am so passionate about the DWO is because they build up a relationship with local businesses. They get to speak to the resident who has been up all night because of the noise being too loud or people doing night-time leisure stuff outside their homes, and they can speak to them, and that officer can then go and speak to the bar owner or whatever it might be.

The issue is the disproportionate amount of time being spent by the police and the council dealing with the bad manager/owner of the venue. It could be a bar, it could be live music or plays. It could be whatever. One of the things that Amy Lamé [Night Czar] and the Night Commission are trying to do is to try and spread best practice. The Commission includes local authorities, the police, licensing experts and others to make sure we can spread that best practice. Martin [Hewitt] used the phrase 'demand management'. One of the ways you can reduce demand is by nipping these things in the bud. It is really important we do that.

A lot of the work we are doing, working closely with Amy and with the economy team, is around prevention, the quality of life issue. You will be aware, if you are a neighbour, a resident, and you receive low-level antisocial behaviour every night for a year, that is massive for you. When you log these calls it might be a minute and not a serious call because it is noise or it is puking or it is urination or whatever, but cumulatively for that person it has a huge impact on their quality of life. That is one of the reasons I go back to the importance of community policing. Community police are the building blocks for addressing some of the problems with counterterrorism, whether it is dealing with some of the challenges around the night-time economy.

I will end this, though, Chairman. You reminded me about the economic consequences. One out of eight jobs in London are in the night-time economy. One out of eight jobs. We have to embrace it but make sure we act responsibly, because nobody wants quality of life deterioration because of nightlife.

Len Duvall AM: That is the important message there which I think we all agree with, but the trouble is, in promoting best practice, the people on the ground have to administer their laws. What they do not want is to be looking over their back and thinking they have to go soft because they want to support that. There is no compromise around safety or issues arising from violence, and that is the message that we ought to be along there and sending the message back to those potential owners of businesses, "We want you to thrive, we want you to do well, but we want people to be safe. You have some responsibilities in doing that. It is not just us. Where you do not take up your responsibilities, we will act, and it is right and proper that we enforce, where deaths occur in venues, that we will go in and do that".

On the issue about Fabric, there was an investigation and observance of breaking laws. It is not a question of the bureaucracy saying, "Thank you, I want to close down a venue because we feel like it", which is what came over in that social media. "We just had a thing about anti-drugs." While the law is there, we need to enforce it and we need to keep people safe, and that is why I am worried about the mixed messages in terms of what we send out and what we say. I am on board with you. I want a thriving night-time economy, but I want people to be safe. Yes, they can make choices and there is an element of individuality about it, but when it comes to laws that we are asking people to enforce or to administer around that, there is no choice in that. People need to come to play where there are issues.

I would welcome Amy and Philip Kolvin QC [Chair, Night Time Commission], to say that and make that clear. I do think there is an issue with Philip in some of his work that he is doing. While he is still doing cases where there is licence involved in London, and in terms of supporting you and giving you advice, there may well be potential conflicts of interest. Mr Mayor, that is for you to sort out, to look into and make sure and protect him as much as others around that in terms of the business.

The night-time economy is a very important piece of work. Everyone here would support that. Equally, the safety of Londoners and people that attend those venues is there. I have used Fabric - it is just an example - where I did some investigation about looking at what was available in public and coming to a conclusion. I might not have it all. I suspect there is a little bit more. To say that the agencies just choose to target one issue without good cause is just wrong. It is myths, and we need to challenge that. Agencies respond to where there is a concern, and that is why they take the actions they do. We want people to engage with us. We do not close down venues lightly. It is the engagement process that was failing on that part. The outcome was the same that could have been done a number of months before. If Fabric had engaged, I suspect that the set of licensing issues that were done were actually there. They lost out because of their business, because they did not engage, and that is where we were. I just think we have to get that messaging right. In terms of City Hall mayoral messaging as well as the policing message, it comes together. I do not see support for a night-time economy in conflict with that, but being very clear to those people that think they are going to dodge their responsibilities, dodge the laws, we have to be very clear on that.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Mr Mayor, I do not expect a long response. We, across the whole Committee, support Len's thoughts around that. We will return to that particular subject another time.

Unmesh Desai AM: Mr Mayor, I am glad you said what you said. Just to back up what Assembly Member Duvall has said very eloquently and very strongly, I attended a consultation meeting in Brick Lane where your Night Czar, Amy Lamé, was there. I am afraid the impression that came over to the people there, about 100 people - they were not NIMBYs or anything like that - was that we see the night-time economy in terms of

pound signs and not what they suffer, something that you are aware of, the puking etc. At the Spitalfields Forum, which is the local planning forum where there was a guest speaker a few months ago, again the same point came across. This afternoon some of us are going to the [Queen Elizabeth] Olympic Park to finish off our review into policing of the Olympic Park and Westfield and so on, and we will revisit the issue again. I am conscious of the time. I know you have taken our message on board. We support the night-time economy. There is also the undesirable side of it. Yes, it is not just about the crime side. It is about the economy, but also making sure that residents are reassured.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I say, Chairman, the way that both Assembly Member Duvall and Assembly Member Desai have made their points are ones that I understand, and it is really important that in the interest of promoting any business you do not inadvertently have residents and Londoners who are suffering the consequences of that, particular when they can be addressed with good management.

Can I say this in reassurance to the Assembly Members? The police cannot be pressurised to give bad advice in relation to a licensing application. They will give the advice based on the evidence that they will give, and I think it is right and proper that none of us can put pressure on them to change their advice. Similarly, a licensing committee recognises the responsibility upon them for the reasons you said, Len. But for the grace of God, if somebody suffers a fatality or another injury because of a bad decision, they recognise what are the consequences of doing that. What is important is for an accommodation to be reached. We live in a global city of 8.8 million people. The level of inconvenience that some residents suffer is not acceptable and we have to make sure we address that, but also there is an accommodation to be made, and we can find a way through that, respecting and empathising with the concerns of residents, but also that businesses who are responsible want to do right by those residents. We need to make sure we weed out the irresponsible businesses and promote and support the responsible ones.

Steve O'Connell AM (Chairman): Again, I have the same issues in Croydon. Thank you for that response, Mr Mayor.

On the topic of Notting Hill - we are going to return to that - we shall write to the Commissioner. The Commissioner is with us in a month's time and we will pick up on Notting Hill at that time.

I would like to thank our guests for today. Thank you, Mr Mayor, for staying that little bit longer. Thank you, Deputy Mayor. Thank you, AC Hewitt.