

GLA Oversight Committee – Thursday 30 January 2019**Transcript of Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with Mayoral Directors**

Susan Hall AM: Good morning, gentlemen. Patrick, how would you describe your media strategy for promoting what the Mayor is doing for London and what do you see as the most important platform for promoting what the Mayor does?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Thank you very much indeed for giving me the opportunity, you and the Chairman, to come and answer these questions.

If I may say, the overall media strategy is to promote the Mayor's work, his key priorities, his main messaging, with as effective a communications strategy as we possibly can.

In terms of how this takes shape, we have a responsibility to make sure Londoners are kept informed and completely engaged with the work of the Mayor and the London Assembly. In terms of how the press team works and does this, it provides a key accountability service to Londoners via the media as well, answering their queries promptly and accurately, as well as correcting inaccuracies that might mislead them about the work of City Hall and the Assembly, and the proactive communications of the Mayor's key policies, priorities and services along the lines of his key priorities, which include crime, policing, transport, housing and air quality, which are also the issues that most preoccupy Londoners.

Susan Hall AM: Given that list, he seems - and I have said it before - to be completely obsessed with Brexit. We hear far more from him about Brexit than all of what you are saying are his key priorities. Is that your idea? Is it his obsession? Do you share the obsession?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I would not characterise it like that. The result of the Brexit referendum shortly after Sadiq [Khan, Mayor of London] came to office was quite unexpected and had a big impact on the city in terms of the future and the uncertainty that it gave to businesses. It was very important for the Mayor, who was elected on a platform of remaining [in the European Union], to explain his priorities and his views when it came to Brexit and its effect on London. It is a huge decision taken by the British people that will have a massive impact on Londoners going forward, and the Mayor's role in that is absolutely crucial.

Susan Hall AM: It was not unexpected by very many of us, clearly the majority of us, but I go back to the point. You say he keeps going on about his key policies, but my point is he does not; he keeps going on about Brexit. As I say, is that your desire for him to do that, to make sure that the public do not realise how he is failing so badly on his key priorities, or is it down to him that he keeps going on about Brexit?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I do not accept that he keeps going on about Brexit at the expense of his other key policies at all, and decisions about the interventions he makes and how he communicates are down to him.

Keith Prince AM: If I can take up a point in relation to what you have just said, part of your role is to correct inaccuracies and issues that are misleading. You will have read the article, I think in *The Guardian*, where the Mayor once again claimed that he had frozen fares for Londoners and that Londoners would pay no more this

year than they did last year. That he has frozen all Transport for London (TfL) fares is actually a lie, as you well know. Did you not have a hand in correcting that inaccuracy?

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Could I just intervene on that, Assembly Member Prince? 'Lie' is quite a loaded word. 'Misleading', perhaps?

Keith Prince AM: I am not accusing anyone of lying. I am saying it is a lie. I am not saying anyone has lied. I am saying it is a lie that all the fares have been frozen.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): OK. As Chairman, I am just offering that warning. It is entirely up to you how you phrase things.

Keith Prince AM: I appreciate that. Thank you. I am not accusing anyone of lying. I am just saying it is a lie.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Thanks for that question, Assembly Member Prince. I think the article you are referring to was in *The Independent*, not *The Guardian*. I did not have any role in that. That was a political intervention and, as such, that was overseen and delivered by the London Labour Party.

Keith Prince AM: If such a quote were to be used within your remit, would you correct that?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): That is a hypothetical situation. I, and the press office, would seek to correct any inaccuracy that was in any media about the Mayor or the work of City Hall.

Keith Prince AM: You would accept that not all of TfL's fares have been frozen and that members of the public do pay more?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): This is not a question covered by the scope of this, Chairman. This is a question on --

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Yes. If we can keep questions related to the role of the Mayoral Directors, I can see what you are getting at but --

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I did not have a role in that --

Keith Prince AM: He just said his role was to correct inaccuracies and misleading items.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): As I said, I did not have a role in that --

Keith Prince AM: No, I appreciate that.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): -- particular article that you are referring to in *The Independent* at all.

Keith Prince AM: I was just curious, if such an article would come under your remit, whether you would feel the need to correct it.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Well, it has not.

Keith Prince AM: I have gathered all the information I need to from your answer. Thank you. What are the strategic and day-to-day decision-making structures within the Mayor's office on communication, please?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): In terms of strategy and day-to-day decision-making, I would describe my role as providing strategy, direction and oversight to the press office. That will take the form of face-to-face meetings, many of them, and other forms of communication. I work very closely with my fellow Mayoral Directors to make sure the Mayor's external digital stakeholder policy and international presswork is joined up and pursuing, as I have said, the Mayor's core objectives. I will sign off content going out in the Mayor's and Deputy Mayors' names, as well as mayoral spokesperson quotes, but I must emphasise that anything that goes out in his [the Mayor's] name is signed off ultimately by him. I will also sign off digital and marketing content to check it is appropriate for the Greater London Authority (GLA) and pursuing the Mayor's core objectives, although I am not actually the Director in charge of the digital output.

Keith Prince AM: Can I just pick you up on that? Can you just confirm what you said there? You are saying that anything that goes out in his name is signed off by him?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Yes, in his name.

Keith Prince AM: I think we have heard contrary to that in the past. That was interesting. Thank you very much.

Tom Copley AM: Just about Assembly Member Hall making this assertion about the amount of time the Mayor talks about Brexit. I have just gone back through the last six days of the Mayor's tweets because I got bored after six days. He has tweeted about Brexit four times and about housing and homelessness 14 times. Of 28 tweets, only four of them relate to Brexit. I just thought, as a point of information for the Committee, I do not think the Mayor is talking about Brexit all the time. In fact, he has mostly been tweeting online about cold-weather shelters.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: That is very good as well, and relevant.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Thank you for that point of information. We are indebted to you for it. Assembly Member Hall?

Susan Hall AM: I am interested to hear that one of the Labour Assembly Members is bored by the Mayor's Twitter account.

Tom Copley AM: I am bored by Twitter in general, Susan.

Susan Hall AM: Aren't we all? Anyway, I will go back to you, Patrick. I am curious to see that, in answer to a written response from a Mayor's Question of mine asking to see his media grid for six months, I was told that there was no such document that existed. Do you not believe in media grids? Every media person I have ever come across with this sort of job has media grids.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Sure. What we will do is we will have a regular meeting daily where issues like this are discussed in terms of interventions and in terms of that day's announcements. It could be an announcement from the Government; it could be an announcement from here in terms of reactive quotes that will need to be got ready and prepared. That is a meeting that is attended by a variable cast of characters, but it would normally include Mayoral Directors, senior people in the press office, members of the digital team, etc. I would describe that as a planning meeting.

Susan Hall AM: Going forward, do you not have a grid of sorts? What would you call it? What would you call your forward plan for communication?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): There are various communication plans that look forward over a period of days, for example.

Susan Hall AM: What would you call that?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I would call that a planning document.

Susan Hall AM: If I asked to see it, that is what I would refer to it as? Then I cannot be told you do not have one.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): You can ask to see what you would like to ask to see.

Susan Hall AM: OK. That is great. Thank you. The Mayor has sometimes been criticised as being the 'selfie Mayor' because he constantly takes selfies. Is that part of your communication strategy?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Could I just say something about social media, really, as well as selfies? My entire career has been in news and media and it goes back rather a long time, longer than I care to remember. I have never known a media environment that is as rapidly changing as this one.

Social media is intensely important in terms of communication now. For example, I have some figures here that show this, really. They also show the big demand that has risen significantly for the press office and the entire operation around the GLA. In London, 84% of 18-24-year-olds, 62% of 25-to-34-year-olds, 53% of 34-to-40-year-olds and 31% of those older - and London is a young city, as you will be aware, with a younger-than-average age than is the case in the rest of the country - say that online media is now their main source of news. My children and people older than them no longer get their news from bits of paper. Online media and the rise of social media is massively important. No communications strategy or tactics can ignore it.

In terms of selfies, the Mayor gets invited to a lot of events and he does a lot of events. He turns up. He is a popular figure and people are going to ask him for selfies.

Tom Copley AM: They never asked Boris Johnson [MP, former Mayor of London], of course.

Keith Prince AM: Patrick, what advice do you give to the Mayor on how to respond when London is hit by a terrorist outrage or a tragedy?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): That is a very good question. Thank you very much. This is absolutely key and, if I can say so at this stage, Assembly Member Prince, this is where our communications and media organisation is most tested in terms of a terrorist attack or a major emergency.

What happens there is that a key group is immediately convened which will include the Chief of Staff, the Chief Officer, the Mayoral Directors and senior officials on press communications as well as policy and other key areas. That is the hub where all the available information is brought in from the police, the emergency services, the first responders and everybody else. As that is happening, I will draw up a communications

strategy for the following hours, up to probably 24 hours in the first instance. Then I will discuss and advise the Mayor on that and we will go forward.

There are two things I would say about that. One is that in circumstances like that, it is absolutely vital that the Mayor puts out a message, first of all, of reassurance and, secondly, of information. How do people get around? What should they do? What is the latest information from the confirmed sources of the police and the emergency services? It is very important that in that situation we put out quick, accurate and reassuring statements. That is very important to the public.

It is also important that he then communicates with as large a number of media outlets as he possibly can, given his other priorities. That is a very key point. You would see then that he would do broadcast and media rounds very extensively. That would not be confined to the local media we deal with all the time but would include the national media that we deal with slightly less frequently but still very frequently and also the international media at that stage. You would see the CNN and the Associated Press (AP), for example, being part of that big media round because big international stories have big international repercussions.

The key thing is to get the information very quickly, be confident that what you are putting out is 100% accurate and reassuring, and spread it as widely as possible. That is something you learn only really with experience. The press office plays an absolutely key role in that. As we are all aware, there was a period throughout 2017 when London was hit by the disasters of Grenfell [Tower fire] and Sandilands [tram derailment] - although Sandilands was a bit before - and four terrorist attacks. The press office played an absolutely key role in that and I would like to pay tribute to them for their very hard work around the clock, keeping the Mayor advised, up-to-date, fully briefed, etc.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you. That was very helpful. I agree that it is very important that we get accurate, reassuring messages out as soon as possible to as many people as we possibly can. That was very helpful.

Susan Hall AM: Can you tell me what your key relationships within the GLA are and how you work with the Deputy Mayors and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), for example, to feed into their communication decision process?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Yes, I can. Thank you, Assembly Member Hall, for focusing on that area. Inside the GLA, as well as obviously meeting with and briefing the Mayor, I meet with the Deputy Mayors and I meet with senior policy officials and the press team serving each of their areas on a biweekly basis. These meetings are very vital in making sure that we have a coherent media strategy in place for each of these policy areas and that key issues are flagged earlier on, for example.

The key thing is to join up the communications and to join up the communications with other GLA bodies and key partners. To that extent, I am also in very regular contact, both as part of a larger group and individually, with my opposite numbers in MOPAC, TfL, the London Legacy Development Corporation, the fire service, etc, as well as - if you would permit me to go slightly wider - my opposite numbers in key bodies outside such as the [City of London] Corporation, the Centre for London, business organisations such as London First, etc. That is a very key part of my job and I am very regularly in touch with them through meetings, through phone calls, etc.

Susan Hall AM: Do you have any issues with any of them if they want to put out something that does not quite fit into the mayoral view, etc, and can you give me any examples of that?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): What we do is we will always try to come to a consensus. If you are looking in terms of the police, anything operationally that the police do or the police put out is a matter for them, but anything involving strategy or oversight we would see and would consult about in advance.

In terms of TfL, the Mayor is Chair of TfL and so the key announcements that TfL puts out and the information that it can spread through those announcements - I am particularly thinking of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), for example - is very much the focus of joint working. I have some information about the ULEZ, for example. It is very key to stress how we need to raise awareness in this and we will test awareness, both TfL and us. For example, following a renewed push on ULEZ communications with the deadline for the start of the ULEZ in the central section rapidly approaching on 8 April [2019], over two million people have now checked whether their vehicle will be subject to the charge using the TfL vehicle checker. That is something that is very important to us.

Susan Hall AM: Yes. I am glad you have brought up the ULEZ because I was going to bring it up. Are you not still very concerned that there are thousands out there that are unaware of it and are going to be blindsided by it?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): No. I am confident. There always is a challenge in raising awareness of such a key policy. For example, if I can, we have already seen improvements from the last time we checked. From August to November 2018, there has been a rise in awareness of this. I have the exact figure here, but I cannot quite find it. I can let you have that later.

Two-and-a-half million registered Congestion Charge users are being contacted if their vehicles do not meet the ULEZ standards. TfL is contacting other drivers. More than 300 ULEZ warning signs, to get technical, are being installed across central London. Businesses are being made aware. There is a big campaign going on using social media, using the traditional media, using advertising across print, radio and online video. We are absolutely doing everything we can and pulling out all the stops to raise awareness on this.

I have found the stats now. Sorry for not having them earlier. In August 2018, awareness of this was at 50%. In November [2018] it was at 60% and we will shortly have another estimate on that, too, which we can share with you.

Susan Hall AM: If the estimate does not show much higher, what is your plan B?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): That was between August and November [2018]. The plan B, if you like, which is part of the main plan, is the big new-year push, which is already underway. We have not seen the figure on that yet.

Susan Hall AM: I am being contacted by people who say that they have gone onto the checker and it says their vehicle is fine and then they have gone onto a different way of checking that says it is not fine. Have you found much in the way of issues with that checker?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I personally have not, but you would have to ask TfL about the technicalities of its checker. We can do what we can with the media to publicise it and to publicise the introduction of the ULEZ, as I said, through traditional media, through social media, and through visits by Sadiq [Khan, Mayor of London] where we take the media along. Everything in terms of the ULEZ we like to see through the fact that it is a public health problem, that the ULEZ is part of the solution, too.

Susan Hall AM: Can I respectfully suggest that you ask TfL about that? If there are problems with the vehicle checker, it is going to mean massive problems for the communications from the GLA. That is something that should be looked at, unless I happen to have just had the people who have had issues with checking their vehicle.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Of course, I will. Thanks for raising it. I will just say that I have not heard internally of any problems, but, yes, absolutely, we will check that out.

Keith Prince AM: Just on the ULEZ, if I can, you are quite right. I have seen a lot of the red signs that are stuck underneath the Congestion Charge signs. Actually, they are very good, except that all they say is, "ULEZ coming to you soon on 12 April", and there is no information. It might be helpful if perhaps there could be some direction, "For more information, visit TfL", or something. People will see the sign, but they will not understand what it is. They will not know what it means and that would be useful. It is good that you have the signs, but it would be even better if we could have something to point people where to go to check to see what it means or whether there are any ramifications.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I am very happy to take that up with TfL. One thing I also would point out is that there are - and I know there are because I have seen them - the more changeable digital signs on the sides of main roads. I am a user of the A3 and I see it on there. They may have slightly more information than the fixed signs that you are referring to.

Keith Prince AM: Most of those at the moment are saying that Rotherhithe Tunnel is closed. You are right. They have said it in the past but at the moment --

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): They are probably not saying that on the A3.

Keith Prince AM: -- they are being used for something more important at the moment around - that I have seen, anyway - north and south of the river.

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): These are all very good points and I am very happy to take them up with TfL.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Just on that last point from Assembly Member Prince, your role, as I understand it and from what you said today, is to oversee the Mayor's corporate output from this building. The line of questioning just now was about the operational output of the functional bodies and the ULEZ was given as an example.

How much interface do you have with things like that? Would it be reasonable for people to assume that you have had some oversight or knowledge of signs that are being put up to advertise the ULEZ or anything like that? It would be great if you could take stuff back if there are problems with that, but would you normally be expected to have been involved in that at some point and, if not, maybe should you? What are your thoughts?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): No, it would be something I would be aware of. As I have said earlier, marketing and campaigning do not actually fall under me. They fall under the Director for External and International Affairs, and that also takes in proactive digital-only communications. If there is a digital communication that is tied in with a media story or a media event, something written by Sadiq [Khan] that we want to publicise, I oversee that, but I do not have direct responsibility in those areas.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Something like the signs on the approach to the boundary of the ULEZ would be a TfL operational thing rather than for you, but if you were driving along and spotted a sign that was

misleading or wrong, as Assembly Member Prince has just indicated, would it be then down to you to pick that up with TfL? How does that work?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I would pick it up with TfL, certainly. As I have said to Assembly Members Hall and Prince, I will make these points.

Susan Hall AM: Can you tell me what you are measured on during your annual appraisal with David Bellamy [Mayor's Chief of Staff]?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): It is probably a question for him. Can I say what I would measure myself on?

Susan Hall AM: Is he your boss or is Sadiq Khan? Which one do you talk to the most? Who is your line manager, as it were?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): David [Bellamy] is my line manager. I have regular meetings and chats with David, but my central role, if you like, is as Sadiq's [Khan] most senior communications advisor and his spokesperson.

Susan Hall AM: To go back to the question, then - and you can answer it in two - both what does David Bellamy measure you on and then what do you measure yourself on?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): My principal accountabilities are stuff that we have covered before. I have to lead the development and implementation of the communications strategy. I provide advice to the Mayor, mayoral appointees and executive directors on media and communications policy. I lead the development and implementation of the GLA's media strategy to promote a positive image of the authority, with a wide range of media. I devise and help implement media campaigns, support policy issues, advise the Mayor, liaise with the Government and with London agencies, and lead on the development and implementation of media strategies for the press office.

A key one, which we have not mentioned before today, is to realise the benefits of London's diversity to promote and enable equality of opportunities and promote the diverse needs and aspirations of communities, which is a very key one and is something we give a lot of thought and a lot of time to: how we best engage community and diaspora media.

How would I judge my own deliverables, etc? My number-one priority is reaching Londoners of all ages and all backgrounds with City Hall's messages. A lot of work goes into how we target the various interventions and statements at various groups of Londoners and at various communities. For example, I have mentioned communities and diaspora media. We are very keen to reach local newspapers, whether it is in print or online. Research shows that Londoners have a high level of trust in local newspapers and local news organisations. In the wake of - dare I mention it - Brexit and maintaining foreign confidence in London, the engagement with international media is important.

One of the key deliverables for me is that I want the majority of Londoners to have seen or heard from the Mayor every month and I want that figure to meaningfully increase this year. It did in terms of December 2018 compared with December 2017.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): On that, how do you measure that?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): That is measured by regular polling and tracking that is done by the GLA Intelligence Unit.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Polling and tracking of what?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I can give you an example of how we track interventions. Picking one, for example, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), which was a very key piece of work and policy innovation, was launched on 19 September last year. We have tracked the coverage of it across a range of platforms, whether in print, online, etc, with a lot of numbers of unique daily browsers, readers, etc. On this particular example, there is pages of lists of the coverage and how many people it reached. It is very extensive. We will track these big announcements on the key policy areas to see how many people they are reaching through the media.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): The GLA Intelligence Unit does regular polling of, presumably, the usual representative sample of 1,200 people - or whatever it is - on key messaging or on whether they have heard of the Mayor this month. How does that work?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): It is a mixture.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): How often do they do that?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I am not in charge of this operation, but obviously the information is useful. It is monthly and some questions quarterly, I believe, but, as I said, I am not in charge of it.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Is that a new innovation or has that been an existing practice for a while?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): No, that is something that has happened for many years.

Susan Hall AM: Just briefly, do you know how much money is spent - obviously, because it is taxpayers' money - on tracking the popularity of the Mayor?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): No, I do not.

Susan Hall AM: Could it be found out?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Yes, I will find out.

Peter Whittle AM: Good morning, Patrick. Do you go with the Mayor on his various trips to other countries that he has taken?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I have been once abroad with him, but not on others.

Peter Whittle AM: I see. Somebody goes and does his press for him wherever he is, in the [United] States or India or wherever?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): In the States, it was me. In India, it was not.

Peter Whittle AM: Do you track his success there in terms of the amount of media hits he gets about it here or there?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): Both.

Peter Whittle AM: Which one, therefore, would you say was, in terms of media hits, the most successful of his trips, then?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): I do not have the exact number on hand, but I know that all his trips, which one should always remember are designed to bang the drum for London and see him acting as an ambassador for London at very uncertain times in the world, will involve bringing business representatives with him as part of the trip. I would say that they have all engendered a lot of positive coverage both here and where he has gone. He is accompanied on trips by representatives of our own media and that is another way - that is the main way - of spreading the message back here about him banging the drum for London.

Peter Whittle AM: Finally, just as a point of interest on that, you went to America with him. Is it the case that with the American media, you have to sell him to them? Do you have to say, "Hey, guess what? We have this guy here who is the Mayor of London. Go on, have him on", or do you find they are quite welcoming? Do they know who he is?

Patrick Hennessy (Mayoral Director of Communications): It is a mixture of both. He is a well-known figure around the world, as you will be aware. We take steps to publicise what he is and where he is going and what he is doing locally, but when we were in America he was on primetime American breakfast television and in numerous other interactions with the American media. They were pleased to have him on.

Peter Whittle AM: Thank you.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): We are through with you now, Patrick. You can take a breath. Nick, it is your moment to shine. Probably the best way to start is for you to give an outline of what your role is as you interpret it.

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Yes, sure. Just to echo what Patrick said at the beginning, thank you for inviting me here today to talk about my role and to ask questions and show an interest in the policy work that goes on in the Mayor's Office.

There are probably five main areas that I would touch on. The most important job is my role in helping to co-ordinate the policy work of the GLA and really support the Deputy Mayors in the delivery of their particular policy areas.

In addition to that, as per my job description, I act as an interface between the Mayor and the GLA's policy teams. I am a point of contact on policy across the organisation for those who want to bring things to the attention of the Mayor's Office or just discuss policy items in general.

Therefore, by working with the Deputy Mayors, I support the delivery of the Mayor's key policy aims and another area has been my work in helping to co-ordinate and lead on the delivery of the Mayor's strategies, both the statutory and the non-statutory strategies - that is always a mouthful - and then ensuring that the Mayor gets regular and robust policy advice and is adequately briefed on relevant policy issues as and when appropriate.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Thank you. How do you do that?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): The latter or all of it?

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): The whole thing. If we go through it in turn, you co-ordinate policy and you support the Deputy Mayors. How does that work?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I meet all the Deputy Mayors on a rolling fortnightly one-to-one basis, and we will discuss pressing policy issues, issues that are in need of co-ordination across teams, anything that is arising, and delivery against the Mayor's policy aims.

Then there are a couple of areas where there is a lot of cross-team working. Air quality is probably quite a good example of that where one of the first things I did after May 2016 was to bring together all of the teams that have a stake in the air quality work, which is more than just the Environment team. It was the Transport team and the Health team. We had TfL in there. That group has continued to meet and has driven forward that work on air quality. Previously there was not always necessarily the same tendency to perhaps work together across teams. It is a natural tendency in an organisation sometimes to get siloed. It is partly human nature. It is my job to try to make sure that that does not happen. Air quality is a good example of where I have managed to bring the teams together.

Similarly, on the strategy work, I was given a very good piece of advice very early on and that was to make sure that the Mayor's statutory strategies are all singing from the same hymn sheet so that you do not get contradictions between them and so that there are some threads that run through them and also so that you get the chronology get right. We work up towards the London Plan and that work is in progress at the moment. The Housing, Transport and Environment Strategies are probably the key building blocks and so we were really keen to get those statutory strategies written, consulted on and approved by the Assembly early so that that work on the London Plan could progress. It was my job to make sure that they were not contradicting each other, that teams were talking to each other, that some of the key themes like Healthy Streets, Health in All Policies, and Good Growth were reflected across all of the Strategies.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): On the strategic side and producing the strategies, that makes very good sense. What about the day-to-day role of strategic and operational decision-making within the Mayor's office? Both of the previous Mayors, I believe, had effectively a cabinet structure. The previous Mayor met his cabinet every Monday at 10.00am. The Directors, the Deputy Mayors, etc, would meet with the Mayor and they would have that function. Does that happen under this Mayor?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): The main vehicle for that is the Corporate Investment Board (CIB), which meets every Monday morning, which is the formal approval mechanism for policy decisions and spend, and all of the statutory strategies went through that process for approval and also the consultation reports attached to those. That is the formal --

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Who sits on that?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): The Deputy Mayors and the Mayoral Directors. The Chief of Staff chairs it. There is also the executive team from City Hall and the Chief Officer.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): The Mayor does not sit on it?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): No.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): All right. What is the interface between that Board, then, and the Mayor?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): The Chief of Staff will provide the running interface between that and the Mayor.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Decisions are not reached collectively, then? What happens? Recommendations are made and the Mayor agrees or not?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): On policy? There is not really a single route by which policy comes to the CIB because, as you can imagine, it depends what type of policy it is, how big it is and how many teams it cuts across. Work came out of the air quality team that I talked about a bit earlier, recommendations on things we could do around low-emission bus zones, the ULEZ, etc. Then they would go up to the Mayor for his approval, either via Deputy Mayor [for Environment and Energy Shirley] Rodrigues, who now chairs that group or via me.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): How much interface do the Deputy Mayors have with the Mayor?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): The Deputy Mayors meet with the Mayor on a regular basis.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): How often is 'regular'?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): On an individual basis, I do not know exactly how often, but they all have time on their own with him and then there is a collective meeting as well.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): You do not know how frequently?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I could not say exactly, no.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): When the Deputy Mayors are meeting with the Mayor, are you present in those meetings?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): No.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): They do those individually or do they do them with their senior officers?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): No, they do them individually.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): For your role, you have given me the description, some of which you were quoting from your job spec. What are your key deliverables, though? What are you being tasked with directly?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I touched on the Strategies earlier. Clearly, that is one of the main deliverables for the job. Linked to that is very much the co-ordination role in the Mayor's Office, stitching together different areas of policy to make sure that they are not contradicting and are joined up. There are a lot of instances where we have had to do that. Air quality I have talked about. We also have the work on the VRU, which is ongoing at the moment, with lots of stakeholders both outside and inside the building that we have to make sure are part of that partnership.

I can give an example of an area of policy that we have developed since we have been here on the back of a report done by the Assembly's Environment Committee on single-use plastics. We pulled together a team that

involved the Environment, Health and Planning teams because we were really keen to try to take forward some of that work around what we could do on reducing plastic use and delivering water fountains for the city so that people could fill up their water bottles.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): We are deep into the third year of the administration. From your perspective, what has gone well?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I would like to say that the co-ordination has gone pretty well. City Hall is blessed with fantastic expertise in its policy teams. One of the things that really struck me early on was how lucky we are to have the people who work in the policy teams here. For many of them, it is more than a job; it is a vocation. They really love the areas that they work in. That contrasts with central Government, where you do not always get that same level of expertise. There is a stability in it, too. I was determined that we would really try to pull that together as much as we could, and I think I have done a pretty good job on that. The Strategies are a good illustration of that.

Also, there are a couple of other things perhaps worth touching on. The nimbleness of the organisation helped very much in a couple of areas. The Mayor decided that we would set up the Young Londoners Fund and we pulled together a team from across the building from Education, Young People, Social Policy and various other teams who managed and drove that forward. They actually started distributing the money in pretty good time from inception to getting the thing up and running, and also put in place really good mechanisms for learning from each of the rounds and the money going out, getting feedback from successful and unsuccessful bidders and other stakeholders on how we could refine it and make it better. Round two is due at some point this year and, hopefully, we will have learned from that and have been able to refine it and make it even better.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): There is a flipside to the same question as the one I asked you. I know that hindsight is always 20/20, but if you could go back and restart the mayoral term, what would you do differently?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): There are always things on a day-to-day basis that sometimes do not go quite as well as you would like them to do and you learn from those and you dust yourself down. One of the big challenges - although we did pretty well to cope with it - is that you can never control for events outside of what goes on in this building. Since May 2016, there have been a number of events out of our control, perhaps more in a condensed period of time than either of the previous Mayors had to deal with. How you cope with that and continue with business-as-usual is a real challenge.

It was a stretch. There was that period in early 2017 when there were regular events that can become all-consuming. If we had known in advance that it was going to be like that, then we probably would have thought much harder about how to make sure that day-to-day operations are as resourced as they need to be. We managed, but it was a stretch, but who could have foreseen that it was going to be like that in 2017? It was a set of circumstances that were beyond our control.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Have you made any changes to the way things function in light of that?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): We did learn from it. One of the things was that I have a senior advisor who works with me now very closely and whom I did not have at that time. That just gives more bandwidth to be able to cope, particularly in those times when the pressure is on if events are out of our control. I did not have that at that time. You have to continue doing the day-to-day things that are really important as well as support the Mayor and the organisation in dealing with the aftermath of events beyond our control.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): You talked earlier on about your role in policy co-ordination. What role do you have in policy formulation?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): In terms of policy, I leave the Deputy Mayors very much to lead on their policy areas and they know their areas better than I do. They are closer to their teams. I gave you the example of how we responded after the report by the Environment Committee on single-use plastics. My job there was very much to take that forward and to pull together the teams within the building to support the formulation of a set of options for things that we could do. I very much try to facilitate the processes that will lead to policy suggestions and recommendations by the experts in the building who know better than me on a lot of the specific areas.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Just on that, that is an interesting area to think about. On that specific example you gave about the single-use plastics report from the Environment Committee, you spotted there was an opportunity there for a mayoral policy development piece of work to go on and then, in a directional way, suggested to the relevant departments that they should formulate something, or did they come to you? How did that work?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I try very hard to keep on top of the work that comes out of the Assembly and the reports that come out. On that particular one, it was exceptionally timely in terms of the report. It came out just as that issue exploded as an issue and everybody woke up to actually how important reducing single-use plastics is. I said to the relevant Deputy Mayors, "We need to take this work forward. Let us pull together a team inside the building of the officers who have expertise in this area and let us come forward with a set of options and proposals for the Mayor to decide on what to take forward".

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Policy work is not static. Policy can get outdated very quickly and things move at a fast pace. It cannot just be down to you to spot policy opportunities and so I am interested in how the dynamic between you and the Deputy Mayors works because I imagine they will have their own ideas and it goes backwards and forwards. How does that work?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): That is a really good point. At the formal regular meetings that I have with Deputy Mayors, which are fortnightly, that is the kind of thing that would come forward in those types of discussions. Deputy Mayors would bring to the discussion new and evolving policy areas. The other benefit of the way that we work upstairs is that the majority of the Deputy Mayors are sitting, broadly, in the same area as each other and also us in the Mayor's office. That interaction on an informal basis also just helps oil the wheels in terms of exchange of ideas. Yes, things do come bottom-up as well. It is definitely not just top-down driven. As I said before, the Deputy Mayors know their areas far better than I do.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): What about your relationships with stakeholders outside this building, outside the GLA? What sort of relationships do you have and how do you facilitate those?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I have good relationships with some of the key organisations that you would expect like London Councils and the officers there and through some of the council leaders because of the particular areas that they lead on. I work closely with some of the key thinktanks like Centre for London and Centre for Cities, having conversations with them about work that they are doing or things that might be of interest in terms of new policy ideas and new areas of work. I work with other civil society groups, academics in London, London First, the London Cycling Campaign and Client Earth, to name a few.

We also have fairly good relationships with some of the other mayors outside of London. Some of that is personal relationships that I have. Then there are the relationships with the wider GLA family.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): The one area you did not mention there was the Government. What are your relationships with the Government?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): When the Mayor meets with Government Ministers, Secretaries of State, I am usually in attendance at the same time and in those meetings.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Do you meet officials? You are an official.

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Government relations is actually not in my job description. It is in my colleague Jack Stenner's [Mayoral Director for Political and Public Affairs] job description. He leads on that area of work closely with our Government Affairs team.

There are occasions when I will be in meetings where it is with officers and Government officials and sometimes I have a relationship with Government officials and sometimes that is done officer-to-officer. Sometimes it is the Deputy Mayors who have that relationship. It is all co-ordinated through the Government Affairs team.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): Policy formulation is critical and your relationship with the Government is absolutely critical as well. We are all realistic people and sometimes we will understand that there will be policy clashes and sometimes that is deliberate and sometimes it is not. However, in order to get things done, very often some kind of assimilation of policy is required, is it not? What sort of a role do you have with that with central Government?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Maybe I can illustrate it by talking about one particular example. In the first year, we did a lot of work jointly with London Councils and the Government around a package of devolution measures. I played quite a central role in that in terms of managing a particular relationship with an official within Treasury who was leading on it on their side of things, as well as individual officers talking to the various bits because it was across a number of different Government departments. I had a role at the centre of that, keeping the co-ordination of that with the officials within Treasury, and working really closely with London Councils. We got a fairly good package of devolution measures there.

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman): That is probably enough from me for the moment. I have seen Assembly Member Arnold.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Yes, Chairman. Thank you very much. Good morning, gentlemen. I have a few questions for Nick. I am going back to policy and development and monitoring and its impact. You gave an example of the Young Londoners Fund, which for me, having seen the excitement and what many of my constituents are doing with that fund, I would say is an excellent example of how it fits into the Mayor's objective of an inclusive London for all.

When I met up recently with about 20 graduate fashion designers of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) heritage, I was a bit put back by what they were telling me about their scepticism about the Mayor. They knew the Mayor was giving funding to the British Fashion Council in order to work with the London Fashion Week. They were very sceptical of this and said that it was money just being paid to buy seats at fashion shows for whoever because they could not see any changes in terms of expansion because, basically, this is an industry that is known to have problems about racism, sexism and all sorts of isms.

Therefore, they asked me if the Mayor's policy was to target it and the many young designers and creatives could in a sense be benefiting from this intervention. It would make sense, and that is how they saw it. I did not have an answer to them. How do you, as the Policy Director - because I would imagine that you were there at the start of this policy development - monitor that to ensure that this valuable resource from London

has been given and if it has been targeted? Would you not be concerned that it is those who have the most who are benefiting from this and those young children, who could do with the catwalk show, that there is absolutely no chance of them ever getting one?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Thank you for that. It is a really good question. I cannot say I know the exact details of what is funded and what the outputs are for that.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Do you know the amount of funding?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): No, I am not a budget holder, and therefore I do not know. I can find out for you.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: It is a great deal of money.

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I can find out for you. It does predate us, in my understanding. It is quite a longstanding investment that has been made by City Hall into the fashion industry, but it is not the only intervention. If Deputy Mayor [for Culture and the Creative Industries Justine] Simons was here she would be able to list off a range of other interventions where we are trying to support young creatives by providing more affordable start-up space and explore on skills that would be very much targeted on those things you touch on. You are right to highlight the challenge around diversity and we are very alert to that. I can certainly get some more information to you, if that is helpful, on some of the other areas that we are active in this area.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Yes, because you must talk about the policy development and where you would expect the policy and what you would expect from the policy, would you not, or have you left this solely to the Deputy Mayor?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): No. The Deputy Mayors do lead on the day-to-day areas of policy and policy delivery. I leave them to that; that is their job. I have a role in co-ordination; I have a role in making sure that where there are overlaps people are talking to each other. That is one of those areas, because support for the creative sector could be in terms of premises, it could be in terms of skills, it could be in terms of start-up. It is very much one of those areas where teams are working together.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: If these young people were to ask the Mayor, his reply would be that our policy is focusing at the entry level. How can you stay with the entry level of any industry? Is there not development and growth? Does the Mayor have an ambition to see the catwalks representative of London, and if there are 50 designers there coming from London, at least 15% would be of BAME heritage? Does he not have this ambition?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Yes, I am sure he does.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Would he not have that thinking in developing policy?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I am sure he does but it is one for Deputy Mayor Simons and I am very happy to find out more information for you on what we are doing in that area. I think he would totally agree with you on that; of course he would do.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Nobody is monitoring. The Deputy Mayor could be left to tinker with the low end without anybody looking to see what the end goal could be after four years.

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): No, there is a full corporate monitoring process in place. The quarter 3 version of that is due very shortly. That is designed exactly to monitor spend and impact.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Do you see what I mean? If you talk about a good example of your policy direction or intervention, when you are challenged about one that clearly people who would look to and know of a Mayoral intervention linked to a policy about an inclusive London for all, they are sceptical and cannot see a future, is that not worrying?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): It is but it is the first time I have heard of that. I will certainly take it back and talk to Deputy Mayor Simons.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: I have raised it with officers.

Sian Berry AM: You talked earlier about paying close attention to the outputs from the Assembly. Are you the one who writes the responses to things like reports and motions or do you co-ordinate that? Does it run by you?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): They are written by the policy teams in the building, but anything that comes back to the Committees in the name of the Mayor, and it usually is a letter, would come past me.

Sian Berry AM: Would you say the Assembly has had a good influence on the Mayor's policies so far?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Yes, I would.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: He is hardly going to say no.

Sian Berry AM: He has the choice, if he would like to answer.

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Policy is my thing and I am genuinely interested in the debate around policy and where new ideas come from and what drives them. We do not always agree. It would be somewhat of a strange world if we did. I think the function that the Assembly and the Assembly's Committees perform in that respect is really helpful. Similarly, I keep an eye on the Centre for London or what comes out of the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) or comes out of the Centre for Cities and things like that because nobody has a monopoly on good ideas.

Sian Berry AM: Exactly. Part of our job is uncomfortable for you because we are holding the Mayor to account and measuring how well he is doing, but a large part of our work on the Committees is looking at problems that are faced by Londoners and what the solutions might be. We put forward things, hopefully, that the Mayor is not already looking at. Can you give any examples of where we have put something forwards and you have thought, "Yes, we need to do that"?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I touched on the report that came out on single-use plastics. That is probably the best example of where we have tried to --

Sian Berry AM: That is a good example but a bit of a no-brainer. Is there anything where you were surprised about something and thought, "Yes"?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I am trying to think back of a good example. I can go back and look through my notes because I tend to scribble a few notes down and then track that back through how things have fed into work that we do. I am very happy to come back to you on that with more information.

Sian Berry AM: I notice you watch Mayor's Question Time, more or less religiously. Do you ever go away at the end of the question time and think, "I want to follow that up with that Assembly Member"? I say that because I have six minutes, generally, to talk to the Mayor and quite often I have wanted to follow that up with the Mayor himself. He is quite generous offering his Deputy Mayors up for meetings, but often things are a little bit less formal than that and could be followed up by you. Do you ever think of doing that?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I have done on some occasions. I am very happy to. In fact, I will have a word with the Mayor and perhaps he could offer me up on occasions if that is helpful, too. I am very happy to meet with Assembly Members whenever they wish to talk to me about anything related to policy. I have done that already with some Assembly Members. I say it to officers in the building, to come and talk to me at my desk if it is something that is more informal, or I am happy to meet up and have a cup of coffee and talk about it in more detail.

Sian Berry AM: Great. Do you have regular meetings with the Chairs of our Committees?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): No, I do not.

Sian Berry AM: Should you?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): It is a good idea and I do not see why I should not. It is a good idea.

Sian Berry AM: You presumably meet Centre for London quite regularly.

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Yes. It is a good idea and I will take that up. In an ideal world I would have a lot more time to get out of the building and talk to policy experts across the city, but such are the pressures, sometimes, of time it is never quite as easy as that. I will take you up on that offer.

Susan Hall AM: Nick, did you have anything to do with the policy to remove advertising for fat and sugar and all the rest of it on TfL?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I was involved in the meetings that my Mayoral Director [for External and International Affairs] colleague Leah Kreitzman convened, which involved TfL, health colleagues, transport colleagues, yes.

Susan Hall AM: Were all the consequences of that ban discussed before?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): In terms of?

Susan Hall AM: In terms of charities not being able to do some of their advertisements because they contained cakes; the amount of advertisements that are having to be removed because in the background they have a chocolate bar and everything else; the continued expense of all these companies having to go through their advertisements; the fact that the advertisements now are going to be put on things like the Metro, etc, so they are going to be everywhere else and the money is not going to be spent at TfL; the fact that TfL's finances are in such a state, to remove that advertising revenue could have a massive knock-on effect. Were all these things discussed?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Because it is more of a marketing lead, it was led by my Mayoral Director colleague and they went into the process with their eyes open and fully aware of all of the factors.

Susan Hall AM: You are fully aware of the consequences of this ban?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): You would need to ask my colleague who led on this area of work.

Susan Hall AM: Since you are the one in charge, do you think it was one of your better policies that came out of City Hall?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): Ultimately the Mayor is the person who decides on whether he wants to go ahead with a particular policy and he decided that he did want to go ahead on this particular policy.

Susan Hall AM: All of the things that have happened were put to him before he agreed to go ahead with it?

Nick Bowes (Mayoral Director of Policy): I think he went into the decision fully with his eyes open.

Susan Hall AM: Did he? OK, that is fine. Thank you.