

**London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee  
28 March 2019**

**Transcript of Item 5 – Emergency Services Collaboration**

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** This brings us to today's main item, the discussion with invited guests from the emergency services on collaboration in London. I would like to welcome our guests to start with. We have Kevin Canavan, Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service (LAS). Deputy Assistant Commissioner (DAC) Matthew Twist, Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). David Shek, Regional Secretary, London, Fire Brigades Union (FBU). Susan Ellison-Bunce, Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade (LFB) and Richard Mills. Congratulations, Richard, on your wonderful new position, but in the meantime I still have to call you the Assistant Commissioner for Operational Policy and Assurance, LFB. Thank you so much to our guests from Durham. I am sorry you had such a terrible journey here but you are here and we are very grateful. We have Councillor John Robinson, Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group, and Sarah Nattrass, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire Authority. Welcome, all. We are all going to ask various questions. We will direct most of them to specific people but if you want to say something else then please just indicate. I will start off, and this is to all of you. What does emergency services collaboration mean to you? Shall I start with Kevin?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** We have always collaborated as the emergency services, predominantly in the operational arena. All three services have been in existence for some time now and collaboration has happened to a greater or lesser extent. The statutory duty introduced in 2017 was a timely reminder and prompted the services into formalising arrangements regarding collaboration. We formalised arrangements certainly here in London and I know colleagues across the country have. We have established a London Blue Light Collaboration Team that was set up at the behest of the three Chiefs at that time to look into areas where collaboration may add value and, as per the statutory duty, seek out efficiency and effectiveness. For me, those are the two watchwords that collaboration means for the three services, efficiency and effectiveness.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** For me, it is about how we can work together to improve service to the public of London, principally. Yes, the statutory duty, as Kevin said, was helpful in terms of placing that at the forefront of our future thinking, but particularly in London, events that we have seen over the last couple of decades, if not longer, have driven a lot of collaboration and joint working at an operational level. In many areas I would say that we are leading in the United Kingdom (UK) in terms of how we operationally can work together, driven by events, principally. For me, the collaboration looking forward, the work that is ongoing now, the work that we have been doing as part of the Blue Light Collaboration Group and as part of our joint collaborative contact and response project is now around how we can take that further and how we can improve our services to the public.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** We have no problem working on incidents on the fire ground with the different services but I do want to make clear we are opposed to any type of merging or turning out to shouts together. This is because we do believe the services should be kept separately. While we have a lot of respect for our colleagues like the police, it is our belief that the services should be kept totally separate. We are fire and rescue. They are law enforcement.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** OK. You want it to be kept separately despite what --

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Yes, for turning out to shouts and things like that. On backroom stuff, sharing buildings and the like, we do have cases where we do share buildings where we are not seen together turning out to shouts. We are less opposed to that, but in general the services should be separate.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** OK. Perhaps we will explore that with you later because some of us have different views. That will be interesting.

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** I would echo our colleagues in the other emergency services in London. It is primarily, for us, around improving outcomes for the public, improving public safety and looking to improve our efficiency as well wherever we can. We do need to look at strategic alignments and that is something we are doing through the governance arrangements that Matt [Twist] has already alluded to, but primarily this is about improving the offer to the public.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** I would fully concur with everything that has been said by our blue light colleagues and Susan [Ellison-Bunce] in relation to providing the best possible service to the public through collaboration. It is not only efficiency and effectiveness, it is how we operate both at the front of house and back of house, dare I say, in relation to improving the training and education, the contact that we have with a broad range of people and the speed at which, through collaboration, we can provide a better service both in our prevention activities but also in our response. Let us not lose sight of the fact that the primary purpose of blue light collaboration is to save lives and everything that we do within collaboration, whether it is front of house or back of house, is all focused on giving the best for Londoners, the taxpayer and also those people who commute to London.

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** Clearly in the County of Durham we are a rural county. We had to look at collaboration long before the duty of collaboration came in. It is engrained into our philosophy. It is engrained into why we use the title, "Being the best". It is being the best at providing improved public safety. We looked at collaboration not only with our fellow colleagues in the police, the ambulance and so on. We have the Pennine Way that runs through our area so we have collaboration with Mountain Rescue. We have quad stations, we have tri-stations. We have looked at all different agencies as well as the normal statutory. We have looked at collaboration locally in regard to what the fire services in the north east can do to work together both front of house and back, and we have also heavily been involved, along with London, in the national collaboration among all fire services. We have looked at it both internally as a fire service and externally with our agencies, and certainly we became a pilot site for the National Health Service in regard to first responding. We took it as global. We will join in with anyone.

**Sarah Nattrass (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire Authority):** I would exactly concur with all the blue light partners' comments for now. Definitely, our drive is efficiency, effectiveness and obviously our delivery for the public safety and the community. Our strategy up in Country Durham and Darlington is based on three areas: better value for money, making sure that we can look at quantifiable efficiencies in any collaboration that we do; improving our outcomes, improving the service we provide to local people and local communities; and also looking to reduce the demand that we have by working together in our individual organisations and hopefully improving our delivery to the local community. It is absolutely vital that this is bought into by all partners and driven from the top of the organisation throughout.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** OK. Lovely. If I concentrate on Durham to start with, has the Policing and Crime Act's duty to collaborate made much difference or were you doing it before then anyway?

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** We were doing it before then. We have a Collaboration Board that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) [Ron Hogg] attends, I attend as Chair of the Fire Authority, the Chief Constable [Michael Barton] attends, the Chief Fire Officer [Stuart Errington] attends, and senior officials and officers. We meet on a regular basis, examining and looking at collaboration and how we can take it forward. It is something we established before the [Policing and Crime] Act [2017]. It was just rolling on.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** It is continuing. If I can ask everybody else, has this Policing and Crime Act [2017] changed the way the emergency services work in London? Were you doing any of it first, Richard?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** In relation to something my colleague said earlier about the operational response, Members may recall that we did a collaboration day back in November 2017 where we demonstrated at Lambeth Fire Station the blue light collaboration that was already taking place. In answer to your question around the Policing and Crime Act, it is an enabling Act that will enable us to formalise the conversations and think about collaboration in relation to all the activities we take, whether that is operational or whether that is through our support services. Many of those conversations had been taking place even before the Act. What that Act allows us to do is to bring it to the forefront of all our thoughts when we are in the early stages of talking about our strategies and also when we talk about our contracts and efficiency and effectiveness as a whole, as a holistic approach.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Just following on from what Richard [Mills] has just been saying, you are all doing it anyway so why do you need a statutory duty to make you do it? That is question one. Question two: Have you had the resources you need to do it properly? In particular, for example, Richard, I am thinking of the urban search and rescue (USAR) exercise we had in February [2019]. You were there and the police were there and it was a very good opportunity but LAS could not afford to go, in my understanding. Without the resources, is this going to work effectively?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** I was not aware the LAS could not afford to go to that particular event.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** That was my impression. If there was another reason --

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** Operational pressures are probably more likely. Has the Act actually changed anything that we do? As I say, it has formalised the collaboration arrangements. All three services have invested heavily in collaboration. Structurally, we have created a London Blue Light Collaboration Team, we have created governance structures around this and we have formalised and embedded collaboration into the three organisations.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** It is also the legislation itself. While we were doing much of the stuff anyway, what it has done is given more momentum, given more of a push and given extra focus. Our three Chiefs meet now more regularly to formally discuss collaboration. We meet at this sort of level to discuss how we are taking forward the thematic areas that we are looking at in terms of collaboration.

It is true to say the exercising and operations have been well-established in London over many years - I can think back to significant exercises that we have done over the past decade - but that is not without challenge. There are reasons why, for whatever reason at whatever time, individual agencies or individual services may not be able to support that, as Kevin has outlined. Generally speaking, we have a good track record of delivering

fairly large multi-agency exercises and do across a variety of spheres, whether that is terrorist-related incidents, whether that is, as you have said, USAR-type stuff, whether that is chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear or whether that is mass casualties. All that sort of stuff is well-exercised and has been over the course of the years in various operational contexts within London.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):**

From my perspective in relation to your question, it is not always necessarily about monetary value; it is about the amount of time and investment. We will utilise each other's skills. I have spoken to Kevin and I know we have an LAS member of staff who sits with us to help us with our medical intervention activities. He has proven invaluable. While the question around collaboration is, "Can it be funded?" there will always be challenges around exercising and there will always be the challenges around resourcing for all services. The benefit of doing collaboration is about freeing up spare capacity by utilising people more effectively and utilising some of that capacity for other activities for the benefit of the blue light services and our response, and also in relation to how we operate during our prevention activities. The enabling Act and the fact that we have a collaboration group established is evidence from us as an organisation of the benefits that will bring long-term.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** That neatly brings me to the question I was going to ask Susan [Ellison-Bunce], which is: what resources are we putting into this, as the Fire Brigade and indeed the other two emergency services? How many bodies are working on it and are we going to get value for money out of it? In other words, how are we going to measure the outcomes to make sure that the outcome matches the input?

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** In terms of the investment, in governance terms I meet regularly with Kevin [Canavan] and Matt [Twist] and we are coordinating and driving, if you like, that blue light collaboration. That is part of the investment. That is part of my time. LFB have funded two half posts to put together into the team. That is also partly funded by the LAS and the MPS. We have just two whole-time people, really, working on coordinating and driving it. They are not actually running projects that will deliver collaboration, what they are doing is making sure that all the services are aware of what is going on and identifying opportunities to collaborate, which is part of our duty under the Act, of course, now. It is not just to be collaborating where we can but to actively seek opportunity to do that.

Then we are working to support colleagues like Richard [Mills] and his equivalents in the other emergency services so that they can meet regularly and pick up the thematic areas in the strategic intent. The idea is that with good strategic alignment, we are focusing on opportunities that we were all interested in developing anyway and then working to do things in concert so that we can do what we were intending to do anyway but better together and hopefully more cheaply.

In terms of measuring outcome and value for money, you are right, it is quite hard to measure that as an outcome. Fundamentally, what we would hope is that our performance indicators in London - the number of fires, the number of fatalities, those sorts of performance indicators; the performance indicators by which we measure our performance already - are sufficient to measure the effectiveness of the activity that we are carrying out with partners. I am not sure that it warrants separate --

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Those statistics you expect to improve as a result of this?

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** Yes. It would be very hard to identify what proportion of that benefit was accrued from collaboration activity but fundamentally, if we believe that we are measuring our performance in the areas that matter, we would hope

that collaborative activity will improve that performance. We could - we have not but we could - look at input performance measures. We are certainly collating the data on collaboration and we are in a position to identify what is working and what is not working so well. Evaluation of specific initiatives is underway. We are looking at the Safe and Well [Fire Safety Home] visits that we have been piloting in five boroughs across London. We are doing evaluation of that and that will give us specific information about the effectiveness of that particular initiative, but I think it would be very difficult to say, "As a result of collaboration A, we have delivered this outcome for London". It would be very difficult to pull that apart that specifically.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Going back to the start of your answer, across the three emergency services we have two bodies, as it were, working on this?

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** Yes.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Just two bodies. Right, OK. Finally on this, a question to our colleagues from Durham. To an extent, I suspect you have been doing this because you are a relatively small brigade. I think the population of your area is the same as my constituency.

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** It is 600,000.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Yes, that is about the same as my constituency of two London boroughs. If you are looking at collaboration, is there not a case in some of the smaller brigades to merge those brigades with neighbouring brigades to get a better critical mass and reduce overheads and costs that way?

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** Can I come back to that but also give you a national perspective on earlier on? The Emergency Service Working Group - the seven constituencies, that is the police, ambulance and so on - have set up three task groups and those are reporting directly to the Minister. The task groups are looking at inspections and opportunities to collaborate. When the inspections are coming into both the fire and the police and when they are coming into health, the Care Quality Commission and the fire inspections are looking at the effectiveness of the duty to collaborate and asking for responses back.

Task Group 2 is looking at the financial barriers to collaboration, looking at what the barriers are, what the problems are and at the same time what the financial benefits of collaboration have been. That is reporting back. Thirdly, it is looking at cultural issues. Are there any cultural barriers to collaboration? It is also bringing in and looking at data. Certainly, the current data is showing that out of 358 responses from fire services to questionnaires, we have 805 instances where positive collaboration has brought efficiency and effectiveness across the country.

Moving back to your question, in Northumberland, Durham and Tyne and Wear we are looking at where we can work together. Can we combine our control? Can we combine our operations? We are looking at more collaboration, working that way while retaining the identity. Our local people want to retain the identity of their police and of their fire [services]. Certainly, our PCC has made it quite specific that he does not want to take over fire and neither does he want to be on our Fire Authority. What he says is that being on the Fire Authority could restrict his activity and restrict the way he carries out his PCC role. We believe our identity as a single Fire Authority is important.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** Just a supplementary on the number of people. Susan [Ellison-Bunce] alluded to the two from the LFB who are on that team but the total team is bigger.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** That is what I was trying to get at.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes. We have, in total, four and a half people. It does not sound huge, but it is four and a half people across the LAS, the MPS and Fire [Brigade]. You touched on the questions of benefits and that team is, at the moment, working with Essex Fire and Rescue, who are the national leads in terms of benefit mapping for collaboration, to look at how that could be done. That is one of the strands of work that the team is currently looking at.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** Thank you. Recently - I suppose it is about a year ago now - there has been a transfer of responsibility for London's fire and rescue service from the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) to the Mayor. Do you think this has created new opportunities for more collaboration and if so, can any of you give an example of that?

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** I am not sure it has particularly, no. It has enabled a focus on it. As colleagues have already said, we were collaborating before. The Policing and Crime Act itself introduced a stronger focus on that and an emphasis on the need to take collaboration into account in particular ways. What it did do, I think, is prompt the three Chiefs to come together, as they were anyway, and to look specifically at collaboration. The three previous Chiefs agreed a strategic intent. The three current Chiefs have agreed a revised version of that and that is setting out their shared vision for collaboration at a very high level for the foreseeable future. I think it has enabled us to focus on specific areas that are of interest to us across the three blue light organisations.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** OK. What governance structures are in place to ensure that there is effective oversight of collaboration activities in London?

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** I am happy to start. There is a hierarchy of meetings and structures that we have. Susan [Ellison-Bunce] has already articulated about the three Chiefs' meetings, which set the vision, which we all report to and update. We have a Blue Light Collaboration Board that sits below that, and beneath that the heads of project boards. Our collaboration effort and work has been separated into six broad strands looking at strategy, response, prevention, people, command and control services, and business support and infrastructure, and I think within that one it would include estates. Each of those heads of project boards has a working group.

Internally within the MPS and probably of less interest, we have the Blue Light Collaboration Board. While we touched on four and a half people there are far more than that working on collaboration, just not full-time. We have senior people, directors within human resources (HR), within estates, within digital policing and the operation who meet regularly at a senior level to take forward their area of responsibility and the area of work they are looking at. In very broad terms, that is how I see it. I am sure there is a better way of describing it.

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** Not at all. That covers the highlights. We have a procurement working group and an information technology (IT) working group. There are a number of areas that are looking at collaboration, but in effect as part of their day job.

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** Just to clarify that, we advocate as a collaborative Board that collaboration should not be seen as an additional to-do. It is part of your day job.

That is very much the emphasis placed upon the three organizations, that collaboration is a vehicle that can help you deliver rather than an additional and burdensome task. It certainly is not.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** No. Thank you. John, if I can ask you, in late 2017 the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group set out to establish an emergency services collaboration database. Can you provide an update on that work?

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** Yes. I partly referred to it. In relation to that database, 358 survey results came back from the country - I did quote it earlier - and 805 examples came out of that, and a report. I have brought you a copy if you do not have it.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** Lovely, thank you.

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** I have to give one caveat. Knowing that we were coming to London, you will find pink is highlighted everywhere. We have already highlighted for you where London is and you will find that there is quite a lot. We produced a report on what results came back. We are now then disseminating every single part of that throughout the various task and finish groups. That will then form the basis of the work of the three task groups over the coming year.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** Lovely. Thank you. I look forward to reading it.

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** You talk about London. If you look in our report - I was looking at it - at the information-sharing, certainly there is a big paragraph and London features heavily on how good it is at information-sharing, how it is seen across the country as a beacon for its information-sharing and for the way you have responded to the concepts of 'protect, prepare, contest'. In fact, we are watching London and working our systems based on what you are doing in London. Every credit to London for that.

**Susan Hall (Chairman):** That is what we like to hear because we all think that London is the best. Thank you very much.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Councillor Robinson, they will be aimed at you mostly. You are obviously a man who knows how to flatter his audience, so thank you very much.

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** No, no, I am just --

**Gareth Bacon AM:** It might be justifiable flattery but it is all good. As the Chairman said, we do like to hear good things about the LFB.

All of you talked about why collaboration is a good thing in principle and talked about how it might lead to lower cost and better output. Perhaps from your report, which I gather you are going to circulate after the meeting, could you give us an example of how that has worked in Durham? Obviously, you are slightly ahead of us in terms of what you have actually implemented.

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** I can give you three quick examples. We have a quad station in Barnard

Castle. The quad station is where we have the police, the fire, the ambulance and also our mountain rescue all based in one station. Therefore, we can respond instantly into the Pennine Way.

We have a three quad station in the city of Durham which is the fire, ambulance and ourselves, and there is also part of that for mountain rescue to go out. Again, all three of us are based in one area. There are the efficiencies of only having one station, one base in the area. The public like it because they know that if they want to go to the police, they want to go to fire, if they want the ambulance, they go there.

We took part in what I call the first responder trial. This is the responder trial where went out working with the North East Ambulance Service. We saved more lives in that responder trial than we did in our normal, basic work of fire and road accidents. That trial was a success. There are three quick successes that we believe prove that it does work.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** OK. In the process of setting it up and then carrying it through, what has been the greatest challenge to establishing collaboration as a way of working up in Durham?

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** Changing personnel. We have had a change in the Chair of the Fire Authority. We have had change in regard to the Chief Constable, who is about to go. We lost our Chief Executive. It is change in senior personnel and maintaining that culture and that commitment, but that has been able to happen. It is also getting people to accept the culture change and accept that collaboration does not mean to say, "We are going to take over, you are going to lose your service and you are going to lose your identity". Collaboration means working together, not taking over.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** You said that in a very concise statement in here but how have you made that real for people up in your neck of the woods? Change is uncomfortable for everyone, is it not, and certainly in London we have blue light services that have tried to cooperate to a greater or lesser degree over the years. We heard from our FBU representative earlier on that there are some reservations the FBU have about certain things. I am imagining you have encountered some of these problems already up in your neck of the woods. How have you demonstrated that collaboration would work and it is not about taking services away or merging them or anything like that?

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** Can I pass over to Sarah? That is Sarah's day-to-day work.

**Sarah Nattrass (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire Authority):** The point, going back to what John said before, is that culture can be a big barrier. Different organisations have different outcomes that they are trying to achieve at the time. As I said, initially it was about driving it from the top of the organisation and that belief. You develop those relationships early on by working together. They get to know each other and understand that it is the right thing to do.

We are in austere times. We need to look at things differently and change. We cannot carry on doing things like we used to do. We just do not have the money or the personnel any more to be able to do that, so we have to be innovative. We have to look at alternative ways to deliver our outcomes and ultimately, we are here to serve the public so we need to change and adapt, move with the times and do things differently.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** OK. Turning to our London witnesses from left to right as I look at it, so starting with Kevin, what do you see as the biggest challenges in London to taking forward collaboration in the way that Durham have?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** One of the first things we did when we were established as a blue light collaboration team was go on a whistle-stop tour of the country. We visited a station referred to as a quad station and saw some good examples, particularly in Manchester, around Safe and Well visits. We went and saw best practice in action, which was interesting and a steep learning curve.

To answer your question, “What are the challenges around collaboration in London?” as ever, personalities can get in the way sometimes if people feel that their department is under threat. When you start talking about potential efficiency and effectiveness around back office functions that obviously sets alarm bells ringing for some people so the barriers can come up there. For me, collaboration is about relationship-building. At least 80% of collaboration is about being honest with each other, building relationships across the three services and trusting that this is not an exercise in cutting jobs, this is not purely an exercise in financial saving; this is, as Matt [Twist] alluded to earlier, an exercise in improving the service and provision to Londoners. Once we can get over those cultural barriers of three well-established and long in the tooth services who have always worked this way in our own little silos, once we can get over those personalities and entrench collaboration as the way we do things around there, then that is the way forward.

Barriers have not been many, if I am honest. In some of the conversations we have facilitated you see a lot of lightbulbs come on. For example, the three directors of estates met and they were having a tea and biscuit chat around the issues they face. One of them said, “Well, we have a challenge in” -- I cannot remember the area of London, and the other estate director said, “That’s funny, we have an estate challenge there”, and the third director said, “I can’t believe it. We have exactly the same problems in that area”. For me, the challenges are getting people around the table talking, being honest and open with each other and leaving nothing behind. Let’s have those honest discussions.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** I support everything Kevin said. The challenges are, I would say, culture, scale, investment and almost legacy in some ways. The culture point is right in that if we all look to what the public outcome is rather than what the service outcome is then that would be a good guide, and we are trying to do that. Do our performance matrices do what we are held to account over, drive collaboration, or do they drive individual service targets? That is a question. I am not saying that is a big blocker. There are ways of working that we have which are long steeped in history and difficult to change and we should not underestimate that.

Scale. Having worked in a smaller force where some of what John [Robinson] and Sarah [Nattrass] have described is thrust upon you and you have to move more quickly, there are also opportunities that you have there that are much harder to achieve in London. In terms of scale, delivering change in a much larger organisation is slightly more difficult when you do not have the same day-to-day contact with all of the staff, as you can achieve in a smaller county force where I have been before.

Also, some of the history and just the geography of London. Again, I have seen developed elsewhere joint accommodation. That requires significant investment. It requires new build sites, effectively, or significant refurbishment of existing sites, and London is constrained in property terms in many ways. There are not those opportunities to build significant new joint estates.

However, there are absolutely places where we can collaborate. There are things that we are looking at on the horizon and there are things informed by the duty to collaborate. In west London we might have an opportunity where we could do something like that, as a result of other things that are going on. Certainly, in terms of our estates, as we are all looking to shrink our estates - or certainly the police are - from the number

of buildings we have to the number of buildings we need to have to deliver an economic and effective model, we will look at how we can do that in collaboration. If we are building a significant new building anywhere, we will look at the collaborative opportunities within it.

To summarise the question, culture is a big thing. Scale and how each of the services is measured are other things.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** I do not know if you know about it but years ago, just going back to what I mentioned earlier, there was a bit of -- like I said, we have a lot of respect for our colleagues in the police and the ambulance, we work closely with them all the time, but there was a situation years ago where the police were using a station in London and the Fire Brigade were deemed to be associated with them, and attacks on firefighters went up in that area. We then subsequently started something called the Local Intervention Fire Education (LIFE) Project, which my colleague Richard [Mills] will know over there. This is the type of stuff we are worried about, that we are seen in a different light. I get what my colleague down the end there is saying about his quad station turning out but like I said, we are still very much opposed to it because, no offence, we are seen in a different light to the police. There is a lot more animosity towards our colleagues in the police. That is the way we see it.

We do share some buildings with the LAS, for example Heathrow. We do have a shared building there, but if anything, it is an individual circumstance where it is set up so they do not impact on the fire station staff training and duties. Stuff like that can be looked at with the ambulance but it is all on an individual basis.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** I heard what you said earlier on about not wanting joint shouts and things like that and I understand that. You sounded at that time that you were more amenable to the idea of sharing facilities but what you have just said now seems to contradict that. You have said that you would be amenable to it with the LAS but not with the police because you do not want institutional symmetry with them. You do not want to be brand associated, for want of a better phrase, with the MPS. Is that correct?

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Not entirely but yes, there is that point where we do not want to be associated with the police because of the way we are seen in a different light to members of the public.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** OK. Moving on to the LFB then, I do not know, Susan [Ellison-Bunce] or Richard, which of you would want to take that. Richard?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** To concur with my colleagues, culture is absolutely key. Culture and trust, as I see it. It is not only the culture but the understanding between the organisations because obviously all of our cultures and some of our priorities, whether they are strategic priorities or legislative priorities, may differ. It is about getting an understanding from each other about what that stands for, but it is also about the culture of the workforces and changing the way in which we communicate with our workforce around collaboration and what that means.

All services are very comfortable on an incident ground collaborating to a greater end and increasingly we are finding that the workforce is more and more focused on joint working through some of the softer areas with our emergency service colleagues. Safe and Well visits have been running in five boroughs where they have been piloted. They are a very good example of that. We have worked with the LAS around slips, trips and falls. We are working with the MPS around security of people's premises and bogus callers. There are opportunities. If we do 84,000 home fire safety visits a year, there are opportunities to get into many properties that some other brigades - and I recognise some of the concerns from my FBU colleague. They are

opportunities to get into premises and do some of that prevention work on behalf of the LAS and the MPS. We are working very closely with them and likewise we have a strategy of opening up fire stations and utilising those fire stations for our colleagues if we see fit.

We will of course always listen to the concerns of the workforce and also from FBU colleagues, but I think it is very important to recognise that there are some significant benefits of working very closely together, training together and that natural synergy that happens when you are in contact at a local level around how you interact on stations. We have the LAS come and join us, we have the police Borough Wardens come and meet with Borough Commanders in stations. It goes on. We want to maintain our identity, but it is about how we recognise that we are supporting our colleagues from the other services to deliver better service for London.

The other elements of challenge around collaboration are very much around capacity. The example that was utilised was from a smaller police force. There are some significant figures where the police would like to us to get involved but as a fire service that is relatively small in comparison to LAS and MPS, it is about managing the understanding and the expectations of what we can actually deliver.

In summary, it is culture, it is trust and it is around what are our key priorities, our joint priorities, and what can feasibly be delivered within the capability of each organisation.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** How far down the line are you on outlining those three key areas and discussing with colleagues in the other services? How far are they in terms of reassuring their workforces?

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** It is probably true to say that we do that on a case-by-case basis, on a project by project basis. Around the work that Matt [Twist] alluded to earlier that we have been doing together on collaborative contact and response, we have agreed joint communications across the three organisations with the staff, in case they were concerned that we were looking at merging of roles or even necessarily automatic co-location and so on. We agreed messages and we made sure that we shared things at the right time in the same way to reassure staff that we were all working together. That is an example of how we do it and it is usually on a case-by-case basis.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** A very good example that was touched on was the collapse behind locked doors or the medical emergency behind locked doors. We totally understand that the primary duties of the respective agencies are different but what the collaboration is looking to do is to make sure that the right service attends the job to deliver the best effect. In terms of a case of collapse behind a locked door, is the best effect going to be achieved by a police officer coming and trying to kick the door down or is it going to be achieved by a professional firefighting crew with a whole load of entry equipment who can do that in 30 seconds, if not less? But we totally understand that that cannot be at the expense of being able to go and fight a fire if needed. The work that is ongoing to look at the trial is to see: does that affect the demand? Does it mean that firefighters are less able to go and achieve the core duties that they have to, or is that demand manageable? We have to trial some of this stuff to work out whether or not that demand is manageable across the services.

Going back to all of our points at the very start, which I think we all thoroughly and wholeheartedly agree with, it is about the delivery of the service to the public of London and what they want at a time of crisis is somebody to help. I think most people do not particularly care what uniform they are wearing if someone is coming to help them, be that a medical emergency, be that a collapse or be that a crime. I think what they want is someone in authority to come and provide some assistance, and it is just making sure that we maintain our core responsibilities, our core identities, and are able to deliver those whilst focusing on how we can provide that help as needed.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** That is an excellent sentiment for me to finish on so I am going to stop there.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Can I first of all broaden this out a little bit? We are talking about blue light collaboration but in practice isn't the collaboration with local authorities, social services, education services and so forth equally important? Particularly we are talking about Safe and Well, which is as much to do with social services as with anybody else, is it not? You are doing that anyway. Do you need a statutory duty to make you do it?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** If I might, at a borough level certainly if you look at Borough Commanders you will have many examples, both as LFEPA Members and also as part of the scrutiny committees beforehand, that we have many links into many organisations, not just local authorities. When you start talking about safeguarding issues, that goes across all of our three roles.

Around the duty to collaborate, I go back to what I was saying earlier about it being an enabling Act. This had been going on way before the implementation of the legislation. Borough Commanders, depending on their relations with local authorities, depending on the key priorities on those local authorities as well as our priorities, will shape the way in which they engage with their public and identify those particular people of vulnerability. It will also enable them to work with not only blue light services and local authorities but other agencies on a case-by-case basis for vulnerable people such as hoarders, and around some of the intelligence that is led in relation to the response and preventative work that we do.

While this Act may look at blue light services, the ethos of the LFB - I am not speaking on behalf of my colleagues but I am sure it applies to them as well - is about that broader bit around how we collaborate with anybody that deals with the public that we can get into and be more effective in how we do that preventative work or how we do that response work, whether that is us doing it or whether that is referring it to other agencies. That is the role that we expect from our firefighters when they go into incidents and when they do their community engagement activity.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Just on that, a couple of things they have touched on. Obviously, there is the Safe and Well stuff. Some of you may or may not know that it is part of a national negotiation going on in the National Joint Council (NJC) for firefighters, which is not agreed. It is agreed it is not part of our role map. We are currently, right now as I am sitting here, going through a consultative ballot about whether we deem an offer that has been put on the table as acceptable to do this type of work. We are recommending it is not acceptable with the amount of money they put up. Obviously, a lot of stuff they are talking about I would not be engaging with because it would undermine our national negotiations on the NJC.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** OK. Can I come back to the issue of buildings and estates? I think Matthew [Twist] was raising this. On this idea of joint buildings, you have done it in Durham but presumably you built it specifically for that, possibly at a different time when money was not quite so tight. In London, we have one police station per borough. We may have two, three or four fire stations. We may have one or two ambulance stations. You all have different attendance time requirements and you all have different operational requirements about where you should be to do X, Y or Z. Is it not quite pie in the sky to say, "Let's put you all together to achieve your individual performance indicators, targets and goals"?

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** On that, Andrew, I would agree with that because obviously there are different governance systems and different employers. It would be near impossible.

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director, Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** I was going to say I think it is on an opportunity-by-opportunity basis. As you know, we all have a property, an estate at Heathrow that may be affected by the proposals for the airport there and there is potentially an opportunity for us to look at coming together and building a shared facility. That will be part of the consideration. Depending on our needs it may or may not come to fruition and depending on the cost of that it may or may not come to fruition, but it is absolutely part of the consideration because there is the opportunity. As Matt was saying, because land is so unavailable in London our opportunities are going to be fairly restricted, but when we get the opportunity we will certainly consider it.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** It does not have to be on the macro scale, either. Yes, we have different response requirements and our estates models lend themselves to that but we also have requirements to have dedicated ward hubs or Dedicated Ward Officers based within the communities, and what we do have is ambulance stations and fire stations that are also based in the communities. We can look at opportunities and we have, where we have put small numbers of Ward Officers in those shared buildings. It does not sound overly ambitious but it is certainly a start.

As Susan [Ellison-Bunce] has alluded to, we do have some major estates projects coming up in the next five to ten years. Where we do have those opportunities, and each of us will have them, it is looking at the opportunity and looking at the duty to collaborate, to say, "If we are going to spend this amount of public money on developing a new site, should we do that together? Would it be more efficient? What is the cost-benefit analysis? Does it meet our operational needs?" Effectively, while we cannot sit here and say today that "yes, we are definitely going to do that", what we are saying is that we would look at each one on a case-by-case basis and if there was an opportunity and it all aligned, we would definitely want to do it.

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** I think it is fair to say there are already several sites where we co-locate. Heathrow has been mentioned. The Fire Brigade headquarters hosts our information and communication technology (ICT) team. The Stratford fire station hosts our cycle response team. There are numerous sites across London where either a bi-service or tri-service presence is already there.

It is also important to point out that one of the founding principles of collaboration among the three services in London is that the costs associated with co-location should be on a cost recovery basis only. No one service - and we all agreed to this - should look to make financial gain out of the other. It is very easy to say, "Yes, move in and we will charge you commercial rent. Thank you very much". We have already tackled that thorny issue and said wherever we look to co-locate, it is on a cost recovery basis only.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** It is important to recognise, as my colleagues have said, it is on the basis of: does it give benefit to one or more agencies? If it does not prove beneficial or it does not prove effective and efficient then we would not be doing it. If we want to co-locate because that fits our response model across one, two or three services, then of course we would take the opportunity to look at it. If it does not suit the correct location for a fire appliance, we will not go down that route unless we can demonstrate tangible benefits. On the example that has been used by Kevin around headquarters, we have multiple agencies there. We have the Local Government Association members there, we have LAS there, we have people who come and do hot-desking for fire aid. It is about: what is the most efficient way? What is the best location to put people in? It is not purely about, as Kevin said, generating income or saving income. It is about being efficient and effective.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** I can certainly see a difference between office accommodation, for want of a better word, and operational stations, and it seems to me trying to get the ducks in a row for an operational co-location is quite a challenge. Let us put it like that. I know we have one in Barnet with the Fire Brigade one-pump and one ambulance station, though they did seem, last time I went, to operate entirely independently of each other although they are housed in the same building, which is not really building a joint culture. I do not know if Sarah or John want to come in. In your quad station, do the different service crews mix together? Do they use the same gym or the same canteen, or do they keep themselves to themselves?

**Sarah Nattrass (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire Authority):** They do integrate massively. It has developed relationships, especially getting to know each other before the bells go in and they turn out on those blue lights, when we are most effective and respond to the people in need. Yes, it has the principles of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) and it has absolutely improved that to no end. They do integrate, they do share all of the facilities on station and they do share the costs of the station. In terms of collaboration, opportunity to improve relationships, improve outcomes and reduce cost as well, it has satisfied all of those criteria in our collaboration strategy for that one premise alone.

**John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** One opened in 2017 and the other in 2018. We have also done a joint training facility with Durham police because it came out of transformation funding. We may be different to London but our capital is now becoming extremely restricted and we are only able to look for funding capital-wise in transformation. The collaboration and transformation, working together, is where we need to go for our capital. Certainly, we have a joint training centre with the police in Durham but it was built out of transformation funding and we see that is going to be the way forward for the next however many years that we will have to work collaboratively to put joint capital bids together to get the funding.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** I suppose what I am getting at in the end is the cultural differences between the different services and indeed local authorities. Each organisation has its own cultural differences. Is that always a bad thing that gets in the way or is it something that has to be cherished and recognised?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** I think we recognise it. I certainly recognise the need to have an individual identity because obviously our roles are different on the incident ground, dare I say. However, there is also a need for the cultures to recognise and merge on certain areas, particularly when we are talking about interacting with members of the public around preventative work. Why could I not ask a firefighter to hand out a leaflet that is going to make a person safer, whether that is through fire, whether that is through medical health or dietary advice or whether that is through prevention of criminal activity? I am not saying that the person who is presenting that leaflet is saying that they are a tri-service responder; what I am saying is that there is a firefighter there who is better equipped and more well-rounded to give the information to the public.

On the incident ground, everyone knows their role and knows their specific culture, but the one culture that does shine through on the incident ground is that we are all there to pull together in the same direction. I do not see why it is any different when we talk about preventative work. I do accept that there is a concern around image and perception and part of that needs to be allayed, but at the same time we need to recognise there are certain things the police will do that the Fire Brigade would feel uncomfortable being involved in and vice versa, there are certain things that we may ask our other colleagues to do where they think, "Actually that is not our core duty and we are not prepared to do that".

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** Thank you. Following on from that, David, I was very saddened by something you said a while back. In my view, and this is my view, the respect for all the blue light services is not where it should be in some areas by some. I was talking to a paramedic only a couple of weeks ago who said she is regularly spat at and hit. I know firefighters suffer this as well. I am saddened to hear what you say about the relationship with the police. Do you not feel that it is incumbent upon us all to lift up in some areas the opinion of the police? At the end of the day you are all blue light services, you are all there to look after the public and that has been demonstrated by comments from all of you all the time. Therefore, we should do everything we can, I think, to enhance the opinion of the police held by some. If that means cohabiting as well, if that is all part and parcel of this big job, do you not think that it is incumbent upon us all to do what we can in that respect?

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** First, I do not condone anyone having that bad feeling but sadly in society we are viewed in different ways. What I am saying my concerns are is that we are not seen in that way at the minute. We are a separate service. By putting us in a link with law enforcement or another arm of the law, if you will, we could be seen in that light. Why would I put my members in that situation where they could be seen in that light and attacks on firefighters go up again? I get what you are trying to say and what you are trying to get at and, like I said, there is no problem, we all work perfectly good on a fire ground, we have good relationships and we have a lot of good friends in the police force. However, the services are separate, and they are seen in different lights. There is nothing you can do about that.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** No, I think that is negative. I think we should be doing something about that and it would help if the unions got behind that. We are all in this together, you are all the emergency services and we are all very grateful to you.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** The problem you have, Susan [Hall AM], is that the roles are very different. Sorry to interrupt you.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** They are absolutely different but nevertheless you are all there as protectors of the public and you all want to do your best. I think protecting other services along the way is absolutely the way forward. Can I ask --

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** I think you made a comment there and I think David should answer that.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Yes. Sorry, I was just saying the roles are very different and we cannot get away from that. That is where we are with it and that is our position.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** OK. I hear what you are saying. I am saying perhaps we should try. OK, I --

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** I remember what happened during the Brixton riots where the Fire Brigade got very badly attacked when they went there to put out fires because they were behind the police lines. You cannot get away from the fact that there are differences.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** But equally I think we should be doing everything we can to assist our other blue light colleagues.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** I agree. We will work closely --

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** I am loving that you are agreeing with me and on that point, I shall move swiftly on.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** My members' safety is paramount.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** Excellent. I think he was agreeing with me. Thank you very much. David [Kurten AM], you are --

**Leonie Cooper AM:** I think safety has to be paramount.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Yes.

**David Kurten AM:** Thanks for all your answers already. We have a very good understanding of where you do collaborate and there is a lot going on already. We talked about the possible collaboration with estates and what you do there and going into the future about possibly what you do with sharing buildings. However, I would like to talk about IT. That is another possible area where there is potential for collaboration. It is a realistic aspiration for the emergency services to have integrated technology? Can I ask, starting with Kevin, what you think about that?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** I do not know if you are aware of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Collaboration Board chaired by the Mayor's Chief of Staff, David Bellamy. That Board recently met and the thematic areas that they are looking at are broadly similar to the Blue Light Collaboration Team areas. One of those areas was the ICT arena. They looked specifically at the question you asked there around -- and I learnt very early on when you ask ICT colleagues, "Surely you must be able to..." it is never so simple.

In summary, when the three representatives from the services looked at the arena of ICT, their summary was that in technology terms we see the power of the GLA IT community - and I include all three services in that - in our approach, continuing to enable the sharing of information between us and our user base. As we increasingly move forward towards cloud-based collaboration tools such as Box and Office 365, as well as desktop video, we are able to facilitate the sharing of information. As we all adopt mobile working and install good quality Wi-Fi, the barriers to *ad hoc* co-location reduce but the tools we have to make collaboration easier across sites become apparent.

What they are saying there is that over 1,000 different applications across the three services and trying to amalgamate all of those with some of the security concerns that the MPS will have around access to data and the sensitive information that they deal with, coupled with patient-sensitive data that we collate and the information that the LFB collates, it is an extremely complex environment and it is never as simple as one size fits all. The ability for databases and software to talk to each other is probably more of the route we should go down rather than buying one computer-aided design and drafting (CADD) system, because they are an extremely complex piece of equipment. Certainly, there have been discussions long had around one CADD system for London and they have proved futile in the past. I do not say there are not opportunities that exist, more around back-office functionality and enabling more cloud-based activity, as the three IT experts from the three services and the GLA move to.

**David Kurten AM:** There is some scope in the back office, but the majority of things will be what you need to do for the ambulance service. There are some things that cannot be shared.

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** Yes, but the ability to talk to each other.

**David Kurten AM:** Yes, absolutely, thanks.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** I would agree. Some of this was pulled out of the strategic outline casework that was done as part of the Police Transformation Fund, the joint work we looked at in terms of the contact and collaboration. Do I think that the answer is that we all change on to the same command and control system? No, probably not. The reason is that we are all at different stages in the lifecycle. There are different command and control systems. These are massively capital-heavy systems to replace and the MPS is looking to replace its one now but LAS and LFB are both at different stages in that. However, should we get to a place where we can share information across the various command and control systems seamlessly and in real time, absolutely we should. It is the integration that we are looking at.

One of the areas that we looked at as part of the strategic outline case was the development of the multi-agency information transfer hub. Rather than just having a point-to-point where every time you push a button it can update the LAS or the LFB, that would be having a much more interactive system that is cloud-based, where you are continually updating each other and the availability of information is that much quicker and does not rely on a manual process of pushing buttons to get things transferred back and forth.

These are exciting times in terms of technology for all of the blue light services as we move away from the big desktop, the big hardware purchases into more browser-based and more cloud-based solutions. As we develop, I think over time, if there is the will - and I am sure there is - our systems will become more closely aligned. I am not saying the same, but more aligned and more integrated.

One of the big challenges, as Kevin has already touched on, is data. The patient medical records are hugely sensitive, just as our crime intelligence records are hugely sensitive. However, those are things that we can work hard on and we can work hard to look at how we can share stuff. Therefore, I think there is a bright future with IT but it is one for the long haul, albeit the Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) hub stuff we could develop more quickly.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Matt has done my summary about the MAIT. Thank you very much for that. I will go on to something else.

From the perspective of sharing information data, absolutely cloud-based technology is the way that we are looking to go. There are some tangible examples even now where we are sharing data. We introduced a new defibrillator, from a manufacturer called ZOLL, which came off a framework agreement in conjunction with the LAS. When we talk about tangible financial benefits, we are talking £200,000 saved on a framework agreement. That equipment will provide data through our joint network services lead. We can then provide that to the hospital. Once the fire appliance comes back to the station, that can automatically be downloaded and that can be provided to the hospital services. That is a tangible example of how we can share that data, and that is cloud-based technology. The desire would be, of course, to do that transfer straight from a fire engine, straight from the ambulance, straight in. That is a direction of travel that we desire to go. Whether the technology can catch up with us, that is where we want to be.

The example of how we utilise and share data, not only data transfer, if I use the same example, is that then shapes our education and training of our fire crews in relation to the depth of compression and the frequency of compression. We can then look at, in conjunction with the LAS, what our firefighters have done well, what

our firefighters can benefit from and how we can change our training, so we get quicker hands on and we get more effective life-saving activity, utilising the data that we have learnt, and we provide that for clinical governance to the LAS. Going forward, specifically in that area, there is some growth in the way in which we operate. In support of both my colleagues, the My Data Transfer at control centres - the emergency services network, radio network - has been developed. All of us sit on that Board in conjunction with the Home Office to make sure that the London desire and the need for London around Transport for London, Underground tunnels and so on has a representation from every service, and how that then links in from a national perspective as well.

**David Kurten AM:** Thank you. David [Shek], do you have anything to add?

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** They are going to be the experts here. I know that the IT systems do cause my colleagues there on the left quite a lot of headaches by doing simple changes. That is all I know; I am not really an expert.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** I mentioned earlier on the point about working with local authorities as well and we talked about the fire Safe and Well visits. How is the information shared arising out of that?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** A lot of community-based activities are driven by the Borough Commander. As well as the fire Safe and Well visits where we are providing information to other colleagues, we have a number of schemes already in place as well. Something like the LIFE project is an example. We are doing knife crime. We would be speaking to our police colleagues to ask what the areas of knife crime are in the area and whether that is part of our prevention activity when we are educating young people. We have recently run a pilot - it is called Safety First - where they have gone into one borough, the Borough of Haringey. That is into secondary schools about combatting knife crime and wider antisocial behaviour.

The police strategy team have taken feedback from the pupils, parents and the teachers around the behaviours once we have done that input in conjunction with blue light services. There are many pilots that take place, as Matt [Twist] said earlier. We will always try to pilot something to make sure that we are not overloading our commitment or promising too much, but there will always be some tangible benefits at local level. That is primarily driven by the Borough Commanders and the relationships they have with Chief Executives, and the Borough Commanders with police and their other partners.

That then gets fed through in a wider piece of work to the organisation. We would start to see some of the benefits around some of the interventions that we do around antisocial behaviour, arson, for example. That is one of the range of reasons for the LIFE course. Also, our Head of Community Safety, Chris O'Connor, will be looking at what that means for the strategy going forward. The community safety activities we do have been well documented for many years; it is just the added advantage of having our partners with us as well to deliver a more rounded message. Hopefully we will see the tangible benefits and so will they, and it will be the conversations being had by Borough Commanders to say if that is working well or if it is not working well.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you. David [Shek], I want to come on to the co-responding pilots. I know it is frozen in the dispute nationally. What was the feeling of your members after the pilot ended? Apart from the dispute, did they think it was a good thing to do or a bad thing to do? Certainly, when I was talking to firefighters on the stations I got a rather mixed picture.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** I think they were not very happy with the trial, or aspects of it. The general consensus - speaking from a national point of view here - is there is

sympathy for some of the work. Obviously, I cannot go into too much detail because I cannot undermine the national negotiations. It all comes down to the pay, training. There were a lot of flaws found that would need to be addressed before we would even look at it, and things like that, but there is not a big appetite in London for co-responding at all.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** One of the issues was having to deal with distraught families.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Yes, there were distraught families, shouts that in our opinion we should not have been sent on. I will not go into details but there were quite a few issues with the trial.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** There were also issues on training and equipment?

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Yes, training and equipment, inoculations, everything. Everything like that would have to have been addressed 100% before we would even consider it. Obviously, as I said, we are still in the middle of national negotiations.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** OK. From the LAS point of view?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** From an LAS perspective, getting to the sickest patients and administering the defibrillator has proven clinically over the years to produce good results. The return of spontaneous circulation is one of the key measures in that. Clinically, the best way to do that is by administering defibrillation as quickly as possible. Whether that be delivered by an LAS member of staff, an MPS police officer or a firefighter is in my view neither here nor there, or indeed a member of the public.

A personal example I will use is that my father lives 50 metres from Wimbledon Fire Station. There are two appliances there with eight trained firefighters and two defibrillators on board. He collapsed two years ago. Unfortunately, at that stage we were not in the business of co-responding. I would ask the question as to why none of those trained firefighters with their defibrillators could not respond to a collapse that was 50 metres away. If somebody knocked at a fire station door and said that somebody has collapsed outside, I am sure the firefighters would have no hesitation in responding to that patient. I spent ten years as a firefighter myself with Surrey Fire and Rescue; I speak with a certain level of knowledge. Preservation of life is a cornerstone of all three services. That would be my challenge back to the FBU.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Before we put the challenge to the FBU, I understand from what I have been reading in the press that the LAS is upping its game with different forms of response and so forth, people on motorbikes turning up to treat people on site rather than ferrying people to hospital and so forth. Is that making a difference to your capacity to deal with these sorts of things?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** Our response has changed. It has changed nationally. We now have the Ambulance Response Programme that has seen changes to certain categories of calls into various different response outputs. As you know, the LAS is one of the biggest and busiest ambulance services in the world and capacity has always been a challenge for us. We are always looking at innovative ways to respond. However, I think co-responding is an additional tool that we should not discard. It is one that we should invest in significantly.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** It is fair to say from an MPS perspective we are signed up to that in terms of carrying defibrillators in our cars, being deployed to

cardiac arrest incidents by the LAS if we have the closest unit to deal. I remember some of this discussion ten-plus years ago, if not more, around --

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Before you go on, could I ask in practice how it works? The way that co-responding with the LFB was working was that it was mobilised, directly or indirectly, by the LAS. Was there the same relationship with the police or if you came across somebody you did it or were you mobilised?

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** No, we can be notified. We would be notified in the same way. If there is that incident, we would attend. Often at times the police happen to be attending anyway because often people dial the police or dial the ambulance at the same time. We would be notified by the LAS and we would send the closest car with a defibrillator.

I said I remember this discussion - it was over a decade ago when I was in firearms - as to whether or not we would want our armed response vehicles at the time attending medical emergencies. There was lots of discussion, lots of debate as to whether that would move them away from their core purpose. However, if the core purpose is to save life, which it is, and that is common throughout the three agencies, then once you reach that point the thing seems self-evident that if you can help, you should. In that sense I am not saying the FBU is wrong, but what I am saying is as an agency, as a police service, if we can help, we should. If we can help save someone's life, we should. I hope that would be echoed across the board.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** When the trial went on it was not just code reds we were going to. We were going to all kinds of stuff during that trial, which brought up loads of issues and near misses and stuff. I do understand what you are saying. Should the ambulance be funded properly? These are the simple questions that I would like to ask people that no one wants to really answer. Like I said, we are in national negotiations and our current position is we will look at the work if pay is addressed. We would want training and we would want proper equipment. It is very simple what we are asking for.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Therefore, it is a standoff at the moment in that the Government will not give you a decent pay offer to do more work?

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** It is exactly that. It is also the work that it entails. There is no clear definition of the work that people want us to do. The last offer was an open-ended list of jobs that they want the fire service to do. In fact, if you put "astronaut" and "brain surgeon" on it and put it out in April, I would probably laugh at it because it was ridiculous, the list that was there. Until this is addressed, we are where we are, a standoff.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Perhaps I could pass to our colleagues from Durham. What happens in relation to co-responding in your neck of the woods?

**Councillor John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** We certainly, as I said earlier, were involved in the co-responding. To the point Kevin [Canavan] made, we had a man collapse with a heart attack right outside Darlington Station. We went straight out, sorted it and there was massive publicity for the service when he came back with his family to say thank you. During the trial, 3,000 directly called in and we saved more lives out of that trial than we did in the year from fire and so on. We did that, but I have to respect the position of the FBU. They are in the middle of a vote. I do have to say - and again you do not have it in London - we retained duty stations and the retained duty stations were up for it as well as the full-time.

**Sarah Nattrass (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire Authority):** The retained duty-system stations, we have three stations currently in the service and they continue, voluntarily, to carry out the co-responding role in line with the ambulance service. Just to clarify the point, we received funding; it did not cost the ambulance service anything in County Durham and Darlington to carry out a co-responding trial as part of the National Joint Council for Fire and Rescue Services trial.

It helped us also on some of the stations when the trial was ongoing on the whole-time stations. It doubled the number of operational shouts that the crews were turned out to. Therefore, it helped us to justify our response model in those station areas that were predominantly quiet, where the calls had reduced. Our prevention and protection work over the years, which we have been really successful at, has been helping reduce the number of fires that we respond to.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** On that I would say that the stations are undermining the national negotiation at this moment in time because they should not be doing that work when we are clearly trying to establish how the work is defined.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Saving people's lives? Sorry, I do not see the problem.

**Sarah Nattrass (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire Authority):** It is done on a voluntary basis.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** The answer is to get the national dispute resolved to mutual satisfaction all round.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Exactly. We want to mutually work together but when things like that happen it undermines the whole national negotiation.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** I think it is a question of priorities, is it not, Chairman?

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** Yes, I think so. I must say, every time I have met firefighters - and I have been to every fire station in London - they are such good people. They are there and they want to help. They want to be doing these things. They want to be working alongside their colleagues. That is what they have always told me. I am sad to pick up here --

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** I picked up a different thing from firefighters I spoke to about co-responding.

**Gareth Bacon AM:** Equally, I did not.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Anyway, the short answer is to resolve the dispute.

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** Firefighters also want to put food on their table and pay their gas bills and everything, but we have been living on austerity. We are 14% behind and we now have people wanting us to do work for free.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** The answer to this is not helping anyway, Chairman.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** No, shall we stop there? Carry on with your questions.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** I will do. That is what I was about to do.

We talked about the forced entry issue earlier on and I do not think there is much more to ask about that, which was on my list. The other thing I wanted to talk about was mental health issues. I think Kevin [Canavan] was half hinting about this, and this is the data transfer, data availability or whatever. If you are called to a fire and somebody has a mental health issue, presumably it would be in your interest to know on the way that you have a potential problem. It is the same for the police, I suppose. Is that something that can happen?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** We always need to be mindful that we cannot account for the behaviour of people within any fire situation, whether that person is living there or a guest or not. We do have processes in place for people who are particularly high risk, not necessarily through mental health, but that is very much done in collaboration and coordination with the MPS. We work on what is called an underwrite system. We make a note on our files for our fire crews to receive a caution. Notwithstanding, we do have a duty to respond to that incident and make sure that the surrounding occupants and other occupants are safe and well. Part of that key work, particularly when you talk about mental health, is in relation to the work that we do around dementia and how we recognise and treat people with dementia.

It is also about the mental health of our firefighters as well. One of the things that was mentioned earlier was about the trauma of meeting members of the family. We recognised that there have been some significant events that have taken place, as well as co-responding. We have looked at the mental health of our crews as well. We work, as part of the blue light collaboration, with Mind, in partnership with them, to educate. We are also doing computer-based training packages, or developing computer-based training packages, around mental health and wellbeing of our crews and also around mental health and awareness training for our officers. That is people who are demonstrating stress and anxiety. That will naturally transpose not only within the workforce but obviously with their engagement with the members of the public as well in quite traumatic events.

We do a lot of work with the elderly as well, particularly, as I said, around dementia. As a norm we will not necessarily be tagging people for mental health issues. It is those that are particularly higher risk to crews. Crews are incredibly adaptable and very well trained and great at communicating with a whole broad range of the community. They know that if they have any particular issue with an individual, if they have any particular safeguarding concerns due to the extent of the mental health, they know the processes under safeguarding of what they can do to call on help and assistance to come and support them in that environment. Therefore, we are not sharing data at the granular level.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** Are you sharing with the other emergency services the work you do on the mental health support you give to firefighters? I know when I went to the USAR training there was some grievance from some of the police people there that they were not getting the same support that the LFB had after [the] Grenfell [Tower fire], for example.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Yes. My apologies for not understanding the question entirely.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** It did not matter because I was going to ask it anyway.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Yes, we do. Obviously, our trauma team are working with other services. Casualty and trauma services are

involved in peer-based trauma network with the LFB. Volunteers are training in trauma support of blue light partners. In addition to that we have the London Blue Light Network Steering Group, which has representation from blue light services and the mental health charity, Mind. We are sharing our knowledge and experience. Having sat on the Strategic Coordinating Group during the Grenfell [Tower fire], the conversation that was had very early on was what support our blue light partners could give us while that incident was running. We recognised the mental health challenges that that would pose for our workforce very, very early on. Thanks to the leadership of the Commissioner, we have taken that through and continue to do that for our workforce.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** The question was to what extent that learning has been passed on to the police in particular. I think you heard the complaints as well.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** I heard the conversation, yes, I did.

**Andrew Dismore AM (Deputy Chair):** That the police officers involved in the recovery --

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** As I said, we have that network working group. I am not at liberty to comment on how that then transposes through the MPS. It would not be appropriate for me to say.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** I think the overall occupational health offer, and linked to that the mental health offer within the police, is something that has developed significantly since 2017 for a variety of reasons, [the] Grenfell [Tower fire] being one of them. The issue of mental health and occupational health support is on the work plan for the Heads of People meeting that is one of our collaboration strands. That is something we would look to, in the event of major incidents, to gather the support and experience and also some of the resource perhaps of our colleagues to support in the different sorts of incidents that we have.

In terms of mental health more widely, the start of the question, it is well known the extent to which mental health places demand particularly on the police but also on the ambulance service. This is a medical matter and the police are probably not the best people - nor, likewise, the LFB - to be dealing with it. What we are looking at - again through the police transformation-funded work that we did around contact and response - was an outline design as to what a mental health hub could look like that would support London, hosted most likely by the LAS, gathering specialists together to provide a service that could support both police and the LFB in terms of responding to mental health, having that immediate access to clinical notes and having that immediate access to the information that would be required to enable risk assessments to take place. Also, more from a policing perspective than perhaps LFB, getting the pathways into care so we are not bouncing around a number of clinical commissioning groups or bouncing around London waiting for availability of [Mental Health Act section] 136 suites, which is an issue that, from a policing perspective, is well rehearsed and well talked about.

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** A couple of points there. The three HR directors of the three services, Clare Davis from the MPS, Patricia Grealish from the LAS and Tim Powell from the LFB, have a workshop planned for Tuesday in two weeks' time, I believe. The whole focus of that workshop is around the wellbeing of our collective three services staff. As has been discussed, after a large, serious or major incident we can rely upon each other to support each other in those times of extremis. That is very much on the top of the to-do list for the three HR directors, to get a cohesive, collaborative,

wellbeing strategy for police services staff and ensure we look after them. That boosts the importance of looking after our staff.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** I would like to talk a bit about major, serious or catastrophic incidents or events. Sadly, we had quite a number of examples during 2017. Could I get you to comment on what progress has been made in recent years to ensure that London's emergency services are working as effectively as possible together during those kinds of incidents? I will start with the police. If I start with you, Matthew.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** Thank you. I think there are a number of different types of incidents and we have encountered several of them. We had an exceptionally busy and difficult time during 2017 for a variety of reasons. If we look at the terrorist attacks that we have had, I can start on that and maybe others will chip in with other incidents. A significant amount of effort across all three services was done in terms of our preparatory work for responding to such attacks, and attacks of different descriptions. That has ranged from the Boards that we sit on at that level, focusing specifically on our preparedness, to some of the tactics that we have used, to the actual physical exercising that we have done across all three of these services, and we continue to do so, and do so regularly. Some of the stuff is not what I would want to discuss in a public forum, for the obvious reasons, but I would say in that --

**Leonie Cooper AM:** We have had some private briefings as well and we appreciate that you will not be able to go into all of the details.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** Brilliant. In that area I would say our preparedness is country, if not world-leading, in terms of how we work together to deal with some of the most difficult terrorist-type attacks. Clearly also we have had other major and significant incidents during this time. London has suffered a number of things and we continue to work together to prepare for that sort of thing, whether it is through exercising or through our joint working. I do not know if others want to comment.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** I thought after you perhaps Richard might wish to come in and make a comment on that as well.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Certainly. As well as obviously preparing and exercising, as you would expect, with any large-scale major incident there is a review after the event to look at what works well and areas we need to focus on, going forward. That information is not only shared between organisations and between our partners, we also utilise that information to share it at a national level, the joint operational learning database that can be used, or national operational guidance, for the fire service, how that feeds into some of our practices. There are examples where the recent events that have occurred are going through that. It would not be appropriate to discuss them here now because it has to go through that scrutiny of that joint operational learning.

That is all going through those systems, with the primary aim of not only improving what we do in the LFB and the London blue light service but how we then influence national and, if necessary, international learning around how we responded. Nationally, people are looking at what London does, particularly with some of the traumatic events that have taken place, but also internationally as well. There are clear systems in place. The Central Programme Office and National Operational Guidance sits within London and is headed by Susan [Ellison-Bunce], and that is all about working as a collaborative piece to the betterment of all services.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Can I see if Kevin wants to add anything to that from the ambulance perspective? That has given us quite an interesting view there from the police and the brigade.

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** I obviously concur with my two colleagues, and the advent of the JESIP principles that are now well embedded across all three services has served to ensure that collaboration works well in the operational arena. JESIP continues to be rolled out and improved. As learnings from incidents happens, we will obviously adopt and continue to improve our operational response.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** I am going to ask you something about [the] Grenfell [Tower fire] and whether there has been some learning from this. I am hoping that this is something that you will feel able to answer. It has been brought to our attention that there was some evidence of different control rooms responding on the night from the police and ambulance to people in the tower, rather than just going through to the LFB. Is there any learning that we can take from that and is that something that the LFB would be leading on?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** I do not have any of those details to hand. What I will need to do is go away and find out the specifics and seek some advice as to whether it is appropriate to release that information currently, because obviously we would not want to prejudice any inquiry taking place.

On the broader question that you asked around operational learning, with every incident that we attend we learn. We have processes in place internally through our performance review of operations and performance review command. There is a lot of work, particularly in my current role, that we are doing based on that learning. A tangible example of that specifically is around working in smoke-filled environments and fire-escape hoods. That has demonstrated a benefit to the community and we are sharing that learning with national fire services.

The very short answer is of course we will take away and learn from what we know now and obviously what may come out of the interim guidance and recommendations from phase one. We are very mindful of phase two of the inquiry and the process that takes place and what those subsequent recommendations may have for not only the LFB but also the National Fire Service. We need to recognise, specifically in relation to collaboration, what the benefits and the challenges are that some of those recommendations may have for us as a collective around collaboration going forward. We recognise there is work to be done. While we will continue to work that way, we remain open minded to whatever the inquiry will give.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** A similar question for you, Matthew, as well, also from [the] Grenfell [Tower fire]. It is my understanding that the police declared a major incident and the LFB were not immediately aware that that was the case. Is there some learning that can be taken from that as well to stop that from happening in similar circumstances, should they ever arise in the future?

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** I am not able to comment specifically on [the] Grenfell [Tower fire], which is subject to inquiry; therefore, I will not do that. However, what I will say is like my colleague from the LFB I have never dealt with any incident where there has not been some learning. That is indicative of the jobs that we do. There is always going to be learning out of everything that we do. The culture of debrief and learning is one that we are very keen and work hard to embed. If there is learning to be taken out of a specific incident that comes through the recommendations of the properly appointed body, then absolutely we would look at that and look at how we could either assist, lead, develop, change in whatever context we would find ourselves in. In terms of that specific incident, I do

not have the information and I do not think I feel comfortable commenting now, only because it is subject to all the reviews ongoing.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** It is also obvious with the Grenfell [Tower] incident, and I think a lot of other incidents, that you are not just needing to collaborate with each other in the blue light services, you need to collaborate with the local authority in the area where you are. Obviously in the case of [the] Grenfell [Tower fire] there was also the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (TMO). I have watched some of the inquiry evidence and it seems that there were several quite long periods of time where there was not sufficient contact going on between the Local Authority Liaison Officer and others over the plans of the building, who was in each flat and so on and so forth. Is a review of that collaboration with other public bodies also taking place?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Again, it would not be appropriate for me comment because obviously it is an ongoing investigation and public inquiry. The thing around collaboration is we have the London Resilience Forum.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Can I just say it does seem like an obvious and necessary thing to do? I represent a borough where we have 99 blocks - and that is just one of the two boroughs I represent - that are over ten stories. If I go and talk to the Borough Commanders, I know that they do have routes on and off estates where many blocks can be found. I would hope that building up those relationships across London in all of the boroughs is something that has perhaps started to be looked at sooner rather than waiting until the end of the Grenfell [Tower] inquiry. Could I just put that out there? David [Shek] was talking about safety earlier on. This is not just for safety for members of the public, it is also safety for getting machinery and also people from the brigade on and off estates as quickly as possible.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Not answering specifically the Grenfell [Tower] question?

**Leonie Cooper AM:** No, broaden it out, please.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Broadening it out, absolutely. The previous Scrutiny Committee talked about fire safety and the work they are doing, and the fact that we have had crews going out and looking at various estates, various high-rise blocks. We are not going to sit and wait for the outcomes of the inquiry because we absolutely recognise that there is work to be done in the meantime. I know of Borough Commanders I have spoken to who are having those conversations with local authorities.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Jointly with the police and the LAS as well?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Absolutely.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Because it has to be done jointly.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** Yes, absolutely. The relationship at Borough Commander level is very, very strong. It does depend on the relationships within those individual boroughs, but I am confident that Borough Commanders are linking in with their Borough Commander police colleagues and local authorities.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Matthew, you wanted to come in as well?

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** Yes. On that, some of the work we have done through the Transformation Fund, the outlying case and high-level design around a concept of a London Emergency Services Coordination Centre (ESCC). What that recognised, that strategic outlying case, was that there are a lot of incidents every day, fortunately nowhere near on the scale that we have seen in 2017, where there is a multiagency response required. What we did see, through generic learning not through specific incidents, was there was a delay at times in terms of different agencies having the same information, because different things come into different control rooms at different times and that is again not related to one incident but is something that we have seen.

The recommendation that came out of the strategic outlying case was for a joint London ESCC where leaders from each of the services would be co-located to provide a very swift transfer of information on the incidents where we respond daily, as well as the major critical, significant incidents, some of which we have alluded to already. That work has reached the high-level design stage and the next step is that there is a funding application for further money into the Police Transformation Fund. Decisions on that are expected shortly to take the work to the next stage, which will be to an outlying business case and a detailed design. That is linked to the work I have touched on already around the mental health hub, optimising cross-service information transfer, MAIT hub and that sort of thing.

There are five key strands to that and jointly we have sought further funding to develop that work. If that funding is not forthcoming, we will have to look within ourselves as to what we think is really important and what we can fund within existing resources. That process has not yet started, but I think all of the things we identified that were agreed at the strategic level across all three services are things that we think would be of use to London, of use to the public and benefit the services collectively.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** It is good to hear that thought is going in and let us hope that goes ahead. I want to ask a point in relation to the changes to the Basic Command Unit (BCU) strategy. Richard was making a very good point. I am certainly very aware that my Borough Commanders have excellent relationships locally, but obviously there has been no change in the Fire Service Borough Commanders, whereas, of course in the police there has been quite a substantial change. Has that impacted on progress in those areas that you were just outlining? There is no chance of it being side-lined in some way while the BCU Commanders are forging ahead with those changes?

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** I do not think so. I think the role of the BCU Commanders is now getting more and more well established. The first pathfinder sites were many, many months ago now and we have now gone live across all 12 BCUs. The building of local relationships is going to be critically important to that. At the moment my instinct is no, that will not change across our desire to collaborate at a local level as well as at a pan-London level, which is the sort of things that we are looking at through this high-level design.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** What about relationships with -- talking about the public services working with local authorities? Obviously in some boroughs, for example, all of the housing stock has been outsourced either to an arms-length management organisation or a TMO or in many cases they have transferred the stock to some sort of registered social landlord, some of which are now very large and operate across many London boroughs. Have you made special efforts to build up working relationships with them, again to make sure you have full information from them on routes on to estates, location of dry risers, whatever the information is that is needed?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):**

Part of the duty of firefighters and Borough Commanders is to go and do familiarisation visits of premises that are deemed of particular interest around operational activity. Part of that will be looking at access, part of that will be looking at where the dry risers are. Some of them will have a premises information box, and they will be checking the plan to get an understanding of the building. In relation to the building itself, obviously when they are doing an inspection of the building they will be looking at what are the concerns within that building, are there any particular issues around fire doors, for example. They will be feeding that back to the Station Manager and to Borough Commander to identify who the occupier of the owner of the building is. That is when we start to have those wider conversations.

There has been work done with some of the major building providers. It is not always easy to identify who owns particular buildings, which proves a challenge in itself. That is why we get the firefighters to go and look at buildings of particular interest, to start familiarising themselves and talking about the firefighting tactics they may need to use should they get an event.

One of the focuses will be very much around - whatever that premises is, whether it is a high-rise or not - the occupants themselves. How do we make the occupant as safe as possible with advice, with the fitting of smoke alarms, for example, given the home fire safety visits? It is a broad suite of how we start to identify not only the people within the building, it is also about how they are going to tackle that building. Can I honestly put my hand on my heart and say that we will always be able to identify a building and the owner of that building? No, I cannot, but what I can say is that Borough Commanders are very, very proactive in working with the local authority and working with the local community to look at how best to respond to that building and, if there are issues, if there is a managing agent, how do we best link into that managing agent.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Thank you. I want to ask a little bit about collaboration on preparation. Obviously one of the things we hope we do not need to prepare for, but it is possible it could happen are things like a widespread drought or widespread flooding or things like that relating to climate change, if you like, those kinds of chronic risks. Is that something that is being worked on jointly as well?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):**

Specifically, in relation to flooding, there is a project currently running. It is part of our London Safety Plan commitment. Within that it talks about our response and provision to Londoners around flood assets. That is working in collaboration with the Environment Agency. Also, the capability that is being designed and developed and is being offered up is around our swift-water capability as a national asset but also an asset on the Thames. We work with the Royal National Lifesaving Institution very closely on that as an emergency responder. We also have national assets that we contain within London: the high-volume pumps around flooding. There is a considerable amount of work that we have always done and we are developing further as part of our London safety plan commitment. When we talk about drought --

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Is that individually as the fire service or is that in conjunction with police and also ambulance?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):**

Around the flooding element it is more so around the Environment Agency and working with the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART), who have a swift-water capability. Less so with the MPS in relation to their capability and what we would be asking them to do. It is more about containment, removal and rescue that we would focus on, hence us drawing on some of the capabilities of HART. Of course, in a flooding incident we would naturally work with police around whatever zone or area that may be, around any evacuation plan, and

we have demonstrated that very clearly in the Kenley Waterworks flooding, where we operated very effectively as a team.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** And drought?

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):**

Yes, in relation to droughts --

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Everyone picks up their glass of water immediately.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):**

Last year was particularly challenging around the drought. We provided a response nationally to support the drought nationally as well. We recognise it is a growing challenge to us within the LFB in particular. We are working more with local authorities around their open spaces, around cutting the grass shorter, firebreaks. All those conversations we are having much more at a local level. In relation to LAS and police response, less so. When you talk about collaboration, yes. If you are talking about blue light collaboration, not as extensive.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Any preparations in collaboration for Brexit, which may or may not happen? Who knows what is happening on that front? Is that something that you are preparing for, in case there is some sort of unrest, either because it goes ahead or it does not go ahead?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** I think I can speak confidently. All three agencies have invested time and energy should Brexit arise. One area specifically as an example is around fuel. Should there be fuel disruption, all three agencies have worked together to work up and further consolidate our already well-established plans around fuel disruption that we had in place following the last fuel strikes some time ago.

**Leonie Cooper AM:** Finally, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has done an assessment of the JESIP, that, "Interoperability has yet to be fully embedded across the services". Would you agree with that and, if you did agree with it, how much do you think it can be improved and what would it look like if it was completely successfully implemented?

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** JESIP has been in operation extensively across London. Colleagues have mentioned already how we train, and we continue to train under the JESIP principles to ensure our readiness for a multiagency attack. There are always difficulties and challenges in terms of availability of time, capacity for that kind of training. Despite all that, that training does go ahead and it proves very useful. I am not entirely sure that we would agree with the Inspectorate, but let's see. It is coming to us in July [2019]. Let's see if it reaches the same conclusion in London. I hope it does not.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** A really clear example of London's commitment is Exercise Unified Response that took place, a multiagency, multinational exercise. As my colleagues have said, we already regularly exercise through a whole host of risks and threats that may be posed. On the Incident Ground we demonstrate that and some of the reviews should hopefully, over time, demonstrate how effective our responses have been to various incidents that took place last year [2018].

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** A final question. Looking to the future, what are the next steps to increase collaboration and is there anything that the Mayor could do to be helpful towards increasing collaboration?

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** Collaboration is not going to go away. In terms of increasing collaboration, I think it is a slow burn. I think it is wherever you shine the light in any of the three organisations.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** Tell us from the LAS. I do not think they use 'slow burn' in the LFB as an analogy.

**Kevin Canavan (Head of Collaboration, London Ambulance Service):** Yes. As I say, it is not going to go away. We will continue to collaborate and where we can seek out efficiently and effectiveness, we will do.

**DAC Matthew Twist (Transformation Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service):** For me it is about all of us maintaining the view on the best outcomes for the public. That is where we will achieve. If we focus on that, the collaboration seems easier sometimes. Going to the point around HMICFRS, I hope I have a high degree of confidence that in terms of our interoperability in London, as I said earlier, I feel that some of the things that we do, some of the capabilities that we have, some of the things that we have done make us not only UK leading but world leading in some areas.

In the short to medium-term for us it is looking at the outcome of the work that we did through the Police Transformation Fund, through looking at whether we can develop the ESCC, the pan-London mental health hub, optimising cross-service referrals and the other work that we have not spoken about today but that is important, around frequent callers, to enable us to have reduced demand, particularly across LAS and LFB, and finally estates, which are the five areas of work that we identified in the high-level design that we would be eager to take forward.

The funding for that work is at the moment in the balance. There were huge demands this year on the Police Transformation Fund. Whether we are successful in our bid to take that to the next step is as yet unknown. What I do know is there is an awful lot of demand on a small pot of money. If we do not get that, it will be for the three services to come together to see what elements, whether there is money elsewhere that could be put towards different strands of this or whatever elements we would want to progress through a business-as-usual route.

That is where I see our focus in the next three to six months.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** Thank you. David, I know your views. Do you have anything to add?

**David Shek (Regional Secretary for London, Fire Brigades Union):** No, just that we have the national negotiation going on at the minute.

**Susan Ellison-Bunce (Assistant Director Strategy and Risk, London Fire Brigade):** I think one of the things that we will be looking at is obviously all the areas of the strategic intention, as outlined by the three Chiefs, and seeing what we can take forward under each of those headings, in particular thinking about strategic alignment across the three organisations. We have our separate strategic objectives, we have our separate core responsibilities, but understanding what we have in common and identifying the opportunities to deliver better services for London within that I think is going to be the primary objective.

**Richard Mills (Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance, London Fire Brigade):** I tend to agree with Susan around the strategic alignment. What is key is where are the overlaps, where can we do the maximum benefit for Londoners and look at what the key priorities going forward are. There is a lot of

very good work taking place but it does come back to what are the key ones that we can all maximise our benefits from.

We need to be mindful around the Inspectorate that has just been mentioned, about what are the recommendations coming out of the inspectorate. Tranche one has been published and tranche two is going to be published in the next couple of months. We are part of tranche three. We need to take into consideration what that may look like around collaboration, not only for London but from a national perspective. Then obviously the Transformation Fund the police have made mention to. Some of the things that we may want to do will be very much subject to what will be funded and what will not be funded and what are the benefits it will have. Then how does that not only support us but also increase our resilience as the three blue light services going forward. That does come absolutely back to the statement made around what has happened wide of the strategic objective that we all work to.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** [Councillor] John [Robinson], I am mindful I am asking about London because clearly, we are here. Do you have anything you would like to add?

**Councillor John Robinson (Chairman of Durham and Darlington Fire Authority and Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group):** I would like to see the Mayor come out and show support for it, say that he is supporting it. I totally agree with Richard about the Transformation Fund. That is where we are going for the capital. As the blue light services, we need to work more together to put together bids for that to get more success. I think we need to monitor what we are doing. We need to monitor the successes, monitor the failures. We should be publicising to the public that we are working together, that we are one blue light service working together. We need to start involving the staff, the unions and the public more in what we are doing, because it is a positive approach and we need to sell it more.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** I could not agree more.

**Sarah Nattrass (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire Authority):** Going back to my initial points, we need strategic buy-in, we need to be driven by the top to that strategic direction. We have to have a willing partner to start off the collaboration discussions. It initially takes a lot of time and resource to develop collaboration and come up with collaboration opportunities and then implement them. I go back to our strategy that we have in place. Make sure that you have things that are tangible. Will it produce quantifiable efficiencies, improved services to the community and also reduce our demand on our services that we have, because in these austere times we are now cutting back.

To concur with John's point, capital funding is no longer in place. We do rely on Transformation funding or generating efficiency savings and opportunities through collaboration to help us fund our organisations and be more efficient.

**Susan Hall AM (Chairman):** Lovely, thank you. Can I say a big thank you to all of you for all of your contributions? I would like to particularly single out you two for coming all the way down from Durham. We are very grateful. It is so good for all of us, is it not, to hear how very well this works for you and your positivity around it. Thank you all for that.