

Date: Thursday, 12 September 2013

Location: The Chamber, City Hall

Hearing: MOPAC Challenge - Victim Services

Start time: 10.00am

Finish time: 11.30am

MOPAC Panel Members:

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member)

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member)

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member)

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member)

Helen Bailey (MOPAC Chief Operating Officer)

Guests:

Baroness Newlove (Victims' Commissioner)

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice)

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker)

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN)

Peter Kelley (Domestic Abuse Partnership Coordinator and Services Manager, Galop)

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS)

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust)

Metropolitan Police Official:

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS)

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Right. Good morning everybody and welcome to -- I do not know, is this the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Challenge? Anyway, this is another MOPAC Challenge and it is the second one looking specifically at victim services so welcome everybody. This is a very important area and in the course of the morning we are going to be launching an independent review of victim services in London. That is going to be carried out by Baroness Newlove. She is due to be with us shortly.

I thought we would start off by trying to set the scene for that review and we have a galaxy of experts that are going to enable us to do that. This is a really important issue. The mission for the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime is obviously in three areas; to prevent crime, but also, importantly, centrally, to seek justice for victims and, lastly, to reduce reoffending. In seeking justice for victims I think it is important that we have an opportunity to understand where we are with the experience for victims and witnesses in London and the support that is currently provided. Importantly the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime will have responsibility for the commissioning of victim services from next year in October.

If I could start with a quick round of introductions so we know who everybody is. Work from Peter [Kelley] through to Ben [Connah]. Do you want to quickly introduce yourselves?

Peter Kelley (Domestic Abuse Partnership Coordinator and Services Manager, Galop): Yes, hello everyone. I am Peter Kelley. I am Service Manager for Galop which is an Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community safety charity.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Great. Thanks, Peter.

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): I am Marai Larasi. I am Executive Director for an organisation called IMKAAN which is a second tier organisation working around violence against women and girls. I am also a joint Chair of the End Violence Against Women Coalition.

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): Good morning everyone. I am Heena Shah. I am here from Victim Support. I work a lot on young people's projects within Victim Support.

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): Good morning. I am Ben Connah, the Deputy Director for Victim and Criminal Proceedings Policy at the Ministry of Justice.

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): Good morning. I am Mike Terry, Assistant Chief Officer of London Probation responsible for victim liaison service for the south of London.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): Adrian Foster. Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) London.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Adrian [Hanstock]

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Good morning. Adrian Hanstock, Commander with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Responsibility for crime, criminal justice and road to policing.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): We have already got join up in the criminal justice system with the same first name! Fantastic. It is always a good start.

I would like to just introduce a couple of slides before coming to ask some question, starting off with Ben if I may. Let's get a feel. Can I have the first slide. This starts off really giving a picture of one way we can measure how effective victim services are in London. Essentially this shows - if you can read it - that Total Victim Care has been launched a little while ago, in Quarter 1 of 2013, and victim satisfaction in London has been low for some time, but we are beginning to see a small rise in the victim satisfaction rate, which I gather now is 78%. That is risen from around 74% when total care for the victim was launched. That is some way to go. I know there is an aspiration from the Commissioner to drive up victim satisfaction. So this is from the Metropolitan Police Service user satisfaction survey.

Can I have the next slide. This is a very interesting slide really. We know that crime levels in the capital are high. The capital accounts for about 25% of all recorded crime. We also know that the rates of crime with a victim are also high. It's about 95 per 1,000 in London against a national average of 66. This is a bit of data - slightly out of date - which shows the proportion of victims that require support services. With the exception of Yorkshire and Humberside the percentage of victims that require support services is also very high, around 26%. I think that really speaks to why, potentially, we need to look beyond pure demographics when it comes to the funding of victim support services.

Can I have the next and final slide. The breakdown of the 26% gives an example of the type of support required by the victim. Confusingly the pie chart, when it says 1%, it is 1% of 26%. The largest area is information from the police which shows the importance of total care for the victim. 7% is protection from further victimisation. Obviously very important. 5% - this is where support services is incredibly important - is someone to talk to. 4% advice on security. 3% practical help. 2% help in reporting. 2% other. 1% help with insurance and compensation. Those are the broad areas of victim services. I think I will leave it there.

The first question to ask, Ben, is can you give an idea of the aspiration of what the Government is looking for when it comes to improving support services for victims and witnesses?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice):

Certainly, yes. Thank you very much for inviting me today. I hope I will be able to provide the national perspective on the Government's victim policy. At its simplest the Government's starting point is that it has a role in helping victims of crime to cope and, where possible, to recover from that crime. There are broadly two areas that that can divide between. There are the standards that victims can expect and their entitlements within the criminal justice system and then there are the services that are provided to help them to cope and recover.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Right. Broadly speaking you perform the commissioning function that is going to be devolved to MOPAC. Can you say how that works at the moment?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): Yes. At the moment roundabout 170 odd organisations are grant funded directly by the Ministry of Justice to provide support for victims across England and Wales. The bulk of that funding goes to Victim Support, the biggest national charity.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): How much about?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): About £38 million.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): How many other organisations?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): 170 odd I think.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): 170 organisations.

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): Who provide a range of services. Some very specialist tailored to individual sorts of crime.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): What is the total amount of money that is spent on victim support services, approximately?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): It is round about £50 million odd. At the moment.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): With the victim surcharge what it is expected to be?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): Well the victim surcharge already exists but we have increased the victim surcharge and we have also increased some of the other financial penalties. That should provide us with up to £50 million additional revenue.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Right. Okay. So that is potentially the amount that will be spent is in the order of £100 million then?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): That is right. From next October we move to a mixed model so rather than the Government grant funding organisations there will be a mix between locally commissioned services by Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and by MOPAC and some nationally commissioned services. Those low volume but high impact crimes like homicide or rape, services for victims of those crimes will remain nationally commissioned, but the bulk of victim services will be commissioned at local level.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Right. With a national charity like Victim Support you commission that nationally today. How do you allocate the funding?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): Well there are various services that Victim Support provides - some of them national, some of them local. As I say, it is done by grant. Victim Support bids for money and they are granted it if the bid stacks up.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Is there an allocation formula for London for the local services?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): No, there is not.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Oh right. Okay.

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): Or at least not to the best of my knowledge. I must say that I am not the official that is responsible for victims' commissioning.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Perhaps I could ask Heena [Shah], do you know how it works in London?

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): I am really sorry, no, because bidding and funding is not really my area --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Oh it is not your area. Okay. Fair enough.

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): But I could find that for you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): My understanding is that the proportion of funding to victim support is in the region - Jeff Gardner(?) may be in the audience - of just around 24% of their

funding goes to London through an allocation formula. If we look at demography London's population accounts for less than 15% of the population but of course, as you will know, the number of victims is far higher. The victimisation rate is far higher for London. It is 95 per 1,000 to a national average of 66. That reflects partly the complexity of a capital city. Do you think it is right to be allocating purely on demography when in a capital city a third of crimes are committed by foreign nationals?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): We looked long and hard at what the funding formula ought to be going forward from next October and, in the end, Ministers decided that, rather than a complex and unclear formula, they should go for something simple and transparent and have settled on demography as giving them that at the same time as giving a fairness across the country.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Well it does not seem entirely fair because obviously if the victimisation rates, which are monitored per thousand - and that is transparent as well - the average is 66 and they are 95 so there is 50% more victims here in London. You can monitor that transparently across the country. If you are surcharging people, so offences committed in London are going to be 25% of total crimes, surely you can transparently ensure that the capital gets its fair share of funding? If you take a demographic approach you shortchange the capital don't you?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): I do not think London is being shortchanged. The amount of money that will be spent in London on victim services will increase under the new model from next October.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): But the proportion that London is getting will be less, if you look at demographics, than it is today. That has to be the case.

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): The proportion of the locally commissioned services, the pot for locally commissioned services, looks likely to be less.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Is likely to be less. Do you think that is right?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): I do not think it is for me to say I am afraid. That is an issue for my Ministers.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I think I had better make that representation. I think you have been open enough about it. We are saying the proportion of money for locally commissioned victim services is going to be less?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): There is no proportion at the moment for locally commissioned victim services but at the moment

roundabout we estimate £6 million is spent on victim services in London. From next year, under the formula, that will be in the region of £8 million, locally.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So the amount is going up but the proportion is going to be going down, relatively?

Ben Connah (Deputy Director, Victim and Criminal Policy, Ministry of Justice): I think that is probably right.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. Well Baroness Newlove I am delighted that you could join us. Helen [Baroness Newlove], thank you so much for coming. We are just trying to set the scene and one of the things that we wanted to do today was to announce the independent review that you will be conducting into victim and witness support services. I am really delighted that you are taking on this commission. I think it is incredibly important with the new role that we have here at the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime that we get this right and very keen to hear from you what you are trying to get out of the review. If you could outline what you see as some of the most important points from the point of view of victims and witnesses.

Baroness Newlove (Victim's Commissioner): Thank you very much. I welcome this opportunity to be the Independent Chair but, for me, victim services come more from a personal perspective as well as a professional perspective so I can speak from both hats in a sense.

My review that I am looking at is open and transparent and it is not favouring the groups that shout the loudest but the best provisions for services for victims is more important for me.

An independent review of victim services is that; it is inclusive of all support agencies in both the voluntary and statutory agency sector. But to explain why it is needed is that victim services, and victims themselves, it is a very, very lonely pathway to be on. Unfortunately there is still a lot to be done in this area and victims themselves have a voice that is very powerful in their own right and needs the respect and dignity. So I welcome this opportunity to Chair this and look forward to the work we do in London themselves because it is quite a big area of work to be involved with, and getting it right is more important than spending a lot of money and not moving from the first hurdle. So it is very, very important for me to make this work, follow through and be able that victims know what services are out there. It is very stumbling at the end of the day. It is a very, very blinded pathway at times.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Great. From your own personal experience above all what are the biggest challenges at the moment we face that you would say we need to focus on?

Baroness Newlove (Victim's Commissioner): The biggest challenge is communication. There are a lot of people - and there are a lot of people here today - and we are here now to make this work so our communication is the biggest hurdle that faces and your language is a

huge hurdle. You speak in a language that does have no connection with the people who need the help and support through this.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes. That is really reflected by a lot of the statistics around confidence in the criminal justice system which is very low so we will be looking at some of the areas where what you have just described there as hurdles are particularly high. Thank you very much indeed for taking on this bit of work. It is going to be very, very important for the capital that we get the commissioning of support services for victims absolutely right.

Baroness Newlove (Victim's Commissioner): It is very important. One thing is that they are not statistics; they are people. So we need to change that around and that is where you will get the commitment from people.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Absolutely. Shall we continue with setting the scene? We have got the message that London has a higher rate of victims than the rest of the country, higher crime levels than the number of people who live here and at the moment the proposal around the funding of victim services is purely around demography. We will be making representations to Ministers on this and I have already made it clear to them that I will be doing that. I think it is important to recognise the complexity of the capital and I am delighted that we have got some experts that can talk about some of the hurdles for specific groups.

Heena, you represent and you can talk about the voice of young people and how difficult the hurdles are for young people. Perhaps you could say a few words about some of the challenges that young people face at the moment as victims.

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): Sure. It is traumatic for anyone experiencing crime and especially for young people. Everyone has individual experiences of dealing with how they cope with what they have had to go through. But one of the issues for young people in the criminal justice system is the actual barriers to reporting and that can include the lack of trust in authorities including the police. They fear that they will not be believed. They are fearful of what their peers may think. They may be called a grass or a snitch for example. They are fearful of any repercussions that may take place if they were to report an incident. I also feel that young people feel targeted by the police. If we look at the high stop and search rates amongst young people this can often be their first interaction with the police and that can be a negative one as well.

There needs to be better communication between the police and the young person who is a victim especially when going to court. Where young people have not engaged in victim support services - where they have we act as an advocate - they rely solely on the police through the Witness Care Unit and the Crown Prosecution Service for any updates on their case. We have known of instances where they have been given incorrect details for their trial so incorrect times, incorrect dates, so they have not shown up for their trial through no fault of their own but the cases have cracked and the Crown Prosecution Service have given no evidence. This is

particularly hard on young people especially after going through all the emotions of deciding to report a crime in the first place. I think this creates a cycle of mistrust. Even when we look at special measures special measures are always provided to young people when they do go to court but that is only if they are identified. But where young people have to give evidence via video link that video is shown in the court room for everyone to see, including the defendant, and this is not always made aware to the young person.

I think services need to be structured differently to reach out to young people to build trust and key relationships to ensure that young people can come out and speak up if they have been a victim of crime or if a crime has been committed against them. Outreach work needs to be developed to meet individual needs. We need to work in partnership with other agencies and reach out to young people who do not report crime or are not heard if they do.

From experience I think working with young people I believe that young people want to be listened to, taken seriously and not just told what the police want to do. I have got some statistics from the crime survey in England and Wales from 2011 to December 2012 which show that young people aged 10 to 15 only reported 15% of theft and 15% of violent crime to the police which would mean that 85% of crime was unreported in that category.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Gosh. Such a low reporting level then by young people.

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): Yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Faith [Boardman], do you want to ask some questions?

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): This is a really clear example I think of the type of extra complexities that we have in London and from my own knowledge of communities I think there will be quite a variation in some of the reasons and some of the needs. You picked out in particular the question of simply encouraging them to engage and report in the first instance. So if we start with that. What are the big hurdles and are there practical things that could be done to make it more easy and more acceptable to report?

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): I think the police need to communicate effectively with young people and I do not think that that is happening. They need to be more approachable for young people to feel safe that they can go and report and to feel safe that if they were to report no repercussions were going to happen after that.

If I give you an example of a case that I was working with. I supported a 14 year old young person a few months ago who was a victim of mugging and he was mugged on his way home from school. He had the support from his mother which made him report the crime. But when he reported the crime he was not told that the case was going to go to court and he was not given any information about that kind of stuff. The police did a good job in arresting the perpetrator but there was not any further communication between the police and that young

person after the case had been reported. When the case did go to court he did not want to give evidence because he did not know what was going to happen in terms of his safety, whether he was going to be kept safe, what that perpetrator was going to do, because they lived in the same area, and he knew who he was. He was fearful of what would happen just because he had reported the crime in the first place.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): It seems to me that the family context is one that is quite important and certainly I know, for example, employment issues and choices of careers and jobs and so forth that the parents' attitude and their understanding is often quite crucial. Are we right simply to think about the victim as the young person or should we be thinking about their school background or their parental and family background?

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): I think everything plays a part but I think, especially with young people, we forget all of the emotions that they have to go through when they are growing up. They have got their friends' circle, they have got family, their social network. A lot of stuff happening on the internet now. All of these things need to be taken into consideration when we look at young people as victims and all of those things will play a part in how they feel as a victim; whether they can report, whether they cannot report. Each individual is different.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): So when we are thinking around communication - which the Baroness has identified as the key issue - should we be thinking around communication in that wider sense as well as to the actual individual?

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): Absolutely. Yes.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): What would be the barriers to that do you think?

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): To understand what is happening initially?

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): Yes, and also, for example, if we are thinking about the school background where they spend a lot of their day, perhaps. What would the schools' attitudes be? How would we best go about that, in your experience?

Heena Shah (Victim Support - Young People's worker): I think we need to increase awareness all round, especially when it comes to becoming a victim and the emotions that people go through. When I used to do workshops in schools I used to go into anti-bullying workshops and a lot of the response I used to get from schools was we have a zero tolerance policy of bullying in school. But for me that does not mean that you do not have any bullying in school so they need to admit that actually there may be an issue and they need to know what

services are available for them to access support and support that young person effectively or to refer on if they do not have the expertise to support.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Faith, I am going to rattle across and hear from Marai and Peter because I know Helen is leaving in about 15 minutes. Then I think you can get a flavour of some of the concerns. We have clearly already heard about the chronic under reporting of crime, often violent crime, of theft, by young people. Trying to understand the barriers to that has, in the first instance, got to be a real challenge for victims.

Marai [Larasi], domestic violence, violence against women and girls, can you frame some of the issues that are faced by victims and witnesses?

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): Sure. I have to start by acknowledging that we have made progress. I do not want this to be a doom and gloom picture. But we are still not doing enough and that is an important message. As Baroness Newlove rightly states the victim's path is often very lonely. What we have found in terms of our own research is that there is simply not enough joined up working. I know it sounds like a cliché but it is really important. Absolute inconsistency in responses. If a woman goes to one police station or deals with one police officer she may have a fantastic response but in another area actually she will get a really poor response.

I am concerned that women are now starting to worry about the pressure on police services so women themselves saying, "Actually the police are under a lot of pressure so I don't want to give them more work to do". That is really worrying. Women and girls are reporting that they are not being supported - and this really echoes what Heena says - to navigate the criminal justice system so actually not being provided with enough information about how the process works, court dates, what they can expect in terms of process etc. There are still inadequate resources being directed to specialist women's services which very often are the key element in making sure that a case will go through because they will support a woman right through the system.

We need to be thinking about safety and recovery and we need to be thinking about reducing repeat victimisation by actually promoting self-determination and autonomy. If we do not support women all the way through the process then we will not have that.

We also, worryingly, still have hierarchies of victims. Young women that are gang associated very often are treated with a huge amount of suspicion and are treated as offenders primarily as opposed to victims. If you are a woman who is subject to immigration control then you are treated as an offender and you are less likely to be believed than your counterpart. If you are a women involved in prostitution you are definitely treated with a huge amount of suspicion. Actually we are talking about, in terms of those three groups, some of the most vulnerable women that we are going to ever encounter in terms of our services.

I want to actually hand it over to you to ask questions because I do not want to go on too much because I think we can pull stuff out.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Jeremy [Mayhew]?

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Can I focus in on this issue of pathways and consistency and coherence between the paths of the criminal justice system. Do you have any ideas how we could be more joined up? How one could help people navigate the system? We recognise the problem. To my mind the issue is how does one help people and are there particular bits of the chain, particular agencies, that are particularly badly joined up?

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): Right, okay. I think we have heard communication a few times today so I think communication is the key thing. With the understanding that we know that resources are limited and we know that agencies on the frontline are facing huge pressures but we need our police officers to be talking to our prosecutors. We need that to happen. If we are talking about a victim centred approach then it means having conversations between yourself as agencies, using language that is accessible -- because we all speak our own jargon and have our little thing that we do ourselves. But actually if you are a woman or you are a girl experiencing violence that is not necessarily your language.

So there is something about getting the communication right immediately and actually having a zero tolerance approach to failure. We need to be going, "Actually, there's room for improvement. Absolutely. Let's deal with that behind the scenes. But she must never have to deal with our inadequacies as agencies". So there is something about making sure that we talk to each other, that we talk to her and that we give her the same message, we give her a clear message.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Who is we?

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): We as agencies. Although I do not work for the statutory services I see this as all our responsibility. So there is something about making sure that police services have conversations with prosecutors. If you know that that woman is reluctant, for example, to give evidence there is no point in putting her under a huge amount of pressure. What can sometimes help is if you have a conversation with her support worker, if you have a conversation with her, if you talk about what is going on for her. If she is frightened about the repercussions, particularly if she is in a situation where she is fleeing multiple perpetrators, you are not going to achieve best evidence, you are not going to have her coming forward. So there is something about have it focused on the support that is needed for her.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): I do not want to be prescriptive and I certainly do not want to put ideas - and this may be a bonkers idea - but would it help if there was somebody who was alongside the victim through the process irrespective of the agency with

which they are dealing? Come back and tell me that is a bad idea and you have got a better idea --

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): No, it is a wonderful idea. That is what we do. That is our job in many ways. That is the point, the piece in the puzzle, that I am saying is really underfunded and, again, is really inconsistent. Stephen [Greenhalgh] talks about a postcode lottery. If you go to parts of London you might actually have women's services that are badly funded but not as badly funded as other parts of London. It is those organisations that have specialist knowledge about violence against women and girls. It is what they do. It is their core business. And those are the organisations that support women through those pathways. However, if those organisations do not have the resources or if they are closing down we are losing an important element in the support network.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Those tend to be voluntary agencies?

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): Those are voluntary agencies.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Finally, if you could identify one - ideally one, maybe two - things that MOPAC could do to push this in the right direction what would that be?

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): Leadership with police and the Crown Prosecution Service just in terms of saying, "Work in partnership, get your communication right etc". Leadership with local authorities around resources, around allocation of resources, around really understanding the importance of support for the woman and girls.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): And making the joins?

Marai Larasi MBE (Executive Director, IMKAAN): Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Right. Peter [Kelley], perhaps I could ask a little about your area. Jonathan [Glanz], do you want to lead the questions?

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): Yes. I would like to hear from Peter first and then ask the questions.

Peter Kelley (Domestic Abuse Partnership Coordinator and Services Manager, Galop): Yes. I will try to be quick. I am here to talk about hate crime but, as Galop, we are a pan-London organisation. We also deal with specialist work around LGBT domestic abuse and also we have quite a unique service as sexual abuse case worker as well as hate crime worker so it is all those kinds of areas of victims we work in.

We have got a successful third party reporting system so in terms of barriers to victims coming forward that is something that we feel is important that works. It is about the unique experience of LGBT people, other victims from minority backgrounds, experience that sets them apart.

A really quick example of that is, for example, a gay or bisexual man who has experienced sexual assault perhaps whilst under the influence of recreational drugs, for example, is very unlikely to want to come forward to report to the police those reasons.

I think over the past decade there has been too much emphasis, perhaps because of the under reporting, on simply reporting alone. What we see in Galop in terms of working with victims really is that advocacy and support that you talked about. Guiding people through the criminal justice service from the beginnings of reporting to supporting them in not necessarily obvious ways; rebuilding their lives, coping things that you mentioned there. It is about working with a range of agencies as well as the victim.

So we spend a lot of our time trying to put things right with people. That simply may be, again, involve more detailed work with other agencies and with the victim because of things like poor follow up to a report of crime, lack of communication we mentioned. Particularly the most vulnerable victims do need advocacy and support so that is what we would recommend in our service. As well, in terms of Galop, we have about reassurance so that communication level so not just about individual. For example, when a high profile incident happens - whether that is a homophobic murder or the treatment of a trans person by the police or criminal justice service - it is really important that we do that kind of advocacy on a community based level to minimise the impact and get learning from that. That is a unique role.

I was going to talk about some statistics really but I do not think we have got time for that. I generally say that obviously the incidences of homophobic crime in London are, and remain, high.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): High, yes.

Peter Kelley (Domestic Abuse Partnership Coordinator and Services Manager, Galop):

In terms of public LGBT attitudes towards the police and criminal justice service we have noticed, through a Freedom of Information Act disclosure, that it suggests that perhaps some of that confidence in the police is declining slightly, especially amongst victims of homophobic crime. Something like 67% of victims said they were satisfied with the police particularly on homophobic crime --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): What was the percentage, sorry?

Peter Kelley (Domestic Abuse Partnership Coordinator and Services Manager, Galop): 67%.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): 67%.

Peter Kelley (Domestic Abuse Partnership Coordinator and Services Manager, Galop):

So it is lower than for, say, other crimes, for example. I would caution that because it is a very small sample. That said, again 25% of those people said they were dissatisfied with the police when they were victims of homophobic crime.

A few things to finish off. We are worried, as we said, about the changes in commissioning and localism, that specialist services around those groups with protected characteristics or young people, will be lost if individual boroughs do not have the expertise or capacity to commission services.

We welcome, for example, MOPAC's commitment to LGBT police liaison officers. We think that they can work well but there is a huge discrepancy in different boroughs about the provision of service and the quality of that service. That can sometimes backfire on the reputation of the MPS if people try to contact them and they get a poor service. That probably goes for anything really.

As I mentioned, LGBT people victims continue not to -- there are barriers to reporting and accessing services. So, for example, with male victims of domestic violence there are no hostels or refuges for male survivors so when we work with them it can be extremely challenging to find them safe places. I will stop there.

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): Thank you, Peter. I just wanted to explore some of these aspects of under reporting and the reasons for the relatively low figure in respect of overall satisfaction in relation to the services which people from the LGBT communities are receiving, and to tie it in, perhaps, with one of your comments in relation to getting messages out. Clearly there are areas in London with highly visible LGBT communities - not just Soho but Vauxhall, Shoreditch etc. etc. - and also very effective mechanisms of communicating with the community through magazines, websites, whatever it may be. Do you think there is any danger in highlighting some of these issues within those specified media that you are actually serving in some ways to undermine the level of confidence because of coverage of individual cases which may not be fully and truly representative of the overall experience of the community?

Peter Kelley (Domestic Abuse Partnership Coordinator and Services Manager, Galop):

That is a long question. We highlight overall satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Often you get a high profile case that can -- for example, a few years ago the murder of Ian Baynham in Trafalgar Square. Obviously it raises that level of concern really. I do not think we overestimate the worst kinds of incidents and the worst kind of treatment. Common experiences are things like poor communication we have heard with either the police or perhaps court services.

Barriers to reporting. People not being kept up to date with their case. Things like language are an issue as well. We particularly look at the trans community. If you get language wrong the victim can shut down. It is back to that thing about accompanying someone throughout their experience of the criminal justice system (CJS) in order to raise their confidence.

I think there are not enough good news stories out there. That is an issue. When things are right one of the things the MPS needs to do, or the CPS, is flag those up where there are successful prosecutions and cases and the victims are satisfied. Certainly we do that when we send out stories of victims' experiences. We would give them good experiences.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Thanks very much, Peter. A long question and comprehensively answered. I am conscious that Helen has to go so, Baroness Newlove, I am going to do a quick 60 second summary. We have got some emerging themes. You set the scene beautifully in terms of as the victims' commissioner, how the victim feels and how important that is and the barriers when it comes to communication and also the language barriers that you have raised. I think it is incredibly important that you carry out this. This is the first independent review. It is going to be comprehensive. I think the capital city is tremendously important.

You have heard three areas where there are significant challenges. From Heena we have heard of the chronic under reporting by young people; 15% of theft and violent crimes reported in the first instance. 85% of them not reported.

We have also picked up in domestic violence -- this is again an issue where we have got potentially a postcode lottery when it comes to the availability of having advocacy, the specialist support services, but also the advocacy from IDVAs. I have had representations consistently from the CPS about some of that lottery from the support services and 50% of unsuccessful prosecutions from domestic violence falling down because the victims are failing to appear in court. So we have got a real challenge if we are going to be successful and deliver justice for victims.

Around again the issue of LGBT crimes. The high incidence but the very low reporting. I think it is about 57% of crimes. Only half of them get reported. But also the low - as you have just pointed out the statistics - victim satisfaction rate at 67% which is, indeed, significantly lower than the average for all victims of crime at 78%.

So a lot of work to be done in some of those areas. Really looking forward to hearing back from you and your colleagues. I think it is very important and very timely.

Also, if I can say a final plea, if you can also look at how the Government are slicing up the pie because, personally, yes, looking at demography is a very transparent way of slicing the pie but ultimately this is about victims and there are more victims in London. It is a fact. The crime rates in London, they are a quarter, victimisation rates at 23%. I think funding victims services

as a proportion at 15% of the national pie is transparently wrong, frankly, and we need to do something about addressing the needs of victims.

Anyway, thank you very much indeed. I do not know if you want to say anything before you go but thank you for coming.

Baroness Newlove (Victim's Commissioner): It is quite refreshing and I agree with everything that you have said. It is something I have been battering on for a long time. With all my hats I am independent and I am passionate. All of this, whatever area you are in, is about the victim. It is not about the crime. It is not about a colour. It is about the needs for that victim, whether it is reported or not. We really have to give them faith in the system, we need to champion good work and communities need to feel safe. With me, I have got all those hats on and I never change from one to the other because I am passionate inside. I welcome this work.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): You have always been so consistent and so independent. We need your review now more than ever so thank you so much for undertaking it. Thank you.

Baroness Newlove (Victim's Commissioner): Thank you very much.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Right. Any more questions, Jonathan, at all on this area with Peter?

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): No, I think we have covered the ground thank you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Thank you very much. It has been really helpful. We are now going to focus on the criminal justice system and we have got representatives from policing and some words of advice from colleagues in setting the scene, but also I am afraid it is the burden now of the CPS to represent all the agencies, courts as well, and obviously colleagues from probation. I think I would like Steve [O'Connell] perhaps, if I may, just to start. If you could perhaps talk a little bit just by way of introduction and then Steve will ask you some questions about how you are approaching the drive to improve the criminal justice system but also the experience for victims and witnesses.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): The first thing I would start with, in context, is I do not disagree with anything we have heard. There is absolute validity for each victim. It is their experience of the system, not our processes, that should be in play here.

If I may provide just a few seconds of context of what we have done since this Commissioner has been in place. First of all we have made it very clear that victims are at the heart of what we do, tackling crime, supporting victims and being professional. Two of our four values that are now being pursued through the organisation relate to compassion and professionalism so this

whole sense of the victim being at the heart of our positive outcomes is very much written through it.

To support individuals we have actually rolled out 2,500 more officers working in neighbourhood policing to provide a greater interface with the public and the needs of individuals so that we can visit with victims so that we can provide additional support there.

I am sorry that I am going to have to use some figures in context but we have 800,000 crimes reported in London annually, potentially more victims than that, and so it is obviously necessary to look at the whole but with that caveat that it is the individual.

I should also say as well that I am the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) lead for LGBT issues and for stop and search so if there are issues on those themes that people want to pick up with me afterwards I am happy to do that as well to explain what we are doing in those particular areas.

For policing I think it falls down to three areas. One is that initial support for victims when they report the crime - having heard certainly some of the barriers to that already this morning. Secondly, how do we check the levels of satisfaction in that service that we are giving because it is the bulk of what we do - dealing with those 800,000 reported crimes is our job - and so we need to understand how that is effective, or not. Then the third thing is preparing victims for the court process before we do our joint work with CPS colleagues in bringing justice for whatever it is the individual has experienced.

If I can concentrate on those three cut me off when you feel I am rambling too far because it is an enormous area, each of those. In terms of the initial report of a crime first of all we have now developed a bespoke service based on what the victim needs. So they will either have an immediate response based on seriousness and risk, which is within 15 minutes, a scheduled response based on their expectation and requirements, which could be within an hour, or an appointment, usually within 48 hours but based on their exact requirements. 92% of those immediate responses are within time. 90% of the scheduled meetings within an hour take place. Of the appointments 91% are met on time. Bizarrely, if we arrive early, it counts as a failure so if we arrive before we say we will, and still meet with the victim, that is counted in the 9% so we need to acknowledge that. We are actually making appointments 430 times a day, 157,000 appointments a year, based on what victims need. A real improvement on what we did.

What has that given us? Well satisfaction rates have actually gone up 10%, particularly around high volume crimes where previously it was felt the police were not interested. It certainly does not meet the threshold of the serious levels of crime but things like motor vehicle crime where Londoners felt we just were not interested. Now if they want a visit we will visit and we will investigate properly.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): The percentage has gone up on motor vehicle crime which is a notoriously challenging figure.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): It has always been a fluctuating crime level. It is actually coming down at the moment for a whole variety of reasons.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): The reporting satisfaction survey.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): For the satisfaction significantly. 10% on that crime alone. We certainly provide follow up visits where the victim requests that. I mentioned the 2,600 extra officers in neighbourhood teams to help provide that service and we do that through dedicated daily tasking. So if it is understood a victim requires a follow up supporting visit that will be managed through our local Grip processes.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I want to come back and question that. It is an excellent aspiration and a promise which the neighbourhoods are delivering now but there is a sustainability issue around numbers and resources so you are setting yourself a high bar of a promise that you are going to visit every reported victim of crime at a certain time, 15% or whatever, but you must ensure that you continue delivering that and that is a challenge isn't it?

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Absolutely it is. We are concentrating here simply on victim issues but of course the roles and responsibilities of a police officer is much broader than that. They will have other risk issues to deal with. Working with schools. All of those other engagement and support to pick up on the things like the interaction with young people and dealing with bespoke community concerns.

If I can just pick up on some of the concerns that came up in that field though. The under reporting issue. Absolutely understand that. Particularly with young people. Our interface with the public is not as strong as it is in other areas of business and other sectors. Are we making enough use of technology? I do not think we are. We certainly have plans for that. How do we liaise and work closer with schools, in respect of under reporting particularly. The concern also that was raised from that was the process that then follows and the risks of going to a judicial disposal. We are certainly looking at - and have worked in the past at some length - around alternative options such as peer reviews, restorative justice, community courts that take the pressure from that whole long term court experience.

I fully accept that our language is wrong. It is complex. We are sometimes bound by the process of justice but, similarly, I do not think we talk in a language that people do get. We need to do more around that.

I will finish this bit by just explaining what we are doing then with professionalising the officers so that they understand this, because we are dealing with mature professional adults. That is the service we give. But we need to give the pointers that we are getting from the community.

We are introducing new front counters to our core police stations that provide a much more user friendly experience. I do not know the last time you went into a police station. It is like entering a glass tardis. It is a horrible experience. Even if you are not reporting a crime. So that is all under a redesign.

We are supporting online tracking and reporting of crime and information and intelligence, which is part of a longer IT refresh. It will not happen overnight but it certainly is in train. We are doing some interim measures with that.

Officer training. We are working with them. We have introduced six professional development days each year which have a number of themes. Certainly one of the first themes is around our professionalism and interaction with the public. What language officers use. How do they professionalise that encounter?

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): That will address the consistency issue that was mentioned earlier.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Absolutely. That is the intention. Things like stop and search are critical to this - and I know I keep referring to that but it is one of our biggest areas of conflict with young communities.

Then next steps and support. A lot of the information that people want we can provide access online. We have a youth website which might not be the coolest one for them to access but it does provide useful information and we work with schools officers to promote that. I will not go on more around that.

If I can quickly move on to satisfaction and how do we understand if any of that is working. We do a significant satisfaction survey of selected victims - and perhaps you will understand why it is selected. We survey 17,000 victims every year. It is a ten minute survey by phone and we look predominantly at burglary, violence and motor vehicle crime. The high volume areas as you would expect. We exclude victims of domestic violence, sexual offences and juveniles for all of the safeguards. Often those victims do not want to revisit those crimes, certainly not with a stranger over the phone. It is hugely emotional and we deal with the feedback and experience in a very different way through forums, through our work with independent advisers and other groups. It is still a challenge for us though. The target satisfaction rate is 85%. We saw on the graphs at the start of today we are currently at about 78%, but on a rising trend. Let's hope that the work we are doing continues that.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I understand that. On the user satisfaction survey I understood that you were looking at ways of enhancing it and expanding the number of crimes it was reporting on because it was quite a limited crime base.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Absolutely. Again, I will not just throw this. This is a resourcing issue. It is about positioning ourselves better so that those encounters have a degree of feedback as well. So if we are doing, for example, a follow up victim visit a satisfaction survey type approach to that, recognising the victim has not asked us to visit to do a satisfaction check; they have asked us to come because they need something in support of what they are experiencing.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I understand.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): But somehow we can capture a qualitative impact of are we providing what they need in a sensitive way.

The final thing is preparing people then for court and how do we keep them familiar with what the process is and what they can expect and how do we then work.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): It does come over as a big challenge doesn't it, for now?

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Absolutely it is. That is probably the most threatening element I think of the whole process, notwithstanding, if I may, some of the unprofessional encounters victims experience. Broadly - and it is broadly at 78% - we are getting something right, but there is a huge 20% that we are not. The fear of the criminal justice system I think is hugely acute and how do we de-mystify that so that victims are confident that they will be well protected by that process, that they are not going to then suffer further violence or intimidation. We have recently restructured our victim care units into five hubs. Previously every borough had one. Now we have put it into five dedicated sites.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Have you measured the success or the effectiveness of that change?

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): We started to benchmark it from October and the reason for that is it is only just introduced, we are only four months into the final site, so to give a degree of consistency we wanted to get it bedded in place for 12 months. So October will be the benchmarking of that alongside CPS colleagues. Since we have introduced it we have done a follow up training and refresh with staff because, as it was new, it had its teething problems. We want to make sure that we have captured those quickly and have now refocused staff as to what their role is there.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Adrian, in short time, why did you rationalise them into hubs and take them away from the boroughs?

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): It was too inconsistent across London.

Steve O’Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): The service was inconsistent across the 32 -

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Not every borough was doing it to a strong enough standard. Also it allows us to provide a more rationalised understanding of who is vulnerable, intimidated or of greater need so that we can balance the workload far more towards those.

Steve O’Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): It seems to me we have got to get that piece right. That is absolutely vital.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Definitely. What was happening was we were having some boroughs that were almost harassing victims who did not want the visit or they did not want the call. They said, “You’ve given me all the information I need. Why are you ringing me again?” Simply because it was in their checklist. Now it is a more balanced approach to what does this victim actually need and how do we resource that to make sure we commit and deliver to that. That then keeps them confident that when they move into the prosecution stage they will have a clear understanding of what to expect and who is supporting them through that.

Steve O’Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Lastly from me, perhaps until we go across to our other agency, there are two pieces that are important. You recognise that the MPS’ record on satisfaction is at a low base. That is a fact and the Commissioner has recognised that and he is putting measures in place, visiting victims and all that, based on the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) model, something that will force that satisfaction up. Also getting right the witness care unit piece. You get those two things right you will hopefully forcing those up. The witness care unit is a piece that goes on to Adrian as well. Stephen, are you taking the lead on this?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): This is the issue for pretty much everybody here but starting particularly with the interface between police, CPS and the courts. We have got to recognise the confidence in the criminal justice system victims is actually very low. The figures I have seen are about four in ten victims do not feel they are getting the support from the criminal justice system. I am not looking to any one agency but that is the feedback that we have. What I would like to understand really is why can we not -- this is feedback from a lot of people setting the scene, the agencies, providing some online feedback being able to track my crime and then eventually track my case. When I raised this -- why can we not provide the services that we see in Avon and Somerset, for instance? Are there plans in place to deal with that, Adrian?

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Absolutely there are. We looked at actually introducing Avon and Somerset’s model. We realised however that we would be paying twice for a service that would not meet the needs of Londoners. It is built into the new crime recording system that is due to roll out at the end of next year. If we bought it in now we would be paying twice for something we are already developing for London. We do have an

interim. We do work with text messages and with email services that are more bespoke to what the victim has.

In terms of satisfaction it is never a satisfying situation to be in. If you are a victim of crime at no point is it ever really going to be a good news story for you. How we minimise that impact I think is what we are trying to do here. Certainly the message that I am giving out through my work in this is forget the process, connect with the emotion of what you are dealing with. I think this is where we have got it wrong in London for a long time. If I set the scene I worked in a county force for a number of years before I came to London. We moved very much into almost a production line approach to supporting the investigation of a crime, the subsequent case preparation and the passing it to CPS who then actually pick up a lot of the emotional impact. It is almost as if we have forgotten that. It really picks up on what colleagues have said here and what Baroness Newlove said; there is a victim at the end of whatever we are doing here and if we forget at any one stage that then we are doomed to have low satisfaction rates.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. Just passing over to Adrian. What do you see are the challenges of how we can increase the confidence in the criminal justice system? With low victim satisfaction rates in the MPS and low confidence in the criminal justice system victims do not feel they are getting the service they deserve. What do you think are the things we can do to transform that experience?

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): We have been doing quite a lot of work together across the agencies, both ourselves, the police and the core service. I think MOPAC have been assisting as well in terms of tracking out the victim's journey throughout a case. We have worked out that there are 34 contacts from six different agencies for someone who is going to go to trial as a witness and then if someone is sentenced thereafter dealings with the probation service as well. There is a lot of contact and we need to make it very clear to victims and witnesses exactly which point to access and to make it much clearer to them who is contacting them and why they are contacting them because it can get very confusing about different people contacting you at different points.

We do know that 80% of victims and witnesses do not want any information, advice or support. I think the data you showed earlier is slightly old data but it does show that nationally it is about 80% and in London actually it is a bit lower; 74%(?). So we need to be proportionate in our response to make sure that those who do actually want an additional service we do provide that additional service to them, particularly those that are vulnerable, intimidated and those in greatest need. That is what we are focusing on in terms of the witness care units. Although it is a police run witness care unit we are very much involved in making sure that that is an effective service for us. We cannot prosecute cases without victims and witnesses. They are essential to everything we do. So we are trying to remind our prosecutors that, in every case where there is a victim, to treat them as though they are a family friend, a relation, that every victim does matter in the cases that we prosecute.

To give you some information - I appreciate that it is not all about statistics - that I do have around attendance rates, the level of the challenge we have. In the crown court we have an 85% attendance rate, so 15% of witnesses do not attend our courts for the trials. In the magistrates' courts it is about 78% for all work. We have got 22% of witnesses in the magistrates' court not attending. That makes a prosecution very difficult. It is not impossible. But we do try, particularly in domestic violence cases, to carry out victimless prosecutions where we try to gather additional evidence from the police officers, from photographic evidence, from recordings, to try to prosecute without the victim, or to bring hearsay, try and use their evidence without them actually attending court to the fore. It is difficult to prosecute but we do try to do it and try to put pressure on the defendant to plead guilty when we have the evidence against them.

In domestic violence cases the attendance is less so in crown court it is about 79% of witnesses attend and in magistrates' court about 73% of domestic violence victims and witnesses attending.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Wow. That statistic I heard -- that 50% --

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): In terms of the cases we lose. We are successful in some of those cases because if you have a witness not attending you can still prosecute. You may have the victim there and a couple of other witnesses. We could still prosecute even if we only had two witnesses that did not show, for instance. So that is counted in it. But of those cases where we do not have a successful prosecution in terms of a conviction the general work we have, about 24% of those cases, are because of victim issues. Either they do not attend on the day or they retract at the last minute.

When you look at domestic violence cases - I think this is the statistic you were quoting - in the crown court is 50% of cases we are unsuccessful in is because the victim either failed to attend or retracted at the last minute. In the magistrates' court it is up to 65%.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): At the magistrates it is even higher.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): I think the statistic is about 50% do not attend on the day and another 15% retract just before we get to the trial. So that is the level of issue for us.

In terms of hate crime - I am afraid I have not got them split down in-between the different hate crimes - it is about 37% of cases we are unsuccessful in is because the victim either does not attend or retracts very close to the actual court date. We cannot do enough really to support witnesses and victims through the process right from reporting all the way through to post sentence to enable the journey to be a much cleaner one for them and to give them confidence in the system. Because we cannot prosecute cases where we do not have the evidence at court.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So if you were to be able to redesign the criminal justice system to ensure that the journey for the victim worked, particularly in those crimes where you have got the very low attendance rate and a huge proportion of unsuccessful prosecutions because of a failure of the victim to attend, what would be your three areas that you would concentrate on to improve the victim's journey?

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): I think it is the support from the outset so not just dealing with the reporting of the crime but other services that might be available to them. Witness Care Units do do that. They are trained in those cases where there is someone who is vulnerable, intimidated, in greatest need to refer services such as domestic violence services or other homes or places they need to go.

In terms of the court process itself we do multi hand so there are a number of agencies that are responsible for the handling of witnesses. We could be better at understanding should there be one agency actually that looks at that across the piece.

In terms of the service when you get to court courts, prosecutors and the police could be more engaged with victims throughout the whole process because I think, often, as we have heard, people do not see them as anything else other than a victim of crime and a statistic and they need to understand that each victim is an individual and has individual needs throughout the whole process, and especially in the courtroom itself.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Clearly also for these issues around domestic violence and also sexual violence a slow criminal justice system must be particularly difficult for a victim if it is dragged out --

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): Yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): What are the opportunities to improve the system do you think, being able to speed up the process from charge to completion? The criminal justice system in London is a very slow process compared to the rest of the country.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): It is although the actual court bit of it is --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): That is not the issue. It is between -- that is true. That is the 100 days. The 169 is between the date of the offence to the arrest --

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): On average.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): On an average, yes. I am talking about averages.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): In terms of domestic violence and hate crime and sexual offences those are prioritised to they are more likely to get a fixture in terms of trials. They are set a shorter trial date than other cases so those are prioritised in the system.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): OK.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): So that does help quite a bit in terms of making sure that we focus on those and when people do attend for those hearings that actually the cases do go ahead. It is not always the case but they are prioritised.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): What role can technology play? Are we back to herald the era of the digital criminal justice system? Moving away from the notebook and paper in courts to a judicious use of technology so things flow quicker --

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): We are getting there. Over the last few years you have heard about people giving evidence over live links into court. That can be from a police station. They do not necessarily have to go to court to give evidence. Could be from their home. Could be from somewhere safe that they feel comfortable giving evidence, the very best evidence.

There are other opportunities in terms of us prosecuting digitally and we are already using tablets to prosecute in court. We get the information digitally from the police. There are opportunities for us to get digital video evidence before the courts much swifter and to make sure that victims and witnesses are supported in terms of apps and understanding about the court system so that they do not have to have a leaflet through but via their preferred means of information. So it may be that they have an app that they download to describe what happens in a courtroom before they come to court. For many young people gaining information from multiple social media sources is their preferred means of getting information, rather than getting something through the post that may alert others as to them being a witness in court.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): It seems that the police are about to, eventually, next year -- Adrian, you mentioned a track my crime facility. What opportunities are there to extend that so it becomes a track my case so effectively we do not just present data through the eyes of one agency but we think about this as a whole system approach so that any member of the public at any one time knows where, as a victim, their case is, or where there crime is within the wider criminal justice system?

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): The system is joined by a server that sits on top of all three agencies in terms of police, us and the courts. We are working more closely with the courts in terms of getting information in terms of the outcomes because they are the owners of the outcomes of cases. It is a question that I think they are looking at a new computer system to be phased in in the next few years to enable them to have better coverage

in terms of getting the results back to the police. That may enable a better system. Certainly victims and witnesses find out directly from the witness care unit what happened but that is by telephone. It is not as easily accessible as somebody might go about their daily business, particularly if they are in work or studying. It may be that actually there are means to enable them to find out the results much smoother in the future but it seems some way off I have got to say. It will not be until 2016 I think until the new court system comes in.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): That is certainly some way away.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Can I follow up with one question. I came across a case recently where the police had told me that a case had gone to court, or was going to court and then had gone to court. But they told me that automatically they were not told the outcome of that case. Is that correct and how can that be the case? I mean they had been involved in bringing the case.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): The way it should work -- I cannot speak about the individual cases --

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): No, I am not asking you to.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): But it should work in that the court resulting team notify the police of all the results. That is then handed to the officer through the witness care unit.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): As a matter of habit that should happen?

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): Yes.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): So if it did not happen that could be a slip up rather than a systematic failure?

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): That is the mechanism that should work. As I understand it the witness care unit notifies the officer in the case as well as the victim, if there is a separate victim. If there is another officer associated with the case, perhaps as a witness, I am not sure that they would individually be told.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Sure.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Unlikely. It would just go through that one point.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I really hope that as we develop technology involving the different groups -- you mentioned six agencies and there are three principal agencies of course; the police, CPS and the court service. I really hope there are common data standards and the

technology does actually speak across the system particularly for the benefit of victims and witnesses, so that can happen and we make more progress further and faster and do not have to wait until 2016 for some of this to come online.

I think the interesting point I would like to raise with you. Both of you work in London, in the metropolis, both of you see higher rates of crime. Certainly we have got 25% of national crime in capital. High rates of victim based crime. 95 per 1,000 against an average in a county force where it is typically around 66 per 1,000. Do you think it makes sense to allocate funding for these services simply on demography when a third of crimes in London are not by the residents of London, it is by foreign nationals? I would like to hear some of your thoughts. Put your cards on the table please.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): The short answer to that has got to be yes but I suppose I would qualify it by saying, as we did right at the start, it depends on what the victim needs because if the bulk of that offending is in those lower risk volume areas where people often say to us, "Look, I just want some crime prevention advice, a crime number because I am insured and if you can pay some patrols in this area that would give me some reassurance". If that is the bulk of what the victim wants it might not need that degree of investment that we think. But purely on the basis of what we are seeing with certain greater need groups not feeling comfortable that the existing service is enough I am not sure to cut our approach would be sensible either.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): London's proportion of victims that requires support services is very high as well.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Other Adrian?

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): What I would say is London does have a challenge in terms of domestic violence and hate crime and other associated serious sexual offences so in terms of the portion of that work I would say we are higher compared to other areas.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): That is certainly true isn't it that, particularly those areas that we talked about today, the incidence of homophobic crime is not at the 15% of demography is one in five or more I think. Then domestic violence again we have got big issues around and violence against women and girls, and young people. The capital city has issues for young people. These are all areas that we have covered today.

I am keen to move on now to the downstream. We go through the process. We imagine the 169 days and then someone will repair or will have their community sentence or in custody and

then the role of probation. I am very interested to learn more about the role of probation in supporting victims.

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): It is actually a victim liaison service which is a distinct and dedicated service delivered by London Probation Service so it is a separate bit of the organisation. We work with victims of serious violent and sexual offences where the offender has received over 12 months imprisonment, so post-conviction. The service delivers information to victims so Baroness Newlove's comments at the outset about communication are essential.

We are reliant upon the witness care units to provide information of victims to the probation service, the victim liaison service, and the informed consent of the victim in order that we can then write to them. Typically we write to 2,500 people each year of about 3,000 people that are eligible to be written to. We are then reliant upon the probation service to inform the victim liaison service of any movement of offenders through the criminal justice system. So if lifers are moved into open prison conditions or if offenders are released on temporary licence or when their release date is going to be notified the victim liaison service updates the victims on the progress of offenders through the process.

There are different tiers of intervention that we have. There are those people who wish to be informed of everything to do with the offender's sentence they possibly can and there are certain frustrations that victims bear in that respect in that they cannot be told what prison the offender is at and what the actual release date is. It is only a geographical area that can be given and a month that the person is released. That causes problems for people. The probation service does not always convey the information to the victim liaison service in a timely manner and with the new structure for the probation service coming in that may pose problems with new providers coming in to deliver that service. And there are issues around the parole process with victims not being advised of the reasons for people being moved into open prison conditions and the fact that if they wish to make a victim impact statement, again, that is given in an open hearing and the offender is in that hearing and can hear those concerns. They are a number of the issues that are around.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): My understanding is that the victim liaison service is situated - where is that situated?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): It sits within London Probation Service but it is a dedicated unit within the service --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So it is a unit within London Probation so when you are talking about probation referring to the victim liaison service it is probation referring to a unit within London Probation Service?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): Yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I understand it. You are not talking to another agency?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): No, no, no. Internal. And the rationale is that the victim liaison officers do not convey information about the offenders.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): The 2,500 to 3,000 victims that the victim liaison service contact. That is a pretty small proportion of the total number of victims. How does that work?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): The people that are eligible for the service are those who are victims of serious or violent crime.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Serious or violent crime.

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): Where the perpetrator receives over 12 months imprisonment as a sentence.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay.

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): How many actually respond to that, of those 2,500 to 3,000 people?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): Roughly 500.

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): 500. So that is your cohort that you are dealing with on an annual basis?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): Yes. There is about 12,500 people that are currently receiving the service at any one time but that is the annual volume that we work through.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Just some comments about areas where you think the support for victims of very -- it sounds like those are the victims that typically you will strategically(?) commission nationally, as I understand it, on the Government's proposals. Where do you think there are opportunities for an improved experience and support? What are challenges that you face?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): I think the local commission service is a route to go down. The victim liaison officers liaise with victim support and other local agencies and restorative justice agencies to work on a local level and that seems entirely appropriate that is done on a local level.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): For the system as it is today where do you see -- we have just described a journey that could be quite confusing for --

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): The 34 points on a journey seems --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): 34 contacts, six agencies. From your perspective, what do you think?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): Well as I have already highlighted the key elements for us are the point of referral which is the witness care units. We are reliant on the witness care units explaining to the victims what the victim liaison service does, which seems an anomaly. Those people that understand the process are then written to by us and do not always necessarily want the service at that particular time. So our service is available throughout the offender's sentence so if there is something that happens that people want to come back and say, "I'd like to be advised" we can update them on that. So we are reliant on information from the witness care units at the one end and, as I say, on the other end we are relying on information from the probation service, of which I am a member, to update us on movements within the offenders within the criminal justice system.

So typically issues will come up where an offender is given a release on a temporary licence by a prison. That information is not relayed to the victim liaison service who does not advise the victim and the nightmare scenario is that the victim bumps into that offender walking down the high street in the middle of an afternoon thinking that they were tucked up in prison somewhere. So it is communication at both sides.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): That is the communication between agencies that needs to be improved. That is the single most important thing.

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): Absolutely. Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Whether it is the police and victim care units but also probation.

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): In terms of some of the questions you have asked earlier the lightbulb thought I had while I have been sitting here is integration. The models that seem to work best, from my experience, are the integrated offender management service from probation point of view where the police, probation and drug services are co-located and work together, and from the local authority's point of view the troubled families initiatives where the local agencies all work together. So I do not know the scope for the witness care units and the victim liaison service to co-locate or be joined up -- I do not like the idea -- I have never seen ICT systems work together but --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Well I am glad you mentioned integrated offender management because I think we are appointing someone who will be leading on integrated offender management for London starting actually on Monday so that whole agenda of being able to integrate services between the statutory services and also locally delivered services, local authorities but also specialist agencies, we clearly need to improve the integrated approach. Your lightbulb thought is something that accords with our own lightbulb moment! Jonathan, any questions?

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): I just wondered what your views were on why you think that the satisfaction levels for your services are lower in London than they are elsewhere in the country?

Michael Terry (ACO Victim Liaison Service, London Probation Trust): I do not know they necessarily are. I think our satisfaction levels are at 92% for London Probation. I think it is slightly bizarre that offer that survey to offenders at the first point of contact so they have not actually had a service from us but we are required to issue a questionnaire to them asking how they received(?) our service. So for the victim liaison service the target is 90% and we achieved 92%. I think I have concerns about when we administer that.

Adrian Foster (Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS): I think we have to be very careful about the user satisfaction from the police is not necessarily the same as the confidence in the criminal justice system. I was Chair of the Gloucestershire Criminal Justice Board and was eternally frustrated that, despite Gloucestershire being a good performing area, the confidence in the criminal justice system in Gloucestershire was at 37% and the MPS, in London, was at 48%. So it was 10 % higher in London than it was in Gloucestershire that did not actually have very much crime and not many issues in terms of criminal justice compared to the real serious crime that London has, and confidence in the MPS in particular. So there is a difference between the two.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I take your point about the confidence levels. They seem to be universally very high when it comes to probation. London is 93%. It may be fifth from bottom but it is in the 90s is essentially the statistic.

I am about to wrap up really and maybe some gloomy(?) remarks. I was looking at a chart we had on the different boroughs and levels of victim satisfaction. You look at levels of confidence which vary so widely. Levels of victim satisfaction really just cannot be accounted for simply by demography. There is a very big difference on the victim satisfaction levels. Some boroughs are high and well above the London MPS average and some are significantly below. They are not areas which you would think are particularly crime ridden. I am shocked to see Bromley has a victim satisfaction rate of 76% and other areas like this borough, Southwark, where we are at the moment, is below the MPS average. Tower Hamlets. Waltham Forest. City of Westminster - which you represent, Commander(?). Any thoughts about what drives that --

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): A couple of thoughts on that. Certainly that was the reason for moving them into the hub structure that I described was --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): More consistency.

Commander Adrian Hanstock (MPS): -- because of that variance. Where you see a high level of high risk crime the skills and capabilities in those units tend to be more refined because they are aware of the risks in a greater way. Where the type of boroughs you described, like Bromley, that does not have those levels, it is a bit more formulaic and I think the satisfaction level there is affected by more of a process approach rather than a victim centred approach, which is exactly what we are talking about today.

The emphasis on those witness care units is phenomenal. In terms of some of our solutions - as we heard from Marai - how we create an advocacy for people to navigate the system is, I think, one of our ways forward because, individually, it does not matter how effective we are at sending the messengers out and providing a demystification, it is still a daunting process for anybody who has never gone through it or who is reliving that incident all over again.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I think that is a very, very clear message. Anything we can do to improve the ability for a victim to be able to get through what must be a very difficult process, and navigate them through that, must be the right thing to do.

I am just going to draw this MOPAC Challenge to a close because I think we have reached a point where we have an understanding of some of the challenges that we face in the capital and that is going to help inform our independent review of victim and witness services for London.

I think it is fair to say that this is an important pre-requisite of our ability as MOPAC to commission effective witness services but we have heard, firstly from Heena, that young people are simply not reporting crime in high enough levels. The 15% figures that you quoted are shocking.

We have heard about domestic violence and the need for advocacy and support, how we have got to avoid that postcode lottery and ensure that the experience is there, because otherwise we are not going to have people reporting in the first instance but, secondly, we are not going to have the successful prosecutions in the criminal justice system.

Lastly around homophobic crime and hate crime. Clearly with those high incidences in the capital we need to have the support services there to ensure that we get confidence in both reporting - reporting levels are low - but also in the wider criminal justice system. It seems to me that the statistic that we had of massive amount of contact and assessment -- we know that 80%(?) of victims are not asking for repeated contact. All those agencies involved. We have

got to make that process simpler for the victim and we have got to enable them to be able to navigate the system more appropriately.

Lastly a message to your political masters! If you are going to divvy up cash. Some of these crimes, whether it is domestic violence, hate crime, crime involving young people. This is not homicide. This is not rape. But these are serious crimes for these victims, some of whom do require support services and London does need its fair share. We really do ask that Ministers look at victimisation rates which are proportionately seismically higher than the national average. 95 per 1,000 compared to an average of 66. The second highest level of victimisation is West Yorkshire at 71. So most people are at the national average or below except London; we are 50% higher. Ultimately surely victim services should be driven by the number of victims that require services rather than a demography, particularly in the capital city with such a vast proportion of crime committed by people who are not resident in the capital. We will be making those representations. I am delighted to say the Minister has said that he welcomes representations. That is the point at the moment; that we think you get short changed if you simply look at demography alone when it comes to support and funding of victim services.

Thank you very much all of you for coming this morning and we have learned an awful lot and appreciate that there are big challenges ahead and MOPAC looks forward to working with you to ensure that victims and witnesses get the services that they deserve in our great capital city. Thank you.