

Police and Crime Committee – 14 January 2016

Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – The Impact of Alcohol on Policing London’s Night-Time Economy

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): We now move on to our main item of business. This is the second session that we will have looking at the impact of alcohol on London’s night-time economy, with particular regard to crime and policing.

Can I welcome our guests today? We have Graeme Gordon, Interim Director of Services and Commissioning at the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). Welcome, Graeme. We have Samantha Cunningham, Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods at MOPAC. Welcome, Samantha. We have Philip Clifford, Policy Manager at London Councils. Welcome, Philip.

I am going to start off, if I can, with just some general questions to try to set the scene. To all of you, based on your experience, how significant a challenge is alcohol-fuelled crime in London? Particularly, you could say what you believe is the impact it has, firstly, on the police and secondly, how the level of alcohol-impacted crime has changed over the last few years.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Clearly, there is a growing evidence base about the significance of alcohol as a driver of offending.

We were interested in the Institute of Alcohol Studies’ survey, which the Committee itself sponsored and which came up with some really interesting headline statistics. Police officers spent, on average, half of their time dealing with alcohol-related casework. That was one finding. Three-quarters of respondents had received an injury while dealing with a drunken member of the public. That was another. Those are very significant statistics.

There are also significant national statistics. In the 2013/14 Office of National Statistics (ONS) data release, 53% of violent incidents involving adults were found to be alcohol-related. It is a significant driver of offending.

The one thing I would add in this overview is that London is disproportionately affected. If you look at the analysis undertaken by Public Health England, which took into account the level of crime linked to the drinking of alcohol in the population, the findings show that there was a rate of 11.05 per 1,000 in London affected by alcohol-related crime compared to 6.45 per 1,000 nationally.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Almost double.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Almost double; quite a significant difference.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Are there any reasons for that difference, other than the size of London, I suppose?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): One can conjecture. Certainly we have a very significant population here. Beyond that, it would be conjecture.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): OK. Does anybody else want to add to that opening statement?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Just across London, there are clearly variations between boroughs. The Borough of Havering, even though it has Romford, has a very different night-time economy from central London and Westminster in particular. Again, we could conjecture that some of the crimes and spikes we see in the concentrated West End zone are simply because not only of the population but people and tourists travel from all over England and all over the world to enjoy the night-time economy there. We get clusters of hotspots across London and that shapes how boroughs perceive the challenge and how much of a burden it is for the police in terms of tackling it.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Chair, can I just go back to Graeme? Once you had looked at the global statistics, did you then go to the next level and seek to see – it was really what Philip brought in – the variations? You can always just tick or dismiss statistics by saying, “It is higher in London”, and then people come up with the dynamics of London. Does that help to move the thing on? If you are able to then go to the next level and speak of that in terms of the location, which would have commonalities with – I do not know Newcastle and so let me just say – Newcastle or wherever, would that not give us a better understanding about the drivers or the dynamics of the relationship between alcohol, health and crime?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): That variability across London is absolutely right and is a point very well made by Philip. Sam, do you want to say a little bit about how we go down to the next level in the data?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Yes. As we go forward we will talk a little bit more about specific crime types associated with alcohol, but one of the key indicators for us is around violence, particularly low-level disorder, which I know was talked about quite a lot at the last meeting on 3 December 2015. We have done some quite specific work about understanding particularly the increase in violence with injury (VWI) in London and how that is linked to the night-time economy.

Taking Philip’s point about the variations across London, we have looked at that down to a borough level and then down within boroughs to understand what the contributions might be. That is very interesting because you see two main things in London. You see the point that Philip was making about central London and tourists – quite frankly, a consistent problem. Then you have other areas in London that are changing in terms of their local economies and what that might mean as a contributing factor.

We did that work last summer and had some specific conversations with four boroughs in London specifically around VWI but where we were also clear that the data was telling us that there was a link to the night-time economy. We accepted that one of those would be Westminster because of the nature of central London, but we were also talking with Croydon, Lambeth and Southwark, for example, where we are seeing changes in some of the night-time economies and development in those boroughs, which changes where we see incidents with alcohol.

We do have the ability to drill down and we very regularly do that and share those products with local Community Safety Partnerships and joint licensing teams to help support them in terms of the endeavours that they are taking on.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): That was very helpful. Would it be possible that you could send us after the meeting some of the findings from that to us? That would be very helpful.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Absolutely.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Thank you. Philip, in the last session we had and also today we are going to predominantly talk about the effect on policing, but it obviously has challenges for local authorities as well. Would you briefly like to outline what challenges alcohol-fuelled crime poses for local authorities?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): It is important to recognise the less-obvious forms of alcohol-fuelled crime: domestic violence, drink-driving and even – it sounds unglamorous – counterfeit alcohol sales. That takes up a lot of time with 73% of local authority trading standards and is an enormous hidden burden, I guess, of crime. The visible stuff picks up on high streets and the various hotspots, but the below-the-radar stuff – for example, domestic violence and the relationship between that – can play out and cause challenges for boroughs that are not quite so visible and do not get picked up.

More generally, you get areas not only geographically but also the time of evening in terms of transport, in terms of connectivity, when people coalesce after sporting events or other entertainment events. It is one of those problems that affects people visibly in terms of where the real entertainment is but, for example, you look at the licensing around pubs. Anywhere there is a pub, basically, there is the potential for something to happen. It is one of those things where local authorities find themselves challenged in a different way, not only dealing with the visible crime and the less-visible crime, but also the challenge of actually balancing the management of their night-time economy with pressure from businesses and the people who want to go out and enjoy themselves, and also the public health aspect and the public order aspect as well. They find themselves facing a wide spectrum of challenges as well as the obvious with people fighting on the streets or public disorder of other forms.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): We are going to ask questions later on about licensing and so forth. On the whole, do London Councils approach the issue of alcohol-fuelled crime as a health or a crime and disorder issue?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): It is an interesting one. We primarily look at it as a crime and disorder issue but, in that, we draw heavily on the local experiences of boroughs and we work through our networks, like the London Health and Community Safety Network, and also bilaterally with MOPAC to pick up issues as and when they arise.

It is fair to say that we do not have a strategic focus on alcohol-fuelled crime at London Councils across London, but what is interesting is the recent advice of the Chief Medical Officer about how there is, essentially, no safe limit for alcohol. How that potentially will shift the conversation nationally – and we do have a public health team that does have a public health remit and oversight – and how it would be interesting to see, having spoken to colleagues in response to this Assembly's inquiry, how that dialogue shifts within London Councils.

It is crime at the moment, usually bilaterally, but possibly a shift increasingly to public health and more complex understandings of what drives alcoholism and alcohol-fuelled crime from a public health perspective.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): I know that each borough will do things differently, but do you have a sense that community safety units based at local authorities are linking up with their public health partners?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): I think it is variable. It is not just community safety. One borough might have a very specific view about alcohol as part of a night-time economy and will very much look at it as managing that economy in a prism and everything else falls out of it. Other boroughs I have spoken to have a more licensing focus and it is very much about regulation. Others will be making the connection between licensing, community safety and public health.

I happen to have a comprehensive view. Some boroughs are better than others at joining up, but it is variable and I do not think everyone is making the connection at the moment.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Samantha, you and Graeme were nodding at that point.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes. I would just add in general terms that both from a National Health Service (NHS) organisational perspective and from a Public Health England perspective as well, there is a key interest in alcohol as a causer of harm. Obviously, we are coming from a community safety aspect on this, but for a health professional it is part of that wider harm question.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): In the research that you have done, have you come across any boroughs that you think perhaps operate best practice that should be shared with others about how they internally organise and make those links?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): There is a difference as well between Graeme's point in terms of looking at the collective work between public health and broader community safety issues around the question of harm in boroughs, and how that work is progressing alongside what boroughs might be doing collectively around licensing and the night-time economy. It is one of the challenges about bringing those two things together and it is a very difficult thing to do.

There is some very good practice in boroughs, particularly, for example, I would say Westminster because it has to because of the level of demand, but it has co-located licensing teams, it has clear stress-area policies and it is clear in terms of how it is using the data and how that is driving shared operational responses on the ground. There are others that are operating in similar ways to Westminster where they have the level of demand that requires that. There are elements of best practice there.

I was also nodding because I think there are strong elements of good practice around shared budgets between public health and broader community safety initiatives around more dependent drinkers and the links between alcohol and substance misuse more generally. It is increasingly important that we do not just look at alcohol as 'the' factor that is contributing to the night-time economy or to violence, but the complex issues for the individuals in terms of alcohol and broader substance misuse are being well taken into account by some boroughs.

For example, I would draw attention to somewhere like Greenwich, where the investment around the public health team there locally is huge with regards to domestic violence, broader violence against women and girls issues and harm more generally with regards to substance misuse in its totality. There are some very good examples out there.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Fine. We might come across that later on when we talk about licensing.

Samantha, can I ask you? MOPAC has said that alcohol is a key driver of crime and reoffending, but also it has said that it is not possible to accurately monitor alcohol-based crime. We heard in the last session that officers attending incidents do not necessarily flag on the system whether something is alcohol-related or not. How accurate an assessment do you think we have of the scale of this issue?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): The challenge around accuracy is about using multiple sources of data and combining those together to see what picture that gives us.

What we have is a number of different data sources, all of which are subjective. What we have from the police system is subjectivity in terms of the arresting officer. What we know from the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and National Probation Service (NPS) - probation-based data - is that that is subject to the perception of the offender in terms of what they are saying their needs and issues are. Equally, then, we have broader surveys - the British Crime Survey, etc - that will be talking not just but predominantly from a victim's perspective with their view of the involvement of alcohol.

The challenge for us, which is what we are working on, is how we overlay all of that data to understand what trends and what picture that is giving us.

The piece that is very interesting, in my view, is that it is often easier to understand the impact after the event and look at it once somebody has been charged and is going through the criminal justice system. With the changes with Transforming Rehabilitation, the confidence that we can have in that data - as they are now doing those assessments with all offenders - it will be a relatively new source of information that we have about the prevalence of alcohol with regards to offending behaviour.

The challenge for us is to continue to work with local areas to overlay that data and to support them to do that so that it helps to drive their local responses and commissioning, and at a regional level to think about how we use some of those new data sources as they come in to make sure that that broadens our understanding.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): If I could follow up on that, there are some quite interesting statistics from that NPS/CRC source, which is the probation area. We had 26% of the people passing through probation - this is as of November 2015 - identifying themselves as having an alcohol issue, but 35% of the prolific high-harm offenders. You can see that disproportionality there. Interestingly, it was only 21% of the youth cohort of 18-to-25-year-olds. It seems to be potentially a smaller problem in that younger adult cohort than it is in the older offenders.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): OK. Is there anything, Philip, that you think local authorities could do to improve the reliability of data?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): To echo my point previously, some boroughs - Westminster, and I also mentioned Havering - have a much better grip on the data and have a much stronger sense of their economy and their management of night-time activity.

In terms of strategic cross-borough datasets, we look to the MPS and to MOPAC to square that up for any decisions, but boroughs generally have a pretty good feel for their town centres and what is going on and also in following through on some of the community interventions around domestic violence and around getting people into work to get a level of understanding - for example, with the Troubled Families programme - on a case-by-case basis of the role alcohol plays in keeping people distant from the employment market or child protection or other social issues.

When you get to the local authorities, you are talking about two different types of data. You have the sense of place and also the people. Both of those will be more or less transparent to the wider outsider inspection.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Just to go back to Samantha, I wonder if you can help me because I was not clear when you talked about some of the data being so subjective that it was a problem. I would have thought that with good data-gathering and if you had your systems right you could actually differentiate depending on the question or depending on what it is you are wanting an answer to. I was not clear on what you meant by your last answer.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): That is fine. One of the key points that came out of the last meeting that you had in terms of the response from Commander Letchford [MPS] was the right one from a policing data perspective and was that it is a non-mandatory field. In terms of what is flagged on the police system, it requires the arresting officer to make a judgement as to whether or not alcohol was involved in the incident. That ultimately means that it is subjective. They are taking a view as to the extent to which alcohol was present or not.

Equally, with probation data, when they sit down with an offender and ask them about a collection of their needs - what they feel as an individual might be driving or causal to their offending behaviour - ultimately the view they are getting is one from the offender as to whether or not they think alcohol does or does not play a part. As helpful as that information is, it is not necessarily complete because one offender may feel that they drink but it does not have an impact on their offending behaviour; another may be very clear that they have a level of dependency that is playing itself out in terms of their offending.

Equally, in terms of asking victims, a victim of domestic violence may perceive that alcohol does have a significant impact on the frequency of those incidents and another may see it as just something that happens in the home but is not necessarily a direct trigger of the behaviour.

My key point was that each of those elements is subject to somebody's opinion. Our job is to bring all of that together to ensure that we not cancel out but that we use all of those variations to look at it from a more cohesive perspective.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Yes. I think I understand what you are saying. My concern is that when you are trying to get to the nub of something, especially with my experience of police services and what-have-you, so much is dismissed because we go back to the subjectivity of the officer. An officer's decision is part and parcel of their practice. Do you see what I mean? I do not see how it is a problem when it comes to this that it is an officer's subjective view that alcohol was related to this person's practice because, further down the line, it will be tested whether or not the alcohol level in the body was high or what-have-you. Do you see what I mean? It seems just a little bit clouded what you are saying, almost like the thing is overly difficult to deal with.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): It is just because it is not a mandatory field that does not require every officer to record in it. One of the key points that was made at the last meeting was that there is not a clear definition of what would be described as alcohol being present at an incident. That does not mean that the information we have is not valuable or in any circumstances not valid. It just means that it may not necessarily be representing the whole problem and that it is not considered in a consistent way at different times of day and across different incidents.

It is still very valid information. Some of the data that we have when there have been studies done asking police officers versus utilising MPS data shows that variation and difference because we picked up a greater number of police officers saying that alcohol was present when asked as opposed to those that are flagged on the system. It is valid information and is interesting and it is important to be assessed and used, but it is not consistent because there is not that definition for a mandatory field.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Thank you.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): One of the suggestions that we put last time to the police was that, if officers felt that alcohol was involved in an incident, they could breathalyse the person. It is standard when you have a road traffic incident. Why on earth can they not do it as a matter of course if they think alcohol is involved? Do you have a response to that?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): What I was picking up from the police was the challenge of what exactly you are doing it for and then what you do with a positive versus a negative result. In the context of road traffic accidents, it is a determinant factor in the crime itself.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): There is legislation enabling it as well.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): There is legislation, yes. I guess the question would be, if you were going to breathalyse suspects, what would be the trigger for that and what would you then do with the outcome of that?

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): At least you would know. At least you would have a database and you would have some statistics so that you could assess how much alcohol influences the level of crime. I will come on to this in a minute, but it is not only high-level crime. It is not only things like domestic violence, fights and so on. It is also about low-level disorder, people being frightened to go out on their street at night, fouling of streets and things like that. At least you would have some statistics to base your work on.

Samantha, I was going to come to MOPAC's strategic role in alcohol-fuelled crime. How would you describe MOPAC's strategic role?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): I will turn to Graeme first and then --

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Could I just give you some headlines and then we will come back to Samantha?

MOPAC has four key strategic roles. One is supporting local areas and that is through the publication of dashboards and deep-dive analyses and enabling local areas to commission alcohol and drug misuse services. Those have totalled around £20 million over the past four years for commissioning.

Secondly, it is recognising alcohol as a factor in all of the MOPAC seven priority neighbourhood crimes and making sure that our approach to alcohol is mainstreamed into our approach to tackling those crimes.

Thirdly, it is improving data-sharing between hospitals and the police to grow our understanding of what is behind levels of violence in the city.

Fourthly, it is to pilot innovations around alcohol-related crime, be that alcohol abstinence monitoring, be that the breathalysers piloted in Croydon. We may go into some more detail on those later on.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): It is interesting about this data-sharing that you mentioned because, of course, if it is data that has absolutely no validity in terms of a statistical base, what is the point in sharing it?

Anyway, MOPAC has focused quite closely on VWI in its assessment of alcohol-fuelled crime. What is the specific reason for that?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): There are two key facts there that are important to consider. What we know is that out of the MOPAC seven crimes, the one that has been increasing is VWI. We have seen in the last year a 6.5% increase in VWI, which has triggered – and rightly so – an in-depth analysis of what sits behind that and what VWI looks like in London.

One of the key things that we have been made aware of by doing that analysis is that we can see that there is a high link between alcohol, the night-time economy and VWI. Part of the focus has been – and Graeme [Gordon] made this point earlier – that we, for example, know from the British Crime Survey of 2013/14 that 53% of adults involved in crime stated that alcohol was present and that was in relation to violence incidents. Therefore, we are really clear that violence is increasing. We have done work around understanding how to break that down. It is the point I made earlier about where that is happening in London and what it is linked to. That is why we have taken a focus – not a complete focus because we have not run through all of our areas of priority and work – on understanding the links between alcohol and violence, predominantly.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): That is with domestic violence as well? Is that included?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Yes.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you. Philip, you have covered this a little bit, but what are boroughs saying is the greatest impact on them of alcohol-fuelled crime?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Again, to look at it in terms of the public perspective, they will highlight the public disorder stuff, which upsets residents who do not partake in the night-time economy. There is a minority that spoils both the moderate drinking of alcohol and also the public environment for others and so there are place-management issues. There are also the people issues, the domestic violence and the stuff that sits below the radar. They both create their own challenges. It is the public-facing stuff – the violence in the pubs, the disorder on the streets – that creates difficulties of perception and difficulties of people's experience of place, and also the people-related crimes and the local authorities putting teams together to help people through instances of domestic violence or other kinds of crime.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): It is some of the things I mentioned earlier like residents being less confident about going outside in the evenings. It seems to me that if we are talking about the night-time economy being a good thing, then you have to assess it properly. You have to make sure that your assessment is a valid one. If you are not taking into account the fact that you might have extra street-cleaning services, that your borough police staffing schedules will be completely screwed up because you have to have more people on duty in the early hours of the morning and so on, they are all impacts. Are you financially assessing those negative impacts?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): I would say that the data is not particularly good. I know that Westminster commissioned some research in the year just gone to look at particularly the night-time economy in Westminster. One of the key points was getting a proper economic understanding of the financial benefits and also the costs of the night-time economy. Westminster was one of their primary points.

There is anecdotal evidence. With local authority budgets, they will be aware how much they spend on street cleaning and looking after licensing. However, that kind of strategic intelligence for assigning a cost to the neighbourhood disruption or looking at it more systematically is still nascent in a lot of areas. Data is one of the key bits.

Particularly, one of the struggles in the more popular areas is mapping the flow of people. If you think about the West End, people will move from one borough to another. I think you are going to come on to local stuff like the night-time levy. If that is in one borough but is not in another borough, people will be displaced. Tracking the impact across borough lines is something that is, again, pretty nascent at the moment.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Are boroughs looking at the intangibles, things like residents' confidence about the area and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with streets being fouled?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Certainly they are looking at managing the town centre experience. It is there for everybody. It is there for not just people who visit but a lot of people who go out in the evening who might visit from elsewhere and then we have to deal with the consequences, to be blunt. They are alive to the concerns of residents in terms of having a place that has a strong night-time economy but is also a place for the people who live there from all walks of life to enjoy, I guess.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Samantha, MOPAC's written submission says that its Crime Dashboard helps to understand the potential relationship between the night-time economy and violence. Tell us about this relationship.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): In terms of the Dashboard, that is the starting point for what I referred to earlier in terms of the deep-dive into which areas of London may have a disproportionate impact on levels of violence and where we see that associated with the night-time economy. The Dashboard provides a regional picture of what is happening in the 32 areas around violence. Fundamentally, it is our starting point within which we would then take further analysis.

The point earlier when I said I would share the data from the findings of that work is probably the critical point. The Dashboard gives us an indication as to whether or not we have two particular boroughs or four particular boroughs that are having a disproportionate impact on increases or decreases around VWI. That gives us the trigger to go into those areas, have a local conversation and look at the data in more depth. That is exactly what was done last year around those four areas that I referred to. The Dashboard does not give you a breakdown of every borough in terms of a temporal and spatial analysis but it gives you a really clear starting point, using the same data across London, as to where we should draw our attentions and do more detailed work.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): The Mayor is promoting the night-time economy, but at the same time it is obviously the Mayor's aim to reduce violent crime and so on. Do you think that this can be done and that both of these two things can be achieved?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): One of the points that Philip [Clifford] made earlier was a really important one and something that Graeme [Gordon] referred to in terms of our strategic response was how local areas are managing their place and the people within the borough. For example, within Westminster - and I know that [the London Borough of] Islington gave evidence at the last meeting as well - there are two very good examples where it has taken that data and looked at a range of services in terms of how it manages its place.

My view is that by good partnership at a local level, by putting the resources in the right place at the right time and by using the right information, you can get a balance between managing an effective night-time economy and reducing increased levels of risk and harm. There has to be acceptance in some night-time economies - for example, in Westminster - that you will be seeing different people all of the time and that flow is really important. In other boroughs, they have a residents-based problem because they do not have such a high number of tourists. My view is that with good data and good support from regional agencies to the local as well, they have the resources that they need to make some decisions that enable them to manage their places effectively.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): I am very concerned that the information is so nebulous in some areas that you cannot make a proper assessment. This is something that MOPAC is going to have to work on with its facts and figures. Sorry, did you want to come back?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): One of the things that is important to make is the distinction between what we can understand on a regional level in terms of data and what local areas can understand. That is an important point. Philip [Clifford] made a good point earlier in terms of trading standards information, noise information and street-cleaning information. Having worked in a local area, those sources of information are extremely valuable in terms of understanding the impact of disorder, particularly low-level disorder, within the context of the night-time economy.

I agree that there is a challenge around the subjectivity of the broader data that we talked about, but we do have to be somewhat reliant upon local areas to provide that information because we would not have that from a regional perspective for 32 areas. The challenge is where the data sits and how we bring that together.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): It is also the quality of the data. That is my main point. The quality of data is so poor. I just do not know how you can really believe any assessment that you are making.

Philip, let me ask you. Do you feel that MOPAC could be doing anything else to support councils in trying to balance the night-time economy boost - if there is one - and reducing alcohol-fuelled violence?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): It is a complicated issue. There are some boroughs that are very much of the view - for example, on licensing or even on managing their night-time economies - that they have it under control and have a pretty firm grip on the partnership working that is required. I will again mention Havering. It won a Problem Oriented Partnerships award for this. They will have good relationships with the business community.

It is worth picking up also the role of businesses and the exposure that they have to alcohol-related crime. There is a very strong sense from some of the areas with more active night-time economies like Kingston. In its Business Improvement District (BID) the clubs there are very alive to the idea of getting a reputation for being a place where crime might happen and not wanting that reputation. Part of that is about bringing them into the conversation.

There are some boroughs that feel they have it under wraps. I am from a local authority membership organisation. I would not be able to get out of the room without saying about the cost pressures affecting local authorities and looking at the cost pressures around licensing. Licensing fees have not gone up for ten years and there is potentially a role that MOPAC could play in supporting an argument around freedom for funding flexibility on licensing. Also, if we took it a little further to a London-wide licensing model, there are some boroughs that would be up for that. I need to be very clear: not every borough will be in that space. There is an opportunity to understand what MOPAC would want and how far it would want to go down that route or what the offer would be, but there is potentially some flexibility around that.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): If I could just add to what Philip has said, MOPAC sees its role very much as supporting local areas to work effectively between local authorities and the police on licensing issues. We are very supportive of BIDs and the support that they can provide in this context. Members will be aware that there is a Business Crime Change Board that was implemented as part of the Mayor's Business Crime Strategy. What it can do to support businesses to look at alcohol-related issues is part of that work programme.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Just very quickly, Philip, last time we had a meeting on this we heard from retailers, who were saying that sales were not up but were just spread over a longer time period. Is that something that you recognise?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Yes, that is something that I definitely have picked up from talking to boroughs and --

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): There is not actually an economic lift? That is the obvious --

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): From alcohol sales, do you mean? Part of it is not just to look at alcohol as the full driver of the night-time economy. You are right that there is a stretching out. Some of our concerns around the 24-hour Tube are about that. When does the cut-off point happen?

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Worries about what?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): It is just that you have a longer tail into the night and potentially it goes back to the flow of people, the displacement and the local approach that local authorities take to licensing and regulation. You will get a longer tail and a shift to areas when other places have closed down. There is a bit of mobility there and a question there and something that is worth considering.

It is partly perception. It is partly important that local authorities do not see all alcohol consumption as wrong. It is very specific overconsumption and there is something within that when you are dealing with the fallout from a small subset of people who overindulge. While there may not be a specific lift from extending the opening hours, it is part of the way that places like to see themselves as having a particular night-time economy, "You can pitch up and get a drink here", or, "We do not want to have that environment here". It is part of the wider package of managing the place and the perceptions around the area.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you. Thanks very much.

Tony Arbour AM: I am very interested to raise, before going on to the specific questions I will ask, that it is a very frequent experience when you are sitting in court and there is mitigation for pretty well every criminal offence that you can imagine for counsel for the defendant to say, "I had actually had something to drink", as

though that somehow or another is some sort of mitigation. The figures you have been talking about relate to the effect of alcohol, if you like, from an objective view. You are assessing whether or not people have been drinking.

Has anybody ever thought of asking offenders what part they thought drink played in them committing an offence? I suspect that a very high number of people would do so. Do you think that that is something that should perhaps be explored? You could ask people themselves whether they think that drink was influential in them committing a crime.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): My view is that in the context of offender rehabilitation, yes, it is a question worth asking because the whole process of rehabilitation is about uncovering and challenging behaviours that contribute to patterns of offending.

Tony Arbour AM: OK. It was just a thought. I have seen it many times and there is the pat thing. They say, "Of course, it is not an alibi and it is not an excuse, but it is one of the reasons I did it", as though somehow or another drink is OK. There clearly needs to be some way in which people can be disabused. In fact, drink ought to be an aggravating thing, not something that acts as an excuse. Anyway, if I go to the specific things I have been asked to do, this is the efficacy of the 'sobriety tag'. I wonder, Samantha. Why did MOPAC think that this would be a good thing?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): It was on three levels, really. The first was around need. The second was around opportunity. The third was around evidence.

We have talked quite a lot about need today so far in terms of the links that are made between alcohol acting as a factor around crime and so that is self-evident.

In terms of opportunity, there was an opportunity through legislation to look for mandatory alcohol testing as part of the follow-up for offenders, which links to your previous question.

The final point around evidence was that there was good evidence from the United States about the impact of alcohol testing and the use of sobriety tags with regards to compliance. There was an opportunity from all of that.

The important thing about sobriety is that we needed to understand how we might impact both on the low-level disorder as well as on what we see as dependent drinkers. There is a difference between those two things in terms of what the solutions might be. We see sobriety very much as being focused on as an opportunity to tackle the lower-level disorder issues around alcohol and is not seen to be an appropriate solution for dependent drinkers.

Tony Arbour AM: You obviously think that the thing works and I guess from that that you want to extend the pilot?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): We introduced an initial pilot in July 2014, which was successful in the sense that we conducted a process evaluation and what we found from that was that the judiciary is using it - that is a really important piece - and has been very engaged in the programme. We were at the end of the initial 12-month pilot in a position where we had 113 individuals who had been tagged and we achieved a 92% compliance rate. In terms of a form of disposal, it is a good indication of the success of that.

From that point, we extended the pilot until the 29th of this month. During that time, we have continued to see the same level of success. As things stand at the moment, we have 145 people tagged for sobriety and we are still holding at a 92% compliance rate. It is a good indication, first and foremost, that it is being used and that the judiciary is seeing this as another tool in the toolbox with which to respond to the problem that we have talked about today, but certainly not seeing it as the solution to alcohol crime because it is only one factor that may be used. We are very pleased with those as process evaluation findings.

What we are really clear on is that we have not worked with enough offenders yet to be able to make any conclusions with regards to the impact of the tagging on future reoffending behaviour. Equally, the time lag in itself would not enable us at the moment to do that because it takes generally 18 months until you get conviction data on which you would have solid evidence to base such findings.

With all that taken into account, we are having very good conversations at the moment with the Ministry of Justice about how we continue the pilot and look to expand it across London. One of the things I was going to ask is if it would be possible for us to do a formal update to you in February 2016 about what the future of the sobriety programme will look like.

Tony Arbour AM: On the face of it, it is incredibly successful. Did I hear you say 98%?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): I said 92%.

Tony Arbour AM: Close but no cigar.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Have you not tagged anyone?

Jenny Jones AM: Have you not done it as a Magistrate?

Tony Arbour AM: No. In relation to this incredibly high apparent success rate, I am not a cynic but a cynic might say that you have chosen the easy subjects. How, therefore, have you decided who the appropriate people are to be tagged?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): That is on two factors, really: eligibility and suitability to the pilot.

In terms of eligibility, it is basic facts. They have to be resident within the four boroughs in which we are running the pilots. That is really important.

The second bit is in terms of suitability. Fundamentally, it is quite a drawn-out process but there is an audit tool that is used by probation as part of developing the pre-sentence report and they put forward options and suggestions about what the judiciary might do through sentencing. By using that tool, they have to score under 20, which means that they have to demonstrate that they are not a dependent drinker and are therefore suitable for the use of the tag. They are the two ways in which the pool of individuals is selected in terms of the use of the tag.

What is interesting for me with that is that that in a sense determines what offences we are seeing coming through as a result of the sobriety. The offence itself is not something that makes you suitable; it is about your level and use of alcohol and therefore the risk that needs to be determined. Fundamentally, what we are

seeing is low-level disorder/violence, which is the type of stuff that we have talked quite a lot about, and drink-driving. They are the two main offences.

It is also worthwhile me saying that, as I said before, dependent drinkers were not included and also domestic violence was not included as part of the pilot for a number of different reasons. At this stage, because it was small scale and we were testing the process of it and the use of it, it seemed to be the right course of action.

Tony Arbour AM: Can I ask you, Philip? On the basis of what you have heard and the basis of what you know about this, is this something that you think that should be rolled out and encouraged by London Councils?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): From what I have seen of the pilot, it certainly looks like it is very interesting and would be very interesting to explore in the future. What would be even more useful for the local authorities would be to connect up the pilot to actual interventions on the ground that the local authorities could undertake. However, as it stands, from what I have seen, it looks like a very interesting and very successful pilot and I await further evaluation of the pilot in the coming months.

Tony Arbour AM: I wonder if I can throw another question, really, to all of you. What are your views on the introduction of 'drunk tanks'?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes. I read with interest the transcript of your last meeting in which 'drunk tanks' came up. I would tend to defer to the operational expertise of the police in how best to manage the problem of public drunkenness on an operational level. As your police witness said, there may be approaches that are different from either taking people into custody or taking people to hospital, but we would need to work through very carefully what the implications and the risks were of managing people outside a more standardised healthcare setting, I suppose.

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Again, relying on the evidence from Westminster conducted in the last year, there has been some evidence of off-street treatment offers within the economy to allow people to cool down and to sober up. I do not know. From London Councils' view, there probably is not concrete evidence as to their efficacy or otherwise, but it is certainly an interesting idea.

Tony Arbour AM: On the face of it, it is infinitely cheaper than dragging them off to hospital, is it not? That must be good for London Councils: anything that is cheaper.

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Yes, but the specific pilot that Westminster carried out found it not to be cheaper. The costs were marginal but it was the number of people. There was something specific around the pilot in Westminster about the location of the treatment centre and people's access to it and its use. If it is going to work, it relies on more factors than just having a 'drunk tank' or non-hospital treatment centre. People have to be able to get to it and people have to be able to use it and there is something more strategic about that.

Tony Arbour AM: Do you have a view at all on that, Samantha?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): I was just thinking about whether I should add, actually, that I was partly responsible for the commissioning of that in Westminster when I used to work there.

What was interesting about it was the challenge that Graeme referred to around fundamentally operational policing. That pilot in Westminster was predominantly health-led and there were challenges around the location, but more fundamentally there were challenges around it not acting as a honeypot. One of the challenges we had was that we had people, therefore, outside the location. We were holding individuals inside and then there was a real challenge for health professionals around whether or not the assessment of the level of risk and harm was the right one that was being made. That question of dependent drinkers is always a very important one. Actually, from a policing perspective, there was a bit of a need for them to start policing the location in terms of the number of the individuals outside. There were place-management challenges that came with that.

Having said that, it was not run for a particularly long period of time. I agree with Philip that it was almost a one-off experience. You would be needing to look at evidence in more detail.

Tony Arbour AM: It is an interesting description that it should be described as a 'honeypot'.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): I wish we had asked you to bring one of these things because I would be curious to see how it works. Can you tell me? It is transdermal and so it is measured from time to time on the person. Where is the request for information coming from and where is it stored?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): We have a provider that provides the tags to us. They have two functions, really. They have to provide the technology and they also have to provide the monitoring.

One of the things that astounded me - and I do not have the numbers in front of me, I am afraid - was that the frequency of the monitoring is incredible. It is not that one reading is taken a day. Multiple readings are taken. We are into the thousands in terms of the number of readings that have been taken over the duration of the --

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): That is what I was wondering about. It must be accumulating now.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Yes. I am more than happy to provide the Committee with a copy of the interim report again and to just highlight the section on the frequency of the monitoring. It is a very high frequency.

One of the things that I found interesting when I first became engaged in this is that there is no tolerance level to the tags. The only thing it would just about tolerate is if I sprayed perfume. It will not tolerate any drinking episodes at all. I personally have not been tagged - I have declined that offer - but a number of my colleagues have. One of the things that is interesting when you look at the monitoring is how quickly and how clearly one incident of drinking would show on the monitoring equipment.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): You can choose where to wear it, can you, on your wrist or your ankle?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): You wear it on your ankle, yes.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): I might try it, although I would probably hate it. How do you measure the success? No alcohol at all or what?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): It is based on abstinence. The monitoring equipment itself, as I said, does not tolerate any alcohol. Success is based on the compliance of wearing and not drinking alcohol for the duration of time that is given by the judge, ultimately.

I was asked a very interesting question yesterday in a different forum as to why we were averaging between 70 and 80 days in terms of the duration of the offender wearing the tag when actually what we had put in the original plans was over 100 days.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): It was 120.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): That is ultimately the result of the sentence that is given. That decision is made by the judge. In terms of what success looks like, it looks like wearing the tag for the duration of time that you have been given it, not tampering with it and not drinking.

In terms of how the process works, you get given one chance and one warning, whether that be for a drinking incident or for a tampering incident. If there is another episode, then you are in breach and you return to court.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): At the moment, you have no feeling for the recidivism aspect? You have no idea about reoffending and so on?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): No. We do not have enough people on which to base assumptions, which is --

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Look, you have loads of volunteers here --

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): We would need to be over the 200 or 300 mark for that. We do not have enough people on which to base those assumptions, particularly because of how the incidents break down. If you are looking at offences as well, you have to have more on which to base those conclusions and also time. We are not in the right time period in terms of reconviction data to make those assumptions.

However, with or without a further scale-up of the pilot, we are able to look at the journey of those offenders over a longer period of time. We, again, would not be able to project from that, but we would be able to make conclusions about the impact on those individuals.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): We would be very interested to hear more about it. Is there any additional counselling for those people who wear the tags?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): In terms of alcohol?

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Yes.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): No. The focus of it, as I said, is around not working with dependent drinkers and that is really important because it is dangerous to take this course of action with a dependent drinker. We

do have health very much engaged in the programme of work and brief alcohol interventions - like talking to them about the impact of alcohol and safe levels of alcohol, which have obviously been recently called into question - are part of the process. The local boroughs are involved and so they are aware of who has gone through this process and services are linked up in that way. However, we do not see it as being a required direct route through into more formal treatment for broader substance misuse.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Have you tried any other pilots of any kind or is there just the one pilot that you have going at the moment?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): We have done some work around the breathalysers with a very small pilot in Croydon around the use of breathalysers for door staff, but that is very small numbers and that is very new and is being led by the MPS.

From MOPAC's perspective, although it seems very small, it has been quite hard work to engage the right number of partners to support the pilot and to have the judiciary and probation engaged in the way that they are. We have focused our attentions on that because we wanted to ensure that the wrap-around process from probation and breach and the engagement in the courts is strong and that we are not just using new technology without the support of all of those broader statutory agencies. Therefore, no, we have been very focused on that one approach.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Can you tell us a little bit more about the breathalysers in clubs? That seems to be a really obvious thing to do. If you cannot get into a club because you have been drinking, then that seems --

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): It is relatively new. It has been put in place initially in Croydon. Sorry, I am just looking for the numbers. The numbers are very small in terms of those who have been tested - I think it is in the 70s in terms of the number of individuals where breathalyser equipment has been used - and so the feedback at the moment is very anecdotal from the door staff about whether that is helpful or not. The feedback has been along the lines that it makes sense and is helpful in terms of stopping the preloading issue with individuals drinking before they come into licensed premises.

We await that. It is at very initial stages and it is part of a partnership approach with businesses and with the MPS about whether they voluntarily want to engage in the use of those breathalysers.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): Philip, would you consider recommending to councils that it is part of the licensing requirements for clubs to have breathalysers on the door?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Councils already look at requirements around having, for example, Security Industry Authority staff on the doors and closed circuit television. It sounds like a sensible thing that you would put into the toolkit when local authorities are looking to license, yes. It does sound interesting.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): It just sends out a signal that this is not a good idea before you want to go out.

You are probably not the right people to ask on this, but do you have any idea of the proportion of people who are arrested for being drunk and disorderly and who are actually convicted later? I will ask the police. Do not worry about that.

I am very curious about the tag, actually. I am looking forward to seeing one.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Can I ask about the pilot in Croydon with breathalysers? Are you going to do some evaluation on that and, if so, what is the timescale for that?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): At the moment, that is all being worked up and this is just part of the partnership conversations between the MPS and businesses about, as Philip referred to, how door staff and the broader community could be supported in terms of some of the challenges around preloading and also something that I have been briefed on, side-loading, which I was not quite aware of until I engaged in some of these conversations.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Side-loading? What is that?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Side-loading is moving between licensed premises. It is a very important point. Part of the challenge around licensing is that you are looking to identify a particular premises that might be causing issues with regards to disorder. However, in areas where you have a high concentration of licensed premises, an individual's challenge would be to drink as much as possible and move as quickly as possible across as many venues as possible. Therefore, trying to pinpoint that on one particular venue as being responsible for that is, rightly, disproportionate.

This is part and parcel of the point that Graeme [Gordon] made earlier about the Business Crime Change Board and the conversations that are happening there. We need to continue to engage in partnership with licensees and businesses to understand the movement and the business implications around alcohol. It is in its very initial stages.

I am happy to get more information back to you on the breathalyser pilot if that would be helpful.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): In terms of the evaluation of the breathalyser pilot, it is important to just stress something that Sam has already said, which is that it is entirely voluntary. This is just a tool and we have gone out and said, "Do you think this will help you to manage some of your door issues?" Some premises have said, "Yes, we think it would", and they have taken it up. Others have chosen not to take it up. It will probably depend or vary quite a bit from one premises to another as to whether it feels like the right way to manage that particular issue.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): It might seem sensible, but it could cause more friction on the door for those staff members who are there.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): That is right. For some other establishments, they would just see it as a little bit too intrusive and a little bit too enforcement-heavy when there is not a problem already necessarily presenting itself.

Jenny Jones AM (Deputy Chair): You could target clubs where there is a problem. On the whole tagging thing, you have expanded the scheme without really knowing if it works yet because you do not have the

figures to say that there is not any recidivism. Was that because you just wanted to get a wider span in the number of people? Why did you expand before --

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): We needed to expand the scheme in order to be able to generate that reliable data that you are talking about. What we have done so far is the proof of concept, which is that partners are working with it and the judiciary is using it as a sentencing option. I really do not want to underestimate that it can be quite challenging getting to that point of view with an innovative approach like this. We have got to that point and that is fantastic. We now need to expand it to generate that real evidence of actual impact as opposed to simply compliance.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Could I, just before I move on to my area of questions, pick up the issue of the 8% who have drunk alcohol? Can you just remind me? You said they get a warning and then they are back in court.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): If you have a tag and you either tamper with it or drink, for the first instance you would get a warning, which comes initially through the provider of the tag. They would flag to you that they are aware that the device has been tampered with or that there is an alcohol reading. That is then followed up by the CRC or MPS officer, depending upon where they sit within probation. If after that point there is another incident, then it is reported through to the National Probation Service, which is what would happen with any other breach of any other order, and is then formally treated as a breach. If determined appropriate by the National Probation Service, which acts as the front door around that, then you would go back to court.

Our approach is exactly in line with what would happen with any other form of disposal. If you had community payback as part of your sentence, it is exactly the same approach that would happen. If you did not turn up once, there would be a warning. If you did not turn up again, it would be a breach.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): I just wanted to be absolutely clear on that. That was helpful. Thank you.

I remember reading that MOPAC has set up a 'strategic licensing unit'. Can you tell us what that unit is and what its overall aim is?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Sure. It is not exactly a strategic licensing unit. It is a strategic licensing function. It is actually the Greater London Authority's (GLA) Intelligence Unit that has been responsible for creating that for us. What the GLA Intelligence Unit has done is to develop the Safe Sociable London [Partnership] alcohol licensing analysis dashboards. Effectively, what those are for is to allow us to map key hotspots of disorder linked to the late-night economy and, therefore, share information down to the local level to enable the best possible decisions to be made about licensing in those local areas.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): It is GLA Intelligence in City Hall that is doing this for MOPAC?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): They are analysing data and then that data is being shared with the boroughs' Community Safety Partnerships?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): It is not just the analysis. It is also the gathering of the data from the police, the London Ambulance Service (LAS) and accident and emergency (A&E) departments to try to bring all of that data together and then disseminate it outwards for us.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): At our last meeting, Islington came and gave some very good evidence. They suggested that MOPAC could and should continue to do more to support this kind of work and that you could do more in pulling it together and helping with the analysis. Do you accept that?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): We would always like to do more. The more we can do to gather information and to help local boroughs with those licensing decisions the better. I would need to understand from Islington colleagues what their specific asks were and whether we are the right people to provide those asks, but that would be something that we would be keen on looking at.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): They particularly wanted you to pull together more what is happening in different places and to look at the real impacts - I guess some of it sounds like it is about sharing best practice, which is partly London Councils' role - as well as more data to be analysed.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Certainly for that it sounds like a bit of teamwork between us and London Councils to make sure that we can access the data from the boroughs to aggregate it and then disseminate it back out again.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): You have talked about the data that you analyse and you have talked about the police, the LAS and A&E departments. However, we know - and I have thought about this for quite a few years now and I used to when I was on the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) - the Cardiff Model has not been implemented in every A&E department in London. Therefore, you do not have accurate data across the capital.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): It is absolutely fair to say that we do not have complete data across the capital. We have 17 out of 29 A&E departments contributing to this --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Just over half?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): That is from a starting point of four and so that has improved over time. We continue to work in partnership to bring partners together to promote participation. Obviously, we do not have any direct control over that. I do recognise that those A&E departments are under a lot of pressure from all kinds of directions and additional asks on those staff are not always necessarily what they feel is welcome.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): The impact it has ultimately can reduce people going into A&E departments and so it has a benefit for them as well as the wider community. The Mayor, following my questions a year ago, wrote to all chief executives of hospital trusts.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): That is correct, yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): What has now happened from that? He admitted to me last month that it is not good enough and that progress has not been made.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes. There has been a good deal of work by MOPAC to follow up that letter with those trusts and to bring people together to explain the benefits of the information sharing. We will keep on making every effort to, as it were, bring the horse to water and, hopefully, continue to grow the number of A&E departments that are making that data contribution.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): You have another 12, you are telling me, that are not doing this yet. How many are close to signing on the line?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Could I just add to that? Graeme is absolutely right. In the last 12 months from the point at which that letter was written, as a follow-up we have done two key things in addition to forming it into a proper programme for London.

One of the challenges was that there was a requirement to share the information or a will to share the information, but it was not clear how that information was coming together and then who that information was going out to in fulfilling that function that you were talking about in terms of improving responses and the prevention piece. We applied through the Home Office Innovation Fund specifically around this piece of work and have been successful in securing just under £2 million to drive this forward. We are now ten months through that first year. We have an event in this building tomorrow, which is based around the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence model, to drive up the remainder of those A&E departments in terms of sharing the information and more broadly to talk about it in a bigger way and to think about why that information is being shared, who gets that information and what the end result is, being able to continue to reinforce that message about the opportunities for prevention and different responses as a result of that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): You are saying that the 12 are coming in tomorrow?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): I am not sure. I do not have the attendance list in front of me. However, the purpose of that conference and the purpose of that whole programme of work is to continue to drive up the numbers that are sharing and to get closer to the 29, to support hospitals to understand what the resource implications are around this - the point that Graeme made about how much should be invested - and to also get an understanding of who will be in receipt of that information, which is obviously a key question for hospitals.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): What I would like - and maybe you have to put it in writing - is I would like to be clear on how close you are on those remaining 12 A&E departments. There must be huge parts of London where you just have no or not-so-accurate data. If we are trying to deal with this issue, which is complex, you cannot just have these black holes of data because major A&E departments are not playing ball here. The Government had signed up to it in the past as well. There has been quite a lot of pressure from the Government and regional government. I do not understand why they are not signing up. Thank you for that.

The other point, really, is that there are also minor injury units and walk-in centres as well. Are you doing work with them to see whether you can share anonymised data from them?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Could we provide that back in the same response, if that is OK?

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): OK.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): The short answer is that my understanding is, yes, we are.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Fantastic.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): They are included, but we will confirm that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Are you finding any other partners to be particularly difficult around this or any other challenges around this data-sharing?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): I cannot think of any specific challenges. It is --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): What about the LAS, which you mentioned? We know that it is in a bit of a crisis, really, at the moment in London. Have there been issues there?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): We do have that through the Safer Stats programme already. That pulls together LAS data, Fire Brigade data and British Transport Police data. In that context, in terms of the question around the strategic licensing function, that has already been pulled together in a way that is possible to be analysed for support to be given to local areas.

The real challenge is the A&E department data. That is the fundamental challenge. You are absolutely right that there was a commitment made at a national level, which found itself being delivered through the Violence Reduction Nurses (VRN) programme and funding programme with that, which we are fully engaged in as well as part of this work. In terms of that response, we can give an indication about the VRN programme as well and how that is supporting this. The challenge is the health --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, that would be really helpful because this is the big piece that is missing in the jigsaw, which would really help with the analysis. Presumably it would help boroughs as well, Philip, in terms of your local Community Safety Partnerships and the work that you are doing on being able to more accurately target resources.

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Lovely. Thank you very much.

Kemi Badenoch AM: My question is around the other support that MOPAC provides for tackling this issue. I will ask about the late-night levy in a moment.

This is to Samantha and Graeme. What kinds of services have been funded through the Crime Prevention Fund and what impacts are these services having?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): Just as a top line in terms of the London Crime Prevention Fund, I am sure you are aware that it is about £18 million a year over four years and we fund between 145 and 149 projects across

London over the four-year period. Out of that funding, £19 million over four years has been allocated specifically to substance misuse projects and there are 35 of those in London covering 22 boroughs.

One of the key important pieces is that although the ring-fencing around funding was pulled away about three years ago, which used to support the drug intervention programmes, what we have been able to do through the London Crime Prevention Fund is to continue to support local areas to maintain those services and to develop and change those services in line with their local needs.

Kemi Badenoch AM: Thank you. What is MOPAC's role in supporting the take-up of the late-night levy? Are you helping boroughs to take it up? How many local authorities have adopted the late-night levy, for example, in London?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): We support those authorities that do choose to come forward to have a late-night levy by contributing the 70% of revenue that MOPAC is entitled to. We just give that back to the boroughs.

The view at MOPAC is very much that this is one tool in the toolbox that local authorities can use. You may be able to achieve the same aims through partnership working with businesses. However, if a local authority makes the decision that a late-night levy is the right thing to do, provided it has sufficient evidence that it is needed and there has been proper consultation, we will support it in implementing that.

To date, we have only one local authority that has adopted the late-night levy, which is Islington. We do know that Camden is also keen to implement it and we are waiting formal confirmation that it wants to go through that process.

Kemi Badenoch AM: You are not proactively going to boroughs and saying, "This is something that we think you should have"? The incentive is basically the 70% going back to the borough?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes, but it is more the other way around. If boroughs themselves feel that this is a useful thing, we will help them to go about approaching it in the right way and we will make that financial contribution back to them.

Kemi Badenoch AM: Thank you. My next question is for Philip. Why do you think the take-up has been so low across the London boroughs? What is their view of it?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): If I could just add to that, Graeme, Tower Hamlets is also thinking of looking at it and I understand that the City has implemented it as well, and so there are, I guess, three-and-a-half. Camden is potentially making a decision in April 2016.

Graeme also made a point about it being a tool in the toolbox. It is a bit of a blunt instrument. It has to apply across the whole borough. It cannot just be used to target particular premises. Also, if you are a smaller borough, it is probably not cost-effective to implement it when you do not have that many people.

However, a point came up earlier about the pressure from businesses and that is only going to become more acute. There was an article in the *[Evening] Standard* just a couple of days ago about Wetherspoons closing its doors at midnight in Islington as a response to the levy, saying that they would have to make £1,000 within the hour. They were not going to make it and so they were going to close. Wetherspoons is a massive national chain. Smaller businesses are likely to see this as just another tax. They already have to pay business rates and contribute, potentially, to the BID. As the local government funding settlement shifts more in the

direction of an increased reliance on business rate retention, this brings to the fore the efficacy or the use of the late-night levy in controlling or tackling alcohol-fuelled crime versus how much it costs businesses and how attractive that area is for a business.

Also, having spoken to boroughs, as well as those other issues, they feel that they are increasingly more confident in their own capability to license individual premises. They have gone through the process a number of times and they feel that they are more able to take charge on a premises-by-premises basis through the licensing system. Again, it is that combination. It is a bit of a blunt instrument and they feel that they have the tools up to a point with the regulation system, but also the fundamental issue is whether it drives businesses away and creates an additional pressure for not much gain further down the line.

Kemi Badenoch AM: OK. Finally, is there anything else that you think boroughs would like to see or would like help on using that Crime Prevention Fund support from MOPAC that you have not mentioned already?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): No. Some of the stuff that has come out of the drug intervention programme in Greenwich was highlighted at a recent meeting I was at. As long as - and I think MOPAC would appreciate this - we have an opportunity to use those strategic funds to pick up and champion local innovation and good practice, we can only support that. We are all facing significant funding pressures. Business-as-usual is over and anything that helps support new approaches to tackling what in relation to alcohol but also a lot of the other serious reoffending issues are quite complex problems, getting into the nub of that and developing a better understanding of the drivers of that but also supporting more sustainable solutions to that in a joined-up way, is only a good thing.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Philip and Samantha might know, but certainly my boroughs in the past - I am not sure they do now - used to have a dedicated MPS officer who was responsible for licensing. It was their job to visit premises, to give prevention advice and to appear on a licensing panel and give any objections. Is that something that is useful? Secondly, I do not know whether you have experience as to whether all boroughs that have significant premises do have a dedicated officer or not?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): My experience is that where it works well in terms of licensing and managing the night-time economy is where all partners are fully engaged and where the approaches to licensed premises are done between both the local authority and the MPS. Both have clear functions and to bring those together is always more effective and, quite frankly, it is better for the business in terms of the communication and the response to that.

I could not say whether all boroughs have that function. I am aware that where there is a need for it, they have managed to maintain those specific licensing teams from the MPS's perspective and many of them are still co-located with local authority staff.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Philip, do you have any --

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): I could not give you chapter and verse. I can only say anecdotally from feedback that the boroughs I have spoken to have said the MPS are very good particularly if there is a problem with a particular venue or an event. If something is happening, they close down the place very quickly. The reactive role and having police there is highly valued.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): What I would say is that we do think it is really important that we have those local links between the MPS and the boroughs that run

licensing. Quite exactly how that is configured in different boroughs is less of a concern for us, as long as it works.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: My question is around the future of MOPAC's role in tackling alcohol-fuelled crime. I suppose that then has to address mayoral commitments and strategies, how MOPAC is then able or has been able in the past to implement those and, if it has not, where we go in the future.

I have just set that scene because MOPAC has not, during its time, produced a strategy about alcohol-related crime, has it, Graeme? We have heard about your two areas of focus but – given that the Mayor said quite boldly and upfront that he was going to make sure that the Police and Crime Plan would develop an alcohol-related crime strategy for London focusing on prevention, enforcement and diversion – has MOPAC taken a narrow view in order to deal with that mayoral commitment?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): I will ask Sam [Cunningham] to come in in a minute on some of the detail around this, but I would not say that. There is not a bespoke alcohol strategy because, in consultation with Criminal Justice System partners, we came to the conclusion that it would be better to mainstream alcohol as a driver into our approach to all crime and offending. That is why it is not picked out as a separate thing. Perhaps, Sam, you could add a little more detail on that.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: You decided you were going to mainstream it and then we have here that in that mainstreaming you now have problems because the data is so subjective and you do not have mandatory fields. It all seems to me to be feeding this feeling that I have around the whole thing that it is all so difficult. It is like, "Let us take a very passive approach to this whole thing".

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): I would not describe it as a passive approach. It is challenging because it is a factor in so many different offences but what we are doing is ensuring that we pick it up as a factor in all the MOPAC 7 priority offences.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): I would just add to that to say that it is important that we understand alcohol in the right context, dependent upon the offence and issue we are trying to deal with. That is one of the reasons why mainstreaming and seeing it as an important component in everything we do is important, just the same as drugs, substance misuse, mental health, or housing. There are a number of different components that drive offending behaviour and drive specific crime types.

Just as an example of that, we have talked a lot today about domestic abuse and the questionable links with alcohol. Alcohol may be present but, in terms of the question as to whether or not alcohol drives domestic violence, there is evidence that sits both ways. Just as an example of mainstreaming, we have had those conversations and discussions through the Violence Against Women and Girls Board that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime [Stephen Greenhalgh] chairs and have been very clear that although it is important to understand that within the context of those offences, to see that as the driver or trigger for that offence discounts the importance of the broader pattern of violence around domestic violence and should not drive our solutions.

However, if you consider it in a different way, when we have talked about the night-time economy and the low-level disorder offences, we know and understand that alcohol is a direct trigger to those. Therefore, intervention, working with the local authorities in funding those areas and providing them with the data is the right response in that context.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: What I am trying to get a sense of is whether or not MOPAC has the right level of involvement in this issue given that in 2012 it was a mayoral commitment to – and I read again – develop “smarter solutions” and to develop a strategy that would “focus on prevention, enforcement and diversion”. What I have heard so far is what you then decided to do with partners was to take a different route altogether.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): I would not necessarily describe it as a different route altogether. It is a question of perspective. What we have done is take an offence-by-offence perspective rather than an ‘alcohol’ thematic perspective. Obviously that is open to challenge. Whatever way you choose to organise your resources and deal with different issues, there is always another way you could do that.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: We are supposed to be able to learn from the work that has gone on. In terms of the future, then, what advice or work is going on in MOPAC on mayoral commitments? Where does MOPAC go over the next four years? Is it now looking to see whether or not this is the time for a pan-London strategy, or would your advice or the work that you have done be demonstrating that the approach you have taken away from the mayoral commitment is the right way forward?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Obviously we are coming to the end of the current Police and Crime Plan period. We in MOPAC do think that we are following a good approach, but clearly we will have a new Mayor and that new Mayor will have their own views. Obviously we are here to advise that new Mayor but also to take a lead from them.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: This is a wonderful thing because it is the Mayor who is the person I suppose I should be asking these questions to: “Why have you not ensured that the manifesto promise that you made in 2012 was adhered to by your Office?”

Can I move on? A lot of the evidence and stuff that we heard from our previous meetings was about a sense that there should be more working together. Philip, I may just ask you boldly: does London Councils have the capacity as a body to enable greater working together? You major more on advisory activities, do you not?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): It would depend on the subject. We are a member-led organisation and so, a bit like MOPAC, we respond to and follow the lead and the direction given to us by our members. You can look at our deal on devolution that we have recently completed, which looks at skills, employment support and health – a bit on crime and housing – where we are very much building partnership working and delivering something. Other bits fall into the advisory category and they really depend on what has been selected by our members.

As I said at the beginning, alcohol-fuelled crime very much at the moment sits on the desks of our local borough authorities and they have not asked us to look strategically at this issue. They have not asked us to develop a particular partnership approach. As I said also, there is a national shift in conversation towards asking whether even a couple of drinks are too many and the idea that with alcohol there is no safe level of harm. That potentially could shape members’ views and potentially shape the way we work together.

I would also say that we work closely with MOPAC on developing areas of partnership working on those things which both our members and the Mayor have identified as a particular priority. We can do it but it would require our members to task us on that matter.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Yes. I take your point. In the Assembly's report on devolution we suggested there that given the continued high volume of alcohol-fuelled crime and alcohol-fuelled violence there may be, over the longer term, merit in a role for the GLA in licensing for alcohol sales and that a London-wide framework agreed with boroughs could provide clarity to residents, businesses and everyone engaged here. Does that fit in then, you are saying, with London Councils' view?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): At the moment we have not considered the issue formally and so we would not have a pan-London agreed London Councils view. I spoke to a number of boroughs about this particular issue, as I mentioned, and some boroughs are very much saying, "We manage to look after our own licensing arrangements, we have good relationships and good partnership working and we would be reluctant to go down that route". Other boroughs could see the benefit of it, potentially, but similarly they would be looking at it as, "What value do we add locally?" They are not so clear on the value they add locally.

One borough said to me that if there was going to be a pan-London framework for alcohol licensing, then why not other forms of licensing as well, like sex clubs? Then you go down the route of, "Taxi licensing is carried out by the Mayor. Can we just allow the GLA to get on with it? However, we do not have much local control". There is always that balance. There is a balance intellectually but there is also a balance between our members and a position. We have not been asked to take a pan-London view on that at London Councils.

Len Duvall AM: Sorry, could I just clarify? The issue is not about taking powers away from the boroughs. They would still be licensing. You would take powers away from the national [framework] and have a London-wide framework for licensing. In that sense, you could have a conversation of strengthening the licensing powers of boroughs within that framework. We have a national framework for licensing. Is it not time to have a London framework and a London discussion about what that would mean? Did you understand that position?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): No. I can understand that.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Philip, let me just put a quote out to support that. As part of the devolution agreement in Greater Manchester, local authorities, Public Health England and NHS England have agreed a shared commitment for Greater Manchester to secure a devolved ability to set its own licensing objectives and specifically a fifth local objective associated with harm to health. That is really what the Assembly's recommendation was alluding to, which is already enshrined in the Greater Manchester agreement.

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): I can say that I have worked on this particular issue around wider devolution for what feels like forever, a number of years, and the idea of London having a greater say in the wider regulation of businesses, including licensing, is something that we have discussed. You only have to look at the West End Commission - again, driven by Westminster - and the particular licensing arrangements that Westminster sits under. That is an idea that we have considered.

I would only go back to saying that we are a membership organisation. Some of the deals we have done in the particular areas we have done have taken a long time to get pan-London agreement and within this, at the moment, this particular issue is not something that we have gone out to members and asked them all to sign up to. They might do, they might all agree, but the bandwidth they currently have to consider the rollout of the current devolution deal is such that we could not take a view pan-London.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: As you say, things are changing and the whole thing is ratcheting up because we have now a health report that says, "Not a sip of drink", do we not?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Things are changing.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Sobriety rules.

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): It could be that the devolution of health, one of the pilot areas, unlocks those conversations. All I can say is that we are member-led and at the moment they have not taken a view particularly. Having spoken to individual officers, there is some uncertainty about whether they would be up for that or not.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: It is a strange thing, is it not? You are saying that we still have 32 little islands in London plus one, the Corporation, still doing their own things around such an important thing that affects Londoners' health, life and every day. The bodies that be are still working in isolation. Is that not what we are hearing?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): My members would see it slightly differently. They would feel that they are more connected to their place and their economy. They know the streets, they know the pubs and they feel that they are best-placed to deal with the local challenge that they see unfolding. It is probably a bit different in Westminster because it is basically the epicentre of the entire UK night-time economy and so there may be wider strategic issues there. I would not say that they do it in isolation. They have licensing managers' forums and also at London Councils we spend quite a lot of time talking to MOPAC about the wider issues of that.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: In boundary areas – say Islington, which I represent, and Camden, which my colleague represents – if you look there and you have two different approaches, it does not help the residents who live in that locality. They do not get up in the morning and say, “I live in Islington”, or, “I live in Camden”. They just get up and see the filth, the debris and the devastation there after the party and the drinkers. This is what I am saying. How do you address that?

It seems that time and time again you have to then go either to a sub-regional level or you have to go to a pan-London level. That has been recognised for Greater Manchester in a can-do way. I am struggling to understand what we need to move us in London to that can-do, pan-London approach to dealing with this issue. You cannot answer this and so it may well be that it is another mayoral promise that we are waiting for.

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): The challenge back to London Councils, clearly, is to think about how these issues are mapped systematically across London. At the moment, our approach would be to say that local authorities, local leaders, manage their places. You can cite anecdotes where either that is not working or it is working. Part of the challenge back to London Councils may be working with MOPAC to pick up on the points about data that have been raised and to think systematically over the next – I do not know – four years as part of the mayoral priorities and part of our work on how we build that picture up and see where there is a role to explore it, led by the data.

Oddly enough – and it is an anecdote – the officer in Camden responsible for this whom we have spoken to lives in Camden and can see the challenges for the borough in terms of balancing the night-time economy and attractiveness for businesses, but also has to wake up and go to work in Camden and pick his way through the streets. It is an issue that councillors are aware of but they have that balancing role between being attractive and also places where everyone can enjoy themselves.

Roger Evans AM: I was just going to say that I can see why boroughs would want to jealously preserve their rights in this area. They would be well placed to understand their own environment.

What about the growth of chain pubs across London? You have operators who are offering a similar offer in different parts of town. Is there something to be said for having a pan-London approach in those cases, where there may be a chain operator who has the same problem in several different places in town? We can perhaps learn from what a different borough has done to handle that.

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): That certainly sounds sensible, particularly – and I had not heard the phrase either – in terms of side-loading and in terms of pubs that you always –

Roger Evans AM: We called it ‘pub crawling’. It is the new word. “Let’s go side-loading tonight!”

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): Particularly if they are large chains that, as you say, cross London boroughs and if a particular pub chain, not to mention any particular chain, would have maybe a reputation for a special offer on a drink or a special availability of beer, then maybe there would be a role of tapping that and looking at it on a pan-London level. Yes, I could see that.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): I will just add on there to the point that Graeme [Gordon] made about the Business Crime Change Board that is chaired here by the Deputy Commissioner [Craig Mackey QPM] and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. It does have in its membership the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers.

One of the priorities of that Board is, with retailers specifically, to begin to build that partnership and to begin to think about whether there are things pan-London that could be taken forward and agreed with businesses to support local areas in some of those conversations. I think one of the challenges at the local level is that if you are dealing with a big chain you are not going to get agreement for one area or for one part of that chain to make a change in terms of the way that it runs its business. There are opportunities and that partnership is in its initial stages, but it is recognised that from a business perspective thinking across London in terms of big retailers is also important.

Len Duvall AM: There is a touch of, “How do we know what is really going on on the ground?”, in terms of some of the conversations and the networks that we have. I am just a bit disappointed by your answers to the questions about the future. I understand about the mayoral direction and politicians making priorities.

I regard myself as having a good network of councillors across the Labour, Conservative and other political parties, and some of the problems they are saying and coming back with and liaising with the police officers about is that there is a problem on the ground. We have a problem with off-licenses. Not all. There are responsible off-licenses and there are not responsible off-licenses. Twenty-four-hour licensing: do they really need it? Are they also a haven for other illegal activity coming to local government such as illegal cigarettes, dodgy alcohol and serving underage? There are usually joint partnership arrangements going on.

That would have been, in my time when I was a councillor, few and far between. Now it is becoming normal practice for our environmental officers and policing partnerships discussions. When we talk about future actions around that I do not get any idea from the centre that we are offering best practice or helping people think, “That is something we have to stamp out and tackle”. I take your answer about domestic violence but if we want to change and correct people’s behaviour then we really ought to be pushing every button going.

Equally, violence impacts on town centre activity. I do not want to be a killjoy. I want people to go out and enjoy themselves in a responsible way and not affect other people's business. It was only some months ago that we had Police and Crime Commissioners outside London saying, "We are going to start closing these places down because we have no policing or resources for it". In times of reduced policing resources, where does prevention come into it? Where is targeted thinking and some support from the centre to those people working hard on the ground to say, "This is what you can do"? There is actually a number of wide and varying practices with the same different resources. With all due respect to Westminster, its entire police force is dedicated to that leisure entertainment/clubs and pubs issue. It has incredible resources to do that even in difficult times when there are reductions.

I do not get a feel from you that there is any push on that. If we are facing a time of reduced resources for local councils as well as for police services, should we not be starting to press some of these buttons a bit more? I cannot quite see in the MOPAC 7 where you tell me that alcohol is taken into account. I scrolled all over these documents --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: It is mainstreamed.

Len Duvall AM: Mainstreamed? Maybe it needs to be a bit more explicit. I just do not get that. Have I missed something in terms of your contributions? Am I being unfair to you? I do not think I am.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): One of the challenges is that this is an area where we have to work in collaboration with the boroughs. There are different things to be done at the regional strategic level and on the ground in the boroughs. I certainly would not want to give you the impression that we do not support that really important frontline work that is going on in the boroughs. We completely support it. We support it in terms of our role in oversight of the MPS and support those relationships between the MPS and the local licensing authorities. Through our work with London Councils we support anything that is contributing to a positive quality of life for Londoners. Whatever the outcome of the mayoral election, I am sure those are the kind of priorities that are going to carry on because they are permanent priorities for people who live here.

In terms of the mainstreaming, this is always a challenge with mainstreaming. In a previous job one of my roles was to be the lead officer for equalities and again we mainstreamed equalities through everything we did. The challenge was making that visible at the same time as mainstreaming it. The feedback I am taking here is perhaps we need to make it more visible as well as effectively mainstream it into our practice in terms of all the different offences that we are prioritising.

Len Duvall AM: OK. Just following up on the question, look, I am not 'Billy no-mates'. I go out and socialise. I would not say I am out every weekend clubbing it and hitting it hard. One of the issues in feedback that has come back to me via councillors is where there is a problem pub. Sometimes the police know it is a problem pub but on the ground they do not bother turning up to offer the evidence to the councillors to take the decision. That becomes a reality. There are issues about making sure that each side of the partnership does its business. Of course that is something local, but should we not be intervening more to ensure that it is part of the process that that happens?

Equally, part of the licensing law is that where we have a difficult set of circumstances, where we are working with decent landlords or corporate chains that want to make it better, they want to do it, that is fine. Where we have people who are resistant to that or change the name of the landlord because they think that will get over the problem but still do not deal with some of the problems taking place on their premises, should we not be advocating some stiffer penalties like longer closure notices to bring them into line? Should we not

be advocating something London-wide where there is a continuing problem because we do not have the resources to deal with some of that problem in the way that we might have had in the past? Should that not be part of our future thinking?

Dare I say, different Mayors have a different view of how in touch they are with what is going on on the ground. I listen to residents because that is my bread and butter. I am much closer to it. I listen to councillors and I listen to police officers who have to grapple with these issues. Is that not something we might want to be offering up and start thinking about what we need to do to – whether it is devolution or not – lobby the national Government to say, “These are the licensing laws and these are the consequences of them. With the resources we have to deal with it, we might need to change”?

What I do not see is any of that stuff coming from you, either through the police officers or from other bodies. I thought when we made the change to MOPAC that was what we were doing, that as we moved from the MPA to MOPAC we might be doing more of that. I thought London Councils was. Certainly some of the councillors I am talking to are. It might not be getting to the leaders and it might not be on their agendas but it is happening on the ground more and more.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): There are two separate issues there. One is that where members have specific instances that they are aware of where they believe that the MPS has not been playing the full role, I would urge them to come to MOPAC and let us know about it so that we can take that away and look at that in a bit more detail.

At the more strategic level, it is that question back about devolution. We are at a very interesting stage in that whole devolution debate. In terms of making changes to the licensing regime for London, it is quite important that we have a full debate about what it is we are trying to achieve. What are the outcomes we are aiming for? The Manchester example is very interesting. Greater Manchester has the whole of health devolved to it. That is a really big driver for them to say, “We need a different licensing regime. We need a different licensing regime that allows us specifically to target harm reduction in that health context”.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Are we not supposed to be working with health?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes. At the moment we have five health pilots devolved in London. Again, it will be very interesting to see how those play out but that is not quite the same situation as they find themselves in in Greater Manchester.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: They have a legislative framework around them.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Can I just come back to the last questions around this one, then? Again, it is clarity. Are you saying that there is no way in the thinking of MOPAC at the moment that you would be looking to recommend a London-wide framework or strategy?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Is this a London-wide licensing framework?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Yes.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): I do not think that at this stage in the cycle it is for us to specifically come up with that as a recommendation as officers. I do not know what discussions --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Not from officers, from the work you have been doing: from all your pilots, from all the data you are gathering and all the intelligence. Is there any sign that that sort of approach could be supported from the work so far that you have done? I only harp on that because it was a mayoral manifesto. It would be good to stop another Mayor making a manifesto that could not be delivered.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): The deliverability of that is down to a devolution discussion with Government. We would also want to, as far as possible, have the boroughs on board with whatever we were putting forward. That needs to go into that wider discussion about devolution to London and we should see where we get with it.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Within that wider discussion we could take on concerns like the concerns echoed by the Association of Convenience Stores. You have alluded to retailers having a problem. It has said in its written submission to us, "Unfortunately, licensing authorities often fail to use the full suite of existing powers". That could be part of a discussion looking at those boroughs that have used the full suite and those who have not and then coming together to get some sort of overall consensus about the best way forward.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Yes, you are quite right.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: That was a reasonable expression of concern from that community, which is shared by residents, I am sure.

Philip, lastly to you: you are here to, as you say, give London Councils' position. Is there anything more that you want to tell us that we could look at in terms of our recommendation about ensuring that licensing powers across London are used well, fairly and confidently?

Philip Clifford (Policy Manager, London Councils): I would only say that it is important just to reiterate that alcohol-fuelled crime is complex. Drunk driving may be not as complex as domestic violence and it may be not as complex as VWI, but there are often complex causes behind those pockets. Some of that is do with geography or to do with the personal profile of people who commit those crimes. There are complex causes. Tackling it is probably complex.

Part of the reflection I have from London Councils is that even in thinking about something as simple as who leads on alcohol crime in London Councils, it touches our public health team, it touches our night-time economy team, it touches our licensing networks and it touches our crime and community safety team. It is a very wide conversation. I would only recommend, as I am sure you are already doing, considering all these issues in the round, as well as the potential national conversation about public health. It is not a straightforward problem and it is not going to have a straightforward answer. That is reflected in some of the answers you have had here today.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: I thought that our business was about doing the complex and the difficult, not just articulating it at meetings like this but having some insights based on work done to say, "This is how we are going to move forward and do it". That answer has not been very helpful, but thank you for it.

Samantha, anything to say? We do not need to go to the complex and difficult. We have already heard that.

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): No, I was just going to add that the work that has been done in the last two years that I have been at MOPAC has been very focused on supporting local areas. The point you were making is the one that is most interesting: understanding how the question of alcohol, not just from a licensing perspective from also from the complex dependent-drinker piece, is being picked up locally. To have a map of that for London in terms of what is happening across the 32 areas would certainly be something that would be very helpful for our work. For me, that is very helpful.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: All right. Graeme, anything to add?

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): No, thank you.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Could I ask something, then? You support local authorities. Does MOPAC do anything to get those local authorities licensing teams together to share best practice or to do anything amongst local authorities to recognise emerging trends at all? Is that something that could be done in the future?

Samantha Cunningham (Head of Service Integrated Offender Management, Programmes and Neighbourhoods, MOPAC): It is potentially something that could be done in the future. The only thing I would say is that there is a multitude of issues across 32 boroughs we could pull them all together to discuss. We have strong representation with London Councils through the London Heads of Community Safety Meeting, which is an important forum in terms of sharing information and often a good forum around the night-time economy and broader licensing issues. Often these sorts of issues are discussed there. There is that forum. We do not have a specific licensing one but there is that forum and, as I said before, there is the Business Crime Change Board that is also being led.

One of the things that stood out for today is how the local is engaged in that. That is a question we could take away as well. The answer to the question is that yes, we could do that. We have to think about how frequently we would do that and what we would get outside of the other mechanisms that we currently have.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): Lovely. Thank you. We have come to the end of our formal questions. Can I thank you very much? I will write to you - I do not know whether it would be Graeme or Samantha - with regards to some of the information on those pilots that you said you would provide --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): The Cardiff Model as well.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): -- and the Cardiff Model.

Graeme Gordon (Interim Director of Services and Commissioning, MOPAC): Absolutely. Please do.

Joanne McCartney AM (Chair): That would be very helpful. Thank you for that. It has been a very interesting discussion and perhaps no easy solutions but we will look at this.

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