

Police and Crime Committee – 19 December 2013

Transcript of Item 5: Work Programme for the Police and Crime Committee

Joanne McCartney (Chair): I am going to start the questioning this morning. My first question is to you, Commissioner, and it is on the issue of crime statistics, which I am sure you are aware is a hot topic. I believe you were interviewed this morning about this very item. Do you accept the claim that manipulating crime statistics is “an ingrained part of policing culture”?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): No, I am not sure I do entirely. I accept that there are always challenges to crime statistics, but, just to repeat very clearly, we need accurate and truthful crime statistics. All of us do. The public does because they need to know whether crime is going up or down. The victims do because they need to know whether or not their crime is being recorded properly and dealt with. I do because I am representing the police and from time to time I will want to say that things are getting better and also sometimes explain why they are getting worse. We have to rely on the stats to deploy our resources properly.

There are challenges which I am sure we may get into this morning about making sure they are accurate, but overall we can generally be confident. However, we cannot be at all complacent. The years have shown that the recording of crime stats can be wrong, as all organisations have shown from health to education and others. We need to be constantly vigilant to make sure the stats are correct.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): The Public Administration Select Committee and the Home Affairs Select Committee have been looking at these over the last couple of months. I believe you gave evidence to the Committee and relied on the fact that Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) had said that Metropolitan Police Service figures in terms of crime recording were competent and reliable.

We had Sir Tom Winsor [Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary] telling the Committee only a couple of days ago that he has written to you about this because - and I am quoting him directly here - “HMIC in fact said that it was looking at 244 incidents logged by the Metropolitan Police Service and 30 had been wrongly closed without a crime being raised”. He went on to explain that, however, you are getting better at that. From those figures, it appears that 12% of the cases that they dip-sampled were recorded as no crime when they should not have been, which does obviously give grave cause for concern. What do you say to that allegation?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Just to explain, obviously, the officers who gave evidence were giving evidence to the Public Administration Select Committee and I appeared before the Home Affairs Select Committee a

few weeks later. I was trying to explain, first of all, what we were doing about the claims these officers had made because we are taking it seriously.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): Good.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

First of all, we are carrying out an investigation into each of the allegations to see whether they are accurate or not. We are not content with that. I know the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is also asking the auditors to look at our figures, too. Finally, I have invited HMIC to prioritise the Metropolitan Police Service in terms of their existing plan to look at crime records throughout the country in this coming year. The plan was to go around in the spring through all the forces and I have asked them to look at it earlier. It may be they have already started having a look at our stats. We are having a serious inquiry into those allegations because it is a serious matter.

The other point I was trying to make at the Home Affairs Select Committee was that the most recent Her Majesty's Inspector's (HMI) report - and I will come back to who the author was - was received and published in 2012 for an inspection that had taken place prior to my arrival in 2011. I know that because I was the author of that report, if you remember.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): The figures I have quoted relate to that time period?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

That is right. If you remember, I was one of the HMIs who was actually inspecting on the Metropolitan Police Service, so that was the report. When I came to give my account to the Home Affairs Select Committee, obviously I had a brief, which was an account of the report I had produced previously and really just concentrated on the summary of that report. Frankly, I could not remember all the detail of it anyway, so I relied on that. The summary, as you have said already, is broadly supported but highlights that there are still some things to do.

One of the key findings is that some of the data is wrong and it gives some cause for concern. The two statements are not incompatible. Generally, we can now be confident that things are good, but back in 2011 there was some cause for concern. I am aware because of my role that there were some far more significant concerns about other forces, so, in terms of the spectrum, that is all I was trying to get over with the point.

In terms of replying to Tom Winsor, I had had a few days off last week. I received the letter the day before he appeared at the Home Affairs Select Committee, so I am afraid I personally have not had the opportunity to reply to his letter, which may have helped to clarify what he identified in his evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee. I do not dispute it, just merely tried to explain why I think there may be some disparity.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): I am aware of the comments made by other chief constables across the country. These concerns are not limited to the Metropolitan Police Service. You have talked about an internal investigation. Can you just briefly tell us about scope of that? Is that looking across all crime types or are you prioritising certain ones?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I will come back to one particular thing, which is about sexual offences, if you do not mind. I wonder if the Deputy Commissioner could say a little bit about that inquiry.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): We are looking at each of the allegations made during the evidence at the Committee. It is important, first of all, because people get the impression sometimes that this is really simple stuff. To give you the scale, there are 607 pages of guidance on crime recording, 184 separate classification codes nationally for crime, 18 separate ways of recording a burglary. People use language like 'no crime' and 'not crimed'. They are fundamentally different things, so there is some real complexity behind what is a large set of data.

What we are doing and what we regularly do is we have our own audit regime. For some of the high-profile crimes, for all of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime's (MOPAC) seven crimes and for rape, we run an audit regime all of the time. That reports back into Crimefighters and to Assistant Commissioner (AC) Byrne. It actually reports back where we are against the confidence.

The first way a crime falls through the system is it gets recorded at command and control, ie someone rings in and it does not get converted into a crime. That is the first check where it falls out of the system. Then, when it gets converted into a crime, is it recorded as the right type of crime? There is a perfectly normal reclassification of crime that goes on as you do an investigation and also as you work through it. One of the changes we made in 2012 and why we have asked for local audit to work with us is that many Members will remember from their days on the Police Authority that a lot of that crime recording and classification was done locally on boroughs. We brought it centrally and that was around consistency and the role of the Force Crime Registrar, so there have been some system changes. As a result of that, when we did the audit plan for this year, we asked for the auditors to actually look at that particular piece of work. That keeps ongoing in terms of doing it.

In relation to the allegations made, each and every line, so I think it was a statement about 300 burglaries disappearing and then other things --

Joanne McCartney (Chair): There were burglaries, thefts, robberies being classed as thefts, snatches and child abuse and rape.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): --Thefts, snatches, yes. What we have done is looked at every single one of those and we will have an answer for every single allegation in terms of where they are, where they were, whether it was time-specific, whether it still goes on now and a reassurance about what the systems look like.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): Are you actually dip-sampling and actually looking at cases?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

Yes, we dip-sample all the time. To give you an idea, with rape, it has been audited eight times in each classification this financial year, so that auditing process is going on all the time in terms of doing it.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): Deputy Mayor, I believe, the internal audit in MOPAC is actually doing its own investigation as well. Is that correct?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes. That is correct, Chair. At the beginning of 2013, we asked the auditors, the Director of Audit, Risk and Assurance [DARA], to conduct what was effectively an end-to-end review of the process to ensure that we were aware of any risks and that we were risk-aware, but also to check the robustness of that. That is very complimentary to the inspections that have been done in 2012 by HMIC and are going to be done next year in the early part of 2014.

Roger Evans (AM): Yes, just something the Deputy Commissioner said, actually, about 'no crime' being different to 'not crimed'. What is the difference? Can you explain that?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

When you see 'not crimed' in these reports, what it will probably mean in most cases is that there was a crime raised by the caller in the telephone call and it has not made it onto the crimes system, so it has not been crimed. We talked about 'crimed', ie someone has recorded a crime on the crimes system. For 'no crime', you have to have - and I cannot remember the exact words - an evidential standard of proof that the crime did not take place. Let us say I report the theft of my car from a car park in central London and you have evidence that actually I still have my car and I am driving around in Hertfordshire or something. That would allow you to 'no crime' the crime. There is an awful lot of complexity in this as well.

One of the areas that was referred to in the evidence was the notion of 'hugger-mugger' type crimes. Colleagues will remember when they came this propensity for people to sort of embrace someone and dip their pocket at exactly the same time. There was a huge debate in the police service about whether that was a robbery or a theft. It is now classified as a robbery, but the crimes did not disappear. They are still in the crimes system. For the MOPAC seven, the crimes still appear in the system, but the huge debate back in 2011 and 2012 was around whether 'hugger-mugging', for want of a better phrase, was robbery. People argued whether it fit the definition - ie a theft, effectively, with force - or not.

Again, this is Home Office guidance and that is why I say those guidance rules will change again on 1 April next year. There was a notification to forces about how you clear up or solve crime. Again, the categories will change. This is guidance and instructions that have to survive contact, be it here, Carlisle, Camborne or Newcastle, so they are written in some considerable detail. That is why you end up with 600 pages of guidance and people called Force Crime Registrars who are the guardians of this guidance and the adherence to standards. In line with every other force, the Force Crime Registrar should have a direct link into the executive of the organisation, ie report right into a chief officer, a report in to Mr Byrne as Assistant Commissioner Territorial Policing, and that is to prevent any suggestion that as a crime manager

or someone else I can say to the Crime Registrar, "Do not follow the rules". That is why we have put those checks and balances in place.

Roger Evans (AM): A 'no crime' occurs because you have evidence that it has not happened?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
Yes.

Roger Evans (AM): What would be the reason for 'not criming' something?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
'Not criming' it can be a system error, so it can be a failing in it. You will see those audits and you will see what they look at in the audit. As I said, they look at the conversion rate from the command and control system to the crimes system, so that can be an error. Someone can forget to do it or someone can go and never put the crime complaint in, so we check that all the time. The current audit on most crimes on that is above 95%.

'No criming' is a much more specific thing and requires a different level. You require a roll called a dedicated decision-maker. That is the only person allowed to 'no crime' crimes that are already on the system.

Roger Evans (AM): 'Not criming' is something that we should be concerned about because it is something that should not be happening?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
There is a whole system piece. When you see those audit reviews, they usually report in three or four areas. (1) They will talk about whether we have the crime classification right, so they will always look at whether we had the crime classification right; (2) whether there is a high 'no criming' rate; and (3) they will look at 'not crimed', ie the conversion.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
The primary thing you find with 'not criming' is it was not a crime. Someone alleges it was a crime. Something wrong has happened. It might be a civil wrong, not necessarily a crime, or somebody has fallen out with their neighbour and they are being abusive. It is not necessarily a crime but they may call the police. It is at that point that the report happens. If you form a genuine view, "This is not a crime but we might take action or we might give advice", you 'not crime'. Then, as Craig said, if the crime eventually does get reported or recorded but later information comes to hand which says this was not a crime, then it is 'no crimed'.

Roger Evans (AM): OK. I think I understand. It is probably worth our while digging those figures out to take a look at them.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
It is worth having a look and perhaps in a different forum going through just how those systems work. It is as simple as someone alleging a crime on a telephone call and what is called an initial classification, a two-digit figure. Bear in mind we are searching five and a half million records

for this. By the time the officer does a visit, exactly as the Commissioner said, actually, it is not a crime and you are talking about a civil dispute with a neighbour or something. The final classification code will be different. An awful lot of analysis goes on.

Roger Evans (AM): Yes, sure.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): It might be useful if we can have perhaps an informal session.

Roger Evans (AM): That is right, yes. That is right. Who does the audit?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

It is a team that works with the Force Crime Registrar. They do the audit and then obviously DARA's team does its own audit and the HMI does an audit. Force Crime Registrars, of which there are 43 in the country, are quite a small group. They provide advice to HMIC as well as internally.

Roger Evans (AM): Is there an audit of the sort that we would understand in this organisation? John [Biggs, AM] and I spent the afternoon in the basement the other day looking at reports which told us where systems were working and took samples of that--

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The DARA review is all about the control framework and looking at risk and where the pinch-points and potential areas of concern are, so, if you are going to do a deep-dive and do some dip-sampling, you know where to sample and where to look.

Roger Evans (AM): What is the reporting process for that? That is reporting to MOPAC?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): That is reporting to MOPAC, yes.

Roger Evans (AM): Do you have an audit panel of the sort that the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) used to have?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, an audit committee.

Roger Evans (AM): Are those reports and the minutes public documents?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am sure there are public minutes. I am not sure if all the minutes are made public.

Helen Bailey (Chief Operating Officer, MOPAC): The Chair of the audit committee advises at each audit panel which documents can reasonably be made public.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, so there are exempt items and there are open, but that is the Chair's determination.

Roger Evans (AM): There would be a presumption in favour of them being public documents not exempt items--

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Unless there is a reason why not, exactly.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): Can I move on now and look at the link between crime statistics and target-setting because this was another issue that was raised? Former Metropolitan Police Service Detective Chief Superintendent Peter Barron - and I am quoting here - said:

"When targets are set by offices such as the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, what they think they are asking for are 20% fewer victims. That translates into 'record 20% fewer crimes' as far as the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and senior officers are concerned."

It was also suggested that officers' chances of promotion were linked to meeting those targets. Perhaps I can start with the Deputy Mayor. To what extent do you accept the risk that crime reduction targets can skew officers' approaches? Is MOPAC alive to that concern and what steps are you taking to make sure that does not happen?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, it is a legitimate concern if targets distort behaviour, so clearly we are alive to that concern, which is why you have to think about how best to ensure that there is not systematic gaming with the numbers. Anyone who is setting the Metropolitan Police Service targets will be alive to that.

What I would have to say is let us go back in time to the time when Sir Bernard [Hogan-Howe,] was an HMI. It is fair to say there were a number of reports carried out by the HMI at the time. I think Kent was the seminal one - and certainly I am aware of this - and there were a number of forces where there were real concerns to the level of a systematic massaging of numbers. I had a meeting yesterday with Tom Winsor [Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary] and the Mayor, and in Kent the kind of 'no criming' incorrectly rates - I have them written down here - were 25% for rape 'no criming' incorrectly, violence 27%, and robbery 67%. We are aware that you can have real problems and need to be aware of that. The first thing is that we are alive to it.

The next thing is whether we believe setting a target is inherently a good or a bad thing. We have no evidence that it is distorting the picture in a systematic way. In fact, if you go to Crimefighters - and I have been on several occasions - what the MOPAC seven target actually does is focus the resources on how to prevent crime, how to reduce repeat victimisation and how to think about sustaining crime reduction over a period of four years. Of course, as part of ensuring that we know that genuine progress is being made you have to look at things like the 'not crime' rate for the MOPAC seven and the 'no crime' rate for the MOPAC seven. All that makes a great deal of sense to ensure that the numbers are not being gamed. In addition to having that internal audit directly within the Metropolitan Police Service, that is why we have that end-to-end process review by DARA, by our own auditors, and finally why the HMI come in and do their sampling.

Even back in January 2012 as a baseline, the 'no criming' incorrectly rate was between 10% and 15% for that small sample. It was not three quarters or 25%. We are very alive to not having targets for crimes where there is an issue of public confidence. We have not set a target for sexual violence or rape or domestic violence. We have not set a target for business crime in general because we know it is woefully unrecorded. However, for these neighbourhood crimes that blight people's lives, we think it is absolutely right that we set a target and that there is a focus on crimes that have a victim, so that is our approach.

You will not see this chart, but this is going to be in your Christmas cards from me. It is quite interesting to note that this year has been a very good year for the Metropolitan Police Service with about a 10% reduction in the MOPAC seven offences over the year, which I think is a great achievement by Sir Bernard [Hogan-Howe] and his team. Surprisingly, there was a massive leap in public confidence from a low in the aftermath of the riots and before the Olympics of 58% to a high of 69%, so an 11% increase in confidence in the Metropolitan Police Service. That is a large sample of Londoners, being asked about their confidence in policing in London as a whole. That is all good news for London.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): Can I ask Sir Bernard the same question about targets? I think all of us have been around quite a number of years on our Local Partnership Boards where you often get complaints that we have to meet this target and therefore we are taking resources from somewhere else or that we see other crime types perhaps rising or not reducing to the level you want. What are you doing to make sure that, although it is vital that the MOPAC seven targets reduce, you are not diverting resources so that other areas are suffering as well?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I would just say it is a good thing to try to get less crime overall. It is a good thing to aim for and it has to be a good thing to have fewer victims. I do not think anybody is going to sit here and say, "We are trying to get more victims of crime". We count and in that sense we set a target. We say we want less of whatever that number is. That is a public good. How we count that is what we are debating, but the overall thing is to get a downward trend and that is what the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime has said we are seeing. What we have to do is to mitigate the obvious risk that if you set a target, you set a perverse incentive. That is what we try to do: to reduce that.

One thing is, as the Mayor said, we have three types of crime where confidence in the police is critical in the reporting of that crime from hate crime to sexual offences to domestic violence, so they are excluded from the seven. We still count them and we still want to see what is happening. If you look at rape, in fact, the reporting of rape has gone up very significantly over the last few years. We know, though, from all the research that probably 85% of rape is unreported, not unrecorded but unreported. They do not tell the police. Although we are seeing a rise in the recording of rape, we still know we are nowhere near what the reality is. We have seen that from some of the historical things around the Savile case, so we know that that is a real issue, but they have been excluded from the seven. We still record them, but no targets.

Secondly, we audit. As already the Deputy has explained, superficially, surely you can count burglaries? There are some complications in the counting. It is what seems to be an arcane world, but it is important now we are coming to talk about it. We need to understand. A proper audit is put in place internally and that is kept separate from the operational people and reported through a separate reporting line and through our immediate independent accountability, which is the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and, thirdly, through our national audit. We did not mention a further level, which is the Office for National Statistics will not allow the police or the Government to publish their national crime stats until they have gone through their check as well. They think that internationally we are in a pretty good place, but none of us are complacent because we know they will not be 100% right.

The third thing, to be fair to the Deputy Mayor, is that what we have done is concentrate on the crimes which people say they believe are the most serious, whether it is robbery, breaking into someone's home, or violence. These are important things. We are reasonably confident that we are in a good position, but I am not going to sit here before you and say all the audits will find they were perfect, because they will not be. There will be some errors, but it is whether it is within the reasonable tolerance of errors and probably you want reassurance, as the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime will, whether we are having a regime that promotes bad recording. I can sit before you and look you in the eyes and say, "That is not what we want". I want to sit before you and say, "We have a 30-year drop in crime, which is the biggest we have ever seen". I do not want you turning to me and saying, "Yes, you would, because the crime stats are awful". There is a fundamental determination to get them right, but any challenge we will look into and get to the bottom of.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): That is helpful. Stephen, it would be helpful if perhaps at the end of your audit process you can let the Committee know the headlines of what you have found and the action you are taking. We will need to return to that.

John Biggs (AM): I was interested, perhaps unsurprisingly, in a mix-up which was highlighted in Tower Hamlets but seems to have covered the whole Metropolitan Police Service area. I do not know whether it was a blip or a question of competence, but we have an interest in the East End in doing some comparative figures on crime. We looked at the numbers on your website and came up with a 9% increase in Tower Hamlets over three years and a reduction in all the other boroughs. All hell broke loose and it was discovered that you had all your numbers wrong on the system. It was all recalculated across the Metropolitan Police Service and we now have different figures. It does raise a basic question about public confidence if the figures are fundamentally wrong. It did turn out in the end that Tower Hamlets is still an outlier with an increase compared to the other boroughs, but not as dramatic at the 9%, which would have been quite horrendous, suggested.

Can you tell us a bit about that and how you are going to trap problems like that in future? It is a fundamental problem - hopefully, a once-in-a-blue-moon problem - but go on.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): It is quite interesting, John, that the reaction you report, which is that when people see crime go up, they react. All hell breaks loose. Why is crime going up? That is just part of the pressures

that borough commanders and police forces and, to be fair, accountability bodies feel. Everybody wants to see them go down. When they go up, people do not like it. When they go down, we query whether they are valid. It is a constant emotional battle and a rational battle to try to keep these right.

What you should be reassured about there is that the figures were showing an increase - there was one example at least where crime was not constantly going down - and hopefully by the fact that it was raised as a problem and we took it seriously and did something about it. For me, that is always a thing, whether it as this Committee or anybody. If it raises something, we will look into it. If we are wrong, we will sort it out. We do have 800,000 crimes a year broken into 32 boroughs. There is always a risk of a local problem. Sometimes it is systemic when we miss.

John Biggs (AM): I know that actions are being taken to deal with that, but the fact was that the figures were wrong. We would perhaps not have been so alarmed if we had known it was a 1.5% increase, although it was an increase, but it does raise a question of the competence of the force in recording the data in the first place. I take it from you that you will be guaranteeing that that will not happen again?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): The error you are referring to was an error on the website, so the data in the source system was fine. The error was on the website and it did affect Tower Hamlets. I was aware from the story that ran in *The Evening Standard* around the work that we did, it was transposing data from there and putting it in the public domain. It was an error like that. The source data is right.

John Biggs (AM): I suppose that the lesson is we live in an age where people live off data in a way that they did not when we were all in short trousers and so you need to get it right.--

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I would totally agree with you --

John Biggs (AM): --There is clearly a public confidence issue around this as well.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): -- but we have moved quite a lot towards getting a lot of data out there. It is exactly the same as people saying, "Why do historic crime figures change over time?" Actually, some crimes get solved that were reported years ago, so there is a lot of detail behind that.

That was one error with a set of data being transposed. It is regrettable and clearly we would choose not to ever have any, but when you look at the amount of data that is now on the website in terms of the crime figures down to borough level, stop and search figures and a whole range of things that people want, we are trying very hard to get as much of that out there as we can.

John Biggs (AM): There was one other interesting discovery in our pre-budget report, which is that although crime has continued to reduce in London - coincidentally since 2008 when the current Mayor was elected, although I do not think it is directly a consequence of the election; it

might be - the rate of reduction of crime in London has considerably slowed compared to the rest of the country.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): John, that is not fair, actually. I have looked into this and it is looking at total notifiable offences (TNOs). I find it really interesting that in 2001/02 crime went up. TNOs went up and then from around 2002, not picking any particular year, crime went down very slowly in London, if at all. My first appearance before the Home Affairs Select Committee was all about the point you are making. From 2010, why is crime dropping less in London than in the rest of the country? It has gone down in London by 1% but 3% in the rest of the country.

The interesting thing is that in the last 18 months, crime in London is going down much further and faster than the rest of the country, so it is in a completely different position. That actually means that the point you are raising is valid for a specific point in time, but it is far longer than 2010 to 2012. Crime in London came down very, very slowly for a long period of time relative to the rest of the country.

John Biggs (AM): The old phrase is a bit incomplete, the one that says, "Lies, damned lies and statistics". It should have "and politicians" on the end of it as well because I think people start questioning the veracity and the purpose of data if someone is going to say, "It depends what period you look at it", or, "That is not quite true". The data does seem to speak for itself.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The data does speak for itself. Crime came down very slowly in the capital for a period of ten years, but it came down slowly and it continuously came down. It did not go up from 2002. Actually, that is a decade of crime reduction at a relatively slow rate. What you have seen is 18 months of a very fast rate of crime reduction not just for the MOPAC seven but overall offences. It is a question of whether that can be sustained. In New York, you saw a 20-year crime reduction. These are all facts. What I am trying to do is provide some perspective because; you are not providing the right perspective in just taking those dates.

John Biggs (AM): From your point of view, I am clearly not providing the right perspective, but I guess on those projections it might take about ten years for us to catch up with the rest of the country. I am very pleased that this coincides with Sir Bernard's arrival because it crowns him in glory, the politicians perhaps less so, but thank you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No one is looking for glory as a politician, as you know, John. It is just a service to the public.

Tony Arbour (AM): The most astonishing thing I have heard this morning is when the Deputy Commissioner described to us the rules and regulations. I think he said that there were more than 600 pages on how to describe a crime and 18 different ways of describing burglary. Then the Deputy listed all the various different kinds of audit. What is happening at Scotland Yard? Do you have some kind of circumlocution office where offences are passed from hand to hand, saying, "How shall we describe this?"

I suppose this is really a question for MOPAC. Are you going to urgently have some kind of cull of the rules and regulations so that you can simplify all of this?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, Tony. I would love to be able to say, "Let us cut through all the bureaucracy. Let us make it simple", but the real question we are asking the Metropolitan Police Service or any of the 43 forces is whether they are following the Home Office Counting Rules. If the Home Office decides to make it the most incredibly complicated process, then we have to make representations about what we can do to simplify it and make it easier. That is broadly the point where we can lobby, but actually it is driven by the Home Office setting the rules. Is that right?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): They are national rules.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): To be fair to everybody involved, it is a very accurate account of how big the rules are. The reason those rules arrived is for the very debate we are having today. Firstly, people have not been persuaded by the stats and they want some serious auditing of it. Secondly, criminal behaviour changes over time, so we have heard about 'hugger-muggers' and we have people who surf tables to take people's mobile phones. Mobile phone theft was not a problem 20 years ago. There were none. It is now.

We have to be fair to everybody involved. There is an argument that it could be simpler than 600-odd pages, but often it has grown because of the challenges from those who hold us to account saying, "I do not believe your stats. Tell me what your rules are". Both are true. We could do with fewer rules, but we will always have them.

Tony Arbour (AM): Can you tell me about the point I made about the different levels of audit and the way that things are classified? Are you employing lots and lots of people to do this?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I would not say "lots", but we are certainly employing some. I do not think it is disproportionate. We could give the Committee figures about how much we spend.

The problem we have is, if we do not spend anything, you would say, "How do you check?" There is a question of how much we spend and in an ideal world you want to spend as little as possible. We do want to make sure that when we report back to you, we did nine audits this year, there was somebody to do them. If you look at the HMIC one, the one I carried out in 2011, it looked at 200-odd crimes when, broadly, there had been nearly a million crimes. This is a very big pool of data. That was a very small sample. If I came to you and said, "We have audited our crimes and we have audited 0.001%", you may not be reassured.

There are two things. We have to have a reasonable number of audits. We have to have them in reasonable depth, so they are not just looking at a piece of paper but are going back, perhaps talking to a complainant and checking the whole process with a telephone call. That requires someone to do it. If someone else would do it for us, I am more than happy because the public

generally would be reassured, but we have to have some level of reassurance. I do not want Tower Hamlets to have robbery going through the roof and I do not know about it. We - the organisation - and you would want to know. Some level of audit is always going to be fair. There is a fair argument and debate about whether there is too much, but we could report to the Committee what we spend now and perhaps what we have spent, so far as we can determine, over the last few years.

Tony Arbour (AM): It is not a question of how much you spend. It is a question of how much confidence we have in the audited figures at the end of the day, so that in itself, Chair, might provide a discussion as to who should do the audit. It is the old Roman concept of *quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* [Latin phrase, "who will guard the guards themselves?"].

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I always think there are two reasons for making sure the crime stats are right. Firstly, you want to know what we are talking about, what the trend is, whether things are going up generally or down over a year, the strategic issue. At a managerial or policing level, you need to know, if you are in charge of Newham, what is happening. It is no good having crime going through the roof down on the borough road and the local borough commander not knowing what is happening, so you need that stat to work out where you want to target your officers and what you are going to do about it. Secondly, broadly, you want to know whether those crimes are going up or down. We need some audit for the former - what we are going to do about fighting crime - and accountability bodies need some reassurance about whether that process is accurate.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): We will return to this, no doubt, at regular intervals in the future.

John Biggs (AM): Yes, the sunny uplands of outsourcing. As part of your business plan, you are looking to outsource services as part of the drive to cut costs by 20%.

The first question is a quasi-ideological question. Is the outsourcing designed to make the saving or is it part of a business that makes sense in its own right?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): John, I will remain consistent on this and it is something --

John Biggs (AM): That makes a change. Good.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No, it does not. I am always consistent, actually.

John Biggs (AM): I am just winding you up.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): It is just that you choose to wind me up, exactly. It is Christmas time. We should have a constructive discussion.

The topic is wrongly labelled. This is not about outsourcing. The Metropolitan Police Service has already made a decision before I assumed this office. Previous Commissioners were very comfortable with the outsourcing of particular services. That has happened as a matter of record. This Commissioner has made it very, very clear that there is an irreducible core of policing that will not be outsourced under any circumstances and the Mayor and I stand behind that. That is absolutely right.

What we believe in is that the process of market testing, benchmarking and competitive tendering - that is essentially putting in-house services and supporting in-house bids where necessary and where it makes sense against the market competitively - can drive out unnecessary cost, deliver value for money for the taxpayer, and a better service for the Metropolitan Police Service. We are looking at that in a number of areas where we believe that can be the case, so this is a process we are embarking upon which is not driven by ideology at all. It is driven by a pragmatic sense of where you can make significant savings through a competitive process.

John Biggs (AM): I do not believe much of that. You cannot have it both ways. You are part of an administration with a political flavour to it and I do not have any problem with the principle that your political priorities drive where you are going.

The next question, then, is about how you have looked around the field at what other people are doing and comparatively understood their mistakes and the opportunities. I take it that your intention is to outsource up to £500 million worth of services and through that to achieve savings in the order of £100 million. Is that right?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): John, no. The intention is to competitively tender £500 million worth of services.

John Biggs (AM): Even if they are more expensive, you might be happy to still --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The process of tendering competitively, as you know because you have a local government background - and you pretend not to know, but I know you know, John - is that you start --

John Biggs (AM): We live in an inquisitorial political context.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): --Yes, but I think the public deserves to be informed rather than you trying to shift this into a rather anodyne, almost 1980s-style ideological discussion which leads us absolutely nowhere.

What I have learned, actually, from other forces because I am new to the landscape of how the police have engaged with the market is that they have tended to go in what I would describe euphemistically as 'blob outsourcing': "This is an area where we believe the market can do something for us. Here is a load of services I am not particularly interested in because I am interested in policing, my back and middle office. Please run them for me. Here is the cost base and then take the cost out". Actually, what we have learned, particularly in local

government which has been doing this for 30 or 40 years, is that the process of competitively tendering those processes ensures that the in-house service has every chance to drive out unnecessary cost and make itself competitive. That is the process the Metropolitan Police Service is embarking on in a number of areas. They are actually thinking of the back office and how you can take out costs.

Even the borough where I became a local authority leader, if you say I am driven by ideology, areas like human resources (HR) remained in-house and are still in-house today.

John Biggs (AM): Good. This is useful. Carry on. Do not get excited.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Areas like IT, the previous Labour administration decided to outsource through a partnership company and I was given that as something I had to manage. I do not think this cut is as simple as you would like to paint it. It is a process of recognising the value of competition in driving down cost and commissioning services. It is important for the Metropolitan Police Service that we think right across the piece that we are delivering services to the public and those services can be tendered effectively.

John Biggs (AM): You think Lincolnshire had it wrong?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am not looking, frankly, to any of the models as the solution on how to engage the market. Packaging things up as a lump and going to the market and saying, "Sort my problems out", is not the way to approach this particular problem.

John Biggs (AM): Lincolnshire had it wrong, then, by London standards?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): We are certainly taking the approach that I have outlined and I am not going to comment on Lincolnshire, but I do not think we have anything specifically to learn from organisations that simply say, "Here is a range of services. Please provide them for me through a single prime contractor". That is not a model that we are going to look at.

John Biggs (AM): The only thing you have learned from other police forces is what not to do, then?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): What we have learned is that that approach - which the Metropolitan Police Service in some ways had wrong with technology and I am saying this as an outsider looking at the Metropolitan Police Service - is not a process that we are embarking on where you simply say, "Let us outsource the service and retain an in-house team", and actually double your costs.

The key to it is to think about the services you want to provide, having a very strong client commissioning function internally that cannot be outsourced under any circumstances and, for complex supply chains often, working with the market sometimes to manage a complex supply

chain. For instance, a decision that has been made is around facilities management where you have a partner that will be managing that supply chain more effectively. Then think about how you drive out unnecessary costs in the services around facilities management. I know you are an absolute champion of the shared services agenda and, when you structure contracts, enabling contracts that can be shared across the Greater London Authority (GLA) family. Indeed, the facilities management contract is one which other functional bodies can step into and use.

John Biggs (AM): It happens, Stephen, that I think that is a very thoughtful series of answers and by provoking you we have actually had some useful stuff out of you--

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Do not do it too often.

John Biggs (AM): It is Christmas. Perhaps there is a modicum of goodwill there. Seriously, it is thoughtful stuff. Is there a written form to your thoughts? Do you have a strategy that is guiding you on this?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes. There is, in a sense, a move towards defining a commissioning strategy which enables the Metropolitan Police Service to decide which services are there to be commissioned, and a process and a timetable by which you will benchmark and then competitively tender a number of services. In that sense, there is a plan.

John Biggs (AM): All right. Can we see that and understand it?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I will certainly share with you the documentation of the plan as it stands today.

John Biggs (AM): Who within the Metropolitan Police Service is championing this? Is it you?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I would think it is the two gentlemen to my left, to my extreme left, the Deputy Commissioner.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Not politically, of course.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No, I am not commenting on your politics.

John Biggs (AM): I think most people are at your extreme left, Stephen.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I suppose almost everything that Stephen said. For us we have had a history of outsourcing. It is not as though the Metropolitan Police Service has been immune to outsourcing, as John put it. There has been a history of outsourcing.

John Biggs (AM): I am sure that is true, yes.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

Certainly, you quote Lincolnshire and I am not going to comment on Lincolnshire, but for me --

John Biggs (AM): Why is everyone scared of commenting on Lincolnshire?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not know enough about it, really.

John Biggs (AM): It is an innocuous place. I am sure they will not mind.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

The principle of the thing for me is that there is an irreducible core of policing. The laying on of hands and enforcement of the law is vitally important and the police officers do it. That is why Parliament gives them those powers. Investigating crime is fundamental to why the police are here. That is important. If you are asking me, we will have a strategy, but when 5.25 million telephone calls come into our call centres, I expect to have some accountability to you about whether we deal with that properly. Personally, I do not want to offshore it, perhaps literally, to someone else. For me, these are some fundamental, core issues that policing is about and I would fight to keep those within our grasp. For the custody people, nearly 300,000 are taken into our care, so --

John Biggs (AM): Yes, absolutely, whereas in Lincolnshire custody has been to an extent outsourced.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

That is their choice, but I am giving you my professional view.

John Biggs (AM): You will not be doing that in London?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): It

is a vital thing for which I should be accountable directly, not through a contract or anything else. That for me is part of my irreducible core. The second thing is that this new process allows --

John Biggs (AM): Do you have a settled view on the irreducible core, then? You have included custody within the irreducible core. Are there other things - which are ideally written down, so we do not delay the meeting - which fit within that?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

The list is really patrol, investigation, call centres and custody. I could go on, but they are the four major ones or the four major areas.

The second point I would like to make is that what this new process gives us, as Stephen has said, is the opportunity for in-house bids to be made. The old system never had that.

Therefore, if you run criminal justice or if you run a transport department, we would have to

give them some skills to get those bids together because they have never done it before, but it allows them, not to create a company and bid to us, but to internally see if they can improve on what they are doing. That is inherently a good thing. The public service, as you know, is constantly striving to get better without the benefit of competition, certainly for the police, so that is a way of driving things to be more efficient. This is, as I have said already, not a new process entirely because we already had £200 million to £250 million - depending on how you count it - outsourced and this is exposing a further £500 million to that rigour, whether it is outsourced or not.

Your starting question was about what we have learned from others and from our own experience, if you look at IT as an example. The first point is that we have to specify properly. In our fourth generation outsource contracts, the specification is far better.

Secondly, we know we need the skills to challenge the providers about their charging regimes. We have clear evidence that sometimes we ask for a thing to be done under a contract, the people charge us a rate and we are not in a position to challenge that rate or we have been overcharged. Sometimes it is blindingly obvious. If they put a wall in, you can work that out. Sometimes they are very technical things and we need expert advice to say, "Actually, you are overcharging there, we believe".

Thirdly, we need to manage it, not just run to the end of the contract. Fourthly, genuinely, if you have a good contract with a good provider, you can genuinely collaborate with that person to have a good contract, provided - and I come to my final point - the contract is incentivised for the provider to save money, not to spend our money. I am afraid there is clear evidence that we have had contracts that incentivise a provider to keep charging us. In fact, it is entirely possible, as we have seen particularly on the property side, to get somebody to drive the savings out on our behalf and to be incentivised to do that.

I do not think that we have individually come to this collective blinding flash. Sadly, it is probably a result of 20 years' development of the public service having outsourced contracts. For me, I think it is a great opportunity and we have to be open about the fact. In part, we have to do it. We should do it, but in part we have to do it. We have to do it. We have to find £600 million of savings. What better time do we have to drive forward change when sometimes we get trapped in the old ways of doing things?

John Biggs (AM): The point you make about monitoring is very important and I take that as, among other things, meaning you need to have quite a strong client within the organisation because quite often without outsourcing everyone is not in agreement. You outsource the monitoring as well and you then get yourself into a terrible pickle.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
Yes.

John Biggs (AM): There is the balance between quality and costs as well in terms of the evaluation. Some things may come in cheaper but you know, having looked at places, maybe even Lincolnshire.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): In Her Majesty's service, it is going to be essentially between those two. It will always be something like 60:40 or 40:60 depending on the service or 50:50. It will be in that range. It has always been important to get a balance.

John Biggs (AM): Obviously, I might as well declare that I am a trade unionist. I am very proud to be one. Clearly --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Which one?

John Biggs (AM): Currently the General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trade Union (GMB). Historically the GMB and Unite, but GMB at present--

Tony Arbour (AM): Do they pay good money?

John Biggs (AM): --The question is about terms and conditions. It is not the obvious one: we must defend the workers' rights in all circumstances, although I tend towards that inclination. It is about making sure we have well-motivated staff who feel that they have a stake and a part in the organisation and that is an important part of the evaluation process. Again, everyone is sort of nodding in agreement with this, some more than others, Sir Bernard a bit less than the other two, I think.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): We will all nod together, John. It is Christmas time--

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): There is a spectrum of nodding, John.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): --We were gauging your reaction, yes. We all want a demotivated workforce. No, of course we want a motivated workforce.

John Biggs (AM): Yes, of course we do. Presumably, also, we all love the European Union and we are somewhat beholden to its tendering regulations, but in addition to looking at best value in its wider sense, one needs to look at the past performance of contractors. You are willing to do that as well, one assumes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Absolutely. One of the biggest problems for the public sector are poorly-let contractors and suppliers that have not been properly managed in the past, not bringing in the expertise technically alongside the procurement expertise. One of the things that I would be broadly critical of the Metropolitan Police Service about is that we have not focused enough on that, but we are doing a lot to address that and that has been a collective effort.

John Biggs (AM): Finally from me because I have had quite a big run at this, it is about back office functions and sharing across the GLA group or, alternatively, perhaps seeing a peer group of fellow police authorities, although they tend to be scared of you because you are so big compared to the rest of them, as we find with the fire authorities. Are you going to preclude internal agreements as a consequence of your market testing exercise?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): No. As I think as the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime covered in the answer, if you look at the one that is live at the moment, the one around property services, which is what I would call a fourth generation contract, that is available to anyone else in the GLA family. For police colleagues outside London, they will look with interest. Going back to your key points, if they add value and if they are seen to provide quality, people may want to join them.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): The only thing I would say is that we all need to keep an eye on the fact that the value-for-money argument is a very big one. What money can you save? It is the point John makes: how do you also get quality? The benefit of getting something very big is often you are getting economies of scale.

The danger at times is becoming inflexible. Whether it is the fire brigade or education, we all have different priorities or different missions in a way, but they are broadly public servants. The only danger is, as you will know as well with political accountability, not all the political accountability will agree about something. The thought that you get trapped in a horrible bureaucracy - even more bureaucratic than we are - to change something that you need to change now is a danger for all of us to guard against. I agree that where we can share, we should.

John Biggs (AM): For the record, I was always as worried as hell by the Capgemini contract--.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Why did you sign the contract, John?

John Biggs (AM): I did not. It was before my time. Not because it is a bad contract but because of the sheer scale of it. It looked unwieldy and difficult to manage.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Commissioner, you mentioned your irreducible core and I am glad you mentioned custody because that is incredibly important. I am a doubter on outsourcing anyway, but there are things like IT. Occasionally, I can see it happening, but on custody I definitely cannot. I also cannot see it on criminal justice. That really does worry me because that relies on legitimacy, as Lord Stephens [former Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service] has described it in his recent report, and perhaps you would not get that with outsourcing. Is that part of your irreducible core as well?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): No, except to just explain what criminal justice means. For example, part of the criminal justice process is the cells. That is the part that I have said I would not see outsourced. A large chunk

of what we do around criminal justice is not the decision about whether or not we prosecute but the administration of the file, how it gets transferred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), how it then comes back to us and goes off to the courts, so the administration of justice, not the application of it, is where I see that there is potential for us getting better.

If we can do that internally, we have around 2,000 people dedicated to tracking all those prosecutions and fixed penalty tickets. That sounds like quite a lot of people to me out of about 50,000. That is about 4%, so it seems to me that there is some potential there for efficiency. Bearing in mind what the strategy says, if we can be more efficient with what we are doing by our people working better, supported by better IT, it may be there is no need for someone else to do it. It is entirely arguable that for the transmission of data between organisations and making sure that the files are right, there is an argument there to do what we do.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I think it is quite dangerous.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Sorry, can I just be clear. On the fixed penalty tickets, this is from memory, so excuse me. I think on the traffic side - speed cameras, etc - there were about 80,000 a year. What I am not saying is that, if it were outsourced, the outsourcer would decide whether the fixed penalties should get paid when someone complains. That is not their role. Actually, for administering the tickets and the call centre that can record when someone is concerned or pays, it seems entirely possible to administer it in a different way.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Actually, results on those tickets at the moment are quite poor, so it would be great if they could be improved, but I am not sure about outsourcing it. If you are expecting people to make internal bids, are you going to give them some help on doing that? That is quite a complex process. It sounds like a very, very good idea, but units might need help in doing that.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): That is what I was trying to say to John. What we are not going to do is train every manager in the Metropolitan Police Service to do it, but where a unit is being considered for that, we are looking at how we enable people to play a part in that. In a way, you could say they should be doing it anyway because they are the managers so they should be making it as efficient as possible, but in preparing for a bidding process we know we are going to have to give them some help. They are not used to it and it is not their usual thing to do. We can help as well in designing the process so that it does not become a bureaucracy. It should measure the things that we want to know about.

Tony Arbour (AM): First of all, can I preface any questioning by saying that last week I came up close and personal to Operation Safeway because I was visiting a constituent who lived in the next street to me and I cycled on the pavement and I was stopped by somebody from the Traffic Division on Operation Safeway. I want to say I took it like a man. I accepted the £50 ticket. I am sorry that there was no discount for instant payment.

The thing I want to say is that it worked absolutely like clockwork. The officer who stopped me explained precisely why he was doing it, what the operation was. It was an absolutely textbook operation. I was extremely impressed that everything was done automatically. He used his machine to print out the ticket and so on. He explained everything and I was strikingly impressed, indeed so impressed I was that I immediately emailed [Detective] Chief Superintendent Jones [Traffic Command, Metropolitan Police Service] to say that the thing works. As far as I am concerned, the thing worked absolutely correctly. Nevertheless, if you like, I am a sort-of-satisfied customer.

Various matters, as you know, have been raised in relation to this. The first question is really to the Metropolitan Police Service. How much resources have you allocated to this on a daily basis and how has it interrupted what normally happens as far as the ordinary role of the Traffic Division is concerned? I have to say I do not think it is terribly likely that in the normal course of events, a police motorcyclist all geared up is going to stop somebody riding a Raleigh Shopper on a suburban pavement. Can you tell me what resources are being allocated to this?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

We have about 2,300 officers and Community Support Officers (CSOs) who are dedicated to traffic policing generally either in the Safer Transport Command or the Traffic Department, so they are all playing a role in it. Every day, from the first day it was started, it is around 750 officers a day or something of that order during the day. We started off concentrating on 166 sites. I think we are down to about 60 at the moment. The idea is we will carry on as long as we can maintain this.

There have been two big benefits. I have to say you are the second public figure - I will not name the other one - who received a ticket and was complimentary about the way it was done and took it on the chin in the way that you described, so we are doing it the right way. In fact, this morning I was being driven from Radio 4 and we received one of these brochures which is handed out to everybody. We did not get it because we were driving badly, I believe.

It does explain quite clearly why we are doing it. I had not seen this before, but I thought it was quite reassuring. It also explains the laws as far as cyclists are concerned as well as motorists. We try to be informative and use education.

The indirect benefit that we have had is that some of the hot spots for where people have been hurt have also been hot spots for crime, so the high levels of patrolling have worked in different ways. People have said, "We have seen officers about", so it has worked at that level. We probably cannot keep it going forever, but I think we have learned something in the process of this. What we have tried to do is to say that we collectively have been concerned - as I am sure you have been - about the fact that there had been some deaths on the roads and it was anything that we could do immediately. There are still, clearly, other longer-term things that will need to be considered.

We have now issued over - I am just checking as we speak - 5,000 tickets, broadly two thirds to motorists and about one third to cyclists. I do not think that one has been preponderantly challenged. We have given a lot of advice. We have not just given out tickets. There has also been discretion issued as to whether or not people receive a ticket. Hopefully, people in

London have noticed it. In fact, I was talking to one of our staff this morning who is a cyclist and he believes - it is anecdotal; I do not know what you think - in fact that cyclists, for example, have started stopping at red lights. That is a good thing for their sakes as well as for other people's. Whether that is true or not I do not know, but there is some evidence that it has had an impact.

Tony Arbour (AM): That actually was my next question. How are you going to be able to demonstrate that all this effort has been effective?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

One of the things we will do is obviously look at the overall number of collisions. Number two is to look at the collisions at the points where we concentrated our efforts. I would try not to go too far because sometimes these stats take a while to gather, but it would be wise to just wait another month or so and get these stats together and see what impact it had. I believe there is some superficial evidence that it is working, but at least we are showing the people of London that we are doing something about it.

Tony Arbour (AM): Do you think that issuing fines rather than simply stopping cyclists and telling them that they have done something wrong is, if you like, going to have a greater effect than simply being stopped? I have to tell you I have been a cyclist for I do not know how many thousand years and this is only the second time I have ever been stopped by a policeman.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

Firstly, we can show that we have not only issued tickets. We have given advice, so we have done both. I say this for the criminal justice generally. You could say, "Why do you put people in prison? You could just give them advice". It has to do with the seriousness of the offence, the reaction of the individual and sometimes the history of the scene or their own history. If they have an offending pattern, then we tend to give a more serious outcome. There is no doubt that a financial penalty makes people think twice.

Secondly, if we think about cyclists, one of the challenges with cyclists if you are car driver is that you run the risk of losing your licence. You may get points on your licence as well as a financial penalty and that is meant to deal with the fact that some drivers can afford to pay the fine and therefore disregard the driving behaviour, so the two things are in place. As you know, for cyclists, neither the vehicle is licenced, nor the individual. The only thing you are left with is the potential for a financial penalty, or something more serious if someone is badly hurt. It is a reasonable response and it certainly gets their attention.

Tony Arbour (AM): The London Cycling Campaign has complained that officers who are involved in this have been giving out to offenders inappropriate advice. Among the things which are cited is that cyclists are being told that they should be wearing helmets and, of course, that is not a compulsory thing. We have had the case, you will recall, of the cycle which had been adapted to carry children in the front and the suggestion there. I know that anecdotes are not really the way to do it, but certainly the policeman who spoke to me was very well informed on the matter. Are you certain that your officers are appropriately briefed on these matters?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

What we have found is we have had to brief them more just for this operation alone and sometimes officers have forgotten their powers and they have forgotten, for example, what *The Highway Code* says. I know you have not had the opportunity to have a look, but this actually reminds people that rule 211 in *The Highway Code* says motorists should keep a careful lookout for cyclists and rule 212 says when passing a cyclist, motorists must give them plenty of room. It is not an option. They must do it. It gives similar advice to cyclists about not going down the sides of large vehicles or to take care when they do.

What we have had to do is (1) remind officers about what *The Highway Code* says - and we all probably need that at times - and (2) remind officers about the law. We have had at least one of the sites where our officer has misdirected cyclists from what was in fact a shared space on the pavement onto the road. That was brought to our attention. One of the traffic inspectors visited the site and saw that we were wrong and we put it right for the briefing for officers there later. By *The Highway Code*, by the law and by each site, we have tried to keep our officers briefed. Occasionally, we get it wrong, but broadly they do understand the law.

Tony Arbour (AM): The long-term objective of this, as I understand it, is that the Mayor wants to make London cycle-friendly. Do you think that this operation is going to contribute to making London friendlier to cyclists?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not think it will hinder it. I cannot see it as a bad thing to advise someone to look after their own safety. If they are breaking the law, then they have to take the consequences. It seems to me most cyclists want to do it safely. They want to do it within the law, as should motorists. I do not think it is a bad thing to remind people of that.

We all have to accept that over time, particularly in London with the congestion and the numbers of vehicles, police officers become inured to seeing bad behaviour. There is a danger that they just ignore it and think, "Somebody else will do that". Who is going to do it? It is reminding officers of their powers - your point - and it is also reminding them that having the powers is one thing but doing something about it is another, so we expect them to play a part in that safety. I would think that generally people would think it makes it therefore a safer environment for motorists and cyclists and therefore a better thing and London would be better for it.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I am very supportive of this. I am just very concerned about the fact that cyclists feel they are being got at and I did watch an operation this morning where it was only cyclists who were being given that leaflet. I am very glad you were given that, but I do wonder if they spotted you and thought, "Here is a chance for a promotion", or something.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not believe so. My belief is that the CSO who did it - it was just beyond the BBC - and saw her go up to the driver saying she never looked in the back. I believe she did not and I looked at the other vehicle and she gave it to others, I promise.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Where was this morning, I saw a vehicle pull into an advanced stop line (ASL). That vehicle was not given a leaflet. As far as I am concerned, in fact, he should have been charged because it is illegal to pull into an ASL when the lights are red. I am very concerned that there is this sort of imbalance still.

I was going to read you out some of the many emails and tweets I have had, but probably people have said most of it. Can I just confirm? *The Highway Code* is not law, is it?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): No, it is advisory, but what --

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): It is advisory, exactly, so --

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): It is advisory in the sense that it is common sense and it is helpful, but it is also advisory in the sense of a prosecution decision. If someone is said to have driven carelessly or dangerously, whether they have caused harm or not, if they have driven in accordance with *The Highway Code* they have a good mitigation or defence. If they have not driven in accordance with it, they run the risk of being prosecuted even more so. That is the standard.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): You say you have updated the briefing but I just wonder if it needs constant reiterations because people are still being advised that they should be wearing hi-vis and helmets and that just is not true.

Are you confident that nobody has been fined for something that is not a criminal offence?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Are we giving out things inappropriately?

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Yes.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I suspect there would be the odd one, but generally they are pretty good. If someone does feel they have been wronged, there is a process by which they can complain by email or sending in the ticket and a senior person will review it. If we have video, particularly at junctions, we will have a look at that video and see whether or not the officer was right. We have become fairer. I do not have the figure, but I can find it for you. Where people appeal, we often agree with them, so I do not think we say, "Just because you were issued a ticket we will not consider it".

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): It is making a difference because I used to be the last cyclist standing at red lights and I am definitely not anymore. I am often at the back of a group, so I really do hope it is improving for all road users. Are you considering enforcing 20 miles an hour?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

We already do to a large extent. The way we tend to do it because of the volumes involved is that there is a piece of kit. I do not know if people have seen this but there is a box that gets put on the side of the road and two wires are draped across the road. That will give over a period of time a graph of the speed of the vehicles passing that point. You often find a standard distribution, so there is 1% at 80 miles an hour and generally people under the limit. What we tend to do is put that box down because people often think vehicles are travelling at a different speed to what they are. The box records in that area for a period of time, say seven days, whether it is showing a very high rate of speeders and then we enforce after that. We do that and Traffic are the ones who generally do it.

We also have the possibility for community members, if they want to, to be trained up on a [radar speed] gun. They cannot prosecute but they can record details of individuals who are often local people and who are exceeding the speed limit and then we will at least advise them about their actions. It would act as a warning should we later take a prosecution against that person.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): There are councils now that are thinking of going for a default 20 miles an hour and they come up again and again against borough commanders who say, "You can do that but we are not going to enforce it". Could you perhaps consider giving some advice? All these borough commanders talk about ACPO advice, which is in fact changing.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

We will do that. The only thing they may be doing, to be fair to them, is of course the more extensive the 20 mile an hour limit, the less likely we are to be able to enforce, not a lack of will to enforce. It is just the extent given their resources and given the fact that over the last 20 years we have seen traffic departments diminish and diminish to a level where they struggle to do everything. That is what they are saying. It is the scale of the task, not whether it is a good or a bad thing to do. The things that work on the whole, as you know, are cameras. I have yet to find somebody who will knowingly drive past a camera at speed.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): At the Transport Committee, we did cycling last week and Transport for London gave us some figures on the one third/two thirds of penalty charge notices (PCNs) issued to cyclists and other motorists. One of the interesting things they talked about was how if cyclists have been stopped when they did not have lights on they were given a PCN, but if they came in within three days and showed they had lights, the PCN was cancelled. Do you have any idea of figures around how many have been cancelled and, if you do not at the moment, are you able to give us that data? I found that a really positive thing. It was trying to get behaviour change.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not. If I am honest, it would be a bit more generous than I would be, only for their own sake. If the light was broken, it might be a slightly different view, rather than not having one, but that is my view. We will check on the figures. I do not know the answer to the question.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): I thought it was really positive in terms of behaviour change that you were doing that, so I would like to see some figures if you have some.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): In answering that, I am not the cause of it. That is all.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): Thank you.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): In fact, an anecdote. My partner has been stopped twice for not having his lights on. He has working lights. He has been stopped twice for not having his lights on and he said, "It is daylight", and the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) said, "I think you should have your lights on". There, it is almost a matter of opinion. It is very subjective.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): You are right, except that there is one thing about it which is not an opinion, which is when the lighting-up times are. These are published. When day and night start is a declared thing by statute, so it is very clear when you have to have your lights on. There is a secondary test, which is that if during the daylight hours visibility is reduced by rain or for whatever reason, you are supposed to put your lights on for no other reason on a cycle than that it keeps you safe. I am not going to get into this, but it seems to me quite a sensible thing to put your lights on as a cyclist, the same way you see motorcyclists who have great benefits in safety by having their headlights on all day. I would not argue all day, if it was me. I would just put them on.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I was not going to bring it up, but --

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): The battery runs out a bit quicker, but --

Tony Arbour (AM): Are there any more confessions?

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I have not been stopped yet.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): -- It seems to me the CSO might have been well motivated to keep safe that person by putting their lights on.

John Biggs (AM): I am sorry I was absent for some central part of this item, but obviously I have anxieties because of what has happened in the East End. Clearly, that was a hot spot in terms of anxieties about cycle incidents. I have noticed lots of people hanging around and stopping people, but clearly in the end there needs to be a behavioural change. Have you talked about this already?

Are you confident that you have the balance right in terms of cyclists' behaviour in the East End, particularly around the junctions that have been so problematic? Simply placing officers

there has probably helped a bit of behavioural change. Do you recognise that motorists need to change their behaviour and attitude as well?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I think so. We would always take advice. If people think that we have the balance wrong, we would have a look. It has been a pretty impressive attempt to talk to lots of people. We have a precise figure here - I will read it out - which is that 116,844 road users have been talked to in three weeks. It is a bit too precise for me, but it is a large number. Clearly, people have been out there talking to people and, clearly, people have understood that and heard it.

During that time, we have issued 6,500 fixed penalty tickets and reported a further 300 people by summons. Where it has been more serious, taking the point earlier, first of all advice. If that does not work, a fixed penalty. If it is thought to be more serious, then 300 people are going through a court process. Of that number, cyclists have been given 3,400 fixed penalties and 16 have been reported for process.

Then we have been giving advice out particularly to large vehicles because what we know is that where people have died, particularly on a cycle, it has often been as a result of a collision with a large vehicle, so we have actually targeted those vehicles, giving out leaflets and advice. Of course, many of the drivers who come to London with large vehicles do not live here and they are not always used to driving these roads, you can get foreign drivers who are not always used to the UK roads, either, so we have tried to use it as an education thing as well as a prosecution thing. That has been a very significant number of people from large vehicles who have been talked to. About 7,300 large goods vehicles and buses have been stopped and talked to.

We have tried to get the balance right, but if it is thought that in any area we could do more, we will have a look.

John Biggs (AM): I do not want to delay the meeting more than two more minutes, if possible. I know that there is a bit of a backlash against cyclists at the moment as well, so the popular opinion in boozers and so on - I do not go to many - is that they need to learn how to behave themselves, they are jumping lights, they weave in and out, they are reckless and they put their headphones on. How many penalty notices - remind us - have been issued to pedestrians who have caused difficulties for cyclists or to motorists who cut up cyclists?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): As far as I am aware, none, because it is not a criminal offence to jaywalk. This is not the United States of America.

John Biggs (AM): It is not a criminal offence to cut up a cyclist, either.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): It is not a criminal offence here to negligently or recklessly walk into the road. It is to obstruct the highway, but it is not to be careless in the way that you think about other road users, not in this country.

John Biggs (AM): That is interesting. As our streets become more animated with non-motorised uses, we will start looking at behavioural issues in the round. I do not want to penalise pedestrians. I do not want a headline that says, "Biggs penalises pedestrians", but clearly there are expectations of behaviour from all people. The most important one, in my view, are people in motorised vehicles because, when you have a tonne of metal around you, you can kill people without even scratching yourself.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): If you could just delay that proposal for a short time until we have got over this campaign, we are struggling to keep this one going.

John Biggs (AM): No, I am not advocating penalising pedestrians. I am advocating a comprehensive programme, rather than a short, sharp thing, which is about changing the behaviour of motorists and other road users, but thank you.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): What we have learned here is that we may not be able to sustain this level for years, but what we have learned is that we can sustain it for a short time and then keep reminding people about their obligations and education.

John Biggs (AM): OK. Can I just signal one other thing which will come up in the future, about the liability of cyclists for incidents or injuries that they may cause? Obviously, this is not a popular subject, but it is something that does come up. There is a general libertarian view that says that we do not need to register cyclists and I tend to that view as well. As the numbers increase and anxieties increase, one can conceive of us moving in that direction. Do you have a view on this?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not think I would express too much publicly. The main issue is not whether in principle it is right or wrong but, bureaucratically, it could be very difficult to enforce. That is a major issue. It would be a cost. I suppose what you would have to show is that the problem is so great that it is worthy of all that administration. I am not sure it is yet.

John Biggs (AM): No? OK. I would tend to agree with that.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Moving on to the student protests, do you feel that the police response was proportionate?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Just to remind people, what Jenny is talking about is the events at Senate House and the University of London Students Union on 4 and 5 December. As people may know, there was a sit-in, which had been arranged for reasons that I will not go into. It is not really for us to take a view on that. I believe that the university asked for the people to leave. Security tried to get them out. On that first day, we made about four arrests. Generally, there were not too many problems and eventually that protest subsided. It was a more difficult situation on 5 December when officers were facing more challenges. On that day, we made 41 arrests. There have been

some suggestions by some of the protesters that in fact officers were aggressive on the day. We have now had three complaints and we are looking into those.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I read somewhere this morning that the police officer who has been seen on YouTube punching somebody is not going to be --

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): That is not correct. I checked before I came in because, like you, I saw that. I was looking at the BlackBerry. We have three complaints around assaults and oppressive behaviour. They are all still currently under investigation.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Where is the point at which you get called in because the university staff cannot cope?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): We can talk in general rather than in detail because I just do not know whether some of the arrests we have made are relevant to this particular case. What generally happens is that clearly, this is private property, on the whole. If it is in the City, it is generally within private property, which is a civil trespass. The occupier generally has the right to ask people to leave or to remove them and we generally get involved when there is that type of dispute is if there is a risk of or actual breach of the peace. That is when we tend to get involved. Of course, if people then move into a public area and there is the potential for breach of the peace or other offences. That is probably when our more usual powers kick in.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I actually went on the demo on 11 December and it was quite amazingly relaxed. There were a lot of people were saying inflammatory things, but actually the general feeling was quite relaxed and so on. There was not a police officer to be seen, which I thought was absolutely great. How many arrests were there on 11 December?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I am not sure there were many at all, if any, on 11 December, actually.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I think there were one or two, from memory.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Certainly very few. As people may know, of course, the protesters were in different places, we did our best to facilitate protests but not allow people to break the law.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I thought it was handled pretty well on 11 December because there was no provocation. Obviously, you know that if protesters see riot police, the whole level of anxiety rises and everybody gets more aggressive, so it worked very well. I would also like to commend AC Rowley who did stay in touch with me and tell me what was going on. In fact, also, from Traffic, Chief Superintendent Glyn Jones has been good about keeping me up-to-date on all the Operation Safeway stuff and it probably does stop me saying a lot of things I might say. It is quite a good tactic on their part, probably.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
We like to keep people informed.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Of these arrests, how many people have actually been charged? I am curious if the arrest is a sort of precautionary activity.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I honestly do not know, but we can find out for you.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): We are dealing now with a whole new group of students who are going to be politicised even more if they have bad experiences with the police. It just seems to me this is not a very healthy thing to happen for London if we start getting more. A lot of students who were involved in the previous protests in 2010 have probably moved on by now, so this is a new generation of students. If they get politicised and become anti-police, it is not good for anybody.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I should not say too much about these particular cases and we will treat them in exactly the way we treat everyone else in terms of prosecution.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): I want to move on to a different area around child sexual exploitation. I am sure you will have seen the Children's Commissioner for England's report, *If Only Someone Had Listened*, on this very subject. Within that report, they found really concerning trends in the response of partner agencies in this area. Local responses lacked leadership, failed to commit adequate resources, had limited strategic planning and so on. There were some really staggering things that came out of the report as well when they talked about how it is almost widely recognised that there are paedophiles who prey on young children but the idea that children abuse each other, perhaps in gangs or groups, is rarely acknowledged. The study also found that one in 12 of the young people interviewed said that they were likely to report crimes of sexual abuse, so there is clearly a huge issue there. Do these findings really resonate with your experience working in partnership with others who would like to tackle this very serious issue?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):
None of us can be absolutely sure about this because of the lack of reporting and recording. It is quite difficult.

We do know that it certainly chimes around the gangs. We already know that particularly with young girls and women there is an issue. One of the groups we work with, which gives us some information, is the Safer London Foundation, which is the Metropolitan Police Service's independent charity. This year, we asked them to help around gangs and young girls to see what we could do because mainly they were victims rather than offenders. We know that this year they worked with over 1,000 vulnerable young women and girls, so that is one group. Bearing in mind we think there are just over 4,000 people in the gangs, this is quite a significant number.

Over 200 boys have been put into a group work programme that models healthy, non-violent, intimate relationships. This is their term. It “challenges hyper-masculinity and promotes positive images of women and men”. That is quite a long sentence, but we all know what that means, which is not only helping the girls but challenging the boys and the men about their behaviour when they are in gangs.

There have been over 60 parents and foster carers who have gone through an education programme and who have been in a similar position. There have been over 700 people trained as practitioners and professionals working with vulnerable young women, including our own Metropolitan Police Service officers.

What we can show is that that is a cohort of people. I am not saying they are the only people, but there is a significant number. We struggle to identify exactly how many, but we acknowledge the report and say that we think it is representative of the problem.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): One of the issues in the report is about the issue of professionals working together and perhaps they do not fully understand the realities of child exploitation. The inquiry team continued to hear references to children “putting themselves at risk”, rather than the perpetrators being the risk to children. Do you think attitudes are changing amongst your officers and how are you tackling this issue of myth around victims and perpetrators?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Part of that training was actually for some of our divisional officers as well, so we are actually getting an outside body to train our people to be aware of that. There is no doubt there is a risk. One of the things we ought to be proud of in London is that the 32 boroughs, the local authorities, the police and others have some pretty strong relationships and some good systems in place. We would all accept we are not perfect all the time, but there is a genuine attempt to identify the youngsters who are at risk and do something about it. We have some good systems, but it does remain a significantly under-reported area.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): You said you had 700 professionals trained and that included police officers. Are you looking to roll that out wider?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): We can do. It will only be limited by the ability of us to do it by time and cost. Certainly, it is something that we will continue to do. We have concentrated initially on the specialists. You could say, “What about the response officers and the neighbourhood officers?” The only answer is that all the time there are so many things for that group to be trained in from psychiatric illness to these issues we are talking about now like domestic violence, so we tend to train on recruit. At refresher time, we cover these things. That is my only hesitation to saying we will roll it out more. DVDs as well are a good way of getting over the simple point, as you said, the important one, that the child is the victim, not the cause.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): It is very important that your eyes and ears, your frontline police, are regularly reminded about some of these issues. How are you working with the London Safeguarding Children Board around this issue of child sexual exploitation? Are there specific things that you are taking responsibility for to try to tackle the problem?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): First of all, the Metropolitan Police Service, as you know, is represented on all 32 local safeguarding boards. At a London level, the Chairman of the Safeguarding Board has agreed and signed off that protocol, so we actually have a protocol between us that is common across the 32. We are represented at borough level and also at detective chief inspector level from the specialist unit, which is serious crime and organised Five, which you will know. We sit on various subgroups, including where there is a child sexual exploitation (CSE) subgroup, and have different levels of involvement depending on the borough. Locally, in the boroughs, they are driving forward the implementation of that CSE protocol. Having had that report, we have signed off the protocol with our partners and now we are doing our best to make sure we implement it.

We have also introduced a safeguarding dataset for all 32 London boroughs to assist those boards in capturing and comparing key performance data in relation to children. One of the problems in the past has been where the data is and how you can compare. We hope in time that will allow us to compare across London and also see where this new protocol is working. There are some fundamental building blocks that put us in a good position, and show that we have broadly agreed that that report has some good ideas and we have tried to do something about it.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): Excellent. Thank you very much for that. Can I move to the Deputy Mayor on this? How does the Mayor's Strategy on Violence Against Women and Girls help set a framework to tackle the issues that are raised in this report?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): As well as refreshing the strategy - that was launched at the end of last month - on the same day we published a strategic framework, a toolkit for boroughs to help them in this particular area. That is something that is alongside the strategy.

In addition, how we are helping as well as having a toolkit or a framework - and we also have a seat on the London Safeguarding Children Board - is resource some of the projects that the Commissioner mentioned, so we actually support the Safer London Foundation in Croydon with a project around prevention.

I think the really important thing is to ensure that not just the police but all the agencies - so particularly those agencies in the multi-agency safeguarding hubs - are aware of the issues and are able to ensure that they are alive to them and that the referral pathways work. That is something that the strategic framework is designed to help.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): How are you challenging partners to make sure that everything is far better co-ordinated, to try to tackle this issue?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The challenge will come to see the response to the strategic framework and ensuring that the toolkit is adopted on the ground. Also, we need to make sure that we collectively find a framework for seeing that we are aware of the risk. I think that is something that is in development. One of the things for violence against women and girls in general is that we try to find a way of being able to measure the impact that we have in these particular areas, and this particular one is particularly hard because of the under reporting and under recording that the Commissioner mentioned. We have to find ways of building that confidence. That has to be an intrinsic part of what we do.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): I think the report stated that it is really important for pre-emptive action to break up networks that exploit children rather than waiting for a child revealing that they have been exploited, so it is that pre-emptive action.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): What progress is MOPAC making to try to bring everyone together to develop an approach to really help identify these young women who are at risk and to do work with them?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): At the moment, within the Violence Against Women's and Girls' (VAWG) panel there is Carlene Firman who I think used to work with the Office of the Children's Commissioner, London boroughs and the Metropolitan Police Service. She is now with the Ms Understood Partnership. Our task, we are thinking about this issue to find the proactive identification. That is something that they are working on and I am happy to report back to the Committee on progress with that particular strand of work.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Deputy Chair): We are going to be doing a lot more work on this area in the New Year, so we will pursue more detail then. Thank you.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): I have some questions for the Commissioner or Deputy and then a couple for MOPAC. Can I just start off and say to the Commissioner, over the years from my own professional background as a health visitor, I have been involved in working with police and in partnerships and also in my association with my boroughs over the years. I really do not think that the police staff gets the credit for the work that they do. I would really like to put that on record, in congratulating your staff for the work that they do in this most challenging area, and they have been doing it for some time.

When you look at some of the commendations in the work that are done at borough level, it is in this mostly. I was recently privileged to see some members of the Metropolitan Police Service being commended for the absolute excellent work they are doing to stop this criminality.

One of the things that the report highlighted was this confusion over whether sexual exploitation is predominantly a child protection or crime disorder issue. You could say it does not really matter, but I think it does because the report has highlighted it and it seems to me that if you had somebody veering one way there would be one way of dealing with it. If one

of your boroughs or whoever decided, “Oh well, we will take the criminal disorder way” they would operate in a different way, whereas another borough would say, “No, this is predominantly child protection” and maybe not prioritise it as another borough would. What clarity have you given to the force about this? Where do you sit on this?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I think it is both and not either. What I think we are weakest at - I think you have been kind enough to comment on the child protection issues - I think we are strong but not perfect on that. I think where we could be criticised is whether we go out proactively to see are there groups of men, usually, who are targeting girls. I think that is where, if you regard it as a crime issue - we go looking for phone thieves; we go looking for car thieves and burglars - we would need to do more work.

I suspect that one of the reasons is that - remember where we started today - what normally prompts our investigation and our patrol is the report of the crime. Where we are vulnerable here is we are not getting reports of the crime. I suspect actually spotting that bad behaviour we could probably be better at targeting these people.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Would you not be dealing with stereotypes then because, again, there is an issue about a victim being a certain type, a perpetrator being a certain type. How would you go about targeting a sexual predator?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I think it is quite hard because, as you know, what you often have is perhaps groups of males and groups of young females. To some extent, that is normal behaviour depending on the preference of the individuals. It could be young males and males but generally we are talking about males predating, I think, on young females.

To some extent in any community that is what is going to happen. As people grow up, you find people looking for partners and they will have that sort of behaviour. Sometimes they group into not gangs but just groups of friends, and what you have to spot is when it transmits over from being a normal, maturing relationship to somebody who is targeting youngsters who are vulnerable and either using drugs, alcohol, whatever, just their age, to dominate the individual.

I think you are right that it is not going to be easy to spot. I suppose what we have to do is talk to people in a community and they will tell us what is happening. I do not think it is something where generally one community will go to a borough in the north, having lived in the south. They are not going to wander around doing this. It is going to be local. It is going to happen locally and generally people will know who the bad guys are.

I think provided we are talking to people then we generally pick that up. Whether or not we are attuned enough to listen carefully I am not sure.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): There are some other ways to pick up without stereotyping. For instance, we know that the experience over recent public incidents has been very much around the targeting of vulnerable

people. There is a lot of work being done at the moment at a borough level about repeat missing persons and what drives it, and particularly with missing persons from care homes or from assisted placements, to try to understand if there is something more going on there. With that sort of analysis I think you can begin - as the Commissioner said - to get a feel for: do we have a problem?

I think you are absolutely right. First of all, it is that recognition of the problem and then, to some extent I am pretty ambivalent over who deals with it but that we address the problem, either in a child protection way or an investigative approach. I think there will always be a balance with those. First and foremost, it is about protecting the person and then tackling the perpetrator.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Let me carry on because the report also identified an area around how victims are treated because this is as important for so many reasons that we do need to go into. One of the quotes in the report was a young person reported, "They made it feel like it was my fault". This can mean that they are then not adequately protected. The police, in particular, noted that they struggled to engage with children and young people and to know what support to provide to victims.

You have spoken about the work coming from the foundation, but what more do you plan to do following the release of this report?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): First of all, we will reflect more on it because I do not think it is straightforward. What we know is we have changed our neighbourhood policing model, which I know there has been a debate about but the genuine intention has been to get more officers walking and meeting communities. It will take a couple of years to get everybody there but that is the first intention.

The second thing is we already have officers dedicated to schools and we have officers in schools. I think there are over 900 secondary schools within London and we have officers dedicated to over 200 of them. If I can get my way we will get a few 100 more, ideally all of them, but with a genuine intent to engage with the young people in secondary and feeder primary schools.

Then thirdly we have quite an active strategy around engagement for young people. We can always do more but from Keeping Internet Kids Safe (KIKS) to all the other projects we have, they are very important ways that police officers are seen as people and not just as a uniform. We are always trying to promote more of that.

I think at a time when we are trying to cut if we are not careful we de-prioritise that and there would be a risk of that for the Borough Commanders and for the Metropolitan Police Service. I think we have to keep an eye on that. There is a determination - for the reasons you say - to keep talking to young people particularly. It is not always easy for us to engage with them.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): A last question I think to the Deputy Commissioner. It is in two parts. What is the linkage between the 900 school officers, the officers who are involved in

child protection, then the regular crew who would do the crime and disorder thing? Where does this feed up the chain because I cannot make a chart of it?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

Right. I mean for information like this it all goes through our briefing system and our intelligence system, so the information flows through. You will hear officers talking about, "Have you put a Crimint on?" What they mean is, are they putting information on a system. That system goes through internally in terms of that.

At a borough level it works through the supervision levels. At a central level there is always a decision about when does it move from a borough to a central team and those sorts of things. Those are managed much more by relationships and discussions than saying that if you get three offenders it goes to a central team; if you only have two it stays local. That is much more a debate and discussion probably with the Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) on a borough with the central team in terms of the work around it.

The way the information works - and that is why the point around the local policing is so important - it comes literally from a PCSO outside a school, let's say, this afternoon as school breaks up picking up some little piece of information all the way for something that comes through a safeguarding meeting or a particular child protection issue. The way that we get visibility on that is through a criminal intelligence system and briefings.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): That is tracked and that is monitored by --

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

That is tracked and monitored so we can --

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): -- the sergeant on the team?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

The sergeant on the team and the briefing sheets are there for all of us to look at and see. I could go back now or go on my laptop and tap into the briefing for Enfield this afternoon, whatever it might be.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service):

One of the things that is important that London has and not everywhere has, are these MASH-London Safe guarding Children's Board centres that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime referred to earlier. You have these multi-agency hubs where you have individuals from each organisation who have immediate access to their own IT, their own intelligence, and sit in the room. The best examples I heard was where a child has not turned up for school one morning, where we went the previous night to a domestic violence incident and we found out that someone went missing two weeks' ago, and we had not had a report.

It seems to me that all the agencies have people sat in that room able to talk about a child as a person not as, "We went to a command and control incident last night. You have an education report. We have a social service report". I think that is an immediacy that the rest of the

country does not have. Often it will be, “We will wait until the meeting and then we will discuss the cases” but on a 24 hour basis you have a group of people there who are checking out what happened these last 24 hours, “Have we seen that child before? Is it unusual for them not to be at school? Did something else happen that is relevant?” I am not saying they are perfect yet, but I think it is a good thing in our system that is better than five years ago.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): I have been privileged to observe that and I think it is good that we are able to put it on the record and bring it out to the public. If that is common across the Metropolitan Police Service then we are absolutely in a good position. For me it is just about maintaining that level of professional activities because individuals change. You can get somebody who is passionate and they are driving onwards with a fabulous sergeant who I would just want to take him home and have him with me always. You just worry that if he left that things would change.

Deputy, are you saying then that you have somebody looking at the report specifically at its findings and you will be reporting back? What is that timeline reporting back with any implementation issues?

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not have the detail of the timeline. I know you have a meeting in January or February where you are looking at this issue and the lead is coming, so I will make sure you have an update on the timelines to report back.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Yes because that would fit in with our work. That is what I was just trying to press to you that when we are here next time that we have something of substance.

Craig Mackey QPM (Deputy Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Yes, always.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): I have a couple of questions for the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. Will this area of sexual exploitation be covered by your new gang panel?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Interestingly enough we had a mobilisation meeting of the Gangs Panel, which was not the first formal meeting but it was really to --

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): What is a mobilisation?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): It is to agree terms of reference, to think about the work programme, think about the membership and think about the function and the form of the new Gangs Panel. This meeting - because I like to warm up for these Committee meetings - happened at 8.00am this morning. In fact, the issue around girls and gangs has been raised both in the Gangs Panel but also in the Violence Against Women and Girls Panel, and yes it will form part of the work programme.

Interestingly enough, I was introduced to Susan Tranter in a meeting with the Commissioner, who provides the education perspective. It is actually three facets to this that we need to think through. We have to think through the child protection, which cuts across both policing and social care. Obviously the law and order response, but I think also how educationalists deal with this. One of the shocking things that was stated by Carlene Firmin at the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Panel is the response in some schools to when a rape occurs inside the school, and almost not really feeling that the appropriate response to the victim applies. It is often moving the victim out of the school as opposed to thinking about the circumstances that led to the rape. Yes, it is forming part of the Gangs Panel and it remains a topic of discussion in the already existing VAWG Panel.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Just update us about your Gangs Panel. Do you chair it?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Like the VAWG Panel we have co-chairs--

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Violence Against Women and Girls?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, Violence Against Women and Girls. Sorry to use the acronym. Joan Smith and I are both co-chairs. I think Members have had the information about the Gangs Panel which is co-chaired by myself and Ray Lewis.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Right. OK. You meet for breakfast at 8.00am?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No, this was not a formal meeting. This is what we would describe as a mobilisation to ensure that the first formal meeting will take place in I believe January. I will check, but it is early in the New Year. It is essentially a prep meeting to get the form and the function of the Gangs Panel right, and to agree a work programme.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): OK. We can get more information?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I think it is the end of January/early February is the first meeting. I can get you the precise date.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): OK, fine. The idea of you mobilising at 8.00am is very interesting--

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Normally I am dropping the children off at school, but as schools have just broken up I was able to make 8.00am, yes.--

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Does it involve tanks and armoured cars?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): No, it was a very proportionate response this morning.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): If we are talking about 8.00am, I was listening to the Commissioner clearly doing well.

Victoria Borwick (AM): We were all listening to the Commissioner.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): You are all ahead of me on that one.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Sticking up for London's best.--

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): --It has gone full circle this morning.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): I thought you did a brilliant job this morning at 8.00am, Sir Bernard.

Going back to MOPAC, we look forward to hearing what you are doing with the Gangs Panel. I have one last question and that is something that the Commissioner touched on. That is about the issue of attitudes of gang associated young men; well, as we are told. Again, if you have had the privilege of meeting some of them, many of them come with a particular way of approaching women and young girls and this was highlighted in this report.

It seems to me MOPAC would be in a good position to do some work around this issue, either through MOPAC or commissioning, the foundation or other organisations, to work around attitudes towards women and that relationship with young men. I know Kids Company do an awful lot of work with young men to challenge them about their approach to young women. Are you exploring any of this work that you could commission?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am happy to take that specific idea forward. You are right, absolutely, that comes through. Very early in my term last year I was at a practitioner conference exposed to some of the attitudes that you are describing and the academic research was around that. It was not in London. It was outside London. There is an evidence base there and I think we need to be careful about ensuring that we build on that. But, yes, it is an absolutely appropriate area for us to think about a programme.

I have been handed a note. What does that say? "Gangs Panel is early February. No date has been finalised." That was the last question, though. I am answering a different question. It is early February, no date has been finalised for the Gangs Panel, Jeannette.

Yes, it is a good idea. Perhaps we could talk outside this Committee how we take this idea forward?

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): Yes, it should also be part of the criteria for your mentoring team. That is from my point of view, but can you say whether it is and if you cannot then we could perhaps get a note from you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): One part of the VAWG strategy is about this education and dealing with some of the issues around attitudes of young men to women. That is certainly having appropriate interventions, but I think what you are talking about is commissioning to get insight and about how to get that to work better--

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): There is a lot of expert work. You could have a talk to the Kids Company because this is --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, I am happy to do that. I have met Camilla [Batmanghelidjh, Founder and Director, Kids Company] before, yes.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): -- boyhood to manhood. A number of them have been doing this for the last ten years, the Stephen Lawrence Foundation; you know just talk to them about it.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes, sure.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Deputy Mayor, Joan Smith, which Joan Smith are you talking about?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): She is the co-chair of the VAWG Panel.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Yes, I know but --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The one that writes in the Independent occasionally.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Oh it is. All right, fine--

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): The feminist, Joan Smith.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Sorry?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): To give her a label; I mean well known.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Yes. OK. I wonder about going back to the sexual exploitation of young women. There are new crimes now of course because of online abuse of young women?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Is this something that you are actually trying to work towards monitoring and being aware of and actually bringing charges against people?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I am certainly aware of the shifting nature of crime patterns, so the sense I have is that very often the challenge that certainly the Metropolitan Police Service and other agencies have is ensuring that homes are as safe as they can be. As the streets tend to get safer, that really is an issue - and you are right - there are these threats that we are well aware of, the bullying and the sexual exploitation of people in their own home. Yes, I think that is one of the reasons why policing, quite rightly, are thinking about the appropriate response to these new threats.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Commissioner, have there been any cases yet?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not know off hand. First of all, I think we are guided to a large extent by some Director of Public Prosecutions' (DPP) advice on this, because sometimes as people meet in the street they abuse each other, sadly, or in schools and that sort of thing happens. The question is whether it is a crime. Of course, one of the difficulties on the internet is everything is recorded so people talk and they abuse but the evidence is not there.

I think all I am trying to say is two things. One we are aware and we wait for reports. I suspect we cannot intervene and police the internet or all the social networking that goes on. There has to be a trigger before a crime is reported. It may be for others to think about their responsibilities in education or in the way that the internet is run. The police can do so much. I think the volume of interaction will mean that we cannot criminalise everything, but we are interested in that which is crime: racial abuse, somebody who is abusing a child. These are very important things but I think the overall scale of the interaction means that police alone must struggle to change some of the fundamentals that are in that system.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): The thing is that because it is a relatively new crime you need new ways of tackling it. I was just wondering if you did have anybody working on that sort of thing.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not know if Members of this Committee will have seen the article that we did for *The Evening Standard* within the last four weeks --

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): Some of us do not read *The Evening Standard*.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I do not believe that.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): I do not think many of us read it, though.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): What we did was an article which was explaining that we are going to set up a Cyber Crime Unit with something of the order of 500 officers and staff. To be clear, that is probably aimed in particular at economic crime but it is clear that other crime is happening on the internet - on

which you have raised some aspects - where we are not equipped to deal with it. If we have this type of crime, for a uniform officer to attend a home and to try to get the evidence trail through a computer on the internet is just very difficult. If you have economic crime same challenge. I think we had one case recently of 3,000 victims, about £3 million stolen - victims all over London and outside London. A local detective sergeant (DS) is really going to struggle to get the evidence chain and then do something about it. For that reason we are going to invest in a Cyber Crime Unit, not with growth but with reallocating existing resources. When we get more detail we can bring that back to the Committee. I do not think the majority of the resources will be for what we are talking about, but there will have to be some of that considered and I am sure it will grow over time.

Jenny Jones (Deputy Chair): As Caroline [Pidgeon] said, she will be leading on a piece of work on this and I am sure we will include online abuse.

Victoria Borwick (AM): I thought you already had a Cyber Crime Unit because I remember having a presentation on it before, but perhaps it has been changed in format. The question I really want to talk about is on female genital mutilation (FGM), which is something that is of interest to all of us around this table. You were just talking briefly about multi-agency working, and of course that has been one of the most important points highlighted in here, and if we do not all work together we are not going to tackle this. There is this mixture of the need for education, the need for health professionals, and the need for police but not I think criminalising people so that it goes so underground that everyone is too scared to raise the issue. I think it is something that all of us here have had increasing knowledge of, regrettably.

Here we come up to a Christmas holiday when everybody wants everyone to be safe in the bosom of their families and some people of course will be both maltreated here and also taken abroad where these practices will be performed. Therefore, perhaps if you would just give us a five minute update on what you are doing.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): In terms, first of all, of the Cyber Crime Unit, you are quite right we do have one it is just very small.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Yes, I seem to have had a presentation from you.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I think you are talking of the order of a few tens. We just need to expand it massively. Therefore, there is some facility but it is reserved for the most complex of cases.

The second point, in terms of FGM, certainly something that I think is a big priority - one of I know - because the main thing we talked about today is about underreporting. This is just hugely underreported. I am afraid there are mixed views in some communities about whether it is a crime, but the truth is that it is a crime. It is on the statute books. It is very clear.

Over the last couple of years we have had five cases in the pipeline where we thought we could make progress. Four of them have fallen by the wayside. We have one that remains there, and

the truth is in this country there has not been a single successful prosecution for this crime since the legislation has existed. I think we all collectively need to get our act together. I am not only talking about the police. I am talking about health. I am talking about education. There are clearly cases where people must have been identified as victims, on medical examination alone, and it has not been reported.

I do not know if Members of the Committee have seen, there was a very good documentary six weeks' ago on Channel 4 by a woman called Leyla Hussein. For those who have not seen it I would recommend it. It is only about 45 minutes but it is graphic in describing what it means, and it is powerful in describing to people who thought they knew what it meant, and it causes a reaction. I have now met Leyla because I was so impressed by the clarity of what she said. If I just say that she made this documentary and she is trying to get more Government action, all of us to do more and we are determined to do something. I have said to her that I am very selfish; I just want to know who the cutters are. Of course there is a dilemma, for the child or the woman involved; they have to complain generally about their parents. There is an inbuilt problem. I am afraid that is what we found.

In a case that we have at the moment, which we think we have some success with, it was an estranged father who arranged for it. The mother is still supporting the child, or the now slightly older person, but we think we will be able to maintain this prosecution. That is for the victim to have to make the complaint. If we can get to the cutters, of which there are two types. There are those who are in foreign countries and this time of year, as you have said, Victoria --

Victoria Borwick (AM): As I mentioned, yes.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): -- is a dangerous time. I did not realise but Leyla explained that Christmas is when people are taken away.

Victoria Borwick (AM): This is the time they are taken away.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Mainly because they have some time to recover by the time they appear in the school. They are less likely to notice.

There is some work we have done at the airports for the last couple of years trying to identify children coming back from certain countries but it is fraught with difficulties.

Victoria Borwick (AM): It is too late then.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): We are making almost a clinical observation on the behaviour of a child to seek an examination for which we might one day be held to account.

Victoria Borwick (AM): The problem here is it is not just as you say the sexual side of it; it is the years of other problems and other health issues. This is something as you say that really does need multi-agency working. We can all beseech you to do something but unless everybody here is allowed to talk about the long-term health issues and what is actually happening and what do you do? Just because you educate somebody, until you actually stop somebody inflicting this on somebody it is not going to stop. You can stop people coming and going in and out of airports but it may be too late. You are absolutely right, and I am very pleased that you have given us that Christmas message.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): I am seeing Leyla again I think in the first couple of weeks of January because we are going to see what we can do together about gathering intelligence and what will work.

I think one of the very practical things, if it is a political score, I would say that the great thing about that documentary is it was so powerful and the best piece of evidence. I think there were five young people - I do not know what their origin was - from a community. I think they were aged between 16 and 22 who are being shown in graphic detail what this meant and were in one case physically sick and in four cases just were clearly shocked..

That education is really valuable from that documentary but it went out at 10.45PM. I caught it by accident. It needs to go out far earlier and to have a wider circulation - schools, mosques, wherever - so that people are challenged about their attitudes. With that change of attitudes we will get more support for investigation.

I am determined that we will do our best but, you are quite right, unless we get some cultural change it will not change.

Victoria Borwick (AM): You certainly have the support of everybody around this table.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Just on that, certainly this is picked up against the new Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, but you are absolutely right about the need for very meaningful prevention, if you like, real engagement with communities. Certainly, MOPAC's approach on this is to identify two boroughs where we can really do some pioneering work around the issue around prevention and get those referral networks to work earlier rather than too late. I think that is really something where there is more work to be done, certainly. It is dealing with the criminal justice response is important, but getting that prevention right is critical.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Chair, could I just take one opportunity? This is a challenging meeting at times but it is also an opportunity to just say very clearly. If there is any victim out there or anybody who knows who are cutting girls, here or abroad, if they tell us we will do something about it, so tell us.

Victoria Borwick (AM): That is great.

Jennette Arnold OBE (AM): I welcome all that Victoria [Borwick] said and I welcome her work especially coming from health. I just have to say, as somebody who has been working in this area for now nearly 30 years, this is an issue that peaks and gets people excited and impassioned, and then it is like they tick a box and they go away. This is an endemic activity that has been going on for thousands and thousands of years. I think you will find that the Metropolitan Police Service over the years have led on this area in a really quite sustained way, whereas other partners for them it is like they have to wait until after the event. I think that the push now in terms of the police and that statement that the Commissioner has made, in terms of the clarity that this is illegal. This is a child protection issue and in this country there is a zero tolerance to it. I think that the police saying that and us knowing that that is the way forward is really affirming.

Can I just add - and I think it is what Stephen said - that I think we can never move away from the fact that unless we are organisations and agencies working with the community we will get nowhere. We know this time and time again. What is interesting now is that this generation of young people who are speaking out are the third generation born here, so they have an issue about identifying, of being born in this country, of saying, "The laws of this country are my laws". I think we have to do everything we can to be supporting this sort of growth. Many of them are young women who are speaking up and who want people to help them. They usually want to save their younger sisters or their younger cousins because, sadly, when they do speak up it is because they have had that experience. I welcome all the work that is being done and thank you for that statement, Sir Bernard.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): I am just going to raise one final issue if I may. There has been a press report - perhaps I will start with Stephen [Greenhalgh] - that the Mayor is seeking to hold urgent talks with the Home Office about the Terrorism Prevention Investigation Measures (TPIMs). We touched on this last month that ten are up for renewal in the New Year. I realise that two of them are now on the run. The press report indicates that it was after a briefing from senior Metropolitan Police Service officers that the Mayor was so concerned that he is seeking this urgent meeting. Stephen, perhaps you could outline exactly what the Mayor's great concerns are.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): I do not think it is my job to specifically speak for the Mayor on these occasions. Obviously the Mayor, as Mayor of London, is worried about absconds when people are subject to a TPIM. He has regular briefings with the leadership of the Metropolitan Police Service, in this case with AC Cressida Dick. I will not comment specifically about what is said in those meetings either. That is a meeting that necessarily has to remain confidential. Clearly, the important thing that the Mayor is trying to do in every single case is to ensure whether there is an operational breakdown that results in an abscond, or whether there is something wrong with the inherent powers that could potentially minimise that risk. In this case he has had feedback. I am not aware, following that meeting, that he is seeking an urgent meeting with the Home Office so I cannot comment upon it any more than I know.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): It has been reported that the Mayor believes that suspects should be able to be relocated away from London, as the previous orders used to have good results.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime): Yes. He has some concerns. We are talking about a very small number of people that are subject to these orders. I think it is eight in total. I might be wrong but I think that is the figure I have got. There have been a couple of absconds and he has certainly raised this issue. I have to say I have also briefed the Mayor on my meeting with other police officers involved in counter-terrorism, and it is all about an assessment of where you put your resources in dealing with risk. At the moment I would not say this is a crisis talk. I am not aware that there is any emergency, and all the Mayor is seeking to do at this moment is ensure that he is properly briefed on these matters.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): Commissioner, from the Metropolitan Police Service's perspective, has the Metropolitan Police Service made representations to the Home Office about the future of TPIMs or what should happen?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe (Police Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service): Not at all, no. I am afraid I am not briefed. I picked up that the Mayor might have made some comment but I am afraid I am not briefed on his particular concerns.

Joanne McCartney (Chair): Are there any further questions from Members? No. Thank you all for coming in and, on behalf of the Committee I wish you all a Merry Christmas.