

Transcript of the meeting of the Metropolitan Police Authority held on Thursday, 25 June 2009 at 10 a.m. in the Chamber, City Hall, SE1.

PRESENT:

Members:

Boris Johnson (Chairman)

Jennette Arnold, Reshard Auladin, John Biggs, Faith Boardman, Christopher Boothman, Valerie Brasse, Cindy Butts, James Cleverly, Dee Doocey, Toby Harris, Neil Johnson, Jenny Jones, Clive Lawton, Joanne McCartney, Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman), Steve O'Connell, Caroline Pidgeon, Deborah Regal, Graham Speed and Richard Tracey.

MPA Officers: Annabel Adams (Deputy Treasurer), Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive), Jane Harwood (Assistant Chief Executive) and Nick Baker (Head of Committee Services).

MPS Officers: Tim Godwin (Acting Deputy Commissioner), Anne McMeel (Director of Resources) and Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis)

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK, Members of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), can I possibly call you to order and welcome you? I would like to begin with our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and we are going to get going now, if that is all right. Apologies of absence have been received from Victoria Borwick and Kirsten Hearn. Can I ask Members whether they wish to declare any interests?

Authority Members: None.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. We are going to go straight into the AGM, but before that I thought I might as well just give my opening statement and say, of course, to begin with congratulations to Jennette Arnold and Reshard Auladin on their Orders of the British Empire (OBEs); richly deserved. Congratulations.

We welcome the Commissioner. Members will know already that the MPA Selection Panel interviewed four candidates for Deputy Commissioner last week. We are in the final stage of the process and an interview with the Home Secretary [Jacqui Smith], the Commissioner and I should take place. There have four JEMS over the last month in Bromley, Brent, Camden and Harrow. The Domestic and Sexual Violence Board (DSVB) have met, chaired by Cindy [Butts]. The Board took evidence from Richmond and Greenwich and I am pleased to hear that Richmond Borough Operational Command Unit (BOCU) has the highest domestic violence arrest rate across London.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Good for them!

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Greenwich has made notable improvements over the last year. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) have launched the Metropolitan Police Service Heritage Collection Centre at Empress State Building (ESB). It is a small but

fascinating collection and we hope it is the first step towards creating a world class blue light museum in the capital, which is, I think, an ambition that is widely shared around this room, though not necessarily by everybody, John [Biggs].

On Saturday, 13 June 2009, Kit [Malthouse] attended the 21st anniversary of the Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC); 1,400 members aged between 14 and 21 marched from Wellington Barracks to Horse Guards Parade and the event, I think - Kit [Malthouse], you would agree - showcased the superb young people of this city who gave up their time and their energy with commitment and a real sense of duty to others, which is what we want to encourage and what the Metropolitan Police Service does so well in encouraging in their various projects across London.

Finally, I am very, very pleased to note that the Civil Liberties Panel, which we created last time, will meet for the first time this afternoon.

Can we then go on to the Committee Appointments and Members' Attendance please? I am going to ask Catherine [Crawford] to speak on this.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): We have two papers at Item 3, Chairman. Item 3(a) records Members' attendance during the period. We are required to report back to the Authority. I would like to reinforce the message in this that this is attendance at the formal Full Authority and Committee meetings. It is not a complete reflection of the extensive work that Members do on an informal basis throughout the year.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you very much, Catherine [Crawford]. The Members are asked to note that report.

Authority Members: Noted.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I am glad that Members have noted it. Are there any comments, questions or suggestions?

Authority Members: None:

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I am obliged. Can we, therefore, go to the Committees? Now, Kit [Malthouse], do you want to say a word about that?

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): No, basically there is no change on the Committees. I do not think we have had any other nominations, have we, beyond those that have been suggested in the paper?

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): No, Chairman. The first recommendation is important that Members note that you have decided to chair the Authority again this year. We are, of course, on the timetable slightly out of kilter because it does not feel like a 12-month AGM because it is not, because you did not in

fact take over until the beginning of October. So, I think what we are proposing here is effectively that we keep the status quo going for another three months. We undertook to review the Committee structure next October when the new regime has been in place for a full 12 months, but we are required by statute to hold an Annual General Meeting in June, so that is why there is a slightly strange combination of timings here.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Excellent. Can I ask whether the MPA is satisfied and have duly noted the Committee Structure?

Authority Members: Agreed.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I am obliged to Members. Can I take it that Members agree to the various other recommendations that are listed before you?

Authority Members: Agreed.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I am grateful. We are rattling through this, Commissioner. I move now, I believe, to MPA Standing Orders. No?

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): We do have an item about membership of the Committee. This is not chairmanship but there have been indications that have reached us from three Members that they wish to join the Strategic and Operational Policing Committee but I think, in the light of what I said at the beginning, the feeling is that we should keep the status quo going until October and review at that point.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think that is right. Are we happy with that?

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): What we agreed was that we would run it for a year and then we would see about rotating people on and off various committees.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think there may be some traffic offline about how exactly we settle that but it strikes me this is a sensible way forward.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): In which case we can move to Item 4 which is the Standing Orders. The revisions here I think Members are familiar with, but the particular section that I would draw attention to is that relating to the urgency procedure where both Valerie Brasse and Joanne McCartney have been working closely with officers and I believe are now satisfied that this more properly reflects what ought to be in place.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Can I take it, Valerie [Brasse] and Joanne [McCartney], that you are happy with the revisions to the Standing Orders and the Urgency Procedures?

Valerie Brasse (AM): Yes.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Yes.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK, excellent. We, therefore, come now to the ordinary meeting today and the minutes are attached of our last meeting. Can I ask Members whether they approve those minutes and whether they have any comments or suggestions? I see Chris [Boothman] and then Joanne [McCartney].

Christopher Boothman (AM): Yes, Chairman. Could I take the liberty of asking for the questions I asked in relation to the form 696 to be incorporated into the minutes which is on page 32? I specifically asked is there a review being conducted, who is doing it and can we know the terms of it. So, if those specific questions could be incorporate into the minutes.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Of course they should be, yes, because we had an important discussion about that. Joanne [McCartney]?

Joanne McCartney (AM): Yes, can I refer Members to page 35, paragraph 121.3? That does not in fact reflect what we decided at the last meeting. This is regarding whether the Civil Liberties Panel could make recommendations to the Full Authority. We have only recorded down here the Vice-Chairman's comments that it was for the Authority to make recommendations. However, looking at the transcript and my memory I actually note that the Vice-Chairman actually agreed with me that we can make recommendations to the Full Authority and, in fact, Chairman, you actually said it was commonsensical that we have to make recommendations. So, could I ask that to be changed? The Civil Liberties Panel would make recommendations to the Full Authority.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): That sounds fine to me.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Also under "Resolved 1" we have got it "Resolved that the terms of reference be endorsed". Could I have that changed to "The terms of reference be endorsed with amendments as raised by Members at the meeting," because we did not actually endorse those terms of reference and, in fact, the Civil Liberties Panel this afternoon is to consider extensive changes to those terms of reference.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Uh-huh. Right.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): I suppose that those changes are proposed by the Panel this afternoon.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Yes. It seems to me, just thinking out loud, Members, that if the Civil Liberties Panel was contemplating extensive changes to its terms of reference then that really ought to be a matter for the Full Authority.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I think they would have to be agreed and then come back here, but at the meeting we did raise problems with those terms of reference. So, we did not agree the terms of reference as endorsed and I think, Chairman, you said that we

would come up with some wording that was fine, which I think we can get the transcript that that is right. So, I think that should be quite clear. We did not endorse the terms of reference that were there at the last meeting.

Jenny Jones (AM): True.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. Dee [Doocey]?

Dee Doocey (AM): Chairman, first of all can I support everything Joanne [McCartney] has said, but I was going to, in any event, suggest that the first meeting of the Panel this afternoon be postponed because only three of us can be present and I do not really think that three people should be deciding on the terms of reference that have been changed substantially. I was going to suggest it was postponed anyway and that might help give a breathing space in order to get all of this sorted out, because I must say I am quite concerned about the fact that we did have this discussion, it was agreed and it has not been reflected in the minutes.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK. Well, I understand the concern that you are raising. It seems to me that, if the Civil Liberties Panel is going to have a discussion of its terms of reference this afternoon and wished to make substantial changes to those terms of reference, then it is always possible for those revisions to be brought back to the MPA for our further consideration at our next meeting. I think that would be the best way forward.

Joanne McCartney (AM): That is fine, but I do want these current minutes that we are signing off today to reflect the fact that we did not accept those terms of reference.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I have no problem with that whatever. Jenny [Jones]?

Jenny Jones (AM): Dee [Doocey] did make a suggestion that we postpone the Civil Liberties Panel. I am loathe to do it because I think we need to get it up and going but it is just not practical, I think, if there are only three people out of six.

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): It is a matter for the Panel members to be honest.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Only three people what?

Jenny Jones (AM): Out of six will be able to be there this afternoon.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): We were told that five would attend.

Richard Tracey (AM): Four.

Dee Doocey (AM): Three.

Richard Tracey (AM): Oh, who else has disappeared?

Dee Doocey (AM): Jenny [Jones] cannot stay.

Jenny Jones (AM): I have got a train ticket which was booked before we arranged this.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): A train ticket?

Jenny Jones (AM): Yes.

Clive Lawton (AM): Chairman, whether or not the Panel is or is not postponed, can I say that I also express an interest and because of confusions it was not also recorded so there may be some others who are going to be on this Panel who were not recorded amongst those four or six, or whatever. We should bear in mind the whole reason for having it straight after this meeting is because we were supposed to be having it straight before this meeting. There was a tremendous sense of urgency and it all had to be done and so on and so forth. Look, I am more than happy if it is to be postponed for good order and all the rest of it but at the last meeting we were very concerned that nobody should think we were postponing things and kicking them into the long grass. So, I am a bit puzzled now about whether this is urgent or whether it is not urgent. If it is urgent I think those could should meet and come up with something intelligent which could then be reviewed.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Right, Jenny [Jones] has a train ticket for Glastonbury, which is obviously a very high cause.

Jenny Jones (AM): It was booked some time ago before this was arranged.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Can I propose this, that members of the Civil Liberties Panel confer afterwards about how they want to take this forward? I think your point is well made, Clive [Lawton], and certainly what we should do is reflect within the minutes - to get back to Joanne's [McCartney] initial point - the variations in opinion that took place at the last meeting. Caroline [Pidgeon]?

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Just very briefly following on from Joanne's [McCartney] point. I think there is a real issue with the quality of minutes from our meetings across all our committees and subcommittees that often we will make amendments and so on and they are never actually reflected in those put before us. I just would like that put on record, our concern about that.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I am sure that is a general point that I am sure that Catherine [Crawford] will take on board and that will be minuted.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Well, let us see if it is!

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I have no doubt. Thank you very much. I take it that there are no further questions or comments on the minutes. I am going to ask the Vice-Chairman if he has anything to say.

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): No, I do not have anything. You have said everything I wanted to.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you so much, Kit [Malthouse].

Toby Harris (AM): Chairman, just on the report you made earlier, which was clearly related to the Vice-Chairman's presence at the 21st, I think, anniversary of the Volunteer Police Cadets. I am slightly bemused because - I dare not make a lot of this - in my youth I was a Volunteer Police Cadet and I am absolutely confident it was more than 21 years ago. So, what I am suggesting is that there was a precursor to the Volunteer Police Cadets.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think this is an important point, Toby [Harris], you must get to the bottom of this.

Toby Harris (AM): I think we probably ought to be looking for a 43rd or 45th anniversary celebration.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think it is a very, very important setting straight of a historical record.

James Cleverly (AM): Lying about your age, Toby [Harris]. The oldest cadet in town!

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I have to confess I asked a similar question because I attended it and I got a little confused. I am told the reason is it is the 21st anniversary of the reforming in its current format. It was a spectacular event and should you wish to march on the square I will do everything I can to arrange it.

Toby Harris (AM): I know that the Commissioner is particularly proud of the ability of both cadets and indeed officers to march effectively.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Thank you, Toby [Harris].

Toby Harris (AM): I will join you in marching.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): You are on!

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think that will be a sight for sore eyes. Can I ask, therefore, we move next to Item 3, which is a motion received by Catherine [Crawford] from Jenny [Jones]? I am going to ask Jenny [Jones] to put her motion.

Jenny Jones (AM): Do I have to stand up?

Boris Johnson (Chairman): No, I do not think so, unless you want to.

Jenny Jones (AM): No, it is fine. This is about a case that happened in April 1979, so it is actually now more than 30 years ago and it is all about a man called Blair Peach who was killed or who died after contact with the police from a blow to the head from a police officer. That is the information that we had that came out from the inquest. Now, there have been over the years lots of requests to publish this report. I think the latest one was a Freedom of Information request in 2008. At that time the Metropolitan Police Service put up a series of arguments about why they should not release the report. The first one was it would interfere with Blair Peach's family's right to a private life. Now, the family themselves, who are here today, have said that they want the report published. Do you want to wave at the Metropolitan Police Authority so they know who you are? Thank you.

The second thing was they said that identifying any living individual would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act. Now, obviously we all accept that sometimes a report has to be redacted in small ways, not as the Members of Parliament (MPs) expenses were redacted, but perhaps with a much lighter hand so that we can protect where information, for example, was provided in confidence. The Metropolitan Police Service also said, "Realising a report could prejudice any possible future investigation." Now, I just do not believe, and I think quite a lot of people do not believe, like senior judges and Ministers of State at the Home Office, that any case will now be brought. In 1999 a Minister of State at the Home Office said that an investigation into this death was "very unlikely to be reopened".

The fourth point the Metropolitan Police Service made was that "releasing the report would reveal the police's investigative methods which could prejudice its ability to conduct future investigations". Now, that is very fair but redaction could deal with that if there is anywhere that it is mentioned.

Basically the Metropolitan Police Service is a public authority and should be held to account by the public. I feel it is absolutely ludicrous that it has been kept quiet for so long. There were several other issues but it seems to me that if you are a public body you have to accept that you are held to account. It seems that there is a public interest in just being open and honest in this. I think that will do more for the Metropolitan Police Service's reputation than trying to keep something secret that should have been brought out probably 30 years ago. The last point I would like to make is that this is even a policy that does not exist any more. The family of Ian Tomlinson, who also died after police contact after a demonstration, will actually have access to the report that the Metropolitan Police Service produces. So, this is an old policy that has somehow become imbedded and it seems to me it really is time that it is not embarrassing to release this report; it is actually embarrassing keeping it secret.

Now, I spoke to Tim [Godwin] before the meeting and he said actually the Metropolitan Police Service wants to release it. So, you can all freely vote for this motion I am glad to say and I would still like the motion put. They do have to put it through legal, they do

have to make sure that there are no problems and that redactions can be made. So, I would like, therefore, to take out the word “immediately” and put in “before the end of this calendar year”, before the end of 2009.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think that is very sensible, it seems to me.

Jenny Jones (AM): I think that gives plenty of time for the legal people to pour over this to redact anything that needs removing, and at least the family will have a sense of bringing the whole thing to a close. Thank you.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK, Jenny [Jones], I think that is a very interesting case very persuasively put. Can I ask the Commissioner to respond?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Yes, thank you for that, Chairman. Jenny [Jones], the case was brought to my attention during the intense scrutiny of G20 [referring to the demonstrations which took place between 1 April 2009 and 4 April 2009] and having been brought to my attention, and given the time that you quite rightly say that has passed since Blair Peach’s tragic death, I have already asked for a detailed review as to the reasons as to why we should not release this report.

I want to make it clear my starting point is a desire to publish, unless there are reasons that cannot be overcome, there be the reasons of legality, fairness or whatever, and that is the starting point. That process is now ongoing. There are issues that have to be considered and you are aware of those issues. We have got to ensure we consider issues of fairness and fairness cannot be applied selectively. In doing that my starting point is a desire to publish and we are now reviewing it, but it is going to take some time to actually go through that process because this is a 30-year old case, it is a long time ago, and issues of fairness relating to people of 30 years ago takes some time to deal with. There are a number of issues, they are not overwhelming issues in my opinion, including legal professional privilege - all those sorts of things - and we are going through that process now.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you.

Jenny Jones (AM): Secunder?

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Can I have a seconder? Joanne [McCartney]?

Joanne McCartney (AM): Yes, I am glad to second this motion and I welcome Sir Paul’s [Stephenson] comments this morning as well. I think Jenny [Jones] has outlined some of the reasons that were given, I believe, only 18 months ago as to why this could not be released under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). With my reading of the papers and my own research I have been led to believe that the reasons given for refusal to release the report were so broad and overarching, and in many cases I understood without foundation, that they were in fact hard to credit at that time. It

certainly gave the appearance that the MPS was refusing to release at all costs rather than on a considered reasoning so I am glad to see that that considered reasoning will now be undertaken.

One of the main grounds was that the family would be hurt and their rights had to be protected under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act, yet the letter refusing release stated that no attempts had been made to contact the family to find out what the level of distress would be. In fact, the family quite clearly want it to be released and have been asking for it to be done over the last 30 years.

I think the point that Jenny [Jones] has made about this being an old policy and that if this was an investigation that took place today this would not be the case and it would be released is an important one to make. I understand that there is now a voluntary protocol under which families are given access to such reports where there has been a death as a result of police contact. As Jenny [Jones] has stated, we are all familiar with reports of sensitive natures being released with appropriate redactions so that if there are any legal or sensitive issues they can be dealt with.

I would also like to say that this motion is not the only piece of pressure being applied in this case. I understand that Commander Cass [John Cass], who did the initial report, has stated that he is happy for it to be released and he has stated that, "If it was released now I've got no qualms about it." The Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights has stated that, "If the family are willing to see it published then that should be paramount." I understand that that is certainly the view of the Government now. I think this is a matter for public confidence in police and it does depend on a rigorously impartial investigation into any case, but it also depends on openness and transparency. I think that is paramount to us because the police have to be an open and publicly accountable organisation.

Interestingly and looking at the reasons for refusal some 18 months ago there is an acceptance in there, and I am going to quote now from the reasons for refusal that, "There is a clear public interest in providing the general public with the known facts surrounding this incident," but it then goes on to say, "But that needs to be imbalanced against the distress to the family." Well, given that the family want it, it seems to me that there is no balance in this case at all. The balance is clearly weighted on one side rather evenly. I would also point out that there does seem to be some contradiction in the reasons that were given for refusal. For example, it is stated that the report cannot be released because certain things are not known and there are sensitive issues. Yet, in one place it actually states that the fact that, "The circumstances surrounding his death are well known to the public," which does not seem to be able to square that circle.

I think what this does it just brings up yet time and time again more speculation and perhaps unfounded rumour as to what happened but we do not know. I think until that report is made public that will not stop and so we have comparisons being made at the moment with this case and with Ian Tomlinson's case. It could be that they are entirely different; things have moved on a great deal, but if we do not release that those

comparisons will be continuous. I think this is one of a reputational issue for the police so I am glad to support this motion today.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK, thank you. Sir Paul [Stephenson], is there anything you want to come back on there?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): If I may, Chairman. Joanne [McCartney], I am not going to debate your analysis of all the points put forward by the MPS because some of them I may well accept. I have made it quite clear my starting point is a desire to publish. Overwhelmingly I have to consider issues within the law of fairness and fairness to everyone and it would be reckless of me not to do that, particularly if we get that judgment wrong it may well end up in litigation and an issue of public money. So, we have to do that; that is hugely important.

If I can just make a comment; my understanding is Commander Cass has spoken to the Metropolitan Police Service and he has said he supports the Metropolitan Police Service decision and the stance that it is taking. Whatever has been reported in the media that is not for me to comment on. The other thing I would point out, whatever reason had been given in the past - and I think this has been asked for on something like five occasions already - I think I am right in saying, Joanne [McCartney], that there has been no appeal of that decision. Nevertheless, that is history; we are now in a different place in time and my starting point is a desire to publish and look at the reasons as to why they would be overwhelming - and they would have to be overwhelming - not to do so.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK, are there any other points anyone wants to add? John [Biggs]?

John Biggs (AM): Two and a half things, Chairman. The first is the fact that there might be a risk of litigation is not on its own a reason to not publish, obviously. It depends on what the nature of that might be. For example, if it made allegations about people who would then feel that they needed to take to law in order to defend themselves 30 years after the event.

Second point is that I very strongly support this. I did not know Mr Peach but a lot of my constituents did because he was very active in the anti-racist activities in the East End of London. Of course, this event was in West London, but people travel from across London and were involved in the incidents around that day. This could be a form of closure which I very much welcome.

The third point though was whether, if we can move towards releasing this document which I would like to happen, the family should in some way be not involved in its release but should be acquainted with it prior to its release. I would not want to read in the newspaper a stage-managed release of a document which the family then had to catch up with after the event. So, I think this is a sensitive matter and the family should be given the opportunity to be involved in some way in the process.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. Any other comments? Valerie [Brasse]?

Valerie Brasse (AM): Just a question really. Jenny's [Jones] amendment to the timing of the motion presumably sits quite comfortably with your review. I do not know whether you have set a timescale for that review.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): All I can do is give you a commitment that we will come to a conclusion - and I told you what my instinct is - as soon as I possibly can. I hear the Authority's desire to put a time limit on it; my commitment: I will do it as soon as I possibly can.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Right, OK. Clive [Lawton]?

Clive Lawton (AM): Chairman, I would very much like to keep the time limit and except that if there is a problem with it, Sir Paul [Stephenson] would come back and say, "I can't meet that date," rather than leave it a little more open than that.

Look, I think every reasonably minded person feels that such a report should be released and it is very good to hear Sir Paul [Stephenson] say that that is his starting point. The thing that has bothered me most about this is the claim about family feelings, because for me it is the one thing that would have led me to say, "Well, if they're upset then I don't think it should be released." My self righteousness, "You've got to respect the feelings of the family." That would have been a stopper for me as a member of the public observing this debate. I am very concerned that it has been claimed that they would have or might have expressed a feeling of distress and not wanting this published because that does seem to me something that would have very much manipulated my view of this as a member of the public as to whether this should be revealed. I would like to understand how or why such an explicit claim could have emerged without any conversation with the family.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Clive [Lawton]. Now, I get the strong sense from Members that they are with Jenny's [Jones] amendments and with the understanding that Sir Paul [Stephenson] will have to look at the issues of fairness and legality and that there is a very strong call from this MPA for that report to be released. That is my feeling of the meeting. Is there anybody who wants to dissent from that?

Authority Members: No.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Well, in that case can I propose that we simply adopt Jenny's [Jones] motion with the amendments that she has put in, which I think are helpful to Sir Paul [Stephenson] as he ensures that, if and when the report is released, it is indeed fair to everybody involved?

Authority Members: Agreed.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you; good. Can we get on now to the Commissioner's report?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Thank you, Chairman. The report is in front of you. If I can quickly concentrate on performance again; some good news in there but I will come onto the challenging news, and I think I spoke to you about this at the last Authority.

The good news is that youth violence continues to fall and in particular serious youth violence continues to reduce but as I always say it is still far too much but it continues to reduce. Operation Blunt 2 continues - and it is just over a year now - to recover significant amounts of weaponry and we still feel it is a very, very useful operation but I still say again the way in which we do that we have to be very careful and we have to maintain community support and use our Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) to ensure that communities understand what we are doing, why we are doing it and ensure that what we are doing we are doing well and professionally so we maintain the support of people.

In addition to that within that operation we launched I think it was reported in the media, Operation Hawk on 11 June which was a coordinated search of addresses which was conducted across London boroughs targeting serious youth violence. That resulted in almost 260 arrests; 83 individuals have been charged; 112 people have been bailed for a range of offences including drugs, robbery and assault, these included more than 70 arrests for drug supply and possession and 60 arrests for robbery. It was a significant effort by operational officers and support staff. Those matters are ongoing and I am very pleased with that operation. Recoveries include firearms and cash in excess of some £200,000. There were also quantities of body armour and handcuffs; a worrying array of recoveries.

At the last Full Authority I reported youth murders; we have not seen that in this month but I am always cautious about saying things such as that. I am always thankful whenever there are no more youth murders, but I am always very cautious about that. Motor vehicle crime is down; knife crime is down and racist crime is down. Let me get into the difficult areas because I think that is probably more important.

Burglary continues to remain a very real challenge for us. At the moment in time - and this is the performance year from 1 April - burglary is up and it is up by just over 9% at this moment in time. We knew this was going to be a struggle; we are launching operations and the continuation of Operation Spotlight. We are also looking at the re-launch of the very successful historic operation down here in the Metropolitan Police Service which was Operation Bumblebee which some of you might remember, which had the most incredible market penetration and effect on people's minds down here in London. I know about it because as a young Assistant Chief Constable in Merseyside I came down here and stole it and it was very effective there. It had a very good market penetration. It is a problem, I think, in a number of forces across the country but we have got a problem here in the Metropolitan Police Service.

Business crime is something I keep referring to. That is up and that is up, again since 1 April, by just over 6%. I suppose the good news is the rise was actually greater than that last year but I would not claim that the pressure is off on business crime and that does worry us and shops on the high street at a time of recession.

I also have concerns about the rise in overall violence. There is a figure quoted in the report which, I think - and Tim Godwin might be able to expand on that - is very much about a change in the recording. Nevertheless, within that, I have a concern about how we measure overall violence and that is violence with injury because that is more real and I think it is much more reliable. That is up by 4.7%. That is a very real concern to me.

I think we discussed last time the effect of the very significant drain for public order policing and it has been very significant on boroughs. We have moved their entire discretionary asset, if you will. Hopefully we are beyond that now, although we have some big set piece challenges in terms of supplying people to them going on over the summer: Notting Hill Carnival and various other things. Nevertheless, we have got officers back in the boroughs now but that has, in my opinion, had a significant impact on performance and it has reduced our visibility.

We are looking, as you know, to enhance patrolling and enhanced patrolling in town centres in particular. As a result of what we have already put in place in recent months, in particular single patrolling which is still a gathering piece, we are putting out now an average of 5.5 extra officers patrolling in town centres in boroughs every day. That is now equating to, over the full 12 months, some 64,240 extra patrols over the next 12 months. I think that is a start. We want to do more of that but I think it is exactly what the public are asking for. It is about creating confidence on the streets but also, I think, what we are looking to do is be effective in town centres particularly around the offences with violence which makes people stop coming out and enjoying their streets and enjoying their rights.

We are maximising the use of our own employees with the specials and we do aim to further increase these extra patrols. I have been reinforcing, if you will, on my five Ps the notion of presence on the streets. I recently spoke to 1,000 staff and workshops are now following with some 6,000 first-line supervisors to ensure we are doing what we say we want to do.

That is all I want to say on performance because I am sure there will be many questions on it, Chairman.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you very much, Commissioner.
Joanne [McCartney]?

Joanne McCartney (AM): I want to ask something that is not in your report. I am the link member for Enfield borough and of course we are all aware of allegations that have been made about the Crime Squad in Enfield, but I do not propose to go into them

because they are subject of an investigation at the moment, but I am sure that this will come back at a later stage for us to discuss in more detail.

I just want to see an assurance that serious allegations had been made, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) are investigating and I just want to know that senior officers in the Metropolitan Police Service are taking this extremely seriously. I would like to know what you have done to ensure that this is not happening across London. Can I just be reassured about the actions that you have taken?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS):

Joanne [McCartney], I think you know I take the allegations made extremely seriously, as do all senior officers in the Metropolitan Police Service. I think we have got to be careful not to prejudge any investigation - I always say that and I think that is the right thing to do - but the allegations as they stand I am very concerned about.

The action taken by Lynne Owens, one of our new Deputy Assistant Commissioners (DAC) is impressive in terms of trying to take the learning that we are already gleaning out of this incident and spreading that learning around the Metropolitan Police Service. In particular I think already we are pointing towards a reinforcing of the need to exercise intrusive supervision at all levels. Assuming things are going right, it has never been the right thing for managers and supervisors to do. I think the vast majority of my supervisors do not do that but where it does happen it can lead to particular problems. I think intrusive supervision is a hugely important area for us and it is something that I am speaking to all staff throughout the Metropolitan Police Service and I expect all my senior team to do the same. Lynne Owens is certainly leading the charge on that but we are taking it extremely seriously.

I think as you know, Joanne [McCartney], there is not much good news in this but the reality is this came to light because we had somebody who we employed who had the courage, the ethics and the integrity to do something about it.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. Cindy [Butts], then Dick [Tracey] and then Caroline [Pidgeon].

Cindy Butts (AM): Thank you, Chairman. Obviously some really good news within this report and I think that is something we need to recognise. I wanted to ask you about the disappointing figures in relation to the satisfaction gap between white and minority ethnic victims. I just wanted you to maybe give us an impression of what you think is going on there, but also if you could give us more detail in relation to the third bullet point, which is on page 43, which talks about a number of initiatives being implemented. I just wondered what the detail of those initiatives is.

Also, in relation to the overall satisfaction levels what we know is that you have been doing some considerable work around citizens' focus, in particular around the victims' focus **desk(?)**. I wonder what more have you got up your sleeve in order to improve the satisfaction levels overall and in particular amongst ethnic minority communities.

I am disappointed to see under paragraph 11, page 45, yet more references to new recording practices. It almost seems every other month we get notification that there is going to be yet more changes and I wondered if you could be kind enough to say something about that.

In relation to the issues around youth crime - this is more, I guess, something I would want to put to Boris [Johnson] - obviously the Metropolitan Police Service and the local authorities and other bodies have a significant role to play in combating youth violence, but equally so to does yourself and the Greater London Authority (GLA). I wondered whether or not we could get a report based on your Time For Action in particular, around what you have been doing, the successes you have had and, of course, the challenges that you face to the Full Authority.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Perhaps I should say immediately on that before I revert to the Commissioner that we will in fact be producing I think in the next two weeks just a quick résumé of what we have done so far, where we are going and just mapping out the next couple of years' work as we see it. I hope very much you will be able to come along to that.

Cindy Butts (AM): No, you will be here because it is to this Full Authority. So, not coming along to it, you present it here.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): We are producing a document about Time For Action, what we have achieved, where we are going, some of the things that we are doing for instance this summer, some of the ideas we have got about volunteering, about summer camps, all sorts of things that we are taking forward with the boroughs and above all with the Metropolitan Police Service themselves who, as you know, Cindy [Butts], have such a huge and pioneering role on it. I think it is actually quite important we get across to people the kinds of interventions we are doing at all ages to try to address this problem because I think the Commissioner and his colleagues would rightly say that they have had a terrific considerable success in dealing with the symptoms in the sense that they are driving down knife crime, it seems to me, with the interventions that we are very familiar with. I think what we have also got to get across is some of the things that we are doing to intervene and to give kids the diversions, the opportunities that will actually steer them away from that kind of thing and James [Cleverly], Kit [Malthouse] and others are heavily involved in preparing that.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): Could I suggest, Chairman, that if there is to be an event to discuss this paper and ways forward which you are planning in the next couple of weeks, that there could be a report back to the Full Authority on the success of that event in the July meeting?

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): We will send you all a copy of the publication.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Let me propose that this will happen before the next meeting of the MPA so it seems to be natural for me to discuss it then and you can raise anything then.

Cindy Butts (AM): What I am asking for, Chairman, is a formal report that comes to the Authority. If you have got this event happening then it is natural that that report would come after the report that you have done and the event that you are hosting, but at some stage, as we have done in the past, I think it is really important that we, as an Authority, hear about what you are doing around youth crime.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think that is only reasonable.

Cindy Butts (AM): Thank you.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Commissioner?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Thanks, Cindy [Butts]. Dealing with the issue of what extra are we doing, what else have we got up our sleeves and what new trick might we have; well, firstly, I actually do believe the pledge is important - led by the Home Secretary - but actually confirming where we are already going anyway and that is a genuine issue because we were developing the promise, actually making it clear to all our officers that it is the duty of the MPS to make promises to victims of crime, to make promises to people who are joining us and actually delivering on those promises and holding ourselves to account. There is a huge amount of action taking place around the implementation of the pledge and that is very much about citizen and victim satisfaction. Maybe we need to bring a more detailed report back to this Authority as to the actions we are taking, or to whichever other Authority Committee meeting you want it to go up to, about what we are doing on the pledge. Actually that is about improving victim satisfaction.

In addition to that I think it is mentioned in here Operation Spotlight, the burglary initiative. We have seen improvements in satisfaction with burglary victims and, particularly within that, something I think I discussed with this Authority in last November or December, of actually loosening up some of the restrictions around Safer Neighbourhood Teams and making them responsible for crime in their area and getting them to visit and revisit victims of burglary because that is another way we can actually increase satisfaction.

If we then turn to the dissatisfaction gap, I think it is a real challenge. I will not resile from the fact it is a real challenge. I think you might recall we have - offline and actually at this Authority - discussed before the need to understand the challenge. There is a dissatisfaction gap there. I am going off memory now, but if you start looking at the analysis, if we were able to do something about the dissatisfaction gap between white and black and minority ethnic (BME) on burglary alone we would halve the overall dissatisfaction gap. Those figures might have changed since last time; I think that was about six months ago.

When you analysis burglary and start analysing the reason for the dissatisfaction it starts pointing you in different directions. For a start there is a significant difference in dissatisfaction over times of attendance and yet we know there is no dissimilarity between times of attendance between white and BME. So, we have got to understand why is it that there is either a greater expectation or something is going wrong there. We know that actually between the older and the younger there is greater likelihood - forget BME for one moment - of young people to be more dissatisfied with police actions than older people. If you look at burglary victims, it is the case that it is more likely that BME victims of burglary will be younger than other victims of burglary. So, again, it points you towards doing something about the age gap as opposed to the race or ethnicity gap.

We also know, again this applies right the way across, that if you come from a more deprived area you are largely more dissatisfied if you are a victim of burglary with the response than a non-deprived area, so then we start looking at the socioeconomic gap. We are trying to build that learning into what we are doing in Operation Spotlight but I do not actually resile from that. It is difficult and it is something that we have to address.

Turning to your recording issue; I just entirely agree. Absolutely and entirely agree. If we could just settle on however it is we record crime, whether I agree with it or not - and I do think, and I think you know, I have said for some time the way we record crime sometimes defies any understanding and it does not make sense to a lot of people, and it certainly would be difficult to explain the intricacies of crime recording to the man and woman on Clapham omnibus - and stop changing it, because the reality is it makes us all look fools and it makes us look like we are fiddling something.

We, in the MPS, are fiddling nothing and when there was a different interpretation of recording of violence - and Tim [Godwin] will tell me if I have got this completely wrong, because he is the expert on this - we knew this would lead to an increase in numbers that will actually be way beyond any increase in reality and what the real figures were. I think it is not just about the figures, it is about the public's lack of confidence in public data when we keep fiddling about with it. So, I entirely agree. I have got no arguments about it.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. Are you happy with that answer on the satisfaction gap and everything else?

Cindy Butts (AM): Really, really useful to hear. That is the kind of detail that somehow if we could try to build into reports like this because that is the public interface in terms of what is going on in your performance. It is a pity that we cannot, but I know that it is very impractical - when you start adding lots of detail where do you stop - but it is that response that I think gives weight and body and I think would give people confidence to understand the intricacies and the complexities of this particular satisfaction issue.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Good, thank you. Dick [Tracey]?

Richard Tracey (AM): Thank you, Chairman. This is a very promising report, may I say, but I have got several questions that I would just like to put to the Commissioner to dig into one or two things. Could I ask if you can give us some more information about what you are doing to deal with the public perception of the way the police deal with rape cases because you will be aware, Commissioner, that the Reid [Kirk Reid, convicted of a series of sex attacks] case, a number of his offences took place in my constituency between Clapham South and Balham through to Tooting. I am receiving, and several of my councillor colleagues and so on in the area in Wandsworth are receiving, quite a few rather worrying comments from people that were affected in various ways by the Reid case and so I think there is quite a bit of bridge building and fence mending to be done in the public perception.

That is one thing on rape, the other thing is that Members of the Authority will probably be aware there was a television programme the other night, "Rape in the City", which dealt with the involvement of very young women and young men in rape in gangs and so on, even as young as 12 year olds which is really quite appalling to all of us I am sure. What is being done to deal with this in the fight against gangs? It is something that we really do have to take very serious, I think, and it has been all over the television in a programme which may have been somewhat sensationalised but nevertheless I think some comment from you would be very helpful.

Also on gangs - I am sorry to be going on a bit - could you give us some idea of the real impact of the G20 operations and the Tamil protest on your overall work in the Metropolitan Police Service on gang activity in London? Because clearly officer eyes and your eyes can be taken off the ball a bit by very big events like this. I wonder actually looking forward to the Olympics in the preparation going on for how you are going to deal with that, to what extent will the abstraction of officers to deal with Olympic policing take them away from dealing with gang activity at that time, if you could reassure us?

Last thing; we talked at the last Authority about the pilots that you are conducting on Section 44 of the Terrorism Act in several boroughs. Can you give us a timeline of how that is building up and any results so far to report to us? Thank you indeed.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Dick [Tracey]. Commissioner?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I will start with the last one first. What I can say is that I have had discussions with John Yates [Assistant Commissioner, Special Operations, MPS] in the last couple of days over Section 44 and I think those pilots are very positive. I really do not think we need to carry on piloting it; I think we just need to get on with it now. So, we will launch this right the way across London on 20 July. The reason why we are not launching it tomorrow is actually there is quite a lot preparatory work to make sure people are trained and understand what it is we are now asking them to do. There is a lot of training because we have been telling cops to do one thing and now we are going to tell them to

do it slightly differently. So, we are going to be rolling it out across London. We think it is the right thing to do and the analysis from the pilots is there has been a big percentage in reduction in stop searches but we do not believe we have reduced our capacity and capability to create that defensive space. I have said before I think this is a very important power and I think we need it and we need to use it wisely. If we do not use it wisely we will lose it. I think this is a move towards using it much more wisely so we will roll that pilot out across London because I do not think we need to pilot it any more, but we need to prepare people for it.

Turning to the gangs issue; I did not see the programme, Richard [Tracey], but, whether sensationalised or not, we do know there is an issue and the issue is hideous. It is just simply hideous and shocking to many of us who could never imagine that sort of thing would happen on our streets and with our kids. It is hideous. We are doing a huge amount of work with gangs - happy to bring back a more detailed discussion to whichever Authority you want - pathways and various other things of which we now have to incorporate this because it ranges across the work we are doing with gangs to the work we are doing on rape. It just does not sit in one category and that is the way the Metropolitan Police Service now has to work and we are doing that through our tasking and coordinating processes and actually ensuring that we get the best effect of all the talent in the Metropolitan Police Service to try to concentrate on problems across categories. I cannot give you a satisfactory answer around the issue of rape and gangs, other than it is hideous. We realise there is an issue there and it is part and parcel of our gang work but also our rape work and we do need to up our game on it.

You asked for the impact of the Tamil protests and G20; I cannot quantify it and it will be silly of me to try but it is a very significant impact. It really is very significant. If you think about G20 alone - again I am going off memory - I think there are 13,000 officer days actually used on that. It was just gigantic and that deployment would have been available to the streets of London. I think I reported last time we did reduce our activities significantly including around Operation Blunt and Blunt impacts on gangs. So it has had an impact; there is no point hiding away from it.

I know there is a paper later on the Olympics so perhaps it might be better to leave the substantive discussion to then. I would simply say if you take officers away from the street there is bound to be an impact and if there was not we would not need them in the first place. I am not going to sit here and say, "I need fewer officers."

Boris Johnson (Chairman): No, quite right.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): On public perception; Tim [Godwin], I wonder if you could assist me with that one.

Tim Godwin (Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I think one of the things there is we have got to do a specific thing around Wandsworth where that particular case occurred over an amount of time. We are building, as you know, the new Sexual Offence Operational Command Unit (OCU). One of the things

there is to actually accommodate all the learning that we have had because a lot of Reid's crimes were what would have been called indecent assault as opposed to rape before and there is an issue about the importance of taking that as seriously as rape. So, there are a number of bits that we need to do to change all that. We are also though picking up your other messages, and to add what the Commissioner has said, we are very aware that some of the increases in recorded rape are coming from young people.

Now, whether that is an increase in sexual assault against young people or whether it is the fact that young people are now coming forward because we are doing, through our Safer Schools partnerships and stuff, we are talking about it in schools. We are trying to make prevention one of the issues in terms of safety, etc, and to make sure that people are confident about coming forward. Nonetheless, it is an issue that we are picking up as well. In terms of the specific stuff in the borough I am quite happy to take that with you offline to make sure that we get the necessary in there to address those concerns in whatever public forum you wish.

Richard Tracey (AM): Thank you for that offer.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Dick [Tracey]. I think I am going to go to Caroline [Pidgeon] who is next.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Thank you. I have got two questions. First one relates to page 47 around the issue of drugs and sanction detection rates; you have seen a decrease in sanction detections for cocaine and MDMA [methylenedioxyamphetamine, also known as ecstasy]. It also says that some of the recent decreases may be due to officer abstraction and so on. So, I am just wondering whether you are expecting that to go up now that protests are over. Also it says in here there is some indication overall drug trends are changing. I was wondering whether you could explain that because I am not fully au fait with what you mean by that.

My other question relates to some figures that came out from the British Transport Police (BTP), and the Mayor announced these last Monday, about 18% reduction overall in crime types on and around buses. What I was concerned though, going into the figures, that drugs but particularly sexual offences had actually increased on and around buses. I was wondering have you looked at that data and what it is you are particularly doing to tackle that given the discussions we have just been having around sexual offences.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I will do my best to answer those, Caroline [Pidgeon]. Are we expecting the detection rates for drug offences to go back up again now we have got people back on the streets? I would like to think so. After 30 years in policing I am still rather partial to arresting people for committing serious criminal offences so I would like to think so. The arrest rate for drugs has always fluctuated. It should do providing we are putting those officers to deal with that particular issue but of course we are putting our officers to deal with a number of issues. My prime issue is violence and burglary. That is my prime issue. The numbers of drug offences is one of those offences which is directly relatable to how

much officer time we put in because we do not get people reporting drug offences. Drug offences come about because we find it and arrest them. It is different than burglary.

So, if we put more police asset in to deal with drugs the offences will go up and the detections will go up. It is just so sensitive to how much effort we put into it. I am not saying drugs are not important and we are all covered in priorities that are hugely important, but I am saying to the officers in the Metropolitan Police Service violence is the key issue and burglary. I expect them to deal with drugs offences and we have a drugs strategy and we do do it, but it correlates directly to how much effort and priority we put to it. I would expect it to grow and I would certainly like it to grow.

Drug trends; happy to bring a more detailed report back to the appropriate committee on that, but I am guessing what we are talking about there, the change in trends, it is the change in - and we have got to be careful we do not jump to conclusions on drugs because we have done this before - where suddenly you start making assumptions based on the number of offences you are getting out of your arrests and you start making assumptions that the drug of choice has changed. We have got to be very careful because some drugs of choice are very resistant to change but I think we might be alluding to maybe there is a change in supply, that will alter the availability on the streets, what is the drug of choice. So that thing we do monitor but happy to bring more detail back on that.

Sexual offences on buses; I do not have the detailed information but I think we are talking about a very small number and I do have to say the work we are doing on transport, I think, is a significant benefit to London. I think we are talking about a small number but I do not have the detail there and maybe I can be corrected.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Right, it said sexual offences had gone up 11%.

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): You will find they are very small numbers.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): They were very low numbers.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Fifty-five. Well, 55, I think that is still --

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): Across the whole of London.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Still, an increase quoted there. I am just wondering because that is an outlier in all of these, so what is it you need to be doing on that?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I am actually not trying to make excuses; I am just saying it is a small number. In my opinion 55 is a small number, but it is too many. We do not want any of it, but do not forget it is a bit like Commander Mark Simmons' [Head of Operation Blunt 2] report in the paper with a rather sensational headline saying, "We don't know why there's a 50% increase." I

suppose you could draw that conclusion. What he was actually saying is we are not entirely sure whether the increase is because there are more rapes or whether it is because we are succeeding in getting people to report more. Now, that could also apply to the buses but we are talking about percentages that are large and dynamic when we are talking about small numbers in the first place.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. Tim [Godwin], do you want to add something there?

Tim Godwin (Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Just very briefly; is to say that I think actually it might not be the buses that is the key. One of the things we are picking up is that the sexual offences are increasing within the night-time economy bit around late night houses and all of the rest of it where, of course, they might take place in the buses. So, the issue that we are looking at is what is happening around bars, clubs and all the rest of it into the evenings. That I think you will find correlates with what is going on in the buses, but we can provide you with some details around that.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): That sounds very interesting. Yes, I would like some more information on that please.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Good, thank you. I am going to go now to Clive [Lawton].

Clive Lawton (AM): Three things. First of all on page 47 in the chart on disrupting criminal networks - it is just a detail - the second item says the number of cases where assets were seized and then it does not give the number of cases it gives the amount of assets seized. So, if you know it that would be interesting to know.

Two other matters that I have raised previously and I am still not entirely confident with the answers that I have received. The first relates on page 50 on your report. At the bottom of the page you indicate the percentage of police officer recruits from minority ethnic groups compared to the percentage of people from minority ethnic groups in the economically active population. You give a percentage, which is very gratifying, it seems to be rising; it is not yet on target but it is going in that direction.

I am concerned to have a clearer breakdown of that number. My memory is, and it may be inaccurate, that the whole reason why we became concerned about this in particular was the involvement of black folk in the police service, initially. It is excellent that the police service reflects the population of the city and all the rest of that stuff. I would like to know more specifically what the proportion of black recruits are in relation to the economically active population, etc.

The last thing is that a couple of meetings ago I raised your aspiration that there should be more officers patrolling singly - Boris [Johnson] reassured us that he had seen one - and --

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I saw the same person twice.

Clive Lawton (AM): Oh, seen one twice. Anyway, you have now more recently said that this does appear to be a tricky issue of police culture and tradition, I believe. I wonder if you would want to say something more about that because clearly the use of police officers patrolling singly would be a vast and instant impact on the number of patrols happening and so on.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think the Commissioner did say there were 64,240 more patrols. That was the stunning statistic this morning.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I will start with that one. Do I want to say more? I can keep saying the same thing. We have to challenge previous assumptions in certain places in London that the default position is double patrolling. That is simply a statement of strategy, tactic, fact and direction from the Metropolitan Police Service - I have made that quite clear. We are having some success because we are putting out more patrols. Why is it challenging? Actually because if officers have been recruited - it might be the case with some officers - and spent most of their career not patrolling alone. I hesitate to say this but I will say it anyway, there might be the odd officer who gets through a full 30-year career with only one pair of shoes and not wearing them out. Well, that does not make sense because patrol is an important function of policing.

We need to actually make sure we break down that perception and that culture, but in doing it actually build officer confidence. Because if that is all you have ever done and you have suddenly been asked to do it in a different way there is a confidence issue and we need to make sure that our training actually prepares people for it, that our equipment and their knowledge of the equipment and technology that we now have is there to maintain their safety. Because one of the prime responsibilities, if not the prime responsibility, of any Commissioner is the welfare of their staff and the safety of their staff and I take that incredibly seriously. So there are a whole series of things we have got to do to build confidence and also build the infrastructure to make sure that we have the technology to ensure that we know where everyone is at all times and we can give officers confidence that we know it and we have the grip in our control rooms to make sure we can move people very quickly when people on their own might get into trouble.

I also say there will be times when single patrolling is not the right thing to do. I think it is a significant issue for us; I think it is an issue of economy, making best use of resource, increasing the visibility of policing, but I have also said it is an issue of engagement because it is much easier - and I think there are a number of research studies that would go towards this - for a member of the public to approach a single patrolling officer than two patrolling officers; it is just one of those things. I think it goes beyond numbers. It goes into the way we engage and I think we are doing a huge amount around that. I think I mentioned 6,000 officers and supervisors now going through workshops. It is part of the intrusive supervision. If that is what we say we are going to do we now have to enforce it but enforce it in a way that gives officers confidence. It is a difficult issue.

Would I say we are there? No. Are single patrols increasing across the Metropolitan Police Service? Absolutely. I am jumping out of my car less frequently to ask people, “Why are you patrolling together?” than I was when I first started on this, but we are still not yet there and it is going to take some time.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Why in your car?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Because I found it difficult to walk here this morning and I do not enjoy your (inaudible) to the bike.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you.

Clive Lawton (AM): Sir Paul [Stephenson], I do not want to hold you to specific dates, targets or whatever on this because I do realise it is a cultural shift, and not in order to create a hostage to fortune, but in reality when are we likely to see single patrols? Is this a thing that will take a year?

Boris Johnson (Chairman): They are happening, Clive [Lawton].

Clive Lawton (AM): I do not mean one or two. I mean when is it likely to be normal, in a few months, in a couple of years, in four or five years?

Boris Johnson (Chairman): They are happening, Clive [Lawton]; look around.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Well, I would turn round and say I am seeing it very frequently now, but you will see people patrolling together and that will be right. That is about the decision making of supervisors. We should not have a default position. I want supervisors to make a positive decision if it is a right thing to do in certain circumstances. So, you will see people patrolling in twos, you will see them patrolling in vans if they need to do, but we are seeing now far more single patrolling. The fact that we are now confident over these 12 months - and we have already started this now - we are going to see the number of additional foot patrols on the streets of London. I think it is really good news and I want to increase it.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Good, excellent. Thank you.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I think there are two other questions that you asked, Clive [Lawton].

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Sorry.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): You wanted a clear breakdown of recruiting. That is a recording issue and I am happy to bring that

back. I do say we have got to be very careful here. I understand why you focus on it was an issue of black and I do understand that, but we have got to be very careful. We do not send out unfortunate signals to other BME, in particular Asian recruits. We have got to be very careful about that but I accept it and I will try to bring a different breakdown and we speak to you offline about that.

I think the first one was a point about numbers. I do not have a number here.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I am sure that can be readily supplied. Chris [Boothman]?

Christopher Boothman (AM): Yes. Commissioner, can I seek some feedback on a couple of topical issues? The first is about quite widespread coverage of a book published by a former senior officer which has been all over the media the past few days; the second is about coverage of the House of Lords debate on the police bill. In relation to the first one, as I said, there has been quite widespread coverage about this book and what has come across has been concerns raised by this former officer about the effectiveness of the current counterterrorism set up. The impression I have been left with is, firstly, is this simply about publicity for the book?

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): I think you may have a point there!

Christopher Boothman (AM): I suppose the more sensible question is: are there any concerns that he has expressed about the current set up that are still valid? Now, I appreciate you might not be able to answer that immediately but I think that is something the Metropolitan Police Authority should know. Are any of the concerns he has expressed still valid? Secondly, what safeguards are there in place to guard against the publication of unjustified revelations by former officers? That is in relation to the book issue.

In relation to the police bill issue, I was quite surprised to see an amendment put forward by Lord Imbert that was said to be supported by you and by the Metropolitan Police Authority. My question in a sense is not so much to you but more to our Chairman. The question is really: if the Metropolitan Police Authority has supported this amendment why don't I know about it?

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think Reshard [Auladin] wants to ask the same question.

Reshard Auladin (AM): Yes, the question for me though, I think the very late insertion of this amendment in the bill was a surprise to a number of police authorities. I think at the very last minute they were informed that this amendment was about to be tabled. They had done quite a bit of consultation with all sorts of people and they had come to a view that they did want to support what was already in the bill which is to give the Commissioner and Chief Constables a statutory right to be consulted, but they did not feel that they wanted the Commissioner or Chief Constables to appoint their own senior police officers on the basis that this would be a retrograde step, it would be against the tide of accountability, openness and so on which is at the moment being demanded by

members of the public. So, it was a serious concern to me that that was happening and it is, therefore, clear that we need to debate this at the Authority if we are going to have a view to be put forward when this amendment would be reconsidered I understand some time in the future.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Good, any other points anyone wants to raise on this particular issue? Commissioner?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Can I deal with the book, Chris [Boothman]? I do not think you would expect me to answer the question as to whether it was for publicity or otherwise. I think that is directed somewhere else. Am I confident of the arrangement around counterterrorism? My genuine belief is what has been done in recent years to increase the capacity and capability and coordination of the counterterrorism effort in this country and in London has been very significant improvements. Would I say there could never be any improvements? Well, that would be very foolish; there can always be more improvements.

If you were relating to comments that my former colleague said in relation to the way in which Cobra works, I would simply say that I expect and I am confident that I have my senior officers attend Cobra and actually give a very professional performance and engage in good discussions with the other people who should be there. I am not entirely sure it is helpful for future confidence to actually comment any further on that or comment on, if you will, the style of discussions, particularly confidential discussions in particular with dealing with such important matters. I mean no criticism of anybody, people have a right to do whatever they wish but I do not wish to comment any further on that other than I am confident that my officers go there and behave professionally and actually engage with other professionals. The way in which this is done I think is a significant improvement on the past.

As for what control there is over books; that is actually a matter for the Authority but interestingly it goes partly to the heart of the other issue because I do find it surprising that as Commissioner that I have no right or indeed on this occasion any access to that book before it is published. I find that rather surprising, I find it troublesome and I do not think it helps for good order and conduct. It certainly does not help me prepare. That is no criticism of the authority because I think they are under certain obligations and restrictions but I find that somewhat surprising.

If you want I will stop there if you want to debate that one any further before I go on to the matter.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Do we need to give this book any more publicity?

Jennette Arnold (AM): No.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I do not think so. Commissioner?

John Biggs (AM): Has you bought one? No? OK. Not on expenses even!

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I accept that the Authority may well come to a different view than I have, Reshard [Auladin], and I accept that you may well have - I respect the different view - but I would say that during all three of my interviews for the job of Commissioner I raised this issue and I made my views quite clear that I do believe that things have changed. I do not particularly want to get into a debate now, but the nature of accountability of the Commissioner has become clear and stark and it can be dynamic and sudden, and I do not resile from that. That is where we are now and that is fine. I understand that and I take the job on that understanding. I do also think that any Chief Executive in any organisation across the world - and I think policing is the same; and I have never changed my view on this - actually to be a success against very clear accountability would want to be the final arbiter on their own team. That is how Chief Executives create success.

I have never argued for the Authority not to be involved in that and neither would I, but I think the balance needs to change. I think for the Chief Officers it should be the Commissioner who should be the final arbiter with heavy involvement from the Authority. That has always been my view and I made it clear in every interview. Equally importantly, and perhaps more importantly, I think the reason for that is many people would and did find it surprising that the leadership of the Metropolitan Police Service did nothing or could do nothing to discipline a senior member of the team when something clearly that had happened that everybody expected discipline to take place. I do not need to go further than that but I think we all know what I am talking about. Actually it caused people to question and have a lack of confidence in the leadership of the Metropolitan Police Service that the leadership of the Metropolitan Police Service did not do something that they had no power to do. Lots of people found that very strange. Senior civil servants who should have known actually what the legal position is but actually members of the public found that very strange and I know that personally.

So, that is my personal view. I have always made that view clear. I made that view clear in all the interviews and having made that view clear in the interviews it was then raised with me that I think the Parliament Secretary was convinced by it, the then Home Secretary was convinced by it, the Chairman of this Metropolitan Police Authority - I think he can speak for himself - was convinced by it at the interviews; I have subsequently discussed it with the Chairman of this Metropolitan Police Authority, the Vic-Chairman of this Metropolitan Police Authority and the Chief Executive of this Metropolitan Police Authority. So, I have done nothing in anything but other in a transparent manner but I accept you might have a different view. I think it is legitimate on this to have a different view.

In terms of the sudden surprise around this; people did know that there was a possibility of an amendment. My understanding and my officer understanding was for various reasons it was not thought appropriate at that time and we did not believe there was going to be an amendment. I know Lord Imbert decided late that he wanted to place an

amendment and I found out about that on the Monday. That is what happened. I think I have been completely transparent about the matter from start to finish and I have raised it with all possible people. If people have a different view I think that is entirely legitimate and I would not try to say that people should not have a different view, but that is my view.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Commissioner. Just for the record I want to say that I accept the force of the argument that when the Commissioner has to carry quite so much responsibility and when he is held so directly accountable then it did seem to me in my discussions with the Commissioner - I know that Kit [Malthouse] and I think to some extent Catherine [Crawford] share this view - it should be right that there should be a rebalancing. Clearly what did not take place, as I understand it, the amendment referred to the agreement of the Authority and that clearly was not ... is that right?

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): No.

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): No, there was no reference to the agreement of the Authority.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): It said consulted with the Authority.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Well, had there been a reference to the agreement of the Authority that would have been inaccurate but it is certainly my view that the argument the Commissioner puts forward is a very forceful one and is likely to command a wide degree of public support. If the question is really now to what extent there may be disagreement amongst Authority Members and how that disagreement should be properly expressed I think that is a legitimate subject that we could with advantage debate. I am not convinced that we are going to solve that now and I propose really that we remit that for further discussion at another time because I think that is going to be a long debate that I do not believe we have time for today. Toby [Harris]?

Toby Harris (AM): I think there is actually a need for quite a big debate about the accountability role of this Authority while the current statutory framework remains, and obviously that may change in the future. I think in fact that has been made more obvious in terms of some of the comments that we have had because the Commissioner has raised his frustration about the book which we are trying not to publicise and he has raised it about former issues around disciplinary matters and the route by which firm or rapid action can be taken.

I think the problem about this particular issue is that people have talked about a need for rebalancing and the bill that is before Parliament at the moment does do some rebalancing. I had understood, perhaps naively, that that was the settled outcome of lots of discussion and that although people might have wanted more or wanted less that that was where it had ended up. What the bill does is - and you may say it is bizarre and perhaps it was bizarre - that the Commissioner's role in the appointment of officers of Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Assistant Commissioner and Commander was not

previously recognised. In the bill it will be recognised in that the appointment remains as the responsibility of the Authority but the Authority is required to consult the Commissioner, so that rebalances the situation.

Now, the practice, as all of the Members here who have been involved in appointments panels in the past know, is that the Commissioner is, I think, virtually in all but one case in the last nine years been present at that case. In that particular case I think Sir Paul [Stephenson] deputised for the then Commissioner. In all the appointments panels I have sat on the Commissioner has had every opportunity to indicate whether or not he liked a particular candidate, he thought a particular candidate should definitely be appointed or, indeed, whether he had reservations about particular candidates. I can certainly recall instances where that advice has been taken and decisions that might not otherwise have emerged have emerged. I think the problem is that the rebalancing that Lord Imbert put forward went further because what it said is that the responsibility would reside entirely with the Commissioner but that the Commissioner would consult with the Authority.

Now, that is sort of where we have been about the appointment of borough commanders. Now, that is a system which we all know works absolutely seamlessly, wonderfully, without the slightest hitch, but actually the Authority is often presented with a fait accompli. I think the Commissioner is in danger of laying himself open to all sorts of difficulties in terms of it appearing that we are going back to the magic circle type of appointments. Now, that would be dreadful and nobody wants to do that and I do not think the Commissioner wants to go there, but the trouble is it creates an atmosphere in which that looks as though that is possible.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): I think there is a very substantive discussion to be had about this. I am just not convinced that now is the moment for us to have it.

Toby Harris (AM): OK, I will stop referring to the substantive issues then and just make one other point. The way in which this arose in the House of Lords is that about a week or so before the debate I became aware that various Members had received a draft amendment in these terms. I then thought, "Well I must find out what the provenance was." I was told the provenance was the Commissioner's office in New Scotland Yard, so I asked the Metropolitan Police Authority to make inquiries as to that. I was assured at that stage, "No, New Scotland Yard and the Commissioner were not promoting such an amendment." Now, that may have been miscommunication and miscommunications happen, therefore, I was rather surprised to hear Lord Imbert say that this was an amendment which was with the full support of the Commissioner and also he mentioned in passing the Mayor and the Vice-Chairman of this Metropolitan Police Service, the Deputy Mayor.

I just think that in the interests of good communication it would have been helpful for people to be aware of this because there is a debate to be had. I think that the rebalancing in the bill itself actually is sensible, protects the Commissioner and protects the responsibilities of the Authority. I do think that we have got to find a way of resolving it,

because I would not want there to be a tension between the Authority and the Commissioner, not just about this which in a sense is one small issue, but it is coming up in other areas about what is the legitimate relationship between the Commissioner, his proper accountability, but also his proper right to make decisions over operational matters which we, I am sure, all accept.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Toby [Harris], and I am grateful to you. Can I ask whether anybody wants to come in on this particular issue so that I can give the Commissioner a chance to come back on this? Neil [Johnson], then Dee [Doocey], then Faith [Boardman] and then Dick [Tracey].

Neil Johnson (AM): Chairman, thanks very much. I might take a slightly contrary view on this because I try to see it through a perhaps particular set of spectacles. Can I make it clear that I have not discussed this with the Commissioner, with anybody in the Metropolitan Police Service or indeed with Lord Imbert, and I do not comment on parliamentary procedure, Toby [Harris], at all in it? I am a bit puzzled by this debate, as indeed I am puzzled by a number of things around this relationship issue which I think is the fundamental issue that we are actually talking about here.

My understanding when I joined this organisation was that we are here to hold the Commissioner to account for the policing of London, simply put. We dress it up a bit longer than that but that is what we are doing. Then we tell him who his team is going to be, technically. I find that quite extraordinary. We clearly have a duty to appoint the Commissioner and choose him very carefully as somebody who is competent, professional, dedicate and all of those things. I believe we probably have a duty to appoint his Deputy who will only be a heartbeat away, that is the sad reality of life.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): We share it with the Home Secretary of course.

Toby Harris (AM): We share it with the Queen.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): The Queen, thank you, Toby [Harris]; Her Majesty.

Neil Johnson (AM): I bow to that. If we then draw the comparison with a similar-sized organisation outside this goldfish bowl, the Chief Executive, who is held accountable by the board and the shareholders for running that business is broadly speaking given a free hand to appoint the team that he needs to deliver his mission. I find it quite extraordinary that we walk in the other direction on this.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Neil [Johnson], I think that is a powerful point. It is, I am afraid, on the substantive point at issue.

Cindy Butts (AM): I thought we were not having the debate!

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Can I propose that we accept this is an important and substantive issue but we do not attempt today to resolve it? I think that this has been

clear to the Commissioner that this is something that does evoke concerns amongst Members across the board. This is something people will want to discuss. Can I propose that we take the substantive issue of the exact relationship of the MPA and the appointment of other ranked junior members of the Commissioner's team to another day, because I just do not think we are going to get to the bottom of it today? Thank you, Neil [Johnson], for your contribution. If there are any more contributions on the substantive point at issue I would be grateful if you could bottle them up and remit them. Are there any points about procedure or anything else?

Richard Tracey (AM): Chairman, just one tiny point which I think is urgent. I believe I read that although Lord Imbert withdrew the amendment the Minister undertook to come back to it at report stage. Now, perhaps Toby [Harris] can tell us when report stage is, he may know, but it is something we ought to be aware of, I think.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Dick [Tracey]. Dee [Doocey]?

Dee Doocey (AM): Chairman, I just find it very odd that you allow some people to speak having said you are not going to have the debate and some people will speak and you will say, "Fine, we don't have the debate," and then let them go on. Then you will say when it then suits you we are not going to have the debate.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Absolutely.

Dee Doocey (AM): I only wanted to say right at the beginning that I wanted to support what Reshard [Auladin] said. I feel very strongly about this. I think that we ought to have a proper debate on it. I think it ought to be properly timetabled and we ought to have quite a lot of time timetabled in with not people looking at their watch saying, "We've got to finish by 12.00pm". It needs to be quite a lengthy debate and we need to have papers in advance and we need to be able to talk about it until we have exorcised everything.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK, Dee [Doocey], thank you. I am grateful for that.

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): This is a political thing it is not an Authority thing.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Any other points? Commissioner?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Just on points of accuracy; I think I am right in saying, Toby [Harris], that when you say that the amendment to the bill as it stood was the result of a settled outcome of lots of discussion; it may well have been but no one ever discussed it with me. Anyway, I kind of think it goes back to your issue with communication, maybe. I also would say the idea you compare it to the appointment of borough commanders, and I accept that has been problematic on occasions but the idea the appointment of Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) officers and the idea that that goes mostly seamlessly is not true. The one thing I would say and I am very grateful for, if I may say, is the measured language

that is actually the issue of how this came about and has been discussed today. I think the language is slightly more measured than the language that has been used previously because I have acted with complete openness and transparency on all occasions with this and my views were well known by a lot of people.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): They certainly were. Thank you. Listen, I propose, unless there are any more points that people wish to raise which are not of a substantive nature, that we should move on back to other questions about the Commissioner's report. I think I am going to go to Jennette [Arnold] next actually and then I am going to come back to Dee [Doocey]. Jennette [Arnold]?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Thank you, Chairman. I have a couple of comments and two questions. They are about rape, gangs and single police patrols. A comment is based on the partnership work that has been ongoing for a number of years now in the three boroughs that I am linked to I can endorse the Commissioner's statement that a lot of good work is going on. What I am not sure about is how widespread that is. So, I think we should have some sort of report and of all these bits of monies, as well, that is there from the Home Office which are doing great things. Again, one of the problems that you get there is the stop/start approach. I know for a project that was working, say, with gangs and introducing young people to meet ex-offenders - he would be telling them just how it is - and not frighten them but say, "This isn't the way you want to go." Projects like that were funded by the Home Office but have stopped, so it would be nice if all that could be pulled together so that we can understand what is happening.

The question then arises for me is, as the Chairman identified, there are some boroughs when you look at issues about rape you are doing some really good work, and it is not **PIs(?)** that are dismissed but it is good to have something to look at or targets, whatever it is. Again, I am not sure really how robust the instruction is for those boroughs that are struggling to actually either partner up or get their act together because there is good practice there. I do not know how widespread that is.

Then a question for the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman said publicly, and I have followed up a conversation with him because it is something that I am interested in, that the MPA would be setting up a "Gangs in London", or something, board. I am concerned because I know that the Metropolitan Police Service is doing some work; I have recently been invited to a forum that we have got on young women in gowns and that in one of my boroughs. If we leave this board too long, and we have seen it before, what will happen is the MPS will establish a way of working, a strategy, and then all we will be doing is then just looking at that and maybe ticking off boxes rather than being involved in the development of that work.

I Just think that it would be good if we could hear, through you, Chairman, from the Vice-Chairman what is going on about this "Gangs in London" Board - that is my phraseology - because I know there are a number of people like myself who are interested, we are involved in this work locally and we would like the opportunity to be

involved to help with it. Not help, but, if you like, steer or to take some oversight on the MPS's work that they are developing and are rolling out, as I understand it.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): So, you would like to have a role in that, Jennette [Arnold], is that what you are saying?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Yes, I would but I am not the only one. The Vice-Chairman has said that he is doing it but I want to know what he is doing about it and what have you.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK, I have got you.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Then the last comment I have to make, and it is then back to the Commissioner, I remember one of the first questions I raised in 2000 when I joined the board was about as a child being quite happy and the communities were happy seeing a single policeman out there on the street. Then for me coming to London and seeing police in pairs and I just could not get over it. I have to say you might think we are moving to single patrol but I have yet to see that in my journeys across my constituency. Indeed, last week I saw two of the finest and they were there, I will not say it was not work related, but they had their gizmo in their hands walking along - I will not say they were texting. I mean crime could have been rife.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Who was this, Jennette [Arnold]?

Jennette Arnold (AM): This was two police officers.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): They were texting?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Well, they had their phone in their hand.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Is that an offence?

Jennette Arnold (AM): It might not be an offence but I actually say that we were all looking and thinking, "My God, instead of talking to each other now they're maybe texting each other."

Clive Lawton (AM): So they were not talking to each other.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Before I bring you in Commissioner, Kit [Malthouse], can you just answer Jennette's [Arnold] point about the "Gangs in London" Board?

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): Yes. We will be convening the board shortly. To be honest, Jennette [Arnold], there board was meant to be more practitioners and people from local authorities who are dealing with the problem on than ground than politicians, but I am more than happy for you to be involved. This is a thing we have talked about before. We have got a briefing on gangs from the Metropolitan Police Service at the end

of July and as the Metropolitan Police Service form up their policy and what they are doing around gangs we are going to form the group at about the same time.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Well, you are chairing it. Are you a practitioner?

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): I am Vice-Chairman of the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Ex-officio he is a practitioner.

Jennette Arnold (AM): So, it is just one Member then from this Authority you are saying?

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): I have said, Jennette [Arnold], I am more than happy for you to come along if you want to.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Cindy [Butts]?

Cindy Butts (AM): Sorry, just a bit of clarification because I am now extremely confused about what we talked about during our away day and I am assuming that it is the same gangs board that Jennette's [Arnold] referring to.

Jennette Arnold (AM): I am totally lost.

Cindy Butts (AM): I am lost now as to what this board was about. I thought the idea was that we were going to get together, four or five Members, I think that was the suggestion you put to our away day, and we all agreed to that.

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): Fine.

Cindy Butts (AM): No, it is not fine. If you have decided that it is best placed to have a practitioners' forum we just need to know why that is, get the rationale and it might be something that we agree with, but let us understand it and understand what you are proposing.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): So, Cindy [Butts], what you are saying is at the away day it seemed to you that it was agreed --

Cindy Butts (AM): Exactly what Jennette [Arnold] was talking about.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): OK.

Cindy Butts (AM): Now I am confused.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Well, I think we need to reconcile these two views about how the “Gangs in London” Board will be constituted and I am sure we do that very, very rapidly offline and satisfy everybody. Commissioner?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Thank you, Chairman. I think I have got your question, Jennette [Arnold]. I am happy to bring a report as you request. I do share with you this view coming through that we need to try to ensure that we get a synergy of effort between all the various constituent elements we are trying to do something around. That is hugely difficult to do because there are so many good people doing things and some schemes come on and some schemes fall off. It is not always the case historically the evaluation of schemes have been as effective as they might be but I think we all want to see a synergy of effort. Because it seems to me what we all want to see is the focus on prevention being as robust as the focus on suppression. I think that is what we are trying to get to and I think that is what we all want to do.

Jennette Arnold (AM): What is so difficult? I mean you have got a command and ... you know, get on with it.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I do suppression, Jennette [Arnold]. I engage with prevention with other people but I lead on suppression and that is what we are doing. I want to see that it is not for me to do the job of others of bringing all the various constituents together. I am part of those elements that get brought together but I lead on the suppression element and contribute to prevention. I think, as you know, prevention lies in many places, the early intervention, the nought to three age ranges which is probably not my lead role.

If I can go onto how widespread is the good practice on sexual offences; I think you are right and I think that was one of the prime reasons for bringing together, if you will, the centralised serious sexual assault command which we are now doing. We made real progress in London going back some time but then we found there were still some problems and some horror stories came out. The set up of the serious sexual assault command is to get that, if you will, level of best practice applied to the most serious offences in a consistent way across London and that is one of the reasons we went to that command.

Your third question was for the Authority and not for me. Your point about 2000, single patrol, why all these doubles, etc; I might think it is but you know it is not. We are just going to have to agree to differ, Jennette [Arnold]. It is happening more but I think I am pretty honest about it. It will take some time to get it to where I want it to be. What we should not do is every time we see officers in pairs jump to the conclusion that, “It’s clearly not happening; this is wrong,” because there are a whole host of reasons for being in pairs and I keep saying it. When we go in to arrest people and it is an arrest we will go in more than one.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Walking down my high street it is not.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Actually walking down the street where we have got lots of officers in training in pairs. Texting; I am not saying what it was but we are rolling out Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) now so that we can get people out of police stations so they can actually start doing the reports and picking up the information out there on the street in view of the public. So, all I would say is we are moving and we have moved a long way. I have given the figures; we will be measured on the numbers. It is better than it was but it is not where I want it to be, but we should not jump to the conclusion that every time we see two officers walking down the street in a pair that is against what I am saying. It is not, particularly when we are in training.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Commissioner. I am now going to go to Valerie [Brasse].

Valerie Brasse (AM): Thank you. Commissioner, you very helpfully referred to the reporting yesterday on Commander Mark Simmons' about the increase in rapes and of course the numbers are not small - we are not talking about small numbers there - and the increase is quite substantial. One of the things that is said, and it is said time and time again, is of course we do not really know whether this is a real increase or whether this is an increase in confidence about people coming forward to report. I think, given the opportunity we now have of taking the investigation into serious sexual offences into central command, I hope - and this is really a plea - that we now have the opportunity, and take that opportunity, to show the Metropolitan Police Service's commitment to understanding what is in fact going on.

Your response to Cindy's [Butts] comments about the difference between victim satisfaction, white and BME, was really very impressive. It is that sort of understanding that we really do need to get a grip on when we are thinking and looking at the figures around rape, because if we are going to give any reassurance to people in London we need to understand and the Metropolitan Police Service needs to understand what is in fact going on. So, I suppose it is a plea to you to say, "We're doing this now." Can we please take this opportunity to get an understanding of what those figures mean? I do not think it is acceptable to keep on saying, "We don't know."

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Chairman, there is not a lot I can say other than I accept that. I think it is an opportunity now we have moved to a centralised command; it is much easier to do that. It is difficult. We know that in the Metropolitan Police Service we come from a very, very, very poor position on the way we have dealt with rape. We know we have made real improvements; we know that there is still much more to go. We do know we feel we are creating a greater confidence but I do accept it is unacceptable for us to ad infinitum say, "We're not absolutely sure." I was trying to be fair to Mark Simmons because the headline did not quite do him justice in the way he was trying to discuss it, but I do accept we need to create a better understanding and I think we need to seize every opportunity and I will take that away.

Valerie Brasse (AM): I say it only because if we are going to develop a strategy around this you need to know what is going on before that could be successful.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I fully accept it.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you very much. Dee [Doocey]?

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes. Just to remind Sir Paul [Stephenson] that at the last meeting I asked if he would publish on the MPS website the advice given to officers about the use of Section 58 and you agreed to do so. It is not yet there. Could I just ask that you --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Apologies.

Dee Doocey (AM): Thank you.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you, Dee [Doocey]. Any other questions about the Commissioner's report? Jenny [Jones]?

Jenny Jones (AM): I wanted to give two congratulations actually. First of all on paragraph 42 on the environment; that all looks very good news. I am concerned that the Metropolitan Police Service actually hits the Mayor's target of CO₂ reductions of 60% by 2025 - I know how challenging it is. What Committee do those reports go to? Because I have not seen a report on how you are managing to get to that target; that is all.

The second thing I wanted to mention was the other good news story about the credit card fraud and the fact that you have tracked down people and so on. Is there going to be a wash up report that comes to the Metropolitan Police Authority on that saying how many credit cards there were, how many there are now, what the rules were, what the rules are now and that sort of thing so that we can see how it has all moved on?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): Right, if I deal with credit cards first. My understanding is, I could be wrong with this, Jenny [Jones], that that goes to the Corporate Governance Committee.

Toby Harris (AM): We are receiving regular reports on that and I am sure when we finally reach the end of it we could have a sum up report, but we are receiving regular information on all of those points.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): What I have said on a number of occasions is this is far from a happy story for the Metropolitan Police Service and it was very lax controls and quite shameful. We have made real progress but, of course, a lot of the media coverage of it was actually a re-treading of the issues that we dealt with in the first place. It actually did not add anything new to the debate, I think, as far as the Authority and I was concerned.

Jenny Jones (AM): On the environment, it was the last paragraph on your report and it was quite short, but I was pleased to see it there.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): We do get reports on that to Finance and Resources and I will check when the next one is due.

Jenny Jones (AM): OK, thanks, because it is tough.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, MPS): I discussed only yesterday with the Chairman of the Authority the fact that the Metropolitan Police Service do accept, I think, his offer, instruction, or whatever it was, for the Metropolitan Police Service to lead for the GLA on behalf of vehicles because we own the biggest fleet in the GLA.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): It is going to be fantastic.

Jenny Jones (AM): Oh, I saw that; it is very good.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): There is real scope, I think, for economies as well as driving --

Jenny Jones (AM): The electric cars, what a coup. That is so good.

Kit Malthouse (Vice-Chairman): No, hydrogen cars, Jenny [Jones].

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Well, this is not the occasion to have a substantive discussion about exactly what type of low carbon vehicle we are going to be championing. OK, good. I think that probably brings to an end the discussion on the Commissioner's report. Can I ask either the Commissioner or Anne [McMeel] to present the MPA/MPS Policing London Annual Report? Anne [McMeel]?

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): Chairman, I thought the annual report was not here today.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Well, it is down on my list but if we --

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): The Commissioner's report has been submitted to the Authority.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): I think what has happened, Chairman, is that the MPS's section of the Annual Report, because it is a joint Annual Report, has been received and has been circulated to Members in a preliminary way. The MPA section - I was going to say half but I suspect it will be slightly less than half - is still being worked on and we will have an opportunity to discuss the two parts put together as a whole at the next Authority meeting.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Dynamic. OK. Can I take it then that we note that half?

Authority Members: Noted.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. Can I invite the Deputy Treasurer to introduce the MPA Accounts for the year ended 31 March?

Annabel Adams (Deputy Treasurer, MPA): Members are being asked to approve the statement of accounts for 2008/09 for onward submission to the external auditor. They have already been scrutinised and approved by Corporate Governance and various decisions in relation to outturn were approved by the Finance and Resources Committee last week.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Thank you. Can I invite the Members, therefore, to note the approval of the accounts?

Authority Members: Noted.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Good, thank you. Catherine [Crawford], report from the committees.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): Yes. Well, this is the opportunity, Chairman, for Chairs of the four committees to report back on any items of substance that they feel need to be considered at the Full Authority and there is a written report which Members have had an opportunity to read.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Can I take it that Members have noted the written report? Read it, agreed it understand it?

Authority Members: Noted.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): Any comments or issues they wish to raise?

Authority Members: None.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): There being none we go to any other urgent business.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): There is none, Chairman.

Boris Johnson (Chairman): There is no other urgent business. We are, therefore, under the unhappy duty of asking everybody else to leave because we have one final item to consider.