

Transcript of the meeting of the Metropolitan Police Authority held on Thursday, 27 January 2011 at 10 am in the Chamber, City Hall, SE1.

Start time: 09.58am

End time: 1.32pm

Members:

Kit Malthouse (Chairman), Reshard Auladin (Vice Chairman), Tony Arbour, Jennette Arnold, John Biggs, Faith Boardman, Valerie Brasse, Victoria Borwick, Cindy Butts, James Cleverly, Dee Doocey, Toby Harris, Kirsten Hearn, Neil Johnson, Jenny Jones, Clive Lawton, Joanne McCartney, Steve O'Connell, Caroline Pidgeon, Amanda Sater, Valerie Shawcross, Graham Speed.

MPA Officers:

Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive, MPA)

Annabel Adams (Deputy Treasurer, MPA)

MPS Officers:

Tim Godwin (Acting Commissioner, MPS)

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS)

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS)

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Good morning. Apologies for absence: I have received apologies from Chris Boothman, but also for the first time in ten years, apologies from Catherine Crawford. Item 2, Declarations of interest; does anybody have any interests to declare in relation to this meeting? Item 3, minutes of our meeting on 25 November.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): I have a point on the minutes.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, Val.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Thank you Chair. You will remember, I hope, that in that meeting in November, we had quite a heated discussion about the publication or not of one of the reports. It was agenda item 10, the Policing London Business Plan. Indeed, there are a few paragraphs there about some of the debate, but the crucial point that I was making, and I believe that my colleague, Lord Harris supported me at the time, or made the same point, was that we felt that, under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the information in that report didn't qualify for exemption. Therefore, it should not have been in the private part of the meeting but should have been in the public part of the meeting. As Members of this authority, we have access to that information so it is not a complaint on my own behalf, but there are public information requirements with which this authority has to comply. I do not see that reflected in the minutes and from memory there were some actions agreed, relatively consensually, where the paper was going to be taken away, any items that were exempt redacted and then it was going to be put into the public domain. I just wonder why that is not reflected in the minutes at all.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): We could certainly do that because those actions were taken away and performed and the information was released into the public domain and put on the website shortly thereafter, so we can certainly reflect that in the minutes.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Was there anything else on the minutes? Can I sign them as a true record then? Thank you. Item 4, Chairman's update. It has been a while since we last met so there are a few things just to update you on; key issues, meetings and successes. First, I am sure Members would like to join me in taking this opportunity to congratulate all those MPS officers who received New Years honours at the turn of the year. PS Danny Hill from SO14 received a Member of the Royal Victorian Order for services to Her Majesty the Queen. PC Kenneth Coid SO14 also received a Royal Victorian medal for services to the same monarch. Gary Pugh, Director of Forensic Services received an OBE. Dr Sanjoy Kumar, MPS Senior Forensic Medical Examiner received an MBE for services to the Met. DCSU Hamish Campbell, OCU Commander, Homicide and Serious Crime; CSU Dominic Clout from Territorial Policing, now retired; DAC Rod Jarman, whose retirement party is I think this evening, and PC Ivor Macgregor from Havering all received a Queen's Policing medal for services to policing. Congratulations to all of them. I would also like to congratulate Lynne Owens on her successful appointment as Assistant Commissioner (Central Operations), our second ever female AC and a very good appointment too.

I wanted to congratulate the Commissioner, the Acting Commissioner and others on a number of recent successes. First of all, many thanks for the extremely smooth policing of the New Year's Eve celebrations and the fireworks on the Thames. This is an increasingly burdensome operation involving ever growing crowds and the fact that it went off so smoothly was a tribute to the Commissioner and his staff, but also the 3,200 officers and 68 police staff who were deployed on the evening. Congratulations also go to the MPS Waste Advisor who was highly commended by the Mayor's Responsible Procurement Awards in 2010 for her work establishing the Swap Shop initiative, where MPS staff were encouraged not to throw things away but to swap them. This scheme in the Met has saved well over £10,000 with 4,000 items diverted from landfill over the last year or so.

As Chair of the Authority I have attended a few meetings that I wanted to draw to your attention. First of all the Authority under the chair of Cindy [Butts] held a highly successful national symposium on multi-point entry to the police earlier this month. That was in response to a recommendation from the Race and Faith report. A broad range of speakers and delegates attended, from Government ministers, senior police officers, senior members of other organisations that have grappled with this issue over the years. From the feedback it was generally extremely well received and hopefully will have kicked off a wider national debate about an important issue. A report into the event is currently being produced and that will be presented at the March full Authority.

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill continues to progress through Parliament and we have a separate paper on that today. Just to let you know I attended along with the acting commissioner a Police and Crime Commission, a transition sponsorship board, chaired by the policing minister in mid-January which started the work of flagging up some of the, I think, fairly knotty issues that will be required to be addressed as we move towards transition. That first meeting merely highlighted some of the issues that need to be looked at. What will happen during transition is now going to be the subject of intensive work at the Home Office and hopefully we will bring a report into what the implications are going to be for Members and the authority fairly soon in the spring once that work is underway. I think it is fair to say that there is a bit of an underestimation at the Home Office about the amount of work is going to be needed and the number of issues that will need to be addressed in transition and what the legacy items left by the Police Authority are going to be after the reforms go through.

More about the budget later but there have obviously been a series of meetings trying to maximise funds available for policing in London and negotiations around what the implications are, but we can talk about that later. I also appeared with senior officers of the MPS before the Assembly Budget Performance Committee as part of their investigation into front line policing. We have also met with HMIC, the acting commissioner, myself and Anne [McMeel] as part of the Police Governance in Austerity Programme. They were apparently supporting and challenging us at the same time as to whether we were in good shape to cope with the economic restrictions that we face. We wait to hear from them as to their conclusions.

We completed the MPA roadshows successfully before Christmas and there have been three joint engagement meetings since we last met with Islington, Hackney and Hillingdon. The London Crime Reduction Board held its second meeting in December and agreed three pressing areas where the Mayor and the Board could support the MPS and boroughs: partnership working to combat violent crime, violence against women and girls and reducing re-offending. The Board will steer developments to enable local partners to plan, deliver and reshape services towards better outcomes. We have also asked for a report to be provided to the Strategic and Operational Policing Committee on the issues related to the recent 'Don't Snitch' posters - which you will have seen in the media - about the fact that they were being circulated and associated matters including how informants are treated and handled by the MPS.

Finally, it is worth noting that the date of our meeting today is shared with Holocaust Memorial Day. It was on this day in 1945 that the largest Nazi killing camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau, was liberated. Holocaust Memorial Day remembers the victims and those whose lives have been changed beyond recognition by the holocaust, Nazi persecution and subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and the ongoing atrocities today in Darfur. As well as honouring the survivors it provides us all with an opportunity to look at what is happening today and learn from those lessons of the past and count the blessings for the type of country that we live in.

That is it from me. Does anybody have any questions? We have a fair amount to get through. First of all, before we do that, we have a petition to be presented by Zain Sardar, who is the national coordinator of the Young Greens. Welcome, good morning. As is usual with our standing orders, Zain has five minutes to present his petition and make a comment. I will then invite the Deputy Chief Executive to respond. The petitioner then can respond for up to three minutes and then members may wish to comment. Zain, over to you.

Zain Sardar (Young Greens National Coordinator): Firstly, thank you very much for letting me speak today and for listening to me this morning. I find it quite interesting that today in the media the president of the association of the chief of police has vigorously defended kettling and police tactics, so I think this petition is very pertinent today. Since launching our petition on 8 December, we have had almost 2,000 signatures. We launched the petition in response to police tactics used against student protestors on 24 and 30 November. Since then there has been one more protest on 9 December and that was the tuition fees voting day and there was kettling used on that demonstration as well. I think what has happened is that on the protests of 24 and 30 November, there was an overreaction by the police, in terms of the tactics they used, to the Millbank protests in which Conservative HQ was damaged somewhat.

To put some of this in context, we have a situation whereby public confidence in the police has reached an all time low. Not just in terms of the protests that I am talking about today but also because of the covert agents infiltrating protest groups. We ask you to ban the tactic of kettling because it greatly damages community trust in the police. At

each of the recent student protests in London, large numbers of school children attended what was probably their first demonstration. They were kettled for hours in freezing conditions, despite doing nothing wrong. This tactic of kettling is creating a generation of young people who distrust the police and view them as the enemy.

I was at the protest on 24 November and I was kettled for nine hours in horrible conditions with the temperatures reaching pretty much zero degrees Celsius. There have been hundreds of comments left on this petition saying that kettling is a violation of their human rights; the right to assembly and protest. Even if the police do not view the tactic as a violation of human rights or false imprisonment or collective punishment, the public you serve do. Therefore, continuation with this tactic will only serve to increase distrust in the police. There are comments left by a significant number of people who believe the police deliberately use this tactic to incite violence within peaceful crowds. Again this a perception that is perpetuated each time innocent protestors are kettled without any justification. There is an Early Day Motion by Labour MPs calling on the Government to ban the tactic and the petition has been signed by Conservative councillors and Green Party Assembly Members. There is cross-party support to ban this tactic because it does more damage than good.

There have been comments left by people stating that, because they have children, are elderly or have certain physical health conditions, they will not attend demonstrations in London because they cannot afford to be kettled for hours at a time. This is the perception the public now has of demonstrations in London; that if they attend a protest, regardless of what they do, how they behave or for what cause, you will be kettled. This is the effect that the tactic has on the population. It quite frankly intimidates people. We now have a senior doctor warning that the police risk repeating a Hillsborough-type tragedy with this tactic. The purpose of this body is to increase community trust in the police. The tactic of kettling damages community confidence in the police and it is completely counterproductive. Therefore we ask you to ban this tactic except for circumstances in which there is a threat of violence between two hostile groups of protestors. To give you an example, the UAF protestors and the EDL on major demonstrations. Sometimes they clash and obviously, in those circumstances, kettling would be justified.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, thank you. Jane, if you would not mind responding.

Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive): Firstly, can I thank the Young Greens for bringing this petition to the attention of the Authority. Any information about public confidence in policing is of particular interest to us. It is, I believe, generally accepted that the police should not use containment in situations where violence is not taking place or anticipated. However, the police must also consider other issues, such as actual or potential widespread criminal damage and balancing the rights of protestors and the wider public. I need to clarify that the Police Authority does not have any power to ban the use of this tactic, since this falls within the Commissioner's discretion to make operational policing decisions. However, we do hold the Commissioner to account for the delivery of policing and we have debated the issue of containment on many

occasions, both in this meeting and through the Civil Liberties Panel.

Containment is legal if it is carried out in good faith, is proportionate and necessary and remains in place for no longer than is required. Additionally, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and this Authority have made recommendations about the use of containment, including the release of vulnerable and, where possible, non-violent protestors from cordoned areas, and about the importance of communicating with demonstrators during any period of containment. Both we and the Commissioner agree that the misuse of containment damages public confidence and is likely to deter some people from exercising their legal right to protest peacefully. We are seeking ongoing reassurances from the Commissioner that when this tactic is used it is done so legally with reference to HMIC and MPA recommendations and that all possible alternatives were considered before its deployment.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Zain, I do not know if you wanted to respond to that before I ask Members to comment.

Zain Sardar (Young Greens National Coordinator): Firstly, let me just thank you for your response. Second, I think you talk about an interesting idea in terms of kettling being used to defend property. I think that is why I allude to the fact that, with Millbank, when there was damage to property the police overreacted to the demonstrations afterwards. What I saw of the protest after the Millbank demonstration was that kettling did not stop people from damaging property. In fact, it probably did the reverse. It probably made people even more angry than they were already because they were kettled for hours on end. I was kettled on Westminster Bridge for several hours in dangerous conditions.

I thank you for listening to the petition and I hope you will act on it in the near future. Thank you very much.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you. Does anybody else wish to comment? Jenny, yes.

Jenny Jones: Can I just ask Zain; you were kettled on Westminster Bridge, which I think was an incredibly dangerous situation. Could you just tell us a little bit about it, because I think most people will not know the circumstances?

Zain Sardar (Young Greens National Coordinator): Well we were told by the police at the demonstration that we would be let go. So we followed the police and they lead us onto Westminster Bridge. Most of us thought we would probably gone in several minutes, but we were there for several hours. The biggest problem was that we were so tightly packed together, there was very little breathing space and we were essentially above extremely cold water, so the conditions were extremely dangerous at the time.

Dee Doocoy (AM): Having found myself by accident behind the police lines at the last demonstration I saw at first hand and for the first time ever just what the police had got to face. I must tell you that I found it very frightening indeed, and I was nowhere near, I

was inside a building. I just happened to be behind the police lines. So, I see it from both points. I personally think kettling just makes the situation worse. I think it is counter-productive. Having said that I would find it very difficult to say, if I were police officers in that line, what they should do. Certainly we do not want to look at anything ghastly like water cannons or any other form of containment, and there were so many thugs and it was really scary. If it can be scary from inside a building, heaven knows what the young police officers felt on the front line. So I think there are two sides. My concern is I think the difficulty, the main difficulty with kettling is the supervision and leadership. At the end of the day it comes down to a judgement call from those officers who are supervising the other officers to say, these people should be let go and those people we cannot let go just yet. I think we have not yet got that right, and I have real concerns about that. I think much more work needs to be done.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Valerie?

Valerie Brasse (AM): Thank you. I mean I share some of Dee's perceptions having stood at least on two occasions in those demonstrations and feeling the heat, as it were. I think one of the issues for me is the perception that we do not seem to understand kettling as 'last resort'. There is a perception that one goes from marshalling a demonstration to kettling and there is not much in between. Maybe we are not doing ourselves many favours, or perhaps you are not, by not describing the intermediate steps and in fact what else was done. So I think there is a sense that we need to have a feeling that you just go from marshalling to kettling. There is, I think, something in between which is appropriate and right to use, and we need to hear more about that.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I just wanted to say, rather than repeating it, I endorse what has just been said. I have actually put a question down to the Commissioner today exactly on that incident on Westminster Bridge, because I was very alarmed by the video footage I saw and reports from people inside saying they feel that they had crush injuries. Particularly I am going to ask for answers about kettling on the bridge where the parapet, I believe, was waist-high, and there was great fear amongst those being crushed that there could have been a falling off the bridge at that point. I think that was an extremely dangerous situation. We will have a chance to look at that further when I ask my question later on.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): James?

James Cleverly (AM): Thank you chair. Firstly I would like to thank you for actually engaging with us. I think that is a strong indication of how differing views can be aired and ideally resolved. I think of the challenges we have was highlighted very much by yourself where you gave an instance where you yourself felt that containment might be appropriate, namely the EDL and UAF. I think that whilst it is possible for us to have a huge discussion about where that threshold should be, even you identified the fact that there are times when it may be appropriate. Therefore, what the debate really hinges around is at what point we feel that a tactic like this is appropriate. That is a debate that could go on indefinitely, but I want to thank you for actually engaging with us on this

issue.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you. John?

John Biggs (AM): I will be repetitive in the sense that this has been raised with me by a number of constituents in my representative role and I think it does raise a number of very important points. I wanted to make three or four points. First of all, I am very pleased that the petition has been received today and you have made the representations that you have made, which I think accord with a very wide range of opinion amongst ordinary people out there. It is not some sort of radical leftist position that is being taken. I think a lot of very ordinary non-political people felt very uncomfortable about the way in which the thing was policed. Secondly, as a counter to that almost, I think our duty is also to defend our police officers who are in an impossible position. On the one hand, you do something like this and you are criticised. On the other hand, if there is a breakdown of order then you will be criticised as well, if there is damage to property and threats to the safety of individuals. I would not say it is an impossible position but obviously it is a dynamic position which requires constant revision of strategies and ways of dealing with this situation.

The other point is that I would just emphasise from the correspondence and conversations I have had with people that there are a lot of very ordinary people who are not particularly political, this is maybe for them a once in a lifetime experience going on a demonstration on something they feel strongly about for whatever reason, and they feel harshly, unfairly and improperly treated. In the case of minors and younger people a lot of parents feel uncomfortable about that as well. On the one hand it is part of growing up, life ain't fair, but on the other hand people do feel that they were treated harshly and insensitively by the process there, while perhaps understanding at one remove why technically it was done in the way in which it was done. So it is a very difficult balancing act and our job is to speak up on behalf of Londoners but also I think to defend our police services. Did they get the balance right? Well, they could always be criticised. I think on that cold night with all those young people the balance probably was not, in that there must be some way in which people who are about their lawful business could have been allowed to leave without fettering the good, safe management of London's City Centre. I know that is impossible but I think it is still something people expect us to work even harder to resolve.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Clive?

Clive Lawton (AM): While I share people's reservations clearly about kettling and I would have thought - well we have all agreed - that it is something only to be used in extremis and so forth, one of the points that we were at great pains to stress through the Civil Liberties Panel following the G20 demonstrations was not least the level of communication that is conducted with people within the area. I understand that that level of communication was at least poor if not non-existent for many folk for several hours. That has to be intolerable. There has got to be a system to notify people what is going on, at least, and I think once people know what is going on there is a certain reduction in

distress, as they can see how this thing is unfolding.

The other thing I was pleased to see and I think indicates some awareness on the part of the Met that this is controversial and difficult, was the decision to produce a leaflet to hand out to demonstrators at subsequent demonstrations to explain what was going on. I thought this was marvellous, I was really pleased to see it. Then I read it. Within this leaflet which was full of all kinds of interesting information there was a little paragraph headed, I think, 'Containment'. It was comparatively bland really, you could easily have read it without quite noticing that it was really about kettling, which is what everybody else knows. I noticed in the petition that the talk was only about kettling. It seems to me that an excellent exercise in communication was almost completely wasted by a failure to communicate; that is by using language which ultimately did not communicate with the people who were properly being communicated with. I suspect that youngsters, schoolchildren, students and so on would never have noticed that that was an explanation of the kettling experience that they had all heard of. It seemed a great shame, wasted opportunity but an excellent initiative and I hope that can be improved and built upon in the future.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, Toby?

Toby Harris (AM): I just wanted to make the point that I think we have to look at this in the context of what alternatively police tactics might be. People here will remember times 20 years ago and more, when police tactics in terms of large demonstrations or demonstrations which were unpredictable involved essentially chasing the demonstrators down the street with drawn batons being waved around at substantial danger not only to people demonstrating but anyone in the vicinity. I do not think anyone regards the tactic of containment as being ideal, but if that is the alternative and that is the way in which things proceed then we have to put it in that context.

The other point I would take up is that, I think the petitioner talked about the regard with which the police are being held as being the lowest ever. It may be in terms of recent memory - though I think people might even dispute that - but actually there have been times in this capital city when the regard for the police has been far, far lower than it is now. I have actually been reading some histories of the mid-19th Century. The very early Metropolitan Police was not exactly popular with the population at that time. So I think we have to put it in context. There are issues about the way in which the containment tactic is used and clearly lessons can and should be learned every time it is used, but we have to look at what the alternatives would be.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, I think it is worth bearing in mind also that there are dozens of demonstrations in this city which are not contained, every year, and it is worth us reflecting on, while this is a difficult situation for the police, who makes it difficult? It is not the police who make it difficult. It is that minority who turn up to cause the violence and mayhem that we have seen; demonstrators that put both innocent demonstrators and the police in a difficult position. As I say, the fact that there are dozens, if not hundreds of demonstrations every year that are not contained, it indicates

that there is something within those particular demonstrations, which is not the fault of the police or indeed the demonstrators that means that tactic, controversially, has to be deployed.

OK, thank you very much. We receive your petition and will feed it into the work we have been doing through the Civil Liberties Panel and others on this issue. No doubt it will run and run, particularly if we have more demonstrations over the next year or so.

Zain Sardar (Young Greens National Coordinator): Thank you very much and thank you to the Members for their kind and constructive comments.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you. OK, Members, thank you for that. Now Kirsten [Hearn] is here we should just go round quickly and place ourselves in the room. Kit Malthouse, Chairman of the Authority.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Tim Godwin, Acting Commissioner.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): John Yates, Acting Deputy Commissioner.

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): Anne McMeel, Director of Resources.

James Cleverly (AM): James Cleverly.

Tony Arbour (AM): Tony Arbour

John Biggs (AM): John Biggs.

Amanda Sater (AM): Amanda Sater.

Graham Speed (AM): Graham Speed.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Valerie Brasse.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Caroline Pidgeon.

Jenny Jones (AM): Jenny Jones.

Clive Lawton (AM): Clive Lawton.

Toby Harris (AM): Toby Harris.

Cindy Butts (AM): Cindy Butts.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Joanne McCartney.

Faith Boardman (AM): Faith Boardman.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Jennette Arnold.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Valerie Shawcross.

Neil Johnson (AM): Neil Johnson.

Steve O'Connell (AM): Steve O'Connell.

Annabel Adams (Deputy Treasurer, MPA): Annabel Adams.

Reshard Auladin (Vice Chairman): Reshard Auladin.

Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive): Jane Harwood.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, thank you very much. Item 6, Acting Commissioner's Report.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Thank you, chair. Can I start by saying a quick note on Sir Paul Stephenson and his current health? We are very pleased to say that Paul [Stephenson] was discharged from hospital last week and is now at home recuperating. His doctors have told him that this will be a long process due to the nature of the break that he is recovering from but he still intends to be back at the beginning of May. He has been extremely grateful for all the messages of support he has been receiving, and he is looking forward to the time when he can bend his knee totally and then will be back. He is going through a lot of physiotherapy and he will be back shortly. We wish him well, and I am sure that you will join us in that.

It has obviously been a very, very busy start to the year for us but, before we get into the matters that are, obviously, at the front of everyone's minds at this time, we did feel that it was appropriate to identify that this is a decade now past and equally coincides with the formation of the Police Authority, and that it would be of interest to look back over that decade as to what has happened in that ten-year period since 2000.

One of the things, when going through that data, that we identified; actually, London has become significantly safer. There has been an 18% fall in house burglaries with fewer than 59,000 burglaries for 3.2 million homes. Motorists have suffered far less crime than a decade ago. There have been nine consecutive years of decrease in motor-vehicle crime with theft of motor vehicles down by 58%. It would be wrong for the police to claim that as a success in its entirety on their own because, obviously, a lot of good work has been done by the industry to target hardened vehicles as we know. But, nonetheless, far fewer cars stolen. Theft from motor vehicles, additionally, is down 31% in that ten-year period.

We have undertaken some high-profile action on violent crime throughout that period from Safer Streets, Operation Blunt 2, implementing schools, offices, Operation Protect in relation to school violence, and Operation Trident to name but a few. Last year's homicide rate was the lowest for at least a decade, and represents 16 fatalities for every million London residents, something that this city should be proud of but, at the same time, very concerned that we must not be complacent, and it is still too many. To put this into some kind of perspective, this is a quarter of the homicide rate of New York. We were asked a question the other day as to what had occurred to actually drive down that homicide figure. When you look back, a lot of superb partnership work around identifying risk in domestic violence, partnership work in relation to safeguarding children and, for all its faults in those areas where the system has failed individuals for which we are held accountable and truly saddened, there has been significant progress that we must not lose sight of and we must not (overspeaking)

Robbery has fallen by 32% in that period of a decade. At the same time in that period, we have been policing with our partners 4,500 events every year, the vast majority of which, as protests, go off very peacefully with the full engagement of the organisers. We are currently preparing for a safe and secure Olympic and Paralympic Games, and that is faced at the time of significant challenge fiscally in terms of our budgets and moving forward, again working with partners in the Greater London Authority (GLA), the Mayor and this authority.

Interesting the comments about confidence and grateful to hear Toby's comments because, at the start of the decade, we were at 58% where the population of London thought we were doing a good or excellent job. That now currently stands at 65%, nearly two-thirds of the population.

So, what has been happening in this financial year? Well, it has been challenging. We can say that total crime, total notifiable offences, is down by just under 1%; effectively pretty much flat-lined. Violence with injury, though, importantly one of our priorities set by you as the authority, is down 5.7% with 3,100 fewer offences. Serious youth violence is still down, and we have been driving that down over the last years with those various initiatives that I mentioned before but, again, only down by just about 1%, 45 fewer offences of serious youth violence. Gun crime, which has always been an issue for this authority and for us, the Metropolitan Police Service and for the citizens of London, is down by 16.6% with 429 fewer offences. The instances where a firearm has actually been discharged (we have been there before in terms of weapon intimidated or seen), where they have actually been fired, they are down by 8.2% in terms of this financial year so far.

Knife crime where knife has actually been used to stab or injure someone is down by 4.6%. Hate crime has fallen compared with the same period last year. Racist or religious crime is down by 11.7%, and homophobic crime down by 4.4%. Big caveat with that and the next figure in domestic violence that that does rely upon a confidence in reporting those crimes to us. Reported domestic violence is down by 4.9%, and that is 1,963 fewer

offences. Again, we are encouraging, and we do everything we can with our partners to encourage, people who are suffering from that serious offence to come forward.

Another statistic (and I know people get bored with statistics but a fact); 40 fewer people have died on London's roads this year compared to the same period last year. Forty again too many but that is nearly a 30% reduction in fatalities on our roads.

During this period, we have also been facing one of the most significant counter-terrorism threats in terms of our recent past. As a result of that, significant work has been undertaken by our counter-terrorism command, and also co-ordinating the activity across the country leading to a number of arrests and charging of individuals, who await trial.

What are the key challenges for us? Well, having said that motor-vehicle crime is down 58% and theft gone down 31%, this is the first year for a significant number of years where we have seen a small increase. It is up just over 2%, and one of the reasons that we are looking at there is actually the scrap-metal value, which has increased. We need to look at our responses to that. That has driven an overall rise in serious acquisitive crime by 1%, which when you put it against the amount of crime, 145,000 offences, is a small rise at this time. Burglary continues to fall, though. That is down 4.7%.

Rape, as we have mentioned here on many occasions, is an issue of serious concern for us. It has increased, and reported offences are up 20%. I know the Authority is well informed in relation to that fact from consistency of reporting and recording, encouraging people to come forward. It is an under-reported crime. At the same time, though, we need to be assured as to whether it is, in fact, rising as a risk as well. All those three are probably true.

We also have to report the sad deaths of five teenagers since our last meeting. We are redoubling our efforts to make sure that we maintain our Blunt 2 capability and our anti-gang activities.

We have also launched a campaign against street robbery because one of the things that the knife crime relates to, and the risk, is actually a small increase in robbery. As a result of that, we need to be alive to that because we know from our historic past that, if we take our eye off the robbery perspective, it can increase swiftly, especially amongst young communities. As a result, we launched our campaign against street robbery on 10 January, encouraging people to be cautious in terms of how they use their property, to make sure people were aware of the immobilise campaign, and at the same time to point out that we are on the case.

That is the activity in terms of operational issues confronting the Metropolitan Police Service. In terms of the other matters, I know, having been asked questions as I walked in earlier today, that one of the key issues and challenges that we have is that of the concerns around the phone-hacking inquiry into the News of the World. I would like to reiterate to the authority that yesterday, on 26 January, we received some significant new information from News International relating to allegations of phone hacking at the News

of the World in 2005-2006. As a result of that new information and evidence, we launched a new investigation to consider that material and to take the lines of inquiry forward and to carry out a robust investigation that this new evidence gives us. The work will be carried out by the Specialist Crime Directorate, which has been investigating other phone-hacking allegations since September 2010.

We at the beginning of this week, John [Yates] and I, went to hold talks with the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) about encouraging Alison Levitt QC to widen her role in evaluating the evidence that we had to date, the progress of the investigation and any new evidence. That was agreed, and we publicised that at the time.

Quick point to make: the original phone-hacking investigation was undertaken by the counter-terrorism command in Specialist Operations. However, in view of their current workload and the continuing severe threat level that I mentioned earlier, it has been agreed that it is no longer appropriate to divert them or Acting Deputy Commissioner John Yates from their main duties and responsibilities. Accordingly, this new investigation will be led by Deputy Assistant Commissioner Sue Akers from the Serious Crime Directorate (SCD).

I think at this point I would like to bring in John Yates, which I know is a slight departure from precedent, just to tell you the reality because there are a lot of things being said in the press and elsewhere. What we need to do is just to tell you the sequence of events that led us to where we are now.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Thank you, Tim. Thank you, chair. Tim has rehearsed some of the facts there but I thought it would be useful for members to have a sequence of events laid out for you today around what has taken place. The original inquiry started at the end of 2005, went into 2006. It was led by Andy Hayman. It was in Specialist Operations. It was Specialist Operations mainly because the targets of that original phone-hacking inquiry were the Royal Family or members of the Royal Family. So, it came under the auspices of Specialist Operations.

I think everyone is familiar with the outcome of that inquiry. It was done in co-operation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Two people went to prison, Glenn Mulcaire and Clive Goodman.

Fast forward to July 2009. Fresh allegations appeared in the Guardian newspaper around a range of facts that they had uncovered. I was then asked by Sir Paul Stephenson to establish the facts, not to review the case, to establish the facts. I had to see if there was anything in the Guardian article that amounted to new material that we were not aware of. The plain facts were that, whilst the material, was new to the media, it was not new to us. It did not constitute new evidence, and we did not open the inquiry. That was later endorsed by the DPP at that time.

Again fast-forward slightly to September 2010. The New York Times again produced a range of material in a series of articles making similar allegations about the awareness of

phone hacking within the media. A small team was set up to look at that. It was scoped, again in co-operation and collaboration with the CPS. That went to the CPS, and in their view the material that we were able to gather at that time fell well short of admissible evidence.

We have always said that, if new evidence came to light, we would consider it. That is exactly what we have done today and yesterday. Tim has said that new and highly significant material has come into our possession, and we will now be considering that in a new investigation.

I hope that helps in terms of the sequence and laying out some of the facts around this case, which has caused such a huge speculation and some misreporting.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): If I can build on that, because I would like to finish and I know there are some questions, chair, that come afterwards.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): If you finish that. Then we will take some questions, and then we can move onto the rest.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): We do understand people who perceive themselves to have been potential victims; we can understand frustrations and we can understand concerns. We are very much alive to that.

The other thing that we are is we are not afraid of being held accountable for the decisions and the actions that we take. The reality that we are confronting with today is that we have a full, live investigation under way, and we do not want to do anything that will undermine any prospects of prosecution or other action that might occur. So, I would hate for anyone to think that we were being evasive in terms of answering challenging questions because that is not our nature.

What it does mean, though, is that we do need to allow Sue Akers and her team to robustly go through that evidence and pursue those lines of inquiry, which I know everyone expects us to do.

However, at the end of that process, and when we can actually draw a line through those legal processes (because there are a number of judicial reviews as well that are ongoing as we speak), there will be questions that people will want to be asked, and they will be answered, and we will work that through with whatever being is here in replacement of this Police Authority and others. But that has to be done at the end of the process for this investigation.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Let's deal with this now. I know, Joanne, you have had a written question about this. Would you like to ask a question first?

Joanne McCartney (AM): In a sense, a lot of my question has been answered because I was asking what new information you were providing the CPS, and do you anticipate

questioning any further witnesses or suspects into this matter or undertake any further police investigation. Well, you have now launched a new investigation.

You have now moved the investigation to the SCD under the command of Sue Akers. I understand from what you have said and the press release you have put out that the CPS and Alison Levitt QC are going to be in step with you throughout that process. Is the silk going to be reviewing all the evidence and advising every stage of the investigation from now on?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): There has always been a very good relationship between the DPP and the investigation in terms of the evidence. One of the issues that has been confronted with this, and has been since the Andy Hayman inquiry into this, is that this is a fairly unique offence. As a result of that, there is very limited jurisprudence in relation to decisions on interpretation of law. That is why it is absolutely vital that we take direction in terms of those interpretations and those investigations. So, Alison Levitt will be maintaining that role.

Joanne McCartney (AM): There have been calls for an independent inquiry into this, perhaps another force looking at this. Do you think that gives sufficient isolation from the original investigating team that people out there can be assured that this is going to be looked at completely with a new fresh eye?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): This is going to be looked at in light of very new fresh evidence. The fact that it is in the Serious Crime Directorate is in no way a reflection on those who have been there before. It is actually the right place for it to be.

Can I guarantee that there will be a robust investigation that will pursue it as swiftly as it can with due diligence? Yes, that will occur. The proof of the pudding will be in the eating, and, as I say, we are not afraid of accountability at the end of that process.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I have a few more questions. If this new investigation discovers that there was evidence that should have come out of your original investigation and that should have been followed and that was not followed, what then happens?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I think it would be unwise of me at this point, as I am sure you would agree, to speculate on what might or might not be in any review at the end of any process of investigation. I think what I would say is let's find out when we get it if that is the case.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I have two further questions --

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner): It is just worth pointing out, Jo, on that point do not forget the original investigation was constructed with the CPS and with their guidance. How they constructed that case is a matter for the CPS in terms of the narrowness or otherwise of the evidence they wanted to produce in that case. So, it is all

done. In 2005-2006, the original team under Andy Hayman made it very clear that it was working with the CPS, and the case was constructed with them. That does not necessarily mean that you put everything into that case. You choose what is the best opportunity to achieve the best outcome.

Joanne McCartney (AM): The reason I asked is I have asked previously, because the New York Times article suggested that there was a CPS source saying that they had not been given the full amount of evidence that the police had.

I do have two further questions --

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner): Can I just lay that one as well, because the CPS had access to all the material. They reviewed all the undisclosed unused material. They had the opportunity. Junior counsel reviewed all that in the light of the case that they constructed at that time. So, they had access to all of the material.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I have to say, from the meeting with the Director of Public Prosecutions that I asked for on Monday, he was very supportive of the accessibility and the actual co-operation and what had been done.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I have also raised before the Metropolitan Police Service's not contacting potential victims who may have been phone hacked. Yesterday, although it was overlooked in your re-opening your investigation, there was, in fact, a High Court judgment in the case of Steve Coogan, who the judge stated could have disclosure of the Metropolitan Police Service documents that they hold with regards to him because he has grounds for suspicion that he is a victim of phone hacking. Will you now be informing all of the potential victims that fall into that category that they may have been victims, and providing them with information?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner): Again, we have been going through a process since July 2010 to go through all the lists again to make sure we have contacted all those we ought to have done.

It is worth pointing out again another point. It is reported that the information has been extracted from us unwillingly. That is not the case. The law is that, if we gather this information for a criminal purpose, we are not allowed to release it for another purpose, ie a civil action, unless there is a court order. We have to go through that process. Perhaps we have not explained that very well but that is the position that we find ourselves in. We cannot release it without a court order.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Having entered into this particular world recently, that is the bit that has caused us some concerns but we do need to get that message out there. Again, at the end of this process, those are the questions that will be asked and we will be able to answer them.

Joanne McCartney (AM): One final question. There have been allegations throughout this process that there was a very close relationship between certain Metropolitan Police Service officers and the News of the World. In the spirit of openness, can I ask you if you would disclose any meetings that any officers of the investigating team have had with the News of the World throughout the last process? That would be very useful, I think, to lie that rumour to bed.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I do not have that detail. I have not had any meetings with the News of the World. At this time, I cannot answer that one.

Joanne McCartney (AM): But would you look into that and release details if there have been either formal or informal meetings with officers on the investigating team and News of the World?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): We can certainly do that. The one thing, as I said at the beginning, we are not afraid of is accountability and we are not afraid of being open and transparent. It is just how long we have to go back because there are a lot of people there. Hence my look to my colleague on the right because obviously this is going back now five years.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner): News International is a big beast, and we have a lot of dealings with News International every day of the week around lots of aspects of policing. So, do not be surprised that there are meetings.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Equally, there would have been meetings I am sure. We are speculating here, which is probably wrong to ask him to provide evidence.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Dee?

Dee Doocey (AM): The Acting Commissioner said that he has not been evasive. I have never ever found him evasive in anything. I think he is one of the most open officers I have ever dealt with. I have no problems with that at all. I do think, however, that the Metropolitan Police Service is not very good at communicating. I do not think they communicate well to the public, or as well as they should, and I certainly do not think they communicate to the Metropolitan Police Authority members, which is my concern.

I think there is a general perception that the Metropolitan Police Service did not give this inquiry the priority that it deserves, and that perhaps the investigation was not as thorough as it should have been. I have no difficulty in believing that both of those could be completely untrue but the fact is that is the perception, and we are not dealing with reality; we are dealing with perception. The difficulty that I have as a member of the Metropolitan Police Authority is that all of my information on this has come from the press. I have not had anything at all from the Metropolitan Police Service. In that case, it is very, very difficult to come to an informed judgement because I have nothing on which to base that judgement. It is very helpful what you have said this morning, and I think it

is a great shame that we did not know those things, particularly what John [Yates] has just said about you cannot release information without a court order. I had no idea because I have no legal training. So, that would have been useful to know.

I have real reservations about the Metropolitan Police Service's conducting this inquiry because I do not think it will be seen to be independent. I think for the Metropolitan Police Service's sake as well as for everyone else's sake, it would be very, very good and much more helpful if it were dealt with by a completely independent body so that justice is not only done but is seen to be done.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Caroline?

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): I agree with Dee, and I think the issue at the moment is that confidence in the Metropolitan Police Service, and there are so many different issues going on, and you are having to deal with that.

I wanted just to pick up an issue. One of my colleagues, Simon Hughes MP, was one of the known victims of the phone hacking by News of the World or somebody working for them. He is actually one of the people who gave evidence and helped with the previous successful court proceedings. What I am wondering is whether, because it is a previous case, you are able to provide information? I understand that, potentially, there were some people, perhaps in the House of Commons, perhaps in the House of Lords, who were asked to assist in a previous case, and they refused. I was wondering whether that information could be provided because it has, in some ways, been very one-side and, if you have asked people to help you and they have refused, I think that should be out in the open as well in terms of transparency on this matter of great interest.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner): I think just on that point, Caroline, we would never discuss or disclose in a public fora the identity of victims unless they were willing to have it put in the public domain themselves. We just would not do that.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Are you able to say whether some people did refuse to help in a previous --

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner): We could go back and we would be able to give some broad details. It is not a matter of refusal; it is the individual's right to say, "I don't wish to have my private life or whatever exposed in a court case". So, we would have to respect that and must respect that.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Equally, we must be very cautious about not disrupting the current investigation. Talking to the Director of Public Prosecutions, he sees a challenge of bringing others in because, obviously, there are a number of pieces of evidence already in there that we can now link up with our new evidence and, as a result of that, would delay the investigation. It would be a standing start again, which is why I am totally committed that it will stay within the Metropolitan Police Service within Serious Crime Directorate, and it will be very robust. It will be under scrutiny, as it

should be. It will restore confidence for those victims who feel that we have not given the service, which we want to be able to answer as we go forward. It will be with no stone unturned, and this authority, as you know, we have some of the most skilled investigators in the country, and you will be proud of what they do.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Are you able to confirm whether this has happened that some people refused even in the broader sense to help and co-operate with previous investigations?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner): I would not like to say refused to help. There are some people who have been approached who have declined to assist. That is absolutely their right, and I make no criticism of them for that.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Lord Toby Harris?

Toby Harris (AM): Thank you for that. I think there are a couple of points that we should welcome. First of all, the acting commissioner's very clear statement that this will be pursued as a robust investigation. I also think that it is worth noting what the acting deputy commissioner said. This is a point I think we previously discussed so it is not true that this authority has never had any information about this because this authority several times discussed this case. I think it is worth noting what the acting deputy commissioner said that cases are brought that do not necessarily cover all of the instances of a particular type of crime but that is the package that will best appear before court. I paraphrase it but I think that is the understanding, which, obviously, may be part of the answer to what has happened in the past.

I also think it is worth saying I am not quite sure what would be the more appropriate body to be investigating this case. Dee talked about having an independent body do this. I am not quite sure what she had in mind: the Press Complaints Commission; well known for its robust independence from the news media? I simply do not think it makes any sense.

What I do think is important is that the Metropolitan Police Service is able to demonstrate to everyone's satisfaction that it is carrying out the robust investigation that the acting commissioner has referred to. I am conscious that, in critical incidents maybe at a local level or major critical incidents where a big investigation takes place, the Metropolitan Police Service has in the past, not in every case, pulled together a little group of independent advisers to be briefed in more detail on the progress of the investigation on some of the issues that are arising, and to satisfy themselves and, therefore, the wider public interest about the internal governance of the investigation in terms of the mechanisms and checks and balances and proportionality of what has been done. I just wonder whether the acting commissioner could take away from this meeting a suggestion that that would be appropriate in this particular case, perhaps involving members of this authority, so as to have additional reassurance and additional protection in terms of the robustness of the investigation.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thanks for that. Jenny?

Jenny Jones (AM): I just wanted to add to Jo's [McCartney] point about the meeting between police officers and journalists from News Corp because coffee, lunch, dinner, dance, whatever, it would be useful to have that because that is one of the areas that people are raising all the time. Communications with the Police Authority would be a good idea. I seem to remember last time, Mr Yates, when we asked you questions about this case here at the Police Authority you were quite tetchy with us. Does anybody else remember that? It was, "Don't you worry your pretty little heads about this. We're the experts". Oh, I shouldn't say you said that, should I? It's a bit sexist, but you know what I mean. There was that sort of disregard for our questions; ie, you are pursuing something.

I personally think that phone hacking is a lesser crime. If people do not want to get their phone hacked, they can not use their messaging systems. I do not want huge amounts of police resources spent on a crime like phone hacking. I think that is ridiculous. Perhaps your original decision not to proceed was absolutely the right decision but we need to understand your motives for doing that. That is what is being questioned, I feel.

So, with the new investigation, how can we be sure there is no fear or favour in the way the investigation moves? How can we be sure that the Government is not putting on pressure (not this Government perhaps), you are not getting pressure from politicians or from journalists? How can we be sure about that? What processes are you going to put in place?

Mr Yates, you have also mentioned misreporting. I would be very interested to know if there any major areas of misreporting happening at the moment. Because we get all our information from the news, it would be quite good to know what is wrong with it and what areas should be corrected perhaps by the Metropolitan Police Service without being too defensive.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I think you are being a little unfair to him, to be fair, on John [Yates]. Last time he came, we were in a different situation then because, as both Tim and John have said, significant new evidence arrived yesterday. That is why we are where we are. Other than that, I think what he had said before was that, until that evidence arose, there was nothing more to be done. So, I think you are being a bit unfair to John.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I am told John will answer for himself because, of course, we do absolutely look forward to coming here and being accountable and we are never tetchy.

In answer to Toby's point, we have from learnings of history where the confidence and reputation of the Metropolitan Police Service is at stake in high-profile homicide investigations, etc, the use of independent advisers and others is something that has come in. So, I hear that suggestion. I will have to think about that, if that's OK, in light of

where we are at with the investigation as to how it would fit and all the rest of it. As a result of that we will carry on a dialogue about that so I neither say yay or nay.

In terms of Jenny's piece I will hand over to John.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I apologise if I appeared tetchy. Thank you, Chair, for your support. If I did appear tetchy it was because I was being expected to act on facts that in no way could be developed into evidence so I was being asked to act upon rumour, innuendo and gossip. Whereas I have always said that we would respond to any new evidence. That is exactly what we have done today. This is the first significant new evidence that may have a chance of being admissible and we have set up a new team to deal with that. I think we just need to let that team get on with it, develop the lines of inquiry and do what they have to do following the evidence.

Jenny Jones (AM): Can I just ask about the size of the resource though; that was part of my question? What resources are we putting into it and have you had pressure from people to drop the case?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Certainly I have not had any pressure from anybody to drop the case and I think you probably recognise I would be the last person to bow to that pressure. The resources are a matter for Sue and it is very early days to see what is required.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): The issue is definitely one for us for our reputation as well, and as a result of that it will be properly resourced to do the job well but bearing in mind our priorities around defeating terrorist efforts, hence it has come out of the Specialist Operations Unit but at the same time making our efforts against gun crime and against those gangs that are operating and putting people at risk.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Exactly. John [Biggs]?

John Biggs (AM): Thank you, Chairman. There are many legitimate questions being raised and I do appreciate there has been muckraking as well. I think the reason this is a matter of public interest is that it is in some way perceived to lightly interface between these questions of independence of investigations and judiciaries and politicians and people in power and so on. That is why there is a legitimate question about transparency and openness on this.

I want to make two points: (1) there is a corporate risk to the Police Service in London if this is badly - and it may be unfair - but if there is a perception that things have been suppressed then that will damage the reputation of the Police Service. I do not agree with Dee Doocey; I think the Metropolitan Police Service - although we spend our lives sitting here criticising it, or you perceive we do that because our job is to hold it to account - it is widely regarded as the gold standard and best investigative service in the world or has been historically. However that is not a pedestal that it will always occupy and there is always a risk that it might be perceived to be coming off it. I want to be confident that

was maintained so the questions about transparency are not about people muckraking or trying to add innuendo or attach David Cameron to this or have some sort of conspiracy between politicians and the news media establishment to knobble free debate or whatever. It is about the police being seen to be beyond criticism, standing up to lobbying to politicians, whether it is me or people in Westminster, and transparent about what it has done. I think it is important we get that right and a clear statement about an assertion of independence by the Police Service subject to the rule of law stuff about how it is going to investigate this and not being knocked around by newspaper columnists or busy-body Police Authority members is very important for the reputation of this service.

Then (2) is a delicate point. I was waiting for my family at the airport the other day and had my iPod on. I heard a podcast about Mr Yates which is an impressive story. What it raised in my mind is that Mr Yates, who is a very impressive officer, does not become part of this story because of perceptions about his persona and his connections and so on. Again, I think that is very unfair but we need to make sure that we protect the Service and our officers from any such perception with a very clear series of safeguards to ensure it does not happen.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, thank you. Jennette?

Jennette Arnold (AM): John [Yates] touched on one of the concerns that I have in regard to the links with the ADC and former investigations where you became in receipt of the story and whether or not the Service had thought through how previous investigations that you have been involved with will recall your going into number 10 and the investigations that you had around parliament. If those were seen as not being as successful, whether or not that then clouds the current investigation. It is something that occurs to me and I have heard others say it. Is ADC Yates the only one who can lead on this investigation?

ADC gave us who was the unit investigating but he did not say who investigated the September 2010 New York Times allegations and whether that was SCD or CT. Then linked to that can we be given an assurance that someone has reviewed that investigation and that, as you say, 'lessons learnt' from that investigation have been taken by the Service? Were there any problems in the investigations why the evidence fell below the current standard?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): In picking this up, I am grateful of the support that John [Biggs] gave to the other John [Yates] in relation to that, because it is very unfortunate when it is personalised to individuals. One thing I do know, having known John [Yates] for a very long time is that he is totally honest and steadfast and picks up some of the most challenging investigations that anyone would have and willingly takes them on on behalf of this organisation. We should be very proud of him, as we are, and I am sure the Authority is and is echoing that.

In terms of Jennette's questions about that and the reason that John is not leading the team that is doing this is because he is too busy doing his other main job which is to make sure that London and the rest of the country responds to the terrorist threat.

In terms of this new investigation that we are announcing now Deputy Assistant Commissioner Sue Akers is leading it so it is a separate piece. Regarding September 2010, other allegations were reviewed by the Crown Prosecution Service and the Director of Public Prosecutions but was within the original inquiry team. What we need to do in terms of reputation, and what we know we will do, is a thorough and very good investigation based on the fact that we now have access to evidence that we did not have before.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Yes, but my question to you was have you had an opportunity to review that September piece of work and did you find any lessons to be learnt from that investigation of those allegations because a lot of concerns have arisen out of the inaction or the handling of that investigation?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): In terms of September 2010 that investigation took place in complete consultation and collaboration with the Crown Prosecution Service. They had access to everything and advised us that it was our decision about what lines of inquiry we developed but they advised us and they reviewed all the material at the end and came to that view; one of their most senior prosecutors. It is an ongoing review and it is their independent decision that they come to at the end of that process.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Who led that investigation?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): An officer from my command. Do not forget that the legacy from 2005/06 we picked up and so this office here, me, has been babysitting it, if you like, since the closure of the Goodman and Mulcaire case. This is the first time, as we announced yesterday, that this is a new investigation with new material that there is a prospect - and I only put it at that level; a 'prospect' - of developing some promising lines of inquiry.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Right, thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Cindy, Valerie, Clive and then I think we should move on to the end of the Commissioner's reports if possible, which is probably about undercover officers and their enthusiasm for their work. Cindy?

Cindy Butts (AM): OK, thank you. Firstly a statement: this is not a victimless crime. Jenny, you have a right to your opinion but --

Jenny Jones (AM): Compared to murder and rape.

Cindy Butts (AM): But we are not comparing it with murder and rape.

Jenny Jones (AM): There is competition for resources.

Cindy Butts (AM): We expect a proportionate response and I think it is important that we remind ourselves that this is not a victimless crime.

The question in my mind, and it is kind of the elephant in the room, is whether or not the evidence that has come to light is evidence that should have been uncovered in the original investigation.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): As I said before we have to go through that, we cannot answer that now but that is an issue that undoubtedly will be asked of us later.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I think we have to be slightly careful in terms of straying into an ongoing investigation.

Cindy Butts (AM): I know it is a difficult balance but it is something that we cannot assess from where we sit but it is something that I am almost certain that you would be able to assess in time from where you sit. If it were evidence that should have been uncovered in 2005/06 that has to be the point where the Metropolitan Police Service are bold enough to say, "We can't do this, we have to hand this over to someone else", because if you continue knowing that, that is when the damage to the reputation of the great organisation that the Metropolitan Police Service is comes into play.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): This is the United Kingdom so the time for blame will come because we like to do that in this country - find someone to blame and pin them to the wall - but as we are in the middle of an ongoing investigation it is an operational policing matter that has been set. No doubt it will be scrutinised here and elsewhere, both by the press and by the Authority and no doubt the House of Commons will have a look, because I think there are two inquiries in the House of Commons now. There will be plenty of blame to share around at some point.

Cindy Butts (AM): I do not think any of us have blame in the forefronts of our minds. What we want is to ensure that we assist the Metropolitan Police Service, as we have for the past 10 years, in improving the way that it works and the confidence that people have in the organisation.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Cindy has raised the point I wanted to raise. It is the more general issue: what we hear and how you communicate around this is it is the 'fresh new evidence' that triggers the new investigation. Also in the previous investigation it was the way it was built up with the CPS that constrained in some sense. What I am saying to you, in my naïve way, I always thought it was the police's job to investigate and gather evidence where there might be a crime. So it links to that point: did it get constraint too soon in the former round and if you are now doing this again alongside the CPS what assurance are we going to have that that is not the way forward and your role is to do just

that; investigate and gather evidence where there may be a crime? We need to know that is being delivered.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): In terms of that --

Clive Lawton (AM): My question follows straight on from that so you may want to listen to them both at the same time. John said earlier, "We'll act on evidence. I can't be expected to act on rumour, innuendo and gossip". I hope this is not just a philosophical question: when does rumour, innuendo and gossip become intelligence? It seems to me that there must be all kinds of occasions when the police hear 'stuff' and say, "We'll investigate this". You cannot wait until a chunk of incontrovertible evidence drops into your lap before you proceed.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): In relation to that I - in looking at this and talking to the DPP - am totally satisfied that it is appropriate that the Serious Crime Directorate and DAC Sue Akers carries out this task and I think will do it swiftly and robustly and I am totally satisfied that that is the appropriate thing to do.

Also, as I referred at the beginning, the Metropolitan Police Service is not afraid of being asked questions and answering them as and when it is appropriate to do so in light of ongoing investigations and these questions undoubtedly will be asked. There is a difference between gathering evidence and the rules of law that permits you when you can gather evidence and how you go about gathering evidence which undoubtedly will come through. I am sure that nobody here would suggest that you can just walk into anyone's house on the rumour of someone else, that you need to go and have a look to see if there is evidence in there. There are a whole range of challenges and protections of individuals that have to be complied with.

As a result of that those decisions get taken in investigations. The key for us is to move forward in this investigation swiftly, to give Sue the team and resources that she needs and to ensure we bring people in who perceive that we have let them down as victims and to make sure that we can answer those questions as we go forward as best we can. We are not going to hide from anything at all.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Would you like to complete your --

Jennette Arnold (AM): Will we be able to put questions to the AC about his report?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, we will in time. Would you like to complete your report now, thanks?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Yes. It has been an interesting first few weeks as Acting Commissioner and I think it is probably appropriate now to talk about the issues around undercover police officers and recent media coverage. I know that the Police Authority were giving a briefing from Assistant Commissioner Cressida Dick on undercover policing last Thursday on 20 January because I think it is vital at this point to

remind members that the role of undercover officers is a vital role in protecting people and that the vast majority of deployments of undercover officers are deployed against serious organised crime and counter-terrorism. We have some of the bravest men and women that we have in the service that are undertaking that role on behalf of the citizens of this country. As a result of that we should be immensely proud of the fact that there are people willing to take on what is a dangerous and challenging role. I do not want to talk about any processes in terms of how we operate which might put them on offer out there to be able to identify them which is hence these private briefings with AC Dick.

However on the back of those media revelations a number of actions came to light: (1) Commander Bob Broadhurst and I attended the Home Affairs Select Committee and the Chairman and members of that Committee graciously accepted our apology for giving the Committee inaccurate information in May 2009 regarding the policing of the G20 protest and the use of undercover officers. I am grateful to the Committee for accepting our explanation and agreeing that there was no deliberate intention to mislead them. This came to light as a result of revelations around an officer who was an ex-Metropolitan Police Service officer who was seconded to the Association of Chief Police Officers for England and Wales (ACPO) National Public Order Intelligence Unit. What also transpired from those revelations was that the operation that that particular officer was on was a Nottinghamshire constabulary operation and as a result the Chief Constable of Nottingham has referred that particular conduct matter to the Independent Police Complaints Commission and an investigation into that particular role and operation is under way.

Additionally a further revelation came out around a serving Metropolitan Police Service officer who was active in covert policing predominantly in the late 1990s and I think the last period that is under question was in the year 2000. There is now an internal Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) investigation taking place within the directorate of professional standards in relation to that officer who is still serving but it goes back, as I say, 11 or more years. It would be inappropriate for me to say anything further about those two individuals because obviously, as a discipline authority, that would be inappropriate.

Equally a number of questions raised about the role of the National Public Order Intelligence Unit (NPOIU) and the role of the use of some of the tactics of covert policing in protest. That had been identified by the ACPO Terrorism and Allied Matters (TAM) business area to whom the NPOIU was accountable and as a result of that the ACPO cabinet decided that this unit needs to come under the governance and oversight of a lead force and that the lead force that was most appropriate was the Metropolitan Police Service. I know there have been negotiations about that with the Authority.

At the same time as that is moving forward we also need to ensure we review the use of those tactics many of which are historic in terms of what the role of undercover officers and covert tactics should be in relation to protest and Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) therefore has undertaken that work at our request and support in order to advise us accordingly as to what that new role should be.

At this point I want to reiterate our high expectations of officers behaviour and conduct and that we do take all allegations of impropriety very seriously indeed, hence investigations. Once again we must ensure that the members are aware that the vast majority of our officers who are deployed on covert activity do a very dangerous and important job and they do it very, very well.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, shall we take questions on this issue now? Joanne, you put a written question down I think. Shall we deal with that now?

Joanne McCartney (AM): My question was what role or oversight the MPS has, if any, in the covert activities of Metropolitan Police Service officer Mark Kennedy during this secondment to the National Public Order Intelligence Unit? If you are not prepared to comment about that particular officer can I ask in general when an officer is seconded what is the role of the Metropolitan Police Service because I understand that the Metropolitan Police Service is still the employer and therefore has certain duties to those officers?

My second question is when the work of the NPOIU is transferred to the Metropolitan Police Service what scrutiny and democratic accountability will be put in place to ensure effective oversight?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): At this point I will pass over to John because obviously the control of that unit was in ACPO TAM and John is the Chair of ACPO TAM.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): It is a really good question. As Chair of ACPO TAM I have identified with colleagues over a year ago the slight vacuum of governance in terms of the way this unit operates. In essence it develops intelligence and then once that intelligence has developed to a certain level it goes to the lead force, like Nottingham in this case. Nottingham is then responsible for all the authorities, the ripper oversight, and all those other matters which they must comply with. The vacuum is that bit when it is developing the intelligence and I was concerned about the lack of tripartite statutory governance of that unit. I have been negotiating with the 43 Chief Constables for the past year, plus the Management Board plus the Authority and Toby and Reshard's chairmanship of the Protective Services Subcommittee to get this unit into the Met under proper lead force arrangements. We host it at the moment. It sits in London as most of the work is in London. It is an operational unit sat within ACPO which is not within anyone's view a proper way to govern it.

It is going to be this quite laborious process I am afraid through the Board, the Authority, ACPO cabinet. It goes to Chief Constables Council tomorrow where I will be presenting a paper where I fully expect my colleague chief constables to say, "That is the proper governance for that unit" so it will come under that again under the auspices of the Metropolitan Police Service in that sense.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): The decision on coming in from an MPA governance point of view is going to a joint meeting of finance at the end of March and that will give the delegated authority down through CT and Protective Services in terms of its governance.

Joanne McCartney (AM): So we will have an effective governance structure laid out to us at that meeting with democratic checks?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes.

Joanne McCartney (AM): You still have not answered my first question: when an officer is seconded to this unit what role did the Metropolitan Police Service or any home force have in relation to that officer?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): We still maintain a role in terms of the oversight of the broad nature of his activity as an undercover officer but in terms of the deployment, that becomes, in this case, a Nottinghamshire issue so it is authorised by the Assistant Chief Constable in Nottinghamshire hence the whole process that it is Nottinghamshire that are calling in the IPCC to manage that.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It is a slightly odd situation. My understanding is that although the officer would be under the day-to-day control of Nottingham, if for instance there were a disciplinary matter it would revert to us.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Yes.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I want clarity of what that oversight of the Metropolitan Police Service was. Is it purely disciplinary? You are not in day-to-day contact with that officer. Do you check on him every year? This officer I understand was on secondment for seven years which seems to be an extremely long time and it seems inconceivable that the Metropolitan Police Service, as an employer, did not make contact or have dealings with that officer throughout that time.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): He is managed through the line management of the National Public Order Intelligence Unit which was an Assistant Chief Constable; it is now a Detective Chief Superintendent. So he is managed in that normal way in the same way as any other line management would happen. When he goes to a different job, in terms of the Nottingham matter, then he comes under the day-to-day control of the Nottinghamshire line management in terms of that particular job.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): The authority is at Assistant Chief Constable level. One other point is that if we think it is in the wrong place how can we leave a unit as important as that and as high-risk as that in there. So at the Home Affairs Select Committee it would be that with the support of chief constables it will come under the commander control whilst we go through the process of how that then gets absorbed as of next week.

Joanne McCartney (AM): In the investigation going on into this case is the scope of that investigation to look at what, if anything, the Metropolitan Police Service should have done in its role?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): The Independent Police Complaints Committee (IPCC) will be going through all those bits and pieces and if it spreads into something we should or should not have done, that would come into it, yes.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I think there is a question to be asked: how long is the secondment and when does it become a transfer? Seven years is a very long time and there did not seem to be any anticipation that the officer was going to return. We were not paying for him; he was not working for us; he was under the command of another officer; why we would retain him is one of the issues we need to look at. We will leave that for another day. Jenny?

Jenny Jones (AM): On that question of payment I thought the Metropolitan Police Service was paying for him.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): A top slice of all forces. There are several grant funding streams go into the National Public Order Intelligence Unit. One is a top slice from all the 43 forces, one is a direct grant and there is some other money as well.

Jenny Jones (AM): So the money was coming out of the Metropolitan Police Service?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): There was some money going on from us but not direct.

Jenny Jones (AM): OK, thank you. I am glad the HMIC is looking into it but what about this definition of domestic extremism? Are you going to look at that? I think a lot of people think the group that had so many undercover officers was not probably a suitable group for penetration in that way.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I think in terms of what has come out from the various revelations about the history of the use of covert tactics in terms of protest means that that must be looked at as part of the Bernard Hogan-Howe review.

Jenny Jones (AM): Who will be looking at that?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Bernard Hogan-Howe is Her Majesty's Inspector who has been deployed by Sir Dennis O'Connor in terms of reviewing all that and will be working with ACPO colleagues and seeing if we get clarity as to the role.

Jenny Jones (AM): Thank you. Will we get that information as a Police Authority?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): The HMIC generally publish all its reports and I am sure --

Jenny Jones (AM): The IPCC though.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): The IPCC is a different thing. That will be an investigation into conduct of individuals. It is not just the individual who is no longer a serving officer but in terms of authority levels I am sure will be considered within that investigation. In terms of how to define extremism, do not forget that all this comes under the Officer of the Surveillance Commissioners and the legislation where the authorising officer has to identify that the reason for the deployment is serious, necessary and proportionate. That authority goes forward and that can be dip-checked by the Officer of the Surveillance Commissioners. We need to look at how that was used, how the decisions were taken - that is what Bernard is doing - and what guidance does that give us for the future.

Jenny Jones (AM): Bob Broadhurst appeared not to have known who had given that authorisation you have just talked about. If there is to be accountability how come he does not know who that officer was?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): There are different levels of authority dependent on what it is you are deploying. With intelligence you often have to sanitise the intelligence that comes out because it may come from what we used to call informants but now call covert human intelligence sources, by law, and equally in terms of undercover officers, et cetera, so there are different things that will come out. As a result of that it is not always that a person receiving the intelligence would actually know where that intelligence source is because you have to protect.

As a result of that there is a whole series of authorisations that go on in relation to that at certain levels when those authorities were done. But equally we are reviewing our processes again in terms of how that is managed with gold commanders.

Jenny Jones (AM): They were such big decisions to deploy those officers and then to not pass the information up the chain. You are talking about accountability. It is up to you to make sure you have those processes absolutely spot on.

I think you, at the Home Affairs Select Committee, did say that there were several undercover officers at G20. How many were there?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): One of the things we have to do is protect the individuals; I will tell you about that privately.

Jenny Jones (AM): OK and what about the student demonstrations? Were there undercover officers there as well?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I cannot answer that question whilst I am sitting here. Again, this is where we get into privacy so we would never confirm nor deny stuff. What happened there was that Bob answered a question that possibly he

should have said, "I don't know the answer to that". One thing I would like to say is that appearing before the Home Affairs Select Committee we are quite rightly robustly challenged around the various revelations that came out. At the end of it the Chair pointed out that the members were very content with our explanation and that that would draw a line under it as far as they were concerned as the people that had received that evidence.

Jenny Jones (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Toby?

Toby Harris (AM): You said that it may be a point of interest about the secondment. I think it would be useful - not now - if the Authority was informed of how many Metropolitan Police Service officers and staff are on secondment for let us say longer than three or four years because I have a vague worry that the Metropolitan Police Service may have just forgotten some of these individuals. The Acting Commissioner has said that the ACPO units, assuming the Chief Constables' Council agrees to the principle, are going to transfer almost immediately. I think the plan when it was reported to the Counter Terrorism and Protective Services Subcommittee was that it would be from 1 April by which time we would have the full report to the appropriate body to finally underscore our satisfaction about any risks which were being transferred.

Given the public interest in this it would be helpful if it is transferred but if it is being transferred in advance of our approval you ought to be able to tell us what patterns we said, "No, we think the Authority is bearing a risk that we do not like".

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I am going to bring John [Yates] in in a minute but the intent on that is that we want to bring it under proper governance commander control. There are criticisms about where it sits at the moment but I think it is in the interests of ACPO and the Police Service that it comes within that.

We have a covert command; we have a covert commander; we now have a covert standards unit. We have all the mechanisms in place to ensure we oversee it appropriately. It does not mean though that whilst we undertake the role on behalf of ACPO TAM that we do not actually then have to work out an alternative should that be the case with this authority. That is my position on it. Chief Constables may have a different view tomorrow and John will be the one that will have to then implement it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Can I just say that I agree with you as well, not least also because we have to ensure we do not get stiffed from a financial point of view which we have been in the past on taking on national roles so it is worth us having a look at the money side of it too before we agree. John [Biggs], did you indicate that you wanted to comment?

John Biggs (AM): Yes, I did, Chair. I apologise but I left the room so you may have answered all these questions. In every borough there are many plain clothed officers and

in the wider tabloid world there is a perception that there are all these officers rushing around who do not look like officers doing all sorts of things. There is a very real distinction being a plain clothed officer who is on duty in the borough and being on some particular mission. Some definition of what an undercover operation would be, would be helpful in terms of people understanding this although I do appreciate that there is an interesting interface in my mind between what the Police Service does and what the Security Service might be expected to do. We do talk nowadays about domestic terrorism and one extreme might be people wanting to do outrageous things and at another extreme there may be people whose activities may be viewed as less lethal but nevertheless a threat to the state. There is a boundary between what is appropriate for the Police Service and what is appropriate for the Security Service and that is the sort of thing which we have a secret committee at the Police Authority to look at I suppose. Is there a mission creep here in some way?

The final question is the James Bond question: are there any circumstances in which officers would be expected to act in a way that would be viewed as unprofessional or unlawful as part of their operation? The papers love this sort of story. I imagine there are circumstances which would be extraordinarily exceptional and would never formally be sanctioned but is the type of thing there is a lot of public speculation about.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): In relation to all those questions I know many of them would have been answered at the 20 January briefing by AC Cressida Dick. The conduct, use, tactics, methods and rules I do not want to go into publicly for obvious reasons but certainly if you missed that briefing I am sure we can arrange something for you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, thanks.

John Biggs (AM): Thank you for that non-answer, Chair.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): It is an answer in private.

Neil Johnson (AM): Chairman, thanks. In CT and Protective Services we had the opportunity to review some of the covert aspects a month or two ago and I think it is worth saying that whilst it is perfectly proper that we should be all over this issue when something goes wrong, as I think Tim said at the outset, it is quite clear to me, and I think was to the Committee, that we are very fortunate to have some extremely dedicated officers both male and female who are prepared to do this extremely dangerous work frankly on our behalf and take those risks. So I would not want them, if they ever take the trouble to look at the minutes of the MPA meetings, to think that there was anything other than support for their activity, remembering that we have to deal appropriately where things do apparently go slightly off the rails.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No, I agree with that. OK, thanks for that. Is that it on undercover? Did you have anything else to add at the end of your prolonged report?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): With your permission and I know we are losing time for the really important stuff which is the budget but the other issue is the appointment of Lynne Owens as the new Assistant Commissioner for Central Operations and she has had another very interesting few weeks in her role taking over from Chris Allison who I think we should all acknowledge has done a sterling job in terms of managing both central operations and getting ready for the Olympics in recent years. Now, as the pressure comes on with the Olympics he has undertaken that new role permanently.

We have a number of significant protests planned. We have dealt with a number. We are learning; we do take feedback but it is an environment that whatever we do someone will criticise from whichever perspective they choose to take at the time. I want to reassure everybody here that the commanders and the Assistant Commission are very aware of the concerns about containment and it is a tactic of last resort and it is looked at to ensure that it is necessary and proportionate. Sometimes we are not always privy to knowing exactly what is going on at that time and that is where we have commanders there who make that balanced judgement. Equally I was grateful for the understanding shown by many of the comments here that it is the judgement of Solomon that is required in taking those things forward.

In terms of our leaflets we thought it was a good idea but in terms of language we take that feedback. We have what is perceived to be a very big demonstration on Saturday and we have to prepare both as an Authority but a Police Service in particular to be prepared for those abstractions that will be forthcoming in the coming months. That is it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you, Acting Commissioner. We have a lot of written questions to get through in the next 14 minutes and the budget as well. If anybody is happy for their answers to come in written form - we can post them on the web - if they could indicate as we go.

Kirsten Hearn (AM): Can I follow up on Joanne's questions on the public order issues?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): They are put in in the order we received them I think. Did you want to ask that now, Kirsten?

Kirsten Hearn (AM): I am happy to have mine written.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, as we come to them. First is Victoria.

Victoria Borwick (AM): I think it is because of the work we are doing currently on the Civil Liberties Panel and we have spent a lot of time and I think very admiring should I say of the work that goes on I think we want to register our support for the work that goes on and, therefore, would like to know a bit more about this just briefly.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): You have three questions here, Victoria. Which one in particular --

Victoria Borwick (AM): I think we were particularly interested in this particular one. When I submitted them I said the others could be done on written form. If you could talk about the forensic services and any other detail you can send us afterwards.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): The closure of the Forensic Science Service (FSS) undoubtedly reduces some capacity across England and Wales to meet the forensic requirements. We have been working closely with the Home Office, ACPO and other agencies within the criminal justice system to manage that change and to ensure we identify any risks in short and long term of trials pending and trials coming. It must be a key concern that the Metropolitan Police Service has recently been awarding contracts for the provision of various forensic matters such as drugs analysis and bulk DNA to alternative providers to the FSS and that is because there is now a very competitive market in terms of providing forensic science services and as a result ultimately should drive down cost.

We are therefore looking at our contracts. The spread of risk for us is limited because we do have contracts with other forensic providers and as a result we feel it will be manageable and limited risk in terms of providing forensic services.

Victoria Borwick (AM): I think we are concerned as to the quality of the work. We want to support what you do and we know it has been very successful and therefore want to put on record that we hope the quality issues will be studied in addition to the costs.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Certainly quality as opposed to purely cost is one of the key things in terms of determining contracts for the procurement process anyway. As a result of that we are very content with the product we are getting from alternative providers.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): The other two you will take as written. Tony?

Tony Arbour (AM): I am happy to accept a written answer with regard to the powers of commissioners since this matter was discussed with the Mayor yesterday however I would like to deal orally with the question of ACPO. Do you have a prepared answer to that bit so I can have some supplementaries on it?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Yes, I have. As a member of ACPO am I the appropriate one to answer the question is the issue. ACPO's role is currently being reviewed by government, as every role should be in light of the fiscal challenges and the operating changes that we need to make, and that was initiated by ACPO some time ago. The role and responsibility of ACPO will change but it will retain its national mobilisation and coordination functionality when forces have to work together to deal with a national challenge. From my perspective I lead the ACPO criminal justice business area and there have been benefits in terms of being able to speak with a voice representing the Police Service when working effectively with our partners and, therefore, it does facilitate that.

In terms of providing operational services we have already talked about the NPOIU and the desire is that it will not be running those sorts of services in future. As a result we do see that ACPO provides the Police Service a national professional voice. Equally with the changes coming with the overall political landscape in relation to the National Crime Agency, the demise of the National Police Improvement Agency, et cetera, ACPO may well have a role in there in terms of professionalism, leadership, et cetera. That review is ongoing and we will keep the Committee informed.

Tony Arbour (AM): Is it appropriate, given the powers you have listed which ACPO is going to retain, that it should be a private company rather than answerable to the public? ACPO is not FOI-able. Such information as we are able to get from this private organisation which generates its own income as well as receiving large sums of public money that seems to be spent on rather peculiar things. I understand they rent 80 apartments funded from money provided to ACPO for anti-terrorist activities. Moreover one understands that increasingly some members of ACPO, including its Chairman, appear to be undertaking political roles despite the fact that they are not answerable to the public, so far as Sir Hugh Orde in expressing his opposition to government policies so far as elected commissioners were concerned offered his resignation were that to be enacted. This cannot be an appropriate thing for the Metropolitan Police Service and the Authority to be a member of. Do you have any views on whether it is appropriate that ACPO should be a private organisation in this way?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): In terms of the decision for it to be a private limited company that was taken some time ago. That is undoubtedly an issue in terms of the review of the role of ACPO as to where it stands in the future and will be discussed and we understand the challenges that that brings. I cannot speak for Hugh obviously in terms of some of the things you said other than Hugh Orde does represent ACPO and in terms of what has been said before about the independence and the ability to challenge where appropriate and that is a role that the President of ACPO will do but he obviously must defend himself. I find him a very good President in terms of tackling these challenges and looking to change and that will be done in negotiation with government and the Home Office in relation to the changing political landscape and the changing landscape of the police.

Tony Arbour (AM): Acting Commissioner, you are subject to scrutiny. The MPS is funded from public funds. In effect ACPO is funded from public funds also because it is monies which go from the member organisations to them. Can it be right that such an organisation is not FOI-able and is not subject to scrutiny in the same way as you are?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): In terms of the FOI question which I am sure was not the reason for it to become a public limited company, yes, I think it probably should be FOI-able is a personal view. But at the end of the day that will be part of the decision making and change process within ACPO and all the members will consider that as we go forward. But I do understand the concerns. I know that ACPO does; I know that Sir Huge Orde does.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): James?

James Cleverly (AM): Just asking for an update on what practical steps have been taken to reduce the plethora of guidelines since last it was raised at the Authority.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): September ACPO National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) agreed a new approach to the development of guidance. The current doctoring, as it is called, is going to be replaced by authorised professional practice. The intent is to streamline it. That is going through a process within all the ACPO business areas. There are 400-500 products identified that are being looked at in terms of change or deletion and there is a prioritised list of these new professional practices to come out. That work is being led by the new Vice President, Chief Constable Sara Thornton. Additionally inside the Metropolitan Police Service we are reviewing our current policies and guidance and we have commissioned support from those that are helping other agencies such as the Sentencing Council to make those local guides more based on principles as opposed to “thou shalt at this point do this” so that work is ongoing.

James Cleverly (AM): Whilst I am comforted to hear that through ACPO and the senior management of the Metropolitan Police Service there is this push to make change, I feel one of the things that will need to go in parallel to that once the new principles are put in place is a bottom-up approach as well. I cannot help but think that there are some heavily imbedded practices whereby people, with the very best intentions, produce some quite prescriptive instructions. I would like to see an update as to how that implementation is going as we move forward.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, thank you. Dee?

Dee Doocey (AM): No, I am happy for all of mine to have written answers in view of the time.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you. Caroline, are you happy for written?

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): No because it relates to the subject really.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Your first one might be better to take when we talk about the budget.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): You could just give me the answer now then I can think about it ahead of the budget discussion.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): It is only two figures I am asking for.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): There are currently 639 sergeant posts allocated to Safer Neighbourhood teams. There is an inbuilt vacancy factor of 5% across the pay lines which is about churn and personnel changes and that is managed through the TP workforce planning to ensure we fill those posts expeditiously. The planning assumption for the Safer Neighbourhood teams that is within this budget that we will be coming onto is that there will be a reduction in supervision costs over the three-year budget period and this is being considered in the Safer Neighbourhood review and will be reflected in that revised model. You've got to remember the supervision ratio in Safer Neighbourhood is very high with two constables, three PCSOs to every sergeant and as a result in managing down our supervision costs and management on costs in order to maximise our front line maintenance they will be part of that scrutiny and that is part of the budget.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): How many have you budgeted for in the next year?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): The assumption we put into the budget is for a reduction of 100 in 2011/12 and in 2012/13 at the moment, which is yet to be finalised, the budgeting assumption is a reduction of a further 200 and that is it.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Your second question?

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): You can provide me in written. I may come back to you next time.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Joanne, you had one question remaining.

Joanne McCartney (AM): The first is when will the MPS internal inquiry into the attack on the car containing the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall on 9 December be shared with the MPA? What were the general outcomes of the inquiry and what lessons learnt? All I have is what I read in the press which seems to suggest there were some communication breakdowns.

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I will take that one if I may, Commissioner. In terms of the attack there was a very significant investigation thereafter following up all those matters. The first thing we did was put a review in place. We have shared the details of the review with the Chair and members of the Protective Service Subcommittee in terms of Toby and Reshard I think have seen that. The broad issues we have shared around the planning processes, the coordination and how we deliver protection in a dynamic public-order environment. How firearms meet public order sort of thing in terms of those challenges. In terms of the security issues involved, we would not want to discuss that any further.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Were the lessons learnt in those four headings?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Yes.

Joanne McCartney (AM): You have put new protocol in place?

John Yates (Acting Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Yes. The lessons were learnt almost from the debrief that following day in terms of some of those issues. We will reinforce those and make sure they are implemented.

Joanne McCartney (AM): What assessment does the MPS make of a safety risk to demonstrators prior to containing them on Westminster Bridge on 9 December? Did that risk assessment change during the containment and do you agree with reports that indicate that those contained were crushed and held in an unsafe and extremely dangerous environment? I refer to video that I have seen posted online from within that containment and the eyewitness of a doctor who was held there who talks about people suffering respiratory problems, chest pains and symptoms of severe crushing. Another witness talks about hundreds of protestors sandwiched between two lines of police and people around the edge were screaming saying that they thought they were going to fall off the bridge. Did the assessment change and would you do that again on a bridge?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Following the disorder that took place at the student protest on 9 December a decision was taken to clear Parliament Square of protestors at 9pm and move them into a further containment on Westminster Bridge with a view to disbursement of the crowd and the identification and arrest of those persons suspected of having committed offences. The risk assessment was done and took full account of the environment. The marine policing unit was placed on standby, mobile CCTV and air support units were deployed to the bridge to monitor the crowd dynamics and mood and to assess risk. During the 2 hours 19 minutes for which the containment was in place the crowd was constantly monitored. In consultation with silver, who was also monitoring by CCTV, there was an immediate release plan for the whole crowd should it have been perceived that there was a risk to individuals. As a result equally the planned operation in terms of the arrest and identification was felt to be inappropriate and as a result they were released from the containment earlier than was originally planned because of that ongoing dynamic risk assessment.

In the event of that containment two female demonstrators in the crowd fainted and were removed by officers and received treatment from the London Ambulance Service (LAS). We perceived that 2,766 persons were disbursed from this containment which was removed at 11.19pm. We are not aware - certainly not on that night - that we had any complaints of crushing but equally I cannot say if they have come forward since.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I think that fact the marine unit was placed on standby indicates that in your risk assessment there was a danger that somebody could have fallen off the bridge.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Or people jump. Obviously when you are near water you have to do it. You have to look at what you have with the best assets.

It is a very difficult judgement and as a result of that the containment was taken off early then anticipated.

Joanne McCartney (AM): You used the word ‘inappropriate’ earlier. Can I clarify that in future you would not contain on a bridge again?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I can never say never. Obviously those risks are made aware to the commanders at the time to actually make that assessment and I am not going to prejudge all that. It depends what is going on. In terms of the way we operate we want to do everything in the safest possible way we can but often we have to be aware of how many assets we have.

Joanne McCartney (AM): You mentioned two girls fainting. Were there any other reports of injuries from those that were contained?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I have not been made aware of any and on my briefing here we received no complaints of crushing on that night and the LAS took two people away who fainted.

John Biggs (AM): A point came up in my mind was the operation of what I call turnstiles which is the means by which you allow people to leave a kettled situation in a controlled fashion. I heard repeatedly from the policy side that this was happening and from the demonstrators’ side that it was not happening. I think it would be useful to hear about the thinking on how this might be better managed; letting steam out of the pot; allowing people to leave in a very controlled fashion could be a way of managing this better.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I think that is broadly what the Civil Liberties Panel was looking at. It might be worth having a look at the report again and the recommendations.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): To be fair we have adopted most of that and we try very hard to comply with that. That final containment of 2,700; there were 14,000 in Parliament Square at one point so 12,000 or thereabouts actually did leave. It is always very difficult. It is a bit like visibility of police officers: the famous study where you can put a police officer walking on a prescribed route, have someone ten minutes behind asking people in those locations whether they have seen a police officer and they say, “I haven’t seen a police officer for years” even though there was one there, which we knew, ten minutes before. So it is always very difficult to talk to 2,799 people or more. What we have to do is do our level best, held accountable. We have many Members that go down and have a look at what is going on, we have got to constantly learn, develop our tactics. The leaflets are part of it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Kirsten?

Kirsten Hearn (AM): Yes. What advice do you give to police on the frontline about the

safe and reasonable policing of disabled people? I have had huge numbers of complaints about this, particularly arising from the very visible issues around Jody McIntyre, which I know has been dealt with elsewhere, but there is a strong feeling in the community that disabled people will not be safe and that a number of disabled people have been treated unpleasantly by the police because they are probably acting in ignorance. I would like to know what advice you are offering to police on that.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): That does form part of the training for level 2 public order officers in terms of their support of disabled people that are protesting. You, quite rightly, after the scenes on television and elsewhere, sent me an email about working with some in terms of making sure that that is still match fit, and Lynne Owens has picked that up to make sure that it is appropriate. So we can bring you in on that, Kirsten, to actually see what is going on.

Kirsten Hearn (AM): Will you be communicating what you are trying to do to the community?

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): We will, and certainly Lynne is very keen, as you can see from the leaflets and other things, to actually start talking about what to expect from us in terms of protests, because we are there to support peaceful protest. It is only when we get drawn into these activities and tactics when people are put at risk, when people start to become violent.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Okay, Jenny and then Victoria.

Jenny Jones (AM): On the Westminster Bridge thing, I think personally that was a really bad decision, because I had several phone calls from people who were on the bridge at that time, and you could hear panic, you could hear screams and people saying, "I can't breathe" and it was horrendous, and that was not just containment. That was punishment, and containing them there for that many hours I think was cruel and unnecessary. So please, it was a very bland answer you gave us, but it was a very, very difficult situation for a lot of people.

Having said that, I also think that at the last demo I went to, which was the small one that started from Piccadilly Circus, and the Metropolitan Police Service handed out the leaflets, I think that is a really good step forward, and bearing in mind Clive's comments about some of the language, I think was a really positive thing to do.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): Thank you for the last point. In the other one, it certainly would not have been punishment. It was there to carry out an arrest. I hear what you say and I reiterate that the commanders are in no doubt and fully believe as well and agree with the findings, in the sense that this is a tactic of last resort and that there should be risk assessments, that we do need to provide facilities, water, toilets etc,

and equally, to keep it under constant review and to end it as swiftly as we can. That was done on that night, but I do hear your criticism.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, thank you. Victoria?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Just a quick one, Chairman, to follow up what you were saying. The Civil Liberties Panel are taking the lead in this review, and we will be reviewing the reports and obviously they are disappointing. I think there were several people who felt slightly alarmed about London Bridge. However, Lynne Owens has been in touch with us subsequently and rang us beforehand to let us know what she would be doing and of course sent all the Members a copy of her leaflet. So she is coming to see the Civil Liberties Panel at our next meeting and I hope therefore we will be able to bring more reassuring news back, but certainly as a committee we are taking the lead on this project.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, great, thanks for that. Does anybody have any other questions on the Acting Commissioner's report? No, OK.

We will move on to our next item, which is the Policing London business plan. First of all, some words from me, first on process. I owe you all an apology. It is entirely my fault that the papers for this budget were issued so late. It was a function of the fact that in agreeing this budget this year, as I know you will appreciate, we have been faced with an extremely difficult situation, both in terms of the decisions that are having to be made, but also in terms of the timing, in that the Government settlement and the timetable around the budget has been extremely tight, and even now, we still do not have complete clarity on where we are, both in terms of final grant settlements for counter-terrorism, Dedicated Security Posts (DSPs) and one or two others. We still have some uncertainty from local authorities around third party income, as well as dealing with some unexpected items which arose at the last minute, not least the Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) cuts being made permanent and the grant settlement increasing our gap. All of that meant that the negotiations required both with the Government and with the Mayor and between the authority and the service dragged on and on, because there were some very critical decisions that needed to be made in terms of presenting some indications to you today of the direction of travel on the budget. That did not conclude until late last week and hence the work required to put the papers together meant that their issue was a delay. That is entirely my fault. I held them back to make sure that what we presented to you was as complete a picture as possible, so apologies for that.

Secondly, also because of that delayed timetable, you have not - and a number of Members have pointed this out to me, quite rightly - been provided with the detail at this stage that you have been in the past. Now that the work is moving towards complete on the budget - and this is not the end of the process, do not forget, I will talk about that in a minute - that detail in terms of the savings and growth can be made available, because

what we are doing today is not agreeing the budget, but agreeing the response to the Mayor's consultation. Following the meeting today, if we agree or if we do not agree, there will then be a joint meeting of the Finance and Resources (F&R) and Strategic and Operational Policing Committee (SOP) on 10 February, which will look in detail at the budget. It then comes to the full authority in February for final approval. That will be after the Mayor's draft budget has been issued, so we will have some clarity from City Hall in terms of where we are on that budget. As I say, the Mayor's negotiations on his budget are still ongoing, and hence our fate is not entirely sealed either from that point of view. So all we are doing today is agreeing the response to the consultation. The Mayor then issues his draft budget, which is presented to the Assembly on 10 February for consultation and he does not finalise it until later in the month. So in terms of process, that is where we are, and the apology and the fault is all mine in terms of the delay.

The second thing I would just like to say is to reiterate to you that although it has been delayed, there has been a huge amount of work over the last six to nine months by a number of Members of the authority, and indeed, officers and senior staff at the service, and I am extremely grateful. It has been very difficult, and much more difficult than any budget round that I have been involved in terms of the level of detail. Chairs of committees, notably Steve, Reshard, Faith and others, Graham on estates and one or two others who have been involved in the process as appropriate have put in a huge amount of work, and we have been through the process line by line over the summer, growth and savings, making sure that we were in good shape. That has resulted in the broad indication of the numbers where you are.

Just in terms of the overall thrust of what is being presented to you today, it has been agreed by the authority at previous meetings that our overriding ambition was twofold: first of all, to maintain operational capacity, particularly in the light of the approaching Olympic Games, but some of the crime charges being faced by the City, and that meant seeking to maintain police officer numbers in particular where we could, but also a secondary ambition was to reduce the number of managers and administrators and increase the number of doers, people out on the frontline, whatever that may be, to make sure that that operational capacity, that public-facing operational capacity and that crime-fighting operational capacity was maintained. There are a number of changes that have enabled us to do that more effectively, not least the removal of the ring-fencing on some particular grants and you will see in terms of the numbers that are presented to you the forecast on Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and staff numbers across the piece does go some way - or goes a long way - towards maintaining that capacity and fulfilling that ambition. Getting there has not been easy, and there have been a lot of decisions that need to be taken, some of which we discussed at our last authority meeting, not least around borrowing, around our reserve strategy and one or two other issues which have been incorporated into this paper.

You will remember that at the last meeting, we were presented with a gap in the budget and we agreed at that meeting that we would go away and look at certain measures that we could take to close that gap. Pleasingly, the gap has now been reduced very significantly, but we still face a budget gap of about just under £12 million, which on a budget our size is actually a huge achievement. As I said, negotiations are still ongoing about closing that gap, not least with the Government and with the Mayor about their contributions to what we do, not least around the Olympics and one or two others, and I am confident that we will be able to reach a conclusion on those before we come to the February meeting, when we will be completing the budget.

Overall, there will always be issues of detail, which as I say will be provided where people may make finer judgements about the odd Detective Inspector (DI) here or there, or where certain units should be or whether they should be amalgamated or not, but the overall thrust of the budget I think is extremely positive and we are in a much better place budgetary-wise than many other forces across the country in terms of our ability to maintain that critical capacity out on the street. So on that basis, I commend the report to you with the apologies and the caveats that I have put in place, but as I say, just to make clear that we are not agreeing the budget today, we are just agreeing a response to the Mayor for him to enable him to issue his budget on 10 February for consultation, pending final agreement and ratification of the detailed work that will need to take place in committee and at this full authority in February. So that is it from me.

Tim or Anne, I do not know if you wanted to say any words of introduction or whether we should just go straight into questions.

Tim Godwin (Deputy Commissioner, MPS): I think you covered it, perhaps.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Dee?

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes. First of all, can I say that I am completely sympathetic to the process that you have had to go through, because of the delays in grants and I do not for one second underestimate the amount of lack of sleep that Anne and her team must have had. So I understand all that. However, we are a scrutiny body and it is our duty to scrutinise the budget which goes forward in our name. You have just said that we are not being asked to agree the budget today, but just to agree, I think it is appendix 3, the Catherine letter, it contains a paragraph that says,

“The MPA/MPS has considered a number of options for reducing the core budget gap of £61 million. These options are set out in the attached support and have been approved by the authority.”

The difficulty is because we have not had anything other than headline figures and we have not had any of the detail that are underlying these headline figures, how do we know

first of all if the £61 million should be £200 million, because we simply do not know, and how on earth could we possibly agree that that is correct or not correct? My prime concern, I do not know who takes the decision about what information is given to what they have sent out, but if the information was not available, I would understand, but there is no way that the finance team can produce headline figures without having the underlying information, because the summary sheet follows the detail sheets. This is not about getting into the detail and wondering if it should be a DI or a Detective Sergeant (DS); that is not relevant.

I have got particular problems with the recommendations 1, 2 and 7 and if I could just very briefly go through them, recommendation 1 asks us to note and comment on the amendments since November, but the plan that went through in November was not agreed by the authority, because the up-to-date figures were not available, so I cannot see how we can possibly comment on a paper which was not agreed. That seems to me to be very, very odd.

Recommendation 2 asks us to note that the budget maintains operational capacity, but we simply do not have the information on which to base this assumption or on which this assumption is based. For example, one of the few pieces of information we have got is a table that shows territorial policing going down by £56 million this year and a proposal that it will be reduced by a further £50 million in the next two years. Now, that may well be a very sensible suggestion, but without having any clue as to where these reductions are supposed to come from, I cannot possibly say whether that is possible, so I cannot see how we could possibly do recommendation 2.

Recommendation 7 is the Catherine letter which I have already referred to. My other point, and it is something that concerns me, but it might not concern other Members, I understand, and indeed you have also reiterated what we already knew, that a number of people from this authority have spent a lot of time on this, I think you said over the summer and since then, and have put in a lot of work and that is great. However, there does seem to me to be a situation whereby some Members have been totally and fully immersed in this and involved in it, and others of us have not been involved at all. Now, I am not suggesting for a second that the budget is dealt with by committee, which would be a complete disaster, but I do think there is a little coterie of people in the know who have had the opportunity to look at all of these things in detail, and then there is the rest of us, who have been given headline figures with 24 hours to look through them and been asked to recommend and to accept these recommendations. I simply, personally speaking, would not feel able under any circumstances to agree this, and I shall vote against it, which I think is a great shame, because it was not necessary.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Two things: first of all, it is the nature of the authority that detailed work is often done by smaller groups than the entire authority, so for instance, you are deeply immersed in Olympics funding, no one know more details

about that than you.

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): The philosophy of the organisation is that because of the nature of the organisation, we delegate that authority to you and your committee agrees those business cases in detail and then reports up to the authority in headline terms. That is just the nature of the way it works and we do the same with the budget in terms of finance and resources. The Chair of the Financial Resources is delegated with the same authority that you do in terms of agreeing it. Having said that, you are quite right.

Dee Doocey (AM): Sorry, can I just come back on that point, because the fact that the committee that I chair has got delegated authority to do things has been through the authority and has been agreed, and everyone around this table knows who the Members are knows that authority. What I am saying is this is an ad hoc Committee that nobody knows about and nobody knew was happening until you have just announced it today. I think there is a slight difference.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Well, I think that is a little unfair, since we have done exactly the same thing for the previous two years and have reported.

Dee Doocey (AM): I complained in the previous two years as well.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): In any event, you are quite right. The timing is not ideal and we have not been given the time that is normally required and it has not been done on the usual timetable. So we are in a bit of a bind, frankly. What I am saying is that in many ways, in terms of the budgetary process, we are going through a formal process now which is not entirely necessary, really. The detailed work will come at the F&R and SOP and then we will agree our budget in February. We have shared information informally with the Mayor to allow him to put his budget together. There is no reason why we cannot do that. We can put in Catherine's letter, if you wish, a line that says, "We have not yet had, as Members, enough detail to allow us to properly scrutinise this, and as long as you are aware of that and that things may change, this is the general direction." But as I say, this has been a both delayed and odd budget process in terms of the fact that things have moved, may still move, so to get into the process has been a bit of a game of musical chairs, and I am afraid this is the best that we have been able to do. So I can only apologise again. Toby was next.

Toby Harris (AM): I am moving the discussion on, which may be your idea, Chair, but I wanted particularly Anne McMeel to comment on what she regards as the risks in terms of this particular budget. It seems to me obviously various judgements have been made, judgements about reserves and so on and so forth within it. It would be useful just to get a statement from her now and perhaps something further when we look at this in more

detail on what are the biggest risks in terms of delivering this budget, given the assumptions that are being made within it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Anne?

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): Yes, Chair. Clearly this is a particularly difficult budget at the start of the current spending review round over the next four years, and some of the risks are that we got information very late. As you can see from the movement from November, we had some big changes in what we thought was a gap that we were bridging going forward. In terms of finance, which is the main risk that I would be looking at, the risks are that it is a large programme of reductions that we are trying to move through the organisation. Quite rightly, we are trying to keep the focus of those reductions on shifting our costs out of inanimate objects and reducing down our business model, and as has been said, to try and protect the operational capability of the organisation. In an organisation as large as the Metropolitan Police Service, actually shifting some of those costs out and getting those programmes in place to deliver can take a considerable amount of time.

Having said that, a number of the areas that we have focused on are programmes of change that as a service we started looking at two or three years ago, because we knew that whatever happened and whichever Government was in place coming through into the next spending round that there was going to be a tightening fiscal environment within which we worked, and even if there was not, we wanted to be able to shift our resources into areas of operational capability and therefore if there was growth to be had, that we could still reduce down our overall costs in terms of running the business in order to put that resource back out into those frontline services. So in that sense, we are in a good position, ie better position than we would have been. I think we have been very careful to try and build in some resilience into what are ambitious targets in terms of delivering savings. So we have given the business groups those targets, but are holding within the proposals in front of Members today some resilience centrally, because we feel that there are higher risks in some areas than in others. As is always the case in a budget like this - and I would say particularly this year - we have had to make planning assumptions in terms of the scale of reduction that we can make and the timing of implementation, and indeed, as has been said to Members before, a number of the areas that we have had to make those planning assumptions are subject to ongoing reviews, and we do not yet know the outcome of those reviews. So we have built in some resilience, but we have given some very ambitious targets to the service to actually start delivering on these reductions.

What I would also say, and particularly given some of the issues that have arisen since November, which are explained in the report, in order to move the gap down from the £61 million to just about £12 million, we have had to look at financing changes to current policy, and one of the things that we are asking the authority to look at is the current

policy of holding a general reserve at least at 2% of net revenue expenditure. Now, if I had been in the authority five years ago or in the service five years ago, I would probably not have been asking the authority to look at that, because we did not have the resilience in our balance sheet in terms of earmarked reserves in terms of some of the risks that we carry. We think, as a service, at the moment that we could take that risk in terms of bringing down the general reserve balance to about 1.5% against net revenue expenditure on the basis that we do have better internal control in place within the service now. We have better controls in terms of ensuring delivery on what we say that we are going to do on some of these programmes, and we have built up some earmarked reserve resilience in terms of known operational or business risks to us.

One of the other risks that we have said within the proposals in front of the authority now is that whilst at the moment we are forecasting to be broadly on budget this year - and Members will remember that was having to deal with a £28 million reduction in year because of in year grant loss - we are saying that as a service in this last quarter of the year, we will start taking positive management action to try and drive down those costs and generate an £11 million under spend in the current year in order to help protect the position over the next three years.

The other one I suppose we have said to Members is that we, at the moment, do invest to save and some of our programmes have changed through revenue contributions to capital, because we are never quite sure at the start of the year what the split is going to be between capital and revenue on some of the programmes that we are taking forward. What we have agreed with the Chair is that in the current year, we were looking at a revenue contribution of about £28 million to capital, and what we are suggesting is that we could actually borrow for £20 million of that and therefore release that revenue to support the revenue position over the next couple of years.

As I have said, all of those are managing our financial risk. The risk that we have is that we do not introduce new programmes of change to deliver permanent cost reductions over that three-year period in terms of replacing those financial mechanisms by real cost reductions. The reason why we are and have been working with the authority with this package, I would say two things on that. One is that the service is very clear about what it needs to do over the next three years, but as I said earlier, it can take a while for us to get from concept to delivery on some of these programmes, because they are just big programmes, and therefore this gives us that space to actually get the next wave of change programmes in place and delivering. I would also say as well that we will not be in this position next year, because we will have a much better idea than we do now over what our financial framework is going to be over the next four years, which we have not in this current year.

The other issue that I would say in terms of the risks that we are carrying on some of the things that I have mentioned is that we are using that resource over three years and

therefore if our planning assumptions do not turn out to be quite right, we have not used all of our resilience financially in year 1, it gives us the ability to look at how we are moving it forward into years 2 and 3, and of course we will be monitoring this very closely as we go forward to ensure that spend is in line with what we are talking about in terms of the budget, and we are looking at how we can change some of our monitoring arrangements to get a much better linkage into some of these big change programmes versus subjective spend.

Could I just make one comment about the comment that I think has been alluded to about us not including business group information here? That was a decision that we took at this point and it is partly - in fact, it is wholly - because whilst we can see at the moment what our position is subjectively across the group, we have had to put some health warnings against that, because we still do not know some of the implications of specific grants and other income streams like that. I know it does not help Members, it does not help me in this sense, but actually, those specific grants cut across all of our business groups, so I would have to so heavily caveat anything that I gave you as a business group at the moment until we have actually built up the budget in detail on that that we have not provided it at this point in time. If Members want it with the caveats, we can certainly provide it as it is at the moment for 10 February, but with the proviso that it could change substantially between now and March, when we bring back the final version of the budget, but in terms of financial risks and management, I hope that has helped. What I would say is that the processes within the Metropolitan Police Service are much stronger now in terms of having a very clear focus from the management board down as to what has to be delivered on these, and monitoring what we are doing so that we can have some surety of delivery.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, thanks, Anne. There is a helpful paper from Bob [Atkins] and Annabelle about robustness and estimates, which we thought would be a useful illustration to you of where we are. Caroline?

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Yes. Following on from what Dee said, really we are a scrutiny body, but also a decision-making body. I think if I were to make a decision today, given what everyone has said, there are issues within the paper, things I am concerned about that I do not really want to support today. There are issues around the Basic Command Unit Fund, basically saying, "Well, all that work will have to stop, as it has now been mainstreamed." Actually, that is a lot of partnership work; there is a lot of diversion work. I have concerns about that. I am concerned following my question earlier that your assumptions are you are halving the sergeants and Safer Neighbourhood Teams, which are really supported by local communities, despite the fact your consultation process is still ongoing and our scrutiny is still ongoing, which is why I knew from the start not to go on that, because the decision had already been made and this is just trying to have the paperwork and paper trail to actually justify it. As Dee has already mentioned, over £100 million is coming out of territorial policing, yet we are

supposed to say the operational capacity, as far as practical, is being maintained. We do not have the evidence to show us that and that is a huge concern for us. Given the comments Tony was making earlier about Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), actually how much do we fund ACPO?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): £185,000.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Well, maybe I would like us to have that as an option to take that out of our budget. I am not sure that really is value for money.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): There is an option to increase the MPA savings by that amount.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): So I think that there are lots of issues like that in here. There is also the issue of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) we were asked to look at, and I am quite concerned, particularly around sexual offences, in that area, and I am sure we will have a greater debate about that at some point. You suddenly said today do not worry, you are going to make the decision on 10 February. Well, 10 February, Assembly Members here are spending the day looking at the Greater London Authority (GLA) draft budget through a plenary. We are not going to be able to get to a joint SOP and finance meeting at 2pm. We just will not be able to get there, so we are not going to be able to.

Steve O'Connell (AM): You will be able to get to both. I will have to be at both.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Well, we cannot get to both. Well, one will have to be a lot later, because it does go on.

Steve O'Connell (AM): Clearly, there is time for you, Chair.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): I was speaking, actually, Steven. It does go on throughout that day, that meeting, it is not just a morning meeting, because I remember last year having to shift something I had in the afternoon with the Chief Executive of this place. We were going to speak at something at 2pm and we could not.

But finally, I am not happy with this. I will not be able to support it today and I am going to be asking for a named vote so that can be properly recorded in the minutes at the end of the meeting.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, thanks. Jenny has gone. Graham?

Graham Speed (AM): Yes, thank you, Chair. Four points, if I may, but I think first of all to start off by saying that clearly overall we are in a very difficult position. We have a scrutiny role and we have a decision-making role, and as you would have said previously,

there is a conflict in there somewhere, but nevertheless we have got to progress matters. Whilst I can see that there are still things to talk about, there has been a huge opportunity to discuss and review this at the various meetings, joint meetings, full authority briefings that get us to this stage, and clearly it is a dynamic situation that we are in. It is unfortunate we did not have the papers earlier, but it is as dynamic as that, the information, and that is what we have to work with.

The first of the four points relates to paragraphs 22 and 21, and to pick up on Anne's point following Toby's question, and that is in relation to the use of reserves. It does make it quite clear that there is no statutory guidance, but the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), which is the best guidance I suppose we are going to get, is talking about a 2% to 5% range. Hitherto, we have talked about 2% and we are now talking about going to 1.5%, so we are taking a 25% reduction in our reserves, and I think Anne made the point that a few years ago she would not have been suggesting that, but I have some anxiety about a reduction of that sort of level. It does not allow us much of a margin, it seems to me, with further difficulties that may yet arise. There is an argument to say that reserves are there to be used on a rainy day and this is certainly a rainy day situation, but I just wonder whether it really is as prudent to take the reserves down as far as that.

The second point is in relation really to, I think, paragraphs 35 and on to 38, and it is back to this next question of what we define as frontline policing, and I think that is one we are never going to win and we are never going to understand. I have never seen an acceptable definition of that yet, but I do think it is important that we emphasise particularly paragraph 38, which is that there is a preoccupation with frontline policing, frontline officers, whatever that means, and we must not and should not lose sight of the work that goes on across the piece in terms of what policing provides to the people of London.

The third point is in relation to one of the appendices, which I do not quite understand the point that is being made. It is on 6, on page 26, described as, "New initiatives/operational initiatives under CO." It describes a reduction in cost recovery from sporting events, and I was trying to understand what that meant, whether it was an issue that was causing us a problem. Our objective would surely be that you would be looking to maximise what we can in terms of income from policing sporting events, and my understanding was that a lot of work had gone into and was continuing to go into that, but potentially, as I see it, we are not succeeding, and I wonder if there is anything further that we could do with that particular matter.

The last point, Chair, is on appendix 5 of the proposed corporate indicators with the new KPIs. I recall that we have spent a lot of time discussing this this time last year, and I imagine we are going to have relatively little opportunity to discuss it here and now, but nevertheless it is a fundamental change in the approach that is being taken to the

monitoring of KPIs. We are asked, I think, in one of the items - I think it is 6 - to comment on the options and the approach to target setting. Just as a suggestion, Chair, I wonder if this might be better tackled at one of our lunchtime sessions, where we might have a better opportunity for a briefing as to the logic behind this and to allow a fuller discussion as to the logic behind it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK, that is a good idea. I think we will do that. We have already agreed that, I think. Anne, did you want to respond on the other points?

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): A point of clarification, and apologies if the drafting is not clear enough, but in terms of CIPFA and balances, the recommendation for 2% to 5% was actually in a Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) document valuing the policing, which said that CIPFA recommended 2% to 5%, but actually, in the CIPFA bulletin, CIPFA do not accept a case for introducing a generally applicable minimum level of balances and that the chief finance officers should make their own judgements on such matters. So it is down to individual organisations within the context of their overall financial position to take the proper and prudent judgement on what should be there in terms of balances.

The only other one that I would comment on is the CO income. That is not a new initiative in terms of us wanting to have less income. What that is is a reflection that in the past we have put an income target in and as actually CO have got better at some of these events and have less abstraction, we cannot charge as much in terms of cost recovery around that. The income target sits with CO and they cannot now make that target, and therefore it is trying to realign the baseline to a realistic cost base for them.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, just on reserves, in the end, general reserves are broadly for two functions, one to cope with the unexpected, but two to smooth fluctuations in income. One of the issues that we are facing is the frontloading of the savings that we are having to face, so the use of reserves to smooth that with a view that we might in the future hopefully be able to build them back up seems to me a legitimate point to use. The fact that we are maintaining 1.5% is, in my assessment - but also I think in Bob and Anne's - enough to cope with the unexpected that may well come, but at the same time, all of these figures are an estimate. You are making a guess. You just do not know what may hit. There is a philosophy that says you should not carry any reserves because what is the point? It is like self-insuring, but in any event, that is broadly where I think we feel safe. Jennette?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Yes, Chair. I have just got a general question and that was in the narrative in the section about changing demands from a changing population. Are European Union citizens viewed as minority ethnic in terms of growth? Why I say that is I have been looking at some figures, certainly across the north-east, and the growth there around the police demands has been within a number of Eastern European countries, and

if you are putting them into minority ethnic, then that makes sense. If not, I do not know where they are, and I am just not comfortable with throwing in the growth of London black and minority ethnic communities - their communities are predicted to grow faster than others - and then linking it with a growth of criminality, in a sense, it is saying to me. So I just wanted to flag that up, that there are some bits in this that need some further work.

Then can I just say that I am not going to repeat what my colleague Caroline has said, and I think Graham touched on, I welcome your explanation, but that explanation does not take us over the test about governance as an authority. It does not meet the test if we are going to come in behind these recommendations here and it certainly does not meet our test in terms of our role as scrutineers if we do not have the information. As a member of the Olympics Committee, I do not think there is any comparison between the work of that committee, the way it functions, with what we are required to do as an authority. This is not about the Chair being able to be at a place and those Members who are free join in, whether that is the Chair of the authority or the Finance Committee or SOP. This is the most important piece of work that we do as an authority.

Can I just finish by saying also in the context of where we are, where it will be another body that will be charged to scrutinise the documentation that will be coming out of this authority from today, and therefore I do not think that this is a satisfactory situation to be asking for us to sign up to this. So I will be supportive of Caroline's call for a named vote, and also looking to see if we cannot come to any accommodation here regarding these recommendations from (a) to 7, then certainly I will not be able to support the paper in front of us.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Val?

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Yes, thank you, Chair. Yes, I am also going to support Caroline's call for a named vote and I do not support these proposals. If I can comment on the process and the substance, I think I object to the fact that there are massively major cuts being made to the Metropolitan Police Service in London, and I also object to the way it is being done. That is not a comment on you, Chair, but to say that I think the Government has left the Metropolitan Police Service and MPA grappling with a degree of massive turbulence and uncertainty, which has gone on top of what was already an incredibly challenging situation. It has rubbed salt into the wound. I mean, to have bumped the Metropolitan Police Service's grant down by a further £26 million in December does seem to me to be potentially throwing the Metropolitan Police Service's planning processes into a chaotic situation, and I think it is credit to the staff, the team we have got here that they have managed to pull almost anything from the fire.

I think, very sadly, the way that, Chair - if I may make a comment about your chairing - you have dealt with this, I can understand it, but I do not agree with it, because I think

you dealt with it in November, the fact of the massive uncertainties and turbulence and lack of knowledge by trying to keep information out of the public arena, and that was not just unlawful, but I think it is wrong. I think morally it is wrong and I think this occasion what has happened is it has been dealt with by the information not complying with the statutory publication periods. It ought to have been in the public domain earlier, and the reason why I think that is wrong is that actually the public have got a right to know how difficult this whole planning process has been for the Metropolitan Police Service. People should have a window into what is going on with their public money and their public services and that it has been so incredibly difficult, and I do not think you should be ashamed, Chair, of being able to say to the community, “We do not know these things, and actually it is wrong that we do not know these things at this stage” and just to say on the substance of the matter.

I know it will be debated elsewhere in detail, so I am not going to go into too much detail, but I am looking at a paper where it is telling us that the staffing establishment in the Metropolitan Police Service will fall from 53,000 to 49,500 during the end period. I cannot support that. I think the Acting Commissioner said earlier on how the excellent partnership work and preventative work had gone on in London because of the policing over recent years and how effective that has been. I think everybody I deal with in the community would agree with that. The police are enjoying massive public support, in my experience, for the really great work that is going on in the communities in partnership and in prevention. The reason they have been able to do that really good quality work is because the numbers have been there and I will not accept an argument that says it is only about efficiency, it is not about numbers. Numbers matter in terms of being able to do quality work and preventative work and let us be honest about that.

I am on the Finance Committee with some of my colleagues and you will know that on that Committee we are really hard on inefficiencies. I want to help this become a really efficient, well-managed organisation. I do not think it is efficient and well managed to cut back essential staff and to do it in such a chaotic way and have to do these cuts so rapidly. Public services cannot make that degree of cuts so quickly without there being real damage done and actually without you losing opportunities for doing well-made efficiencies and reinvestments that allow you to continue good service delivery because of investment in things like IT.

So I regret very much the pressures that have been put on our colleagues here and I have to say I have full confidence in Anne and the Acting Commissioner and their team in dealing with it but this is no way for a government to treat London’s Police Service and London’s community.

John Biggs (AM): I start by saying I am a sort of two-headed beast as indeed are other Assembly Members here because at the Assembly, I promise to hold the Mayor to account when his budget is not presented and covering the whole range of his

responsibilities whereas in our role here as Police Authority Members, our job is to work out, in my opinion, whether the police budget has been properly considered and is a reasonable one that can be presented to the Mayor. So there is a certain sort of contradiction in that relationship obviously.

For that reason and for another reason, I look forward, I think, to the abolition of the Police Authority and the main reason I look forward to its abolition is because I think, inadvertently or otherwise, when the government allows the Mayor to directly appoint the Chair of the Authority, it meant that with the wrong sort of Chair, the Police Authority could be held essentially in contempt by that Chair. I think that is what has happened on this occasion and I hesitate before saying that but I do believe that is the case and I think the reality is, for good political reasons -- I understand, I am a politician -- you have done this stuff in the background and brought it to us late in the day. I do understand that there are late announcements about budgets. I do recognise this is a very political process as well but I think the reality is that the Police Authority, for the continuing months of its existence, has a legal responsibility to pull together a budget and I do not feel sufficiently equipped to consider the budget, given the shortage of time and, in my view, a lack of information. I do understand that and the Police Authority Finance 'bods' have the will to try to facilitate a good discussion with the Police Authority. It was going to be very difficult.

Secondly, I would reinforce the point that Caroline made that not only will many of us be unable to attend that joint SOP & LR meeting because it clashes with the Assembly but we would be in a somewhat bizarre position that the Police Authority will be ostensibly agreeing its budget after the Assembly has debated and considered the budget that it has thought was being submitted to it. I think that that potentially holds the Assembly and the Mayor and the Mayoralty in contempt because you are, on the face of it, agreeing a budget after you have pretended to present it.

Perhaps that again reinforces the artificiality of the position we are in, which again goes back to my point that I think we are halfway through a transformation and the sooner we are in a more clear position where we can have clearer new accountabilities, maybe the better.

I have two questions of Anne and/or Annabel and they are about matters in the budget. First of all, as a Police Authority Member, I strongly support the resumption of recruitment of police officers because I think there is a real problem for the Service if we have big gaps. It creates a bumpy profile with the employees. It does not bring the right new experience at the bottom and so on, so it is very important; a very welcome development. We have not, as an Authority, had an opportunity to discuss this and whether that is the right decision in all the circumstances although my tendency is to support it as an important development. The question to our Finance people is whether that is a sustainable decision. It may be good management sense from another point of

view, as I say, given the other medium-term financial pressures we face with the government's budget settlements going in front of us. The other part of the question is that is part-funded by the deletion of a number of posts and the question is whether there are anticipated to be compulsory redundancies as part of that process.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I think the answer to the first one is we do not know yet and the answer to the second one is we cannot say yet.

John Biggs (AM): You have had the privilege of many detailed meetings with our Finance Officers but we have not so that is why I am asking in this meeting.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, I understand.

John Biggs (AM): I am asking you as Chair conducting the meeting rather than some sort of mouthpiece to allow the Finance Officer to answer the questions.

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources): Chair, clearly, the Service was very clear early on in the current year that we were facing a particularly uncertain financial landscape, particularly over this first year of the four-year planning cycle and we did take a decision within the Service to pause both officer recruitment and PCSO recruitment and we did instigate a star chamber approach around all other staff recruitment to ensure that we were not just filling posts without the view to what might be happening in future.

That has given us the ability to maximise, if you like, the prospect of redeployment within the landscape that we are now looking at. It is a difficult one and we have tried to look at this holistically rather than in different categories of staff or officers and one of the issues that we did highlight in November and on which you see more meat on the bone of in this proposal is the fact that the Service, given what is facing, does feel that it needs to maximise its police officer capacity going forward and by doing that, we have had to make some choices with how that would be delivered.

Therefore we have not just taken out some other posts, particularly around PCSOs and traffic wardens. We have actually kept the money from deleting those posts to look at how we can reconfigure the overall policing model to give us that maximum resilience but what that has also done, particularly with the PCSO cadre, is to give us the opportunity and what we are suggesting in this paper, if we get some certainty around the overall budget package, is that we could now start doing some limited officer recruitment, particularly in respect of those PCSO officers who earlier on in the year got partway through the process but did not get an offer.

Now if we do that and we are looking at what the redeployment options are, we are clearly working with our staff and our unions if at all possible to avoid compulsory redundancy. This is why we have tried to look at how we can re-deploy and give the

opportunity, either through recruitment to the officer posts or redeployment within the PCSO cadre and other posts that are vacant to see if we can manage that through the system. We cannot obviously give absolute guarantees but we have tried to take the necessary steps to be able to work with the unions to maximise the opportunity in terms of avoiding compulsory redundancies.

John Biggs (AM): As far as traffic wardens are concerned, they will tend not to have the skills to translate into police officers and they will tend to have a higher risk of facing a possible redundancy. Would that be correct?

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources): What I would say on that, John, is that I am not suggesting that all people displaced would go into the officer cadre but actually if you get PCSO officers going into the officer cadre, you then create more flexibility on what is left in terms of the PCSOs. We also have detention officer posts. We have other posts within the organisation and we would work with the unions to maximise the possibilities of redeployment.

As you are aware as well, in December, with the agreement of the Authority, we ran the first voluntary redundancy scheme, the Metropolitan Police Service's one, and indeed through that, some traffic wardens took up the opportunity of taking up a voluntary redundancy and we will be bringing back now that the civil service scheme has been re-launched by the Government. We will be bringing back proposals to the Authority shortly about the next programme of voluntary redundancies in order to maximise the opportunity for redeployment in terms of people who do not want to take redundancy.

John Biggs (AM): Obviously I am sure we would all agree that certainty and ending uncertainty for staff is very important as part of this, if at all possible. The final part of this then is about what you might call a medium term financial strategy which we ought to talk about, sustainability and recruitment in the context of that. The way I read it is that if there was no recruitment we would lose 1,000 to 1,100 officers at the current rate each year. By having limited recruitment, if this were to continue, we will be reducing the service by the order of 600 or so officers each year. Obviously it is one day at a time. Government budgets are a bit like alcoholism I think; it is one day at a time and we do not know what money we will receive next year, although we have a hunch.

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources): In terms of 2012, 2013?

John Biggs (AM): Yes.

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources): The settlement from the Government in terms of general grant is fairly definite for years one and two. It becomes more of an issue around three and four. We still have uncertainties because we do not know what will be happening for example with the abolition of the National Police Improvement Agency or the creation of the National Crime Agency, and what that would do to budget, particularly over years three and four. I think --

John Biggs (AM): We probably are managing a downward movement in police office numbers, given the budget pressure.

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources): The current proposals at the moment in terms of our overall position is a reduction in numbers, but clearly we have looked at how we can minimise that. As I said earlier, what we are focussed on is how we start creating the next programmes of change that will deliver a reduction in the cost base, always with the aim of trying to maximise our operational capability.

John Biggs (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Okay, Valerie Brasse.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Look I will be brief, because I am out of the political arena so I can be. I just wanted to make the obvious point that if we are looking to sign off a budget or agree a budget that is about maintaining or ensuring operational capability we clearly cannot do that without the information that sits underneath it, so I look forward to seeing that in full. I always wanted to make a plea for what I call internal consistency and coherence around this, and how the public perceive all this. One on the hand we have potential cuts and you highlighted the basic command unit fund. Yet, what did you say to us before, Chair? We have the super-über group, the London Crime Reduction Board, whose priority is around partnership working to reduce violence against women, re-offending, so on the one hand we are dropping the means by which we can deliver the priorities of this super-über group called the London Crime Reduction Board.

My substantive point was around the corporate headline, KPIs, whatever we want to call them. I am grateful for Graham's suggestion because I do think these need a lot more working through. The reason I say that is because they are headline indicators only. I would not want to sign up to anything that did not also generate the suite that sits underneath that, so that every time we discuss, and how often we discuss - whether it is sexual violence or youth offending, whatever it is - we will see the entire package and agree those at the same time. So we do not agree the top ones, albeit they have to be in the business plan, without knowing exactly what comes in the wraparound with all the indicators underneath. I hope that would not be difficult.

I would also want to say there is nothing magic about having 7, 10 or 12; they really need to say and do what they say on the tin. We hear a lot about VOLT, Victim of (inaudible) Time; none of these indicators seem to pick that way of working up. We are going to be delivering policing around that. We do not talk about re-offending, re-victimisation rates, the number of hotspots where crimes are happening in spades. It dose not link to what we say we are about, so that is a plea for the discussion that is going ahead rather than just looking at the individuals.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): That is all for the next stage. Joanne.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I have some sympathy with the timing of this, but I have to

say that I have watched some of the budget meetings at the Assembly, and I have seen you, Kit, saying that we are closing that budget gap and you are very confident. I think it is just a shame that we were not updated, as Members of this Authority, as to how you were closing that budget gap. I think, Anne has said that she has to give us some figures that have heavily caveated words to them, but of course incomplete information is actually better than none, because it leaves us all in the dark.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Not necessarily, but I take your point.

Joanne McCartney (AM): But I have concerns, and I have concerns particularly around the prevention agenda that I know all of us feel very strongly about. Other people have talked about the BCU fund and that £8 million that is going to partnership work. If I look at the Safer Schools activity I can see that we are actually losing 32 officers and I incorporate PCs and PCSOs because you are getting rid of all the PCSCs, putting in PCs but not enough. We are losing 32, so that implies to me that 32 schools are going to be losing their Safer Schools Officer or they are going to have to share it. I went to residents' meeting last night and a teacher from Camden said to me they have already been told that their Safer Schools Officer is being shared with another school and it is giving them real concern about their children's safety once they are out of the school gates in particular.

I also note in this same section that deletion of PCSOs are going from diamond districts, which again is a big preventative agenda and there is no information as to whether they are being filled with PCs at all. Today, and I would not have got this from reading this document, but I have just discovered from Caroline's question that in actual fact over the next two years we are going from 530 sergeants to 230 sergeants in Safer Neighbourhood Teams, and having sat this morning looking at our Safer Neighbourhood scrutiny and trying to make recommendations on it, it just seems to me that has been totally shot out of the water. So I want to know, on that, are you taking that number of sergeants out as an exercise purely in financial savings, or have you actually done the work to say that that reduction in sergeants is going to work and deliver the quality of service we have. Because as I understand it you are still taking part in your review, so it does seem to me to be jumping the gun rather.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Okay, Faith?

Faith Boardman (AM): Thank you Chair. I would like to begin by endorsing the hard work that I know has gone in to getting us this far. Particularly I think from Anne and her team. This is not an easy situation in any sense. Having said that I think I would like to flag up three areas where I would personally like to know more, because we come to the point where we take the final decisions. The first is on the issue of reserves, which is clearly where we are being asked to make quite a significant change in policy. My own feel for that is that I am more content with feeling able to take a decision around the first year than I am around the potential continuing reductions for the second and third. I realise that is very much tied up with the fact we still have gaps for those years to meet, and I am sure we have sufficient time over the next budget round to finish that process.

Nevertheless, I would like to understand more about the structure of the reserves, about the risk entailed in that.

My second area was about the numbers which have been helpfully included from paragraph 40 onwards about police officer resilience and officer and staff numbers. I found this helpful but I would still like further detail on it. Partly because in judging whether we're really making the best efforts to keep that resilience, it is not just a matter of pure numbers, there are lots of other factors which are also involved. Just to flag up a few that go through my head. We know is a proportion of officers at any one time that are on back office, rest and recreation-type duties. We know that that is quite high in the Met as compared with other police forces; what are we doing about that? We know that there is work going on on shift patterns, which I very much welcome. That is quite critical to how much of the officer numbers are actually out there on the streets and doing the work that we want them to do at any one time. We have also mentioned management structures about Safer Neighbourhood Teams. My own feel is that actually they are rather more transparent in that area than they are in some other areas and that overall there are some questions to be raised about whether we are perhaps rather more top heavy than other analogous forces, and looking to the second and third years, whether we could actually make some quite legitimate savings in those areas.

There a number of others, but I think we need more depth of information as well as just the headline figures. Perhaps that is something which we could also return to in the lunchtime session that Graham has suggested, which I very much support. I think it is important we do have that lunchtime session on the KPIs because I share a lot of the concerns that have already been raised by colleagues. I would add to those concerns specific ones around the value for money area, where actually we are only being offered the prospect of receiving a balanced budget for which I am grateful, but I think again there is a lot more around how you actually test value for money. I would like us to go further in getting a package of measures that can test that in a fuller sense and draw on the benchmarking with other forces in doing so.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Okay, Cindy?

Cindy Butts (AM): I would like to endorse Faith's earlier comments about the work that has gone into this. I think everyone has acknowledged the complexity and difficult position that everyone has been in. I wanted to particularly take up and extend Caroline's point around the lack of opportunity we have had to really interrogate the detail behind this and I wanted to extend it to the issue of equality and diversity. The report on page 15 I think quite rightly identifies the potential for significant equality and diversity implications, and talks about the number of Equality Impact Assessments having to rise as a result of all of that. I just think again, it is one of those issues where it is shame that we do not have more detail in relation to the Equality and Diversity impact so we can reassure ourselves as much as is possible that we are doing all we can to mitigate against any negative effects. That might be in relation to the representative nature of the service which we have all worked really hard to develop and would want to maintain, or whether it is about female employees as a result of the changing shift patterns and carers. There is

a whole host of things that really we would want to reassure ourselves on, notwithstanding the fact that there are a number of, I think, programmes that are still in development. So there will be answers to some of the questions that will not be there now, but I think there are a great deal more issues that I think we would want to be aware of upfront. I think it is very difficult.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): There is more work to do, there is no doubt about it, but we are at a stage in a process that is not of our making. Well I suppose we have two options really. We will have to take a vote on the current recommendations and if that is not agreed then we will have to either send a response saying, “Here are the numbers as are but we have not had chance to look at the detail yet. We will be doing that over the next month”, or just send no response at all. We can decide.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): I asked for a named vote, which is in the Standing Order.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes, I heard you the first time. What is a named vote? Can we not just put our hands up and see?

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): No, because it will not only be recorded who has voted which way, so you have to do a named vote according to Standing Orders.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): I think we can probably predict, but okay.

Jennette Arnold (AM): (inaudible) this have got an alphabetic list of numbers, they just call us by our names.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): We will go round since a lot of people are not here.

Cindy Butts (AM): In view of people’s comments are there not any suggestions that you would wish to make in relation to any amendments to the recommendations or are you sticking with them?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): As I said before, if people turn down the current recommendations as they are then we can talk about amendment. Let us vote as we go round. James, do you vote for the recommendations or not?

John Biggs (AM): As the chair, you have responsibilities over the conduct of the meeting. I would have thought, if you are simply saying that you are just going to note everything that has been and to hell with it then that is a pretty significant non-statement if you like.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): No, that is not what I said.

John Biggs (AM): Are you in no way, as Chair of the Authority which has a duty to this board, if you like, persuaded by any of the arguments you have heard that you should look at the timetable, consider whether we need to have an emergency meeting? What

are the options in your mind?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Well I said all that at the start and during the meeting. I know you popped out for a while but I have said that. What I have said is that I think we should go round, we can decide whether we --

John Biggs (AM): Specifically then, if there is to be a meeting after the Assembly has received the budget that does seem a bit sort of ridiculous, so how would you address that concern? The fact that you are holding the Mayoralty of Assembly in some contempt.

James Cleverly (AM): My understanding is that we are going to vote on the proposals. If those are not agreed then we are going to discuss how we do move forward, but we have in front of us an option to move forward, which from some of the conversations, Members are not happy with. We are going to vote on that and if they are not agreed then we can discuss how we do move forward.

John Biggs (AM): Okay.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Caroline asked for a named vote on the proposals, I am going for the named vote on the proposals, un-amended, because I presume she wants to make a point, as you do. So let us have the named vote.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Sorry, can I just ask Chair, are we actually asked only now to look at the MPA's response to the Mayor's draft? Is that what is being asked of (overspeaking)

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes.

Valerie Brasse (AM): -- un-amended, or are you offering (overspeaking) --

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Everything else is nothing.

Valerie Brasse (AM): No, are you offering an amendment to that response/

Kit Malthouse (Chair): No, hold on.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Okay, as is, all right.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Let us just get this clear. My assumption is, Caroline asked, right at the start, for a named vote on the recommendations as they currently stand and the letter as it currently stands. That is what we are going to have. We will then talk, I am happy then to offer options, about something that people may be willing to do, but there are lots of people who want to make a point here today. We are all alive to that, this is a very political situation, people want to make a point. Far be it for me to suppress people's press releases.

Cindy Butts (AM): Which is why I asked whether or not you wanted to make amendments first, because there are some of us who do not want to get involved in that.

Reshard Auladin (Vice Chairman): Chair, can I just say that there are some of the recommendations that we do not need to vote on today. For example, the sixth, which is the draft KPIs. Taking Valerie's point, that can be discussed at the later point. So today it is mainly about the finances people are concerned about.

Steve O'Connell (AM): To be helpful Chair, I think we do need to look at that list of recommendations and then ask Members to pull out the ones that we are not actually making a decision on and actually drill down on the ones that we need, particularly noting Catherine's letter.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): There is not much difference there.

Steve O'Connell (AM): I know it is a bit convoluted but ... and we need to have a chat about the timetabling, which is an important point.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): It seems a bit odd to me, but okay. Dee?

Dee Doocey (AM): On a point of information, first of all, the reason I am not going to vote for this is not political. It is because I have not had the information on which to base a judgment. It is absolutely not political, I will say that in front of anybody. It is because I do not feel that I can carry out my scrutiny role. So please do not just do a throwaway remark that we are doing this for politics. I am not and I can speak for my colleague Caroline who is certainly not. Others can speak for themselves. The other thing which you have just said to Valerie - that we are only voting recommendation seven - I think you need to clarify, as Reshard has just said, whether it is just recommendation seven or if it is the other recommendation. Finally, before we vote, because the reason Caroline has asked for a named vote is so that we can say that we are not voting for this because we cannot carry out our scrutiny role, is there nothing - to take the point that Cindy made - that you can do to change this letter to say that we cannot possibly say whether it is right or wrong because we have not seen it?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Well that was the second stage I was coming to. Maybe I have misinterpreted people's motives, but there has been a lot of --

Dee Doocey (AM): I think you have.

James Cleverly (AM): Why a named vote?

Caroline Pigeon (AM): It is the only it is recorded in the minutes.

Dee Doocey (AM): We want to record that we will not vote for this --

Kit Malthouse (Chair): You are making a point.

Dee Doocey (AM): -- if we do not have time to scrutinise it.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): All right, look, I am relaxed about it from that point of view. My assumption was that a lot of the proposals are about noting, which is, you can note it, it does not necessarily mean you agree with it but you note it. There are a couple of substantive things in there that are to be agreed, so for instance, the change in policy on general fund balances; recommendation two needs to be agreed; we can agree, not agree or amend the letter; I was going to come to that as a second stage. If you want to take a named vote on each of the eight recommendations and then try and amend the ones you do not want I'm not clear about what you are after.

Dee Doocey (AM): Sorry, I promise you, this is the last time I will speak. We cannot note number two, that despite a challenging fiscal environment, the budget proposals maintain operational capability, because we do not know if they do or they do not.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Right. Okay.

Dee Doocey (AM): So it is just a question of, we can just note everything. You cannot note something that do not have information on which to base a judgement.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Just vote on the lot unless you have no suggestion; just vote on it en masse. Unless anyone wants anything pulled out, I do not see ...

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Well, the issues I suppose are that we could amend the letter to put in the caveat around the fact that we have not yet done the detailed work and that will be done over the next month. We could put a line to that extent in the letter if people are content that satisfies the niceties of what we are submitting.

Dee Doocey (AM): Maybe what Catherine came out with the last time might be appropriate, I do not know.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Maybe we could put in,

“The MPA agreed that the papers reflected the work in progress on the preparation of the budget and that it be submitted to the Mayor’s office to comply with the legislative requirements, while recording that the contents are neither agreed or endorsed by the Authority as further details are still required. In addition a transcript from the Authority has been included as part of the submission in order that the Mayor is clear of the issues raised by Members in response to the consultation document.”

Dee Doocey (AM): That is perfect.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Happy? All right, we will put that in letter. Number one then is noted. Are we happy to note number one?

Sorry, are we taking these item by item or en bloc?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Well what I am trying to do is get to a position where we can have a named vote. You are now confusing me. Maybe I am being thick and tired, but I thought we wanted to get to a position now, I am being told by Members, where they would like a compromised position to vote on.

Steve O'Connell (AM): Indeed, and I think we should work through the recommendations accordingly, which you were just doing.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): So we will take them one by one and then we can decide. So number

Dee Doocey (AM): Okay, fine.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): So number one, we note the comment on the amendments to the Policing Plan, principally on the revised budget gap following the police consultation on the publication of the Mayor's draft budget for consultation 2010(?).

It was not agreed.

Dee Doocey (AM): We cannot comment on amendments that we do not have the details of.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): No, but there is a form of words now going into the letter that caveats --

Dee Doocey (AM): The letter refers to recommendation seven.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes. Well we can put the same caveat in number one if you like.

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Number two, we note that despite the challenging fiscal environment the budget proposals --

Valerie Shawcross (AM): I have no idea what we are voting on now. Was that a vote or not Chair?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Can we say, vote --

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Chair, can I propose that we start off by a vote en bloc?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): No, everybody said they did not want to do that, Val. So we are not going back to that.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Well I do not want to vote on something unless I have the wording in front of me.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Right, number two, we could say, the budget proposals *seek* to maintain operational capability.

Caroline Pigeon (AM): Do not know if they do. Absolutely not.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Do you just want to take number two out?

Dee Doocey (AM): Absolutely.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Number two is out.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Number three, agree the proposals to manage down although not close completely the budget gap over the planning period and the need to identify and deliver permanent cost reductions as quickly as is practically possible to close the budget gaps in future years (several inaudible words)

No.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Not happy with that?

I want to vote against it.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): You know the wording, Jane, that you just read out to go in the letter? Could that not just be what we approve today? I would forget all of these and just that wording is actually our --

Dee Doocey (AM): Everything.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): It says we do not agree this.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Hold on a minute, let us just continue the process that we are in. So three is out, we will take out three. Subject to recommendation two we cannot agree that because two is out. Five, note that work continues to identify options to close the current budget gap.

Dee Doocey (AM): We do not know what the gap is.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): No, but we still note that work continues. We can leave out the number. We are not commenting on KPIs are we?

No.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Okay, that is out. Approve the MPA's response to the Mayor's draft budget as amended, with the insertion of the agreed words.

Dee Doocey (AM): The wording of that recommendation needs to be changed to reflect the wording that Jane has come up with.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes, that is what I am saying. We approve the MPA's response subject to the insertion of this wording.

Dee Doocey (AM): No, we do not approve it --

Kit Malthouse (Chair): We are approving the response.

Dee Doocey (AM): We are sending forward the response, I think, rather than approving it.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Agree to send forward the response as amended. Note the report that has been shared with the Mayor pending formal consideration of the budget, detailed budget and business plan via the Authority.

Dee Doocey (AM): I think that should come out. I do not think that adds anything.

(overspeaking) an issue of fact.

That is an issue of fact, yes.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Can I just check that recommendation one stands but at the end we are adding the wording again, about not endorsing it.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes.

Jennette Arnold (AM): So you have ended up with one and eight, is that right?

Reshard Auladin (Vice Chairman): One, seven and eight.

Dee Doocey (AM): Seven as amended.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Can you read the amendment.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): We have agreed the amendment, do you want me to read it again?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Yes please.

"The MPA agreed that the papers reflected the work in progress on the preparation of the budget and that it be submitted to the Mayor's office to comply with the legislative

requirements, while recording that the contents are neither agreed or endorsed by the Authority as further details are still required. In addition a transcript from the Authority has been included as part of the submission in order that the Mayor is clear of the issues raised by Members in response to the consultation document.”

John Biggs (AM): I really do not want to delay the meeting, but is there not a question about our legal duty to produce a budget at some stage? Is there not a legal duty for us to provide one to the Mayor?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): We will satisfy our legal duty when we agree the final budget at the Authority meeting in February.

John Biggs (AM): So after the Assembly has --

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Although more likely March. As long as we do it before the beginning of the financial year we are fine.

John Biggs (AM): So after the Assembly has considered whatever budget we send to them --

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Well no, the Assembly will consider the draft budgets on 10 February; that is not the final. The final budget comes later, as you know. There is a second meeting when the Mayor --

Dee Doocey (AM): We do need to do something about the timing.

John Biggs (AM): This is quite legally important because if the Assembly - it is unlikely this will happen - was not to make any amendments to the budget on 10 February then that will become the final budget, so we are submitting to the Assembly a budget which is not a final budget.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): What the Mayor does is tell us how much money we have. The Mayor just gives us the envelope. It is for us to decide, and we can do nothing about that. I have been putting forward a case we should have more money and I won some of that argument and we will have more money from the Mayor. Us saying we are going to set a budget that is more than the Mayor is going to give us then we have a problem. The detail that Dee is saying is about the decisions; do we spend it on this or do we spend it on that? Those are the details that I presume people want. That does not affect the overall envelope that we are given and as long as we set that budget within that envelope before the beginning of the financial year, we are fine. I have been doing budgets for many years John; I have not yet fallen foul of any legal problems. I do not intend to this year, subject to your cooperation.

Okay. On that basis --

Dee Doocey (AM): Sorry Chair, five was also agreed but we took out the figure.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes the figure is coming out. So on that basis do we still need the named vote?

I think we should.

What is the point?

Kirsten Hearn (AM): I am totally confused. I would like you to read out the recommendations we are now agreeing, slowly, because I do not have what you have now got in front of me. I am having huge difficulty with this process because like the rest of my colleagues, it is difficult. If we do not have information how can we make the decision, and my information has not been accessible.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Okay, well I am happy to read it out again. We have got basically three recommendations. The first recommendation reads:

(1) Members note and comment on amendments to the policing plan since submission to the Mayor in November 2010, principally on the revised budget gap following the police grant settlement and the publication of the Mayor's draft budget for consultation in December 2010. The MPA agreed that the papers reflected the work in progress on the preparation of the budget and that it be submitted to the Mayor's office to comply with the legislative requirements, while recording that the contents are neither agreed or endorsed by the Authority as further details are still required. In addition a transcript from the Authority has been included as part of the submission in order that the Mayor is clear of the issues raised by Members in response to the consultation document."

Recommendation (2) will be to approve the MPA's response to the Mayor's draft budget proposals as contained in appendix 3, although appendix 3 is now amended with the inclusion of that same paragraph that begins, "The MPA agreed that the papers reflected the work in progress". So that goes into the letter from Catherine. Then the final --

Joanne McCartney (AM): There is a paragraph to be taken out that that then replaces?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes, absolutely. Then the final recommendation is that, members note that this report has been shared with the Mayor pending formal consideration of the budget and business plan by the Authority. No we are not including that anymore, and that's it.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): I withdraw my request for a named vote but I would certainly like mine and Dee's votes to be recorded accordingly, which can be done according to Standing Orders as well.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): For or against? Right, do I have agreement to those recommendations?

All: Agreed.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Okay, and we record that Dee and Caroline specifically agreed.

Dee Doocey (AM): Voted in favour will do Chair.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Can I just make one final point on the budget that when we come back to the detailed work on this, if people have particular problems or objections to items that are in the budget that they think need changing, they need to come with the other side of the entry. So it needs to come with a growth and a saving; it cannot come with just the growth.

Dee Doocey (AM): Provided we have the figures on which to base that.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes, I understand that. Then Members can take a view. Okay, that deals with that. So we are now on Policing and Social Responsibility Bill. Jane, did you have anything particularly urgent?

Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive, MPA): No, I think Members have had it, hopefully they have read it, we will be updating yourself on a regular basis, prepared to have Member briefing and there will be a communication strategy for Members to make sure they are kept up to date as the Bill goes through the various stages.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Does anybody have any questions, yes.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I just have one comment. As this is going through, there is required to be a transition phase and in here it looks like the BMG are taking the lead on this. Apart from being updated, there is no input or views sought from other MPA members throughout this. I think is perhaps lacking, because some of us may have some advice we want to give as to how best the new transition arrangements could come into place. There is no scope in this paper for that to happen.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): It does come to SOP.

Faith Boardman (AM): The MOPC implementation will be coming to SOP as a standing agenda item for each meeting.

Joanne McCartney (AM): And views will be sought throughout that?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Yes.

Just to clarify then, MPA stops one day, the new body starts the next?

Kit Malthouse (Chair): We do not know yet because there will be some legacy issues that need to be addressed, not least around part-heard discipline cases and things like that.

Okay, agreed. Treasury management half-year review, Annabel?

Annabel Adams (Deputy Treasurer, MPA): Members are being asked to note the half-yearly review on the Treasury management function. It is also been to an F&R previously where it has been both approved at both of those Committees but in line with CIPFA guidance it also needs to come to the full Authority. Members have also been asked to approve amendments to the counterparty list in relation to increasing our lending limit from 30 to 35 million on UK counterparties and also adding Clydesdale Bank, and a change on our variable rate credentials total limit.

All: Agreed

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Agreed?

All: Agreed.

Kit Malthouse (Chair): Thank you. Annual audit letter/

Annabel Adams (Deputy Treasurer, MPA): Again, Members are being asked to note the letter we have received from the District Auditor on the closing of the accounts for the last financial year. It has previously been considered in front of corporate governance. It was a positive report with only one recommendation in relation to monitoring and review of the medium term financial plan, which means (several inaudible words)

Kit Malthouse (Chair): All happy? The audit letter was very complimentary which is a tribute to Anne and her team and the improving control environment at the Met. Okay, reports from Committees. I do not think there is anything specific to raise other than to note, please, that you are agreeing to amend the terms of reference of the Professional Standards Cases Sub-Committee and that, as we agreed earlier, at the Counter-Terrorism and Protective Services Sub-Committee, we will be taking a decision at the next Authority about the acquisition of the (inaudible) wosit thingy. Everybody happy with that? Yes, okay. No other items of urgent business. Thank you, grateful. I look forward to your press releases.