

Transcript of the meeting of the Metropolitan Police Authority held on Thursday, 28 October 2010 at 10 am in the Chamber, City Hall, SE1.

Present:

Members:

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

MPA Officers:

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive), Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive) and
Bob Atkins (Treasurer).

MPS Officers:

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner), Anne McMeel (Director of Resources) and Lynne
Owens (Deputy Assistant Commissioner).

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Colleagues. I make that 10 am. Shall we kick off? We have got a lot to get through this morning. Welcome all. Just before we start can we place ourselves in the room? I am Kit Malthouse, Chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Paul Stephenson.

Lynne Owens (Deputy Assistant Commissioner): Lynne Owens. DAC, Territorial Policing.

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

Amanda Sater (AM): Amanda Sater. Independent Member.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Val Shawcross. GLA.

Kirsten Hearn (AM): Kirsten Hearn.

Tony Arbour (AM): Tony Arbour.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Valerie Brasse.

Faith Boardman (AM): Faith Boardman.

Dee Doocey (AM): Dee Doocey.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Caroline Pidgeon.

Toby Harris (AM): Toby Harris.

Jenny Jones (AM): Jenny Jones.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Joanne McCartney.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Jennette Arnold.

Clive Lawton (AM): Clive Lawton.

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

Bob Atkins (Treasurer, MPA): Bob Atkins.

Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive, MPA): Jane Harwood.

Reshard Auladin (Vice Chairman): Reshard Auladin.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): Catherine Crawford.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Welcome all. Apologies for absence. I have had apologies from Chris Boothman, who is attending the funeral of DC Tyrone Jones, Graham Speed and Tim Godwin, who is on half term. I have also had apologies from Cindy Butts, the roof of whose flat apparently caved in last night. Hopefully not on top of her.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): I believe not, Chairman.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Good. Any other apologies?

Valerie Shawcross (AM): John [Biggs] is on his way.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): The others will be late. OK. Great.

Declarations of interests. Does anybody have any interests to declare? Anything during the meeting. No? Other than noted in the papers. Thank you.

Minutes of our meeting on 30 September 2010. Transcript is in the pack. Does anybody have any points of correction, clarification or anything to raise? No? OK. Yes, sorry, Dee [Doocey]?

Dee Doocey (AM): Under matters arising. I thought you had moved on.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. I can sign those as a true record. Are there any matters arising from the minutes. Dee [Doocey]?

Dee Doocey (AM): Can I again complain that we still have not had the report of the Civil Liberties Panel?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Where is it?

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): I am sure the Chair would explain this if she was here. She has not arrived yet. As I understand it, there are still some final amendments that, at her request, are being made to the report in response to the response to the recommendations that have come in from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

Dee Doocey (AM): Can I make a strong plea, Chairman, that when the Committee finishes with the report, it has to be published within a certain time? We could all spend every hour dotting i's and crossing t's and changing and faffing around but this is, frankly, ridiculous. It really is.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I agree. In my own defence I am slightly caught here because if I start jumping up and down about reports I get accused of interfering, but if you would like me to take it --

Dee Doocey (AM): Could you possibly interfere in this particular one?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): If you are giving to me to interfere, then I will interfere, yes --

Dee Doocey (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): -- and make sure that it gets out. Although, do not forget, the original report is online, so is available, although the amended one is coming in the print run.

Clive Lawton (AM): Chair, to obviate the accusation of interfering - and I would want to protect you from that - could we not follow Dee's [Doocey] suggestion that we make a broader consistent recommendation or resolution that such a report should be produced within so many weeks or months of their being concluded, unless there is an exceptional case made? Just a standard decision.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. Happy to take that on board. OK. Any matters arising? No? OK. Great. Thanks.

Chairman's updates. As you would expect it has been a busy period, not least with a lot of meetings around the budget, about which I will say a bit more in a minute, and obviously the legislation which, again, a bit more in a minute. The usual run of meetings have been had.

A couple of things I just wanted to draw to your attention. A few things. Items of congratulation for the MPS and the Commissioner and his team. Our congratulations go to Denise Milani, our Director of Diversity and Citizen Focus, who won the Woman of the Year 2010 award at the GG2 Diversity and Leadership Awards. The awards are hosted by the Asian Media and Marketing Group and all award winners are outstanding individuals who have excelled and overcome barriers against the odds. Well done, Denise [Milani].

Also the first MPS Diversity Excellence Awards ceremony was held on 11 October 2010 by the Diversity and Citizens Focus Directorate and was a huge success. Awards were presented to the Deputy Commissioner, Tim Godwin, in five categories no less, relating to all areas of diversity. Cindy [Butts], Reshard [Auladin] and Chris [Boothman] attended.

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) Hate Crime Forum nominated Detective Inspector Jim Foley and DC Paul Richardson for the Performance (Disability) category. Whilst not winners both were highly commended by the Commissioner for their commitment and dedication to ensuring disability hate crime remains high on the agenda for the MPS. Both have been heavily involved in the launch of the Safety Together part of the Keep Safe Scheme, which links with local organisations and businesses and identifies specific points of safety for disabled people to access if in need of help or if they fall victim to crime.

Also congratulations on the Special Constable Awards. Special Constables who have dedicated long periods of service were recognised with an award by Lorraine Woolley MBE, Chief Officer of the Metropolitan Special Constabulary (MSC) here.

Team of the Year went to Enfield borough for its Monday on Traffic Team. As well as targeting anti-social and illegal drivers the team assists with borough task initiatives and supports the Ponders End Safer Neighbourhood Team.

The Service also honoured, on 6 October 2010, the life of PC Keith Blakelock 25 years on from his murder on the streets of Haringey. The dedicated officer was attacked and killed during the Broadwater Farm riots, as many of you will recall, in Tottenham. The Commissioner joined Michael Winner and members of the local community in remembering PC Blakelock at a memorial service marking his death and celebrating his life and achievements.

There are a couple of activities that I wanted to draw to your attention. In particular we wanted to congratulate a small team from Tower Hamlets that has been presented with an award by the Association of British Hujjaj (Pilgrims) UK in recognition of a fraud investigation involving a rogue travel agent who purposed to offer travel packages to the 2008 Hajj in Saudi Arabia. In November last year over 300 pilgrims alerted police that a particular individual had defrauded them of up to £2,500 each. He was sorted out by that team, restoring over 300 passports to individuals, enabling them to rebook and attend the Hajj.

Congratulations also for the involvement also in the Commonwealth Games which was a tricky event - let us put it that way - from all sorts of aspects. We had a team of officers deployed to the Games; protecting VIPs and providing safety advice to British nationals who were attending the Games. All of that went off very well. Pleasingly, also, a large slice of the cost was met by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office so it was an efficient, as well as successful, trip.

Officers from the MPS Central e-crime Unit managed to close down 180 illegal medicine websites recently, making a big contribution to dealing with counterfeit and illegal medicines in London.

There has been a huge clamp down on illegal cabs and the Safer Transport Command is to be congratulated on Operation Safer Transport at Night between 23 September 2010 and 9 October 2010, tackling illegal cab drivers and helping people get home safely. More than 100 arrests were made. Supported by a marketing campaign to warn of the dangers of using unbooked minicabs.

We have also had, from 18 October 2010, National Identity Fraud Prevention Week. Operation Sterling, which was launched in conjunction with this week of activity, offering advice to businesses and residents about how best to protect their identities. In addition, officers made a number of arrests following targeted operations across London. During the week's activity 13 addresses across London were searched by police and 7 people were arrested on suspicion of a mixture of ID act offences and fraud act offences.

Also, some of you will have seen, in the news, activity around Operation Golf which is safeguarding vulnerable potential victims. 41 children were seen at a specifically set up assessment centre staffed by Specialist Crime Directorate (SCD) 5 in Redbridge recently. Social workers and National Health Service (NHS) Trust staff participated in that operation too. Eight people were arrested for a variety of offences although, sadly, none for trafficking at that time.

Two other issues just to raise quickly. I was interviewed by the Home Affairs Select Committee as part of its policing inquiry into the 21st century policing legislation. You will know that the MPA has submitted written evidence based on the Member response to the policing consultation to that group and we await its inquiry findings. The legislation itself is due for publication quite soon, is it not, Chief Executive?

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): 29 November 2010 we are expecting it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Right. OK. I know there has been a huge response to the consultation and we look forward to seeing that legislation shortly.

Obviously the big event of the last month has been the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). No doubt the Commissioner will want to say something a little more about budget. From our point of view, just to reiterate what I said to Finance and Resources about the CSR, although the settlement is challenging for us, it is not quite as challenging as we thought it was going to be. So, from that point of view, we are in a pretty good place. Pleasingly, the assumptions that we had made in terms of preparing for the CSR in terms of the budget, look to put us in a good place too, in that, given the profile of the reduction in funding that we are going to get, certainly for the first two years, we seem to be pretty much in the sweet spot of what we thought we were going to be.

Obviously the fog is still on the battlefield on this and the full picture will not become clear until, we think, December, because the national allocation has to be sorted out. We are still not entirely sure where we are on a number of specific grants and there is quite a lot to work through, with the Home Office and others, in terms of where we get to. There is obviously, also, our precept income to consider and conversations with the Mayor and the GLA are ongoing about that. Nevertheless, we look to be in a reasonably good place on the budget and, now we know where the CSR is, I think we can proceed with our formal budget scrutiny, notwithstanding the informal process that has been ongoing during the summer which, I have to say, has been going extremely well.

Just a couple of other things. We have had a couple of joint engagement meetings (JEMs) since we last met which have gone particularly well. Southwark, Lambeth and Enfield all came in. All very useful and productive meetings. Those of you who are Link Members who attended, hopefully, feel the same way. A number of action points came out of those meetings.

Finally, I was pleased to be invited to speak at the Metropolitan Black Police Association (MBPA) Annual General Meeting, which went well, and attend the MBPA's Celebration of Life concert on Friday. Sadly, of course, as we were all dancing in the aisles and celebrating the good news about young people in London, an incident was starting to brew in Plaistow, about which you will have read, which slightly took the shine, I have to say, off the evening.

Some of you may have seen a small amount of media yesterday on our proposals around a compulsory sobriety programme in London.

That is it from me. Any questions? Yes?

Toby Harris (AM): Chair, I was wondering whether, in that very full and helpful operational report you have just given on your role as Chairman, you were going to

mention your interesting policy announcement yesterday. We all, of course, welcome your policy interventions on such matters. I was just wondering if you could tell us a little bit more about the thinking associated with that and what the implication is likely to be for the MPA's Front Counter Strategy of all these people turning up and wanting to have their breath tested? I understand that it is all to be at nil cost. South Dakota, which I think you cited in your interview - of course there are enormous parallels between London and South Dakota - says that it is \$1 a test that is charged which covers the cost. What would be the equivalent of that in London and would that cover the cost of the police officer time associated with it?

Since the Commissioner is here, he may wish to comment on this - because I am sure you have consulted him in detail about this proposal - what is the MPS's current performance on enforcing bail conditions and, in particular, people who do not fulfil their bail conditions? So if somebody does not turn up, how good is the MPS at tracking them down and bringing them to justice? Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I am sensing a slight tone of hostility in your voice --

Toby Harris (AM): It is a wonderful idea. I just want to know the details.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): -- which is not uncommon I have to say. I am learning in this job that you are not allowed to float new or interesting or possible ideas without people being hostile --

Toby Harris (AM): No, no. It is very interesting. I just want to know the details.

Jenny Jones (AM): You did not float it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): The truth is the sobriety programme in South Dakota has attracted us in this building from a policy point of view because we do think there is a significant problem with alcohol in this city. London has something like 12.5 crimes per 1,000 related to alcohol, compared to the rest of the country which has 8. Time after time, when we have had JEM meetings in particular, alcohol related crime, domestic violence, has been an issue. So we felt it incumbent upon us to try to look elsewhere in the world for where this has been an issue and where there may be an innovative solution.

The sobriety programme in South Dakota attracted us for a number of reasons; because it is effective. It is showing extraordinary compliance rates there and, even if a scheme here that was adapted to work in London was half as effective, it would make a huge difference. Obviously, also, it is very cost effective and, given that we are in straitened times, that had a huge attraction as well.

It is fair to say that, although we have done some work on it in the GLA, and looking at how it might be adapted in London, one of the issues for us is, for it to come into place, we will need to have some changes to legislation. We are currently talking to the Home Office and others about how that might happen. We do not necessarily see a compulsory

sobriety programme as a replacement for other things but we would like to see it as another tool in the armoury that might be deployed by magistrates and others for using.

Interestingly, in terms of police officer time, the truth is, in South Dakota, it does not involve a large amount of police officer time. They, in fact, use college kids to do the testing in the morning and in the evening and if somebody fails their test the police are then called.

Toby Harris (AM): The kids go out to them?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No. The kids staff the centre. It might not just be college kids. People staff the centre who want a job first thing in the morning and in the evening. Take the tests. If somebody fails the police are then called to come and take the person away. Because the compliance rate is so high - 99.6% - the police are, in fact, hardly ever called and people are hardly ever put in the cells for the same reason; because the compliance rate is so high.

We just think, from a policy point of view, we have been doing things the same way in London around alcohol for quite a long time and yet the problem continues to grow. We think it would be a good idea to have a look at a pilot scheme in London around something that somebody else has done in the world that has shown some success and see if we can make it work here.

There are some problems - you are right - that will need to be ironed out; not least the mobility across London and where people might be tested and where you might pilot it. At the same time, they have similar problems there. It is a vast area and people often have to travel many, many miles to get tested, so we have some advantages over them.

Nevertheless, we could just sit back and do nothing. We thought it was an interesting idea and worth exploring.

Toby Harris (AM): When you say 'we' that is because you have been talking to the Commissioner about the details of how this might work?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): We have had a couple of conversations about it but, as I say, it should not involve a huge amount of police time.

Toby Harris (AM): So 'we' as in this case; this building or you or ...?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): We have had conversations with the GLA, with the London Criminal Justice Partnership, with the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) about it. Yes.

Toby Harris (AM): So when will we get a report back on this?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Why would you get a report?

Toby Harris (AM): Because, presumably, you are trying to implement this. It is not just something you floated for the *Today* programme. Presumably the idea is to turn this into action --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): That is right.

Toby Harris (AM): I am being entirely supportive here you understand, Chairman.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I am happy to come and talk to you about it but it is not an MPA initiative.

John Biggs (AM): Whose is it?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It is a GLA initiative. It is being run by the policy team in the GLA.

John Biggs (AM): The GLA. So the Mayor of London wants to do this?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes.

John Biggs (AM): This is the Mayor's idea?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes.

Valerie Brasse (AM): It will have implications for the police. Surely.

John Biggs (AM): OK. That is very useful. So when you say 'we' it is not the Royal we. It is you --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It is the Mayoral team.

John Biggs (AM): -- and the Mayor?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. I would love it if the MPA had some role in criminal justice, but we do not.

John Biggs (AM): They elect dog catchers there as well. Did you know that?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I am quite happy. Sit. Have a go. It is all very well to be cynical and be critical about it --

Toby Harris (AM): Nobody is having a go.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No, you are, Toby [Harris].

Toby Harris (AM): Nobody is having a go.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, you have. In a censorious way.

Toby Harris (AM): This is a very interesting idea which could, conceivably, be extremely effective and you have reported that, in South Dakota - where, as I said, there are enormous parallels between the communities in South Dakota and in London - this apparently works extremely well. What we are interested in knowing is what the details of this are and how you might turn it into something operational, because I think we would all welcome a pilot which demonstrated that this was effective.

So do not get ratty with people. What we are asking is how are we going to hear more? It will have an implication for the MPA because, clearly, the police would have to be part of this process. What we are asking is when are you going to report back to us on your progress in achieving this interesting pilot?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): After Christmas.

Toby Harris (AM): After Christmas. Excellent.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Chair?

John Biggs (AM): Which Christmas?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Just to follow up. I think many of us were listening in and heard this and thought you were talking as the Chairman of the MPA. This is the difficulty; we never know which hat you are wearing unless we can see you I suppose.

What I picked up was, when you talked about the centre, I assumed you were talking about police stations. Are you saying you are not talking about police stations because, if you are not, clearly I look forward to the pilots and I would have thought it was something that you could get buy in for? It was to be done at police stations, I would ask you to go round to every police station. I do not know what it is like in your neck of the woods at the front desk but there is hardly any standing room at some of the front desks that I frequent on a regular basis and have to phone up beforehand to say that I am coming in. Can you give us that assurance, if you are going to be looking to do this sort of thing in police stations, that you will make sure that a proper survey is done in terms of the impact on the current service.

I have got a number of issues. Shall I put them all to you and then you can come back to me?

James Cleverly (AM): Chairman, if this is not an MPA proposal we should not really be taking up MPA time discussing it.

Jennette Arnold (AM): No, the Chairman has put this to us and raised it in his report. The only thing I was --

James Cleverly (AM): Perhaps we can censor the Chairman from raising it in the wrong forum. This is not an MPA proposal.

Jennette Arnold (AM): -- going to. If I can just finish, James Cleverly? The other thing I was going to raise is that we --

James Cleverly (AM): Chair, if I may?

Steve O'Connell (AM): Wasting our time here.

James Cleverly (AM): We have a number of questions and last meeting --

Jennette Arnold (AM): Excuse me!

James Cleverly (AM): -- we had to shoehorn a number of questions into a very short period of time and --

Steve O'Connell (AM): Absolutely.

James Cleverly (AM): -- if this is not an MPA proposal, this is the not the right place to discuss it --

Victoria Borwick (AM): No, but, in fairness, the Chairman did raise it.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Can I just finish the other point that I was going to make to you? We have, over the past, had verbal reports of this length, which are very interesting. We used to get them from the Commissioner. We, as a body, have said, "Fabulous. Could we have that in a written paper?" because then you can take the thing away with you. Can I ask, if you are going to give reports of this length in future, that you give us the report in a paper form?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. We can do that. No problem at all.

Jennette Arnold (AM): I think that that would be reasonable. Then the other point about your report, you did talk, and quite rightly, about the many officers who have been commended. I would ask you to add ours - I am sure the MPA would buy in because many of them will have been at those local commendation ceremonies that are taking place regularly where the brave officers in our boroughs receive the borough superintendent's commendation. I have been, in the last two months, to about four of them. Will you add that to your list of commendations --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Of course.

Jennette Arnold (AM): -- because I would not want us to appear as if we are just cherry picking those of the great and good, or just because you happen to be at an event? I think there are people who are doing this all the time and getting commendations.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No, of course. We are happy to put in a full list of commendations that have happened between meetings.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Kirsten [Hearn] did indicate.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I was just going to answer the question, if I can first?

Kirsten Hearn (AM): OK.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): On the sobriety programme I am happy to bring some more detail back in January. It is at a very early stage. There is a lot of work to be done around the practicalities but we do think it is something worth exploring and that is what we are going to try to do. Kirsten [Hearn]?

Kirsten Hearn (AM): I wanted to ask whether you have been able to look at an equality impact assessment yet? I am hoping that will be part of your assessment of this pilot when you set it up.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It will. Jenny [Jones]?

Jenny Jones (AM): I would just like to make the point that, by and large, the women on the MPA - I exclude myself here - do put their hands up and wait very politely to be called to speak, but there are men here who do not and who interrupt. Could I ask you, as Chairman, please to stop those men and make them wait until the women who have put their hands up have spoken?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I can. I have to say, Jenny [Jones] --

Jenny Jones (AM): I exclude myself.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): -- I keep a list in the order of people who have signalled and I tend to stick to that pretty rigidly.

Jenny Jones (AM): You still allowed Biggs to butt in. You allowed him to butt in. You should stop him and say, "John [Biggs], can you wait until Jennette [Arnold] and Kirsten [Hearn] have had their say?"

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. I am quite happy to stop him speaking.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Interrupted, yet again, by Mr Cleverly.

Jenny Jones (AM): Good.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I will, but he pays little attention --

Jenny Jones (AM): And James [Cleverly]. And him.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): -- but I will. All right. As I say, we have got a lot to get through. Can we move on to the Commissioner's report? All happy? OK. Let us move on.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Since we last met the Home Office, as you know, has released its quarterly crime figures and you have a report in front of you that is a performance report for the first five months of this financial year. What I will be talking about is six months because, since we did the report, we have September. The normal tale in truth.

Total notifiable offences continues to be down, just by 0.3% but, actually, that is over 1,000 crimes. The good news there is that continues to be the lowest level of total reported offences in London since 1998.

Residential burglary offences are down by 8.7%. Motor vehicle crime - and this is something I mentioned at the last MPA - is slightly up by 1.3%.

Most serious violence combined with assault with injury. You will see in the report there is a narrative around that. We think that is the most reliable indicator. That is down by 4.4% which is good news.

Overall gun crime is down by 262 offences, that is over 14%. Obviously less in numbers but higher percentages. Importantly, within that, incidents where firearms have been discharged, is down by 8.3%, 37 fewer occasions. I do think that is good news but, of course, there is some bad news to come in a moment when we talk about what has happened with two very young people. That is clearly pleasing but the challenge over the long time is to maintain that downward trend, particularly on gun crime.

Other reported hate crimes. This is a continuing theme during this performance year, this financial year. They are down. Racist and religious crime down by 507 offences and homophobic crime down, but only marginally down, by 12 offences. I always stress, at this point, we are talking about iceberg crimes here and we know there is significant under reporting so we will do everything we can to continue to get people to report that and have confidence in our services.

Importantly, there have been 32 fewer people that have died from road traffic accidents during this financial year compared with the same year. We would still say there are far too many deaths but 32 fewer victims, a reduction of over 34%, is a very significant reduction, and thank goodness for that.

Challenging areas. For the first six months of this financial year we have had 18 additional offences of serious youth violence. That is a percentage of 2.4%. I confirm what the Chairman has just said. I am sad to say that, since we last met, there have been two additional teenage homicides in London. The shooting of 16 year old Samuel Adelagun and the murder of 17 year old Marvin Henry. This brings a total in London for the calendar year of 2010 to 17, against the same period of 12 last year and, in same period in 2008 it was 28 and in 2007, 23. Bottom line is 17 and every one of those 17 is one too many.

To keep young people safe we are continuing to maintain our tactical focus through the umbrella I have mentioned before; Operation Verano. That includes the Blunt2 taskforce, Safer Schools offensive, Safer Transport Teams and local Borough Operational Command Unit (BOCU) officers working intensely to try to ensure there are safe journeys and safe public spaces. It continues to be a real challenge.

Knife crime still under pressure and that is up by 2.9%, although this quarter's increase is lower than the last quarter's increase so, hopefully, that is a continuing trend. Perhaps most importantly within that, incidents where knife is used to injure continues to reduce. That is down by 3.6%. Whilst knife crime is up by over 2%, actually knives used to injure is down.

I have mentioned before there is a clear parallel that we see between the overall knife crime offences and the offence of robbery which continues to be a concern to us. That continues to be under pressure. Again, within that, gun robberies are down. Knife enabled robberies are up. Then again, we have got to say that knife enabled robberies is up but that is enabled, not used. The actual times when a knife has been used to injure during robberies is down. It is a very confused picture but the bottom line is injuries in terms of direct use of knives are down, but the intimidation of knives during robbery is up. That continues to be a challenge for us. We all know the issue of street robbery in London and just how important it is to keep a check on that.

To address that we relaunched Operation Autumn Nights. Some people might recall for the last few years we have had some very successful operations around Halloween under Operation Autumn Nights. That is about doing the obvious things; targeting hotspots and making sure we put asset there and putting all our tactics into trying to reduce the problems we do have around Halloween. That has been successful in previous years and we anticipate it being successful now. We are extending it beyond the Halloween period because we see the need to put further effort into tackling street robbery.

I would also come back and say what I always say. It is right that the MPA and everybody else continues to maintain the pressure on the MPS to do everything we can to do something about youth crime in this city. I would still come back and say the narrative should always include what do we do in the long term - long term policy issues - to address the real causations. I am at the suppression end of the business. We will continue to suppress and we will continue to work with communities but the real issue here is the long term preventative activity that we know it takes years and years and goes

right the way back to families, parenting and schooling. That whole issue. I think that is equally important, if not more important.

I would like to turn to the issue of rape offences in London. We have had the discussion here before and I am aware there are some significant discussions coming back to the MPA. I think there is a very detailed report coming to the Strategic and Operational Policing Committee (SOP) in December 2010. I have seen the report. I think it is a very good report. It goes into some considerable detail around the activities of our new Sapphire Command and I think that will be a very interesting debate. Then I am also aware that comprehensive research is set up and I think we are bringing that back to the MPA in March 2011, which is that longer term piece of work that we said we wanted to engage in; better understanding, the causations and the driving factors behind these offences.

So far this year the number of recorded rape offence has increased by 290 offences. That is an increase, percentage-wise, of 21.6%. That is set against the British Crime Survey which indicates a flat line comparison for serious sexual offences over the most recent 12 months and, actually, a reduction since 2004 and 2005. Those two facts alone indicate why we need to have more detailed and analytical discussions about this particular offending. I think the report before SOP in December 2010 will actually be a very good spur to a very good discussion and then more analysis will come to the MPA in March 2011.

Now, as the Chairman said, I will turn to the budget. A lot has already been said by the Chairman. Clearly a challenging time. We have had the initial indication of Government funding and that is helpful but, using your phrase Chairman, fog on the battlefield does remain. We cannot take decisions on that information alone and I think MPA Members know that. We will not know, realistically, for a goodly number of weeks yet - and I am guessing December 2010 - when things will become clear, if not absolutely clear, of how that funding translates into both the level of general police grant and specific Government grants available to the MPS.

Also, as you know and I think has already been mentioned, we have significant other income streams, both through the Mayor and precept and local authorities and Transport for London (TfL), and we need to find out what is the effect of their budgets and the decisions they will make that affect our budget and our staffing.

It is fair to say that the settlement, as announced, as far as we can see, is slightly better than we were anticipating. That is good news but I would still turn round and say these continue to be very challenging times and I do not think anybody would say otherwise. They are challenging but we do live in a real world and we have to reduce costs, as the MPA has said before. We live in a real world and it is my job to make sure that we use our people and our assets to the best effect because this is hard won pounds from London ratepayers and taxpayers.

I would say we have done a great deal of excellent work in recent years - and I pay tribute to Anne [McMeel] in what she has been doing ever since she joined the MPS. The year before last we saved £72 million in cash. 2008/09. Last year, 2009/2010, we saved £194 million. This year we are on course to save a further £315 million. We have got a lot further to go. I do not think we should be talking about doing more for less; I think we should be talking about doing better for less. We are looking, as I have said to the MPA on a number of occasions, to streamline business processes and reduce the cost we spend on our buildings, vehicles and all that sort of thing.

A significant part of this includes making efficiency savings around our business support services. Under the MPS Service Improvement programme total accumulated savings, up to the end of 2014, are planned and have been discussed in the budget preparations with the MPA and have been brought back before this Authority. I will just run through some of those categories. Planning from catering modernisation of something in the region of £34 million. Training modernisation, £98 million. The Transforming HR programme, which we have had, is taking a long time in gestation but is still on track to save us, when fully implemented, some £15 million a year in four financial years, so that would amount to, over that period, £58 million. Rationalisation of our property estate, £93 million. Property Service Department (PSD) modernisation and contract rationalisation, £73 million. Forensics, £51 million.

These are big figures and these are the plans that we have put in place, through the Service Improvement programme, that has been driven by Anne [McMeel] and colleagues in the Management Board. On their own they will not be enough but they are a very, very good contribution and an indication that the MPS really does mean business on cutting our business and support costs.

I am absolutely clear that the focus for me is to protect operational capability as far as I can and that is what we are about. We are prioritising where we actually put our attention. It is about business support and it is about what Tim Godwin, rather indelicately, calls the inanimate costs of policing, but I think it does accurately describe what we have been about.

I am also very keen to ensure that, whilst I am passionate about maintaining visible patrol and uniformed governance of the streets - and, as you know, we have done quite a lot this year and last year to increase the number of patrols that the MPS is putting out. Through single patrol alone, 330 additional patrols every day. I am passionate to maintain that but I am also passionate about maintaining what I call the balanced model of policing. We do know that uniformed patrol and Safer Neighbourhood Teams alone will not keep the streets of London safe. We need to make sure we have the right balance and the right investment to ensure we maintain those specialist services, that have often been discussed at the MPA, to ensure we have that balanced model that can do everything we can to keep the streets of London safe. It also includes the less visible asset and the protective services.

Finally, can I just briefly turn to Safer Neighbourhoods? I know there are some questions on this and I will get into the detail of answering those questions as and when we turn to that, Chairman. I hope you will have seen that the Chairman and I wrote to all borough leaders and chief executives this week making it clear that Safer Neighbourhoods will remain the cornerstone of policing in London. I am aware that a number of Members have tabled questions. I will address those shortly. Just some general comments. We are not proposing any major changes to policy. What we are doing is thinking about the model going forward. As I said earlier, I remain absolutely committed to protecting operational capability as far as I can and the delivery of neighbourhood policing through the existing 32 borough structure is key to this.

What this process is about is having a sensible discussion with partners, and sometimes those discussions get very heated and reported on etc, but it is about trying to have a sensible discussion with partners, led by Territorial Policing (TP) and led by borough commanders, who do a very challenging job and are having these discussions every day.

We are talking with partners and communities about the service we provide all the time. You would expect us to do that. This is about gauging the views and giving us all room to consult, discuss and think about how best we can move this model forward in difficult times. The commitment to Safer Neighbourhoods is absolutely clear. It has brought real benefits to London, we have seen increasing confidence year on year since it has been implemented and we have seen significant reductions in concerns around anti-social behaviour. Most recently, over the last 12 months, reductions by people in London about concerns about anti-social behaviour coming down from 23% to 13%. We do not want to throw away the good work and the benefits Safer Neighbourhoods have brought.

Thank you, Chairman.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you very much. Just on the single patrolling, you might be interested to know I have taken to accosting officers that I find single patrolling and thanking them for doing so and, in the last week, I have done it five times! It is a huge rise in what it was a year ago. I do not know how many of you have noticed but it really is now, certainly in central London, it is very noticeable the amount of single patrolling that is taking place.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): If I might, Chairman - sorry to interrupt. To reinforce this seamless teamwork, I have taken to accosting those that are not single patrolling!

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Right. We have got a lot of questions to get through. There are a number of similar questions from people so I am going to try to group them, if that is all right, which will mean, Commissioner, you might have to dodge around slightly. I think it might be worth us talking about Safer Neighbourhood Teams first because there are a few Members who have raised a question about that. Joanne [McCartney] and Jenny [Jones], in particular, have raised questions --

Dee Doocey (AM): And me.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): And Dee [Doocey]. Sorry. Can we group them all under a question from Joanne [McCartney]? Are you happy, Dee [Doocey], if we do that?

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Joanne [McCartney], would you like to ask your question?

Joanne McCartney (AM): My question is when did the MPS decide to withdraw the ring fencing of Safer Neighbourhood Teams? Can I just clarify? The reason I asked this is because, at the last Full MPA meeting, Graham Speed asked about abstractions. In that discussion you assured him that he could return to his own Safer Neighbourhood Team, where officers were sent on different jobs in different parts of his borough, and assure it that there had been no change in policy. That was 30 September 2010.

Since then, I had concerned councillors in Barnet contact me because they had been sent a letter by their borough commander. I am going to quote a couple of bits out of that letter. In that letter the borough commander said, "It is clear that there will be reduced numbers as part of the reform and that Safer Neighbourhood Teams may reduce in size in the short term. Every Barnet ward has one sergeant, two PCs, six Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). It is unlikely that we can sustain those numbers in the long term". He said quite clearly - and I am going to read this perfectly - "Already the ring fencing of police officers and SNTs has been removed and they are increasingly assisting other areas of core police work including helping other Barnet ward teams response times and working cross border with other boroughs where their issues affect our wards".

The assurance you gave at the last Full MPA seems to be directly contradicted by this letter that was sent out in one borough. I know many of us can point to our own local Safer Neighbourhood Teams and letters that have gone out saying that ring fencing has been removed. It seems to me that the assurance that you have given is not either getting through to your borough commanders or they are giving a different message than the one you are asking them to give.

I am going to ask you for three things. One is to give us that assurance today around ring fencing and the model of Safer Neighbourhood Teams is consistent and will remain until the MPA has had a chance to discuss it. Secondly, to ask you what action you are taking to make sure that the message you are giving is consistent throughout the police force? Thirdly, whether you would commit to a proper public consultation on any removal of ring fencing? I do not just mean letters to chief executives because that seems to be happening, to some degree, already and it appears to have led to a very piecemeal and disjointed approach. I think, to retain trust and confidence, if we are talking about changing a Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) model, there has to be a wider and a more meaningful genuine public consultation so that you can take those viewpoints on board if you are going to come back to this Authority and say you want to change that model.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Happy to answer all of that. Firstly, as you are well aware, there is a TP change programme ongoing and the MPA has seen the terms of reference and been consulted at various meetings about that. However, the letter that the borough commander - and this is not about embarrassing anybody; borough commanders are doing a challenging job and they are trying to consult and trying to have discussions and it is very difficult having those discussions when those discussions can be, occasionally, misinterpreted or we are clumsy with our language.

The letter which he sent, which is largely a very good letter, is a little contradictory. You quoted parts of it. What you did not quote - and I will now quote it - he said right at the end of this, and does seem a bit contradictory, "I would emphasise that the TP Development programme has not yet made any concrete decisions for the same reasons, but you would expect us to have embarked on a close examination of the way we can do business in this climate". I think those two statements seem a little bit contradictory.

What I can give you today is, firstly, what I said last month is true; the abstractions - and the reason why I asked Lynne [Owens] to come here today is because, clearly, there does need to be a significant debate and the person who is leading this in TP needs to be part of that debate here in this MPA around the important issue of Safer Neighbourhoods. I think we are still maintaining our abstraction rate, the target of which is 5%. I think that is right, Lynne [Owens]?

Secondly, I can give you an absolute assurance that there will be no major change to policy and no change to the Safer Neighbourhood model without bringing any proposal back before the MPA. That is absolute. The end of Neil Basu's [Borough Commander, London Borough of Barnet] letter was actually saying that. No decisions have been made. I do accept some of the language might have led to some confusion.

We are making that clear to all borough commanders. You are asking me what action am I taking to make that clear? Firstly, the letter that both myself and the Chairman sent out to settle this (inaudible).

Secondly, Lynne [Owens] is going to be sending out a framework that contains the discussions and consultations that we expect borough commanders to have. We do not want to do it for borough commanders. They are very important people who are used to dealing with their local authority councillors and local neighbourhoods. We do realise that needs to take place within a framework that underpins the guarantees I have just given. That framework document is going out this week which will make it clear that there will be no removal of the ring fencing, no changes in policy and no changes in the ward base without any proposals coming back before the MPA.

To go on to your third point, I do expect them to make this meaningful consultation. I do expect it to be with the chief executives, I do expect it with the leaders and I do expect it with the councillors but, more importantly, I expect it to be with neighbourhoods and with people who are on the Safer Neighbourhood Panels to make sure that, when we do

bring something back, what we are bringing back suits what people require locally because that is the whole ethos of Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

We are going to make no changes - policy changes or changes to the model - without coming back before the MPA.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It is worth also saying, to be fair to the Commissioner, that some of the conversation about that has been coming from local authorities. We have had requests from local authorities who are looking at their own distribution of resources to say, "You cannot sit on something static forever. We should be constantly examining whether we can do this better". Now that is whether. It is an if. It may be the case that we cannot. Certainly I have had local authorities coming to me saying, "We would like to have a think about Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Safer Neighbourhoods generally. Can we do that?" and we have said, "Of course". We are happy to constantly look at those ideas and I know the Commissioner's team and Lynne [Owens] and Ian McPherson [Assistant Commissioner, head of Territorial Policing] have been doing that. It is not an outbound. It is as much an inbound conversation.

Joanne McCartney (AM): The framework document you talked about. Was that the MPS Vision Framework that we were all sent?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): No.

Joanne McCartney (AM): In that framework it just talks about retaining the concept of Safer Neighbourhoods, which is very different language --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): No, that is a different document. That is my document out to the organisation, for which we are looking at how we frame this organisation for the coming years. This is a much more detailed document that will be going out and making it absolutely clear to all borough commanders what are the parameters for this discussion, so that any further letters going out will not be saying, "We have changed anything" and it will make it clear to everybody that the changes will be based on thorough consultation locally within a managed programme and any proposals will be brought back to be discussed with the MPA.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Will we be able to have sight of that document? That would be very useful.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Yes, when it goes out.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Happy to circulate it.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): We will circulate it out to our borough commanders because it needs to go out, and we will copy it on to Members of the MPA.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Jenny [Jones]?

Jenny Jones (AM): Thank you. My first question was, are you able to make a commitment to Safer Neighbourhoods? You have covered that really. In your letter you did not mention the numbers. You did not mention the one two blah structure. I wondered if that is something that will be examined, as the Chairman said, that everything needs looking at? Is that part of what will be?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): We have got to do it. I think it is the only responsible thing to do, but there will be no changes without coming back here. We do need to talk to local people and local neighbourhoods and find out what they want, what the local authorities want and what the councils want and then come back. Nothing should be pickled in aspic.

The one thing we should not do is throw away the benefits that we have had out of this programme over a number of years now, and we are not going to do that.

Jenny Jones (AM): How much control do you have over the way that borough commanders actually fund and organise their Safer Neighbourhood Teams?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): The control comes through TP. Lynne [Owens], over to you.

Jenny Jones (AM): It is total control isn't it!

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It is, in theory.

Jenny Jones (AM): Is it?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I have asked Lynne [Owens] to say but let me just say something first. It is within the model that is agreed with the MPA. Actually, if you think about it, over the years this has been in, we have had lots of discussions and every time we have looked at it - occasionally we get outside the 5% but, largely, we have complied with exactly what was laid down in the first place, and that will continue until we change it.

Jenny Jones (AM): Is that what you would say, Lynne [Owens]?

Lynne Owens (Deputy Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Currently we have very rigid controls. As the Chairman has said, we have had approaches from councils. I will just give you one very practical example. Where five wards come together in a town centre there can be confusion about who is responsible for specific issues. On those occasions borough commanders have sometimes done some very sensible, commonsense and pragmatic things to make sure that we give the best service to communities and town centres. In terms of the guidelines and controls; they are in place and very rigid.

Jenny Jones (AM): OK. Thank you. I had another question because, of course, local authorities are facing very, very severe cuts and so they may not be able to fund the level of extra officers and PCSOs. That will have an impact on the community policing that you just said was so valuable. Are you concerned about that?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Am I concerned? Of course. I am concerned at losing any money from the budget. I would encourage all local authorities to continue contributing and buying those additional resources because they are very effective, but I understand the problems that local authorities have. Am I concerned? Yes. Do I know the outcome of it yet? No. I have got to wait and see.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Just on that, we get I think it is about £20 million in total, across the piece, from local authorities. I know that Ian [McPherson] and Lynne [Owens] have been working rather than on a sit back and wait, more of an outbound approach which says, "This is what we may be able to do for you in the future. Maybe we should work together to find a solution that might protect or augment, even, our funding but give the local authorities a better deal than they are currently getting, but also allow them a saving on their own particular resources". I do not know where we are with that, Lynne [Owens], in terms of ...?

Lynne Owens (Deputy Assistant Commissioner, MPS): That proposal has been prepared and we are already having conversations with different local authorities. It would be true to say they are making some very different and varied decisions. We have already been told of some that are withdrawing but we have also been told of some that want to reinvest in a different financial climate and under a different arrangement. We are ending up in different places but those conversations are already happening.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Steve [O'Connell]?

Steve O'Connell (AM): Just to pick up the earlier point around flexibility and the borough that you mentioned where the borough commander is very imaginatively using the resource of five wards is Croydon in the inner north. I hear what colleagues say about the debate and I think it is very important that Safer Neighbourhood Teams are protected and those benefits that have been gained over the last eight years are not lost. That is important. What I would not want is to hand string borough commanders in order that they need to use that flexibility with their resource. I hear what you say about top down control and make sure you keep an eye on it, but I would encourage further flexibility in the hands of borough commanders because they know best where to apply their resource.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Can I just add something, Chairman, if I may? That is exactly what we need to do through this consultation exercise. You get the dilemma of a rigid model and the reality of actually trying to do what people want locally. Outwith the fact that there is a funding issue, it is rightly time that we revisit to say, "Have we got it right for local people?"

I do think - and I would say this - we ought to have pride in what our borough commanders have been doing over a number of years of how they balanced this, implemented a policy, they have maintained that policy in keeping what the authority wants, but they have been making sensible local decisions. I do think they ought to take pride in how they have been doing that.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Dee [Doocey]?

Dee Doocey (AM): Thank you. You are quite right, Jenny [Jones]. We just had it demonstrated. I have got three points that I would like to make. First of all, I welcome the Commissioner's assurance that no changes will be made to Safer Neighbourhood Teams until a policy decision has been made by this body. I am concerned that it appears that changes are already underway in boroughs and I cannot quite work out how your pledge to consult goes hand in hand with the fact that things are already happening.

I have a major concern about the word 'consultation' because consultation suggests that you are going to go out and you are going to talk to communities and say, "What would you like? What would you want?" with an open mind and then weight up what it is that people want and decide whether or not you agree or whether that needs to be modified. I think probably what you have in mind is a public information system, rather than a consultation, ie you have already decided there are certain things that have gone to be done, regardless --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): That is unfair.

Dee Doocey (AM): I am delighted to hear it. Let me read from the Kingston Borough Commander's letter that went out. "It is clear that the current model of one sergeant, two constables and three PCSOs across all 624 wards in London cannot continue. Areas of lower crime, lower incidents of anti-social behaviour and lower deployment requirements will see some of their resources deployed to wards with greater demand". There is going to be a change in shift patterns. I am keen to know what you consider your neighbourhood to be and whether you identify with ward boundaries?

The problem with this is, if you consult in my area, which is a low crime area, what would you say? Would you say, "We're considering reducing the size of your Safer Neighbourhood Team and putting those extra people into areas that need it more than you"? How many people do you seriously think, in your consultation, are going to say, "I think that is a good idea"? I think that, frankly, you are trying to con us, Commissioner. I really do because, on the one hand, we are told that we are going to be consulted and, on the other hand, it is absolutely blindingly clear that these changes, a lot of them, have already been decided upon and your borough commanders are already consulting with communities on them. Frankly, I find the whole thing quite insulting.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Dee [Doocey], can I just say, when you Chair the Authority you are quite keen that we treat each other with respect and do not use what is

known as unparliamentary language in other forums. I think it is very unfair and not correct to accuse the Commissioner of conning anybody. What he is trying to do is --

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes. I apologise. I should not have used the word conning.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Firstly, I have already tried to answer part of this question by saying that we are sending a framework out for the discussion. What I am really saying is I wish we had sent the framework out before so that it would have created the parameters for which the borough commanders can have the discussion. We have not decided. There has been no decision on how we take Safer Neighbourhoods forward. There has been no decision, Dee [Doocey]. I am the Commissioner and I am telling everybody in the MPS there has been no decision.

Dee Doocey (AM): Maybe you should tell your borough commanders.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I am telling them that. That is what the framework document is about. That is why I have told you about it today and will send it to you and you will see there has been no decision. We will bring any proposals back here.

Part of what you read out sounded to me like a desire for true consultation actually. It is not about public information; we actually do want local people to engage with us and tell us how do they want their services delivered in Safer Neighbourhoods based on what they have been having and how do they see it going forward. We have had a lot of approaches from some councillors who want to make changes.

It is right that we look at it. There is no decision taken. There is no attempt to con or mislead anyone, certainly not the MPA, and we intend to have true consultation. Actually that might be very challenging not just for me but for the MPA if people want something that the MPA is not rather keen on, and we should bring it back to you and let you look at it.

Dee Doocey (AM): OK.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Jennette [Arnold]?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Chairman, thank you. Can I come in and say I think the point you raised, Commissioner - and thank you for that insight - is it would have been great to have had that document before? It is not about grief; it is about how we have been in Board meetings, sitting round partnership tables, and everybody is looking thinking, "In a sense, hasn't the Commissioner got his finger in the dam really - or is it Lynne's [Owens] finger - because they are aware of modifications that have taken place?" It is not really fair to say that we are where we are at the start because - as you have identified and as

Steve [O'Connell] came in and said - and it is not just in Croydon - that there have been changes taking place. There have been modifications.

I argued for this way back when it was clear that there was a need for an enhanced team or teams across boroughs to work together. I can think of Finsbury Park where they are now co-located and the idea that you can go in there and say, "That is a one, two, three for that ward and that is a one, two, three for that ward" is a nonsense.

What I do think we need, in addition to the framework document, is a review of where there have been modifications and where there have been changes. I think that would help us. If we then see that hardly anything has changed in the suburbs or the outer boroughs then an explanation as to what is going on there and what sort of work is being done, but identify where the enhancement is taken because a great deal of enhancement has taken place and, of course, that has been up to the discretion and the leadership of the borough superintendents. No one can fault that because that has been about service needs. I think it is about getting the proper language and information from the top team and you need to send out where there are modifications and stop saying that it is just the one, two, three because you have moved away from that for a little while now.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Part of this consultation process will be about how we do that but I do not think we should forget that the MPA has set up a scrutiny on Safer Neighbourhoods which will explore exactly where we are and what service we are delivering. Local commanders do make very sensible local decisions. Where there are joint problems over wards of course they do that. It is right and proper that the scrutiny that the MPA does and the review that we are doing are brought together to understand what is it we are currently doing? What are the benefits from it? How do we maintain those benefits and how do we truly make sure that we are, from the most senior levels in the organisation, delivering strategies and policies that suit the needs of local people. That is the intention.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Will you commit to give us the most up to date picture of what is going on out there?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Absolutely. That is part of the scrutiny. Yes.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Toby [Harris], is your question about this?

Toby Harris (AM): I thought we were taking them altogether?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No, I am. Fire away.

Toby Harris (AM): My question really is that, clearly, the principle behind Safer Neighbourhood Teams was that this would be seen, in the spirit of fairness, as providing an equal resource in every part of London and within every part of every borough. Fairness is a word we hear an awful lot about so, obviously, how this works in practice is

going to be extremely important. This is in the context of local consultation and local changes, so I think understanding the parameters would be helpful.

First of all, we are well into the budget process. Obviously you have done a lot of projections as to how this looks. Are you able to tell us what the number of officers and PCSOs engaged in Safer Neighbourhoods is currently budgeted for and how much that is likely to change, in totality, before you talk about the distribution, in the future? If that is going down by 10% or 20% then that has an implication in terms of how that is going to be spread.

The other point is, is the fundamental principle going to be one of a fair allocation agreed locally, or is it going to be an allocation which is related to crime rates? When Safer Neighbourhood Teams were introduced, there was a move very firmly away from doing it in line with the existing resource allocation working arrangements so as to try to ensure that communities got, essentially, an equivalent benefit.

I think the phraseology that you have used about having a named officer responsible for every ward sounds like good news. However, you could say that the named officer responsible for local policing in every ward is Sir Paul Stephenson, because you are responsible. Or it could be the borough commander or it could be Lynne Owens. Are these going to be officers who are solely responsible for local policing in their area, or are they shared with another local area? How big is the area that they are going to be responsible for? I think those are the parameters we need to be clear about.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Firstly, can we say precisely what the number of officers and PCSOs that are currently **identified**(?)? Yes, happy to do that.

Secondly, you ask, “And will it change?” I am going to be perfectly honest and say, “I do not know Toby [Harris]” because, until we have got clarity around the budget and the contributions from the local authority, we will not - I can tell you that my genuine desire is to ensure that we continue to deploy the same level of numbers, assets and everything in Safer Neighbourhoods after this review than before, but I cannot promise to do it until I know what the budget is, and I do not think you would expect me to do that. My desire is to do that. Let us see how much money we have got.

As for your final point about the interpretation of a named officer, it certainly was not intended to be that I would be the named officer!

Toby Harris (AM): With your mobile number!

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): This is what we need to do coming out of the review and expose it all in front of the MPA, so there is no mystery and there is no cover up on this. It is intended to be somebody who is dedicated. The one thing I do know is that, if we do not dedicate someone to that neighbourhood, it will not be real and it will be just like the failed community policing schemes of the past. This scheme has not failed because we have not done that and we have dedicated them.

We are hugely committed to this and, as I have said to other people who are very worried about are we going to use this as an opportunity to walk away from Safer Neighbourhoods, it is a bizarre accusation - not from the MPA - and a bizarre worry because we actually invented Safer Neighbourhoods. The MPS invented it. The person that actually did the research is now the Deputy Commissioner. We are passionate about this thing and we know the benefits it has brought. Why would there be any suspicion that we are not going to do everything we can to maintain it and modernise it and improve it? I cannot guarantee resources until I see the bigger picture and I see the amount of money that we have got. My desire would not be to take resources away. That is a clear desire. I want to make sure we do it the best way we possibly can.

Toby Harris (AM): And fairness?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Fairness. Actually that is a real debate. Safer Neighbourhoods was about space and it was about reassurance. It was not about chasing the crime model. That is quite clear and it has worked. We need to make sure we get the best out of both but it is a real debate that we have to have, and the MPA has to have, what is the fair distribution of assets, what is the fair way forward, and can we maintain reassurance whilst doing even better against local crimes? My view is that, if we go away from a concept where people in London feel as though they are not getting a return on their rates, on something that they have had for a long time that suddenly goes, we will be in deep trouble because it will not be acceptable to many neighbourhoods.

There is an issue. Some neighbourhoods do not identify with ward boundaries. They see a different shape of neighbourhood. Now I will be frank about it; I am nervous about coming away from ward boundaries. I am very nervous. There is not even a proposal to do that at this moment in time because I recognise the very significant difficulties if you do it. We have also got to talk to some local people who might want to do something around that. True consultation, rather than imposing our own ideas. There is no decision on it but I am very nervous about going away from that model, Toby [Harris], because I think it has brought real benefit and a real sense of fairness.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Plus, just to add to that, there is an issue in some areas about what structure we have created. You might, for instance, find an area where you have got four Safer Neighbourhood Teams come to a border, there is a hub team, a town centre team and, perhaps, two Safer Schools officers. How are they operating together as a team and how should that be brigaded for that particular area is something that is perfectly legitimate to look at. In fact, it would be negligent not to look at that. That is because of the accretion of particular initiatives over time that have layered these teams upon teams in a particular area that might need looking at, and that will form part of the proposal too.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): And including supervision ratios. We have made proposals to the MPA in recent years about making savings on supervision ratios because I think that is where we can make some savings. That is my view. We

will come back and have those discussions with you, as we have done in previous years. This will be a more fundamental review.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Great. Thanks for that. We have covered Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Can I assume, from a questioning point of view, we have also covered the CSR and budget questions because there were a number of Members that had questions on budget that had been submitted, or do we want to talk about budget some more too? Yes? OK. So on budget. The first question on budget was Joanne [McCartney]?

Joanne McCartney (AM): I was asking what the implications were of the CSR on London's policing but I have some supplementaries. I suspect you may have answered some of them. One of which is do we have any indication about the level of cut to the MPS? Do we know the MPS allocations yet? We know it is 20%/21%. If we do not, what is the timescale? Is there any indication from the Home Office?

My second question was on specific grants. Approximately £1 billion of the police budget is on specific grants. Can I check - perhaps with Anne [McMeel]- how much of that is up for review at the moment? For example, I do know the Olympics Security Grant is up for review but there must be many others. What is the total package that you know is now up for review and is at risk?

The third question I wanted is the language, Commissioner, that you have used. You have talked about operational capability. At the last Full MPA meeting you talked about doing everything we can to maintain operational capability and today you have used the phrase you will maintain operational capability as far as I can which, seems to me, an extremely worrying use of language. I am wondering whether you are confident you are going to maintain operational capability, or is it just me misinterpreting the language?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Right. When? I think I have answered that, Joanne [McCartney]. I do not think it is going to be before December 2010. Anne [McMeel] will tell me if I have got this terminology right because, quite clearly, question three says I need to get my terminology right and she will tell me if I get it wrong. We have the indication on the general police grant but how that transforms into the allocation formula from Government we have yet to find out. There are all sorts of issues around that that could complicate it, so we will not know until December 2010 at the earliest. I think that is right, Anne [McMeel]?

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): Yes, broadly, Commissioner. The only thing that I would change --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): That means no!

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): The only thing that I would add to that is that the figures we have got do not split out the general grant and everything else, it is a meshing of all the policing grants which would include specific grants. One of the issues

that we need to have clarity on is exactly your second question which is, what is happening to specific grants and how they will then affect the general grant position. The Commissioner is absolutely right in that we will not get what the force allocations are through the grant formula in terms of the general policing grant, provisionally, until - we are hoping - first week in December 2010.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Which I think answers question two. As for my choice of language, you can choose any one of these. I am absolutely determined to do everything I can, as far as I can, to maintain operational capability. This is a sheer determination but I cannot say until I see what the money is.

Joanne McCartney (AM): You are concerned that there is a risk? The language is that I hope to maintain operational capability.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Joanne [McCartney], this is going to be a very challenging period. Would I prefer that we are in a situation where there were not significant cuts to public sector budget? Of course I would prefer that. I live in the real world. I am determined to do everything I can to protect operational capability but, until I see the actual budget and the various strategies to use that budget, it would be completely wrong of me to give hard and fast promises or guarantees. It would be meaningless.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Can I just say, on budget questions - I am conscious we have got 45 minutes of our allotted time left - the budget is still very unclear so asking questions about specifics on budget now will only ever get the answer, "We're not sure". In that spirit I have got Val [Shawcross] and then I have got John [Biggs] in terms of budget questions.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Just briefly, Chairman, to follow up the specific grant area, I wondered if you had had any discussions at a political level about specific grants? There must be an issue about whether or not we are going to see the general percentage cuts or whether there is some restructuring or some wipe outs and, if there is any indication there, I think we would be interested.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Both the Mayor and I have had specific political level conversations about the level of specific grant that London gets, not least, I have to say, with an eye to the Olympic Games. There are ongoing conversations and, indeed, correspondence around that. The phone is red hot. Fear not. We are getting a good hearing from the Home Office around the particular risk that we face in 18 months and what we need to do to maintain that. So, yes. As I say, there is no conclusion as yet because those conversations are ongoing up until December 2010 because, from the Home Office's point of view, it is working within an envelope that it has been given by the Treasury and it is trying to decide allocation as we go. John [Biggs]?

John Biggs (AM): I do understand your position of saying that you want to hold on to everything if you possibly can but the problem with that approach is that it potentially

ties your hands from being more strategic. The question I have is where is the next Herald? In other words, you can salami slice things, you can see reductions, so we have a 455 reduction in the Mayor's previous budget. That is clearly out the window now and there is a greater reduction in police numbers --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Not necessarily.

John Biggs (AM): I think necessarily, yes. What are your top three big ideas about how you might strategically address, rather than just forever salami slicing and trying to hang on to everything?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): John [Biggs], the one thing we have not done is salami slice. I think I --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): The Commissioner read out a list.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): -- prepared a list of savings which are the big priority savings. That has been shared with the MPA on a number of occasions. Our projects of where we are looking to make huge savings are inanimate objects - buildings, vehicles etc - in business support costs and doing everything we can to make sure that we protect our operational capability.

John Biggs (AM): We know that that is somewhat wishful don't we, unless all the newspaper headlines in the world are mistaken? You do not know that.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I do not think that is wishful. That was the purpose of giving you what we have saved in previous years and we have delivered those cashable savings. You would expect us to be ambitious, to do everything we can to minimise all our own costs and maximise our spend on operational delivery. That is what we are doing. That was the intent of giving that list. It certainly was not a wish list. There is a lot of work been done over the last 12 months to prepare ourselves for this. I did say it still will not be enough.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): The MPA approved, for instance, the Estates programme last week, which involves the significant disposals of property and, therefore, savings on running cost. Val [Shawcross] has got a question about catering. You will have seen some specific proposals around catering which yield huge savings to the MPS. Transforming Human Resources (THR) similarly, which is ongoing and we have pushed the button on. There is a lot of non-salami slicing, big savings in there about doing things in a different way.

John Biggs (AM): I am here as a Member of the MPA and I am aware that I have a party political hat and I am also aware that you do as well, Chairman. I am trying to be part of an MPA which is wanting to hold the Commissioner to account and speak up on behalf of Londoners. I am not stupid. I am not as smart as you are, Chairman, of course, but I am not stupid. My analysis is that you can do these organisational things but if we

are forever inundated with headlines and figures that talk about 20,000 police officers being lost across the country, then London will not be immune from that.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): OK. You are right; your job is to hold me to account and your job, over previous years, is to get me to make better use of Londoner's money. There have been significant debates around the MPA with various people saying we are not making the best use of Londoners' money and we waste it in certain places. We are not salami slicing now. We have some major projects to deliver what we think are realistic savings. I am being very honest about it. Until I see the money, until I see the final settlement and until I get to December 2010 I do not know how much I can guarantee to protect all our operational capability. It is my ambition. I am being very honest and open about it. Of course I wear no party political hat.

John Biggs (AM): No. A very, very final; you have repeatedly said to the MPA - and I think it is quite right in established law - that there are operational decisions that you take and the MPA cannot instruct you on operational matters. Is police headcount an operational matter?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I will take that away and take advice on it. Whether it is an operational matter or not it is a matter of how much money you have got and how many you can afford to employ. It is an outcome of what money we have got. So whether it is operational or whether it is the MPA's, the reality is we cannot employ more people than we have got money for.

John Biggs (AM): So you will formally answer that?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I will come back to you. We have this debate at every MPA on what is mine and what is yours. I will always come back and say, even if I think it is mine, I do honestly try to come back to the MPA and try to seek support.

John Biggs (AM): Thank you. Thank you for giving me that time, Chairman.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thanks, John [Biggs].

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Sorry, if I may? One thing that I will not engage in - and I do not wear any party political hat - and have not engaged in is what people are calling shroud waving. I think that frightens Londoners unnecessarily. I do not think that anybody should be going out there and saying there will be disaster on the streets or there will be a retreat from the streets until we see the money.

John Biggs (AM): I agree with that. I would add another constituent which is, I think, a lot of our police officers and commanders are frightened by this as well. They want certainty and clarity and we have a duty to try to give that to them.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Valerie [Brasse]?

Valerie Brasse (AM): I wondered whether I could ask my question on training because it does fall --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No, we have got an order now --

Valerie Brasse (AM): Oh all right. I was just going to say it falls within, but there you are.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I am reverting to the order. We are done with budget in a spirit of we are not sure. Obviously, hopefully, by the next MPA, the picture will be a little clearer and then clearer again for December. We will, obviously, keep you posted.

Right. In the order that they were submitted. Dee Doocey. Your submitted question about Mark Saunders.

Dee Doocey (AM): You want me to read it?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes please, because the people on television do not know.

Dee Doocey (AM): OK. To the Commissioner. In light of the criticism of the MPS from the coroner in the inquest of Mark Saunders, can you update us on any action that has been taken since May 2008 to update firearms procedures in the MPS?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Right. OK. Firstly, I speak for everyone when I say, whatever the outcome of the inquest, our thoughts are with Mr Saunders' family.

Just dealing with what the coroner said first. The coroner referred to there appearing to be - and I quote - "A blurring of distinction between two firearms' roles". To show what we will be doing about what he has already said we will be reinforcing, through **Bronze(?)** firearms' command training and bespoke Bronze command training, the importance of clear distinction. We have heard that message and we will be reinforcing that distinction through our training.

The second point he made relates to the containment of vulnerable people. We have looked at that. It was clear to those involved in the operation that Mr Saunders was vulnerable, had been drinking and was acting erratically, including his actions. The aim of the operation and the intent of officers involved was to try to resolve that situation without loss of life. Sadly, we could not do that. We were very, very clear of the vulnerability because of the fact that he was a vulnerable person because he had been drinking.

The third point raised by the coroner in a letter to the Home Secretary related to concerns about the levels of policy and documentation. We have looked at that. We do not believe that the policies conflict or provide confusion, however, we will cooperate with

the Home Office or the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) or any other body who wants to review that, because, if it is an opportunity to listen, learn and rationalise, of course we would take that opportunity.

It has got to be recognised that, often, guidance is written in response to specific incidents. Perversely - I do not make this point as a cheap shot - a lot of the guidance comes out of coroners' inquests, the MPA and the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) recommendations. Trying to get the balance between putting in standard operating procedures to deal with things that we once went wrong but not ending up with a mountain of standard operating procedures is very difficult.

My personal view is I do not think we have got that balance right. I think we have got far too many standard operational procedures which are, largely, lists of something that once went wrong, instead of trying to be positive. I think we do have to revisit those lists of standard operating procedures. The point he makes is well received because I think we need to do something around it.

With regards to the jury's comments, we do consider the option of using third party negotiators - that is part and parcel of the negotiator's consideration - but, as was explained at the inquest, there are a number of reasons why it was not deemed appropriate to use a close family member. That is always, as far as we are concerned, based on all the best advice received around the world. It is an option you might consider, but it is always an option that has with it very, very real dangers in terms of various emotions.

I can circulate here a whole list of what we have done since 2008. It is an extensive list. I think it has all been reported previously but I am happy to circulate it.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Are you happy for it to be circulated?

Dee Doocey (AM): I am but I would like to come back if I may?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes.

Dee Doocey (AM): Thank you very much for that answer. What I am still not getting is you say we are going to do something. Have you learned any lessons and have you put anything in place to address this? I was particularly concerned that it said that there were six protocols covering the use of firearms. I am assuming these are ACPO guidelines. I do not know. I also note that you have just said you did not think there was too much documentation but it seems to me, as a lay person, that six protocols covering something is far too much for anyone to read, let alone take in. I wondered if you had any plans that you had actually sorted out so that, as from next week or as from last month, you are addressing A, B and C and, in order to do it, you have put in place X, Y and Z? That is not coming across and that was really what my question was about.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): We have put in place - the first point I made about - reinforcing in our training the distinction between the roles. In other words, there is organisational learning there to make sure that in future we can properly represent that we understand those roles and there is no blurring. There are things that can blur those roles and we have learned that and that will be put into training. That is a positive thing that we are doing now to put into the training.

Dee Doocey (AM): It said the operation was flawed. I wondered if you were going to look at that and see if you could agree with that and why that might have been. That is what --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I would rather deal with the specifics that came out of it, which I am doing. That was a specific point, and we have done something about it.

I have already said that we do not believe there is confusion between the documents. However, we are talking to the Home Office and we are going to look to see is there more rationalising we can do between those documents. We do not think there is confusion. We think there is clarity in those documents and I do think there is probably a misunderstanding of counting one document as two documents. We do not think on that one but we are looking to see should we do something, even though our initial view is we do not think there is confusion between the documents?

Going back to your original question, Dee [Doocey], when you are saying, "Have you actually done something?" since 2008, which was your question, we can demonstrate a huge number of things, positive actions, which are touchable and seeable, that we have done. I am very happy to circulate that list.

Dee Doocey (AM): OK. I just want to come back very quickly. I think it would be really helpful, when these things happen in such a high profile case, if we were to have a simple document that said, "These were the recommendations. This is what we have done about them. We do not agree with this [for whatever reason]". It would mean that we would not have to ask questions like this in order to get basic information. I welcome the fact that we are going to get a report back from the Commissioner.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Just to make it clear; everything we have done since 2008 you have already had reports on that. All I am going to do is reconfirm it because you have had that information previously.

Dee Doocey (AM): I am just thinking of one document saying, "These were the recommendations. These were the comments made. This is what we have done about it."

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Right. OK. Jennette [Arnold]?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Chairman, I would like to follow on from Dee [Doocey]. Dee [Doocey] and I and Faith [Boardman] and a former Member, Len Duvall, were Members of the Stockwell inquiry. What concerned me and made me feel very uncomfortable was there was resonance with what I have been hearing in terms of command and control and other things from that case and the detailed reading that we were involved in.

I would like a request, in addition to what Dee [Doocey] has asked for, can you give us an assurance that you will be looking at the recommendations coming out of this inquiry alongside the recommendations coming out of the Stockwell inquiry? At the same time, those recommendations and those lessons that were said to be learned or are put in the training development from the Stockwell inquiry, and other inquiries, how they have made the situation better. If you are doing that, you may then be able to identify where those lessons have not been learned and also identify and let us have that.

I think there is a concern, from many of us who have sat on many of these inquiries, that it is just a reoccurring theme that we seem to be hearing. I see Faith [Boardman] is nodding.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Jenny [Jones], do you want to ask your question as well at the same time?

Jenny Jones (AM): It was similar. After the Stockwell shooting there were recommendations made. One of the criticisms of Stockwell was a confusion and a lack of clarity in command structure. I really thought that had been taken on board but I seem to remember the coroner also mentioned that there was a lack of clarity with the Mark Saunders shooting as well. You must have put various things in place after Stockwell and so these are different failures in clarity --

Jennette Arnold (AM): Or the same.

Jenny Jones (AM): Or the same. Yes. I wonder if you could comment on that?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I think we need to remember what was the outcome of the jury's verdict on Mark Saunders, which was different than that into Jean Charles de Menezes'. I think we need to remember that.

Secondly, probably the best I can do is bring a report because I do not believe that we are comparing like with like here; I think there are two separate issues. This was about an issue between Bronze and Silver at the scene of a controlled, stand off incident which was an entirely different issue. On the belief of confusion we are looking at the training.

In response to the Stockwell inquiry there were 34 recommendations, 86% of which are now completed and we have reported on that before. Jerry Savill, Commander of Firearms, does have a database where all recommendations are there and we

automatically look whenever any new incident occurs. Every incident. Even if it is wholly successful, we debrief the incident anyway to see if there is organisational learning. We keep the database to see, is there a cross over, and have we made the improvements?

I think it is best if I bring --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Just on that, SOP already has a report commissioned on this which will come and bring that in detail. When is that coming; to your next meeting or the one after?

Reshard Auladin (Vice Chairman): January 2011.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): To the January 2011 meetings. We can have a look at that paper and then take it from there.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Can I just add though? The confusion before was Gold with Gold. Now it is Gold with Bronze. It is still a confusion that we are concerned about.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I think they are two different things, Jennette [Arnold], and I think you will see that in the paper.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): You will see that in the paper when it comes forward. OK. Right. I am conscious that we have got half an hour of our allotted time and I have got ten questions to get through so if we can keep our questions and answers (Q&As) snappy that would be great. Thank you very much. James [Cleverly]?

James Cleverly (AM): Thank you, Chairman. Sir Paul [Stephenson], following your request to the Home Office to curb lawsuits against the MPS due to their high cost, do you think it would be worthwhile investigating the use of body cameras, which have been proven in trials to severely reduce the number of complaints against officers wearing them?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): OK, James [Cleverly]. Two quick points in relation to that. Just to clarify what I did say to the Home Secretary, or what I submitted. It was not to interfere with anybody's right to bring in a claim; it was to draw our attention to the disproportionate legal costs sought by some claimant lawyers in cases. The case there we are making is the average compensation paid in successful cases is under £10,000. All we are saying is consideration was given to some form of ombudsman's scheme for lower value claims, as applies to lots of other bodies. That way, any compensation is for the victims and not disproportionate legal costs which comes out of the public purse and seems, to me, unjustified.

On body worn videos we have had an experiment on that previously and there are merits. The bottom line is it comes down to cost benefits and, in terms of the cost benefits to roll out body worn video cameras across the MPS, and the cost of maintenance, would not be

justified in relation to the problem because (inaudible) claims are a tiny proportion of the number of engagements and arrests and to roll out such an expensive programme at a time when we are particularly looking at using every pound effectively, on balance, we do not think is the right thing to do.

James Cleverly (AM): I appreciate what you say and it seems you have already done a rough cost benefit analysis with regards to the effect on claims against the cost of technology. Clearly, with many things in the technology field, the cost collapsed pretty quickly. Could we get some assurance that this is something that you will keep, at least, on the back burner and keep an eye on costs because it could well be that, as the cost of this technology falls, the cost benefit analysis will shift?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I think we have got to constantly keep our eye on changing technology that might bring benefits, particularly if the change in technology comes down in cost, as technology tends to do. Happily I will do that.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Would you like to answer your second question, James [Cleverly]?

James Cleverly (AM): Indeed. Can I have figures on how many targets are being scrapped in the MPS and how many are being introduced and how much officer time has, or will be, saved as a result?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Sorry, are you looking for a target about scrapping targets!

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I am always delighted, as you know, when the number of targets are reduced because, as I have said on many occasions, if everybody is a priority nothing is a priority. I think if we reduce targets we increase flexibility and we increase the ability for people to use their creativity and, indeed, their professionalism.

I would say the targets are not set by me; they are set by the MPA. I suggested to the MPA last year that we set 10 key performance indicators (KPIs) and we have got 20. I will come back this year to ask you to reduce the number of targets. So, actually, our main targets are set by you, not by the MPS, but we will be asking you again to reduce the number of targets. Whether you decide to do so or not is a matter for you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Tony [Arbour]?

Tony Arbour (AM): Yes, thank you, Chairman. The MPS is working to establish data accuracy levels across the organisation however, if some boroughs' data is found to be consistently inaccurate, how do we know that we are receiving reliable general information from the MPS on crime? You will know, Commissioner, that this arose from a report to SOP which identified particular boroughs as having inaccurate recording, particularly Greenwich, Southwark and Islington.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I think it might be sensible if Lynne [Owens] was to answer that.

Lynne Owens (Deputy Assistant Commissioner, MPS): The MPS is committed to providing the best possible crime data because we know that the public cannot judge our effectiveness appropriately unless we are putting reliable figures in the public domain. At the moment the data accuracy is based on some very rigid and complex Home Office recording rules and standards and, further to previous Members' questions on bureaucracy, we are currently undertaking a review in the MPS of those standards because we think some of the ways that crime is recorded is over complicated.

Some of the figures that you saw - which I think was a Private Member briefing in advance of the last SOP rather than part of a paper that we submitted - and the way that we are assessing data accuracy are inaccurate. Commander Steve Rodhouse is undertaking that crime recording review on behalf of the organisation and we will report back to Members once that review is complete because we think it is absolutely right that you get a far better picture of accuracy in terms of data recording.

Tony Arbour (AM): Can I suggest some of the reasons why recording might be inaccurate and maybe your interpretation of what the Home Office is asking may possibly itself be wrong? Firstly, there may well be considerable pressure on those people in boroughs who have to record the data, perhaps to massage the figures, and can I suggest ways in which this may be done? It may be that, because there is MPS pressure to drive down, for example, the incidents of burglary, burglary might, perhaps, be recorded as criminal damage. It may well be, for example, that the recording of some particular offences is extremely bureaucratic. I understand, for example, that there are 131 pieces of paper needed to record an assault which will include 17 police officers being involved in that. Much simpler if assault is recorded as a different kind of crime.

Moreover, in our drive for targets, and at the beginning of every Commissioner's report that we get here, we are always told how well we are doing in particular categories. Equally, sometimes, we are told that we are not doing so well in particular categories. It may well be that boroughs feel under pressure to alter the figures to suit this. For example, it is very easy to get lots of sanction detections going to a student event and maybe you will be able to find lots of people in possession of cannabis, but each one of those offences - I say, maybe, Chairman - as far as crime recording goes, are the same as recording a murder.

Finally, to go back to the point that I originally made about interpretation of the Home Office doing this, maybe it ought not to be down to boroughs to be recording this. Maybe it ought to be done centrally, not by front line officers, which will save an enormous amount of officer time and you do as they do in Kent, where the whole thing is done centrally.

Lynne Owens (Deputy Assistant Commissioner, MPS): You have covered a wide variety of ground. If I could start with the last point first? I completely agree with that

point. One of the strands of the TP Development programme is a centralisation of our crime recording functions for all the reasons that you have articulated. It will come with revenue savings and data accuracy benefits.

I would not agree with your analysis of the sanction detection position. You will recall, when the Commissioner gave his update at the very beginning of the meeting, he spoke about total notifiable offences, so that is every single offence that is recorded in London. Aside from monitoring the individual category we do count the whole and, within the whole, there is some proactive work that is undertaken by police officers. On a daily and weekly basis I personally, with my area commanders, monitor that and look for exactly what you are describing, which is shifts and changes between crime categories and with a view to meeting the targets.

Of course it is always going to be a risk in a target regime that we hit the target and miss the point, which is why the MPS recommended a lower number of targets in the last financial year that we thought would have been more meaningful. We will be encouraging the MPA to take a similar position in this forthcoming year.

In terms of sanction detections, we do not have a total notifiable offence sanction detection target, so what you have just described in terms of cannabis warnings for students would not be a target, even if your hypothesis of the situation was correct.

Your final point was about bureaucracy. We completely agree with you. We are committed to reducing bureaucracy across the organisation, which is why we have the review being undertaken by Mr Rodhouse, which we will report back on, on how we might reduce it in the future.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Could I add one thing, Tony [Arbour]? That is please do not take Lynne's [Owens] answer to be an invite to set a target for sanction detection for (inaudible)! The other thing is the notion of sanction detections is pretty meaningless to the man and woman on the Clapham omnibus and we need to get away from over layered, confusing and nonsensical definitions of crimes and targets to get to something that the public understand, you understand and police officers can understand, and record it more simply.

Tony Arbour (AM): I welcome Lynne's [Owens] robust defence, but I think what I have pointed to are very considerable flaws. Since much of what we do is dependent on having accurate data, can I suggest that we - and I think this is a suggestion to you, Chairman - take a leaf out of Eric Pickles' [Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government] book who says that, if we think that there are unnecessary regulations, then, in effect, they should be discarded? If the figure that I have given about the number of pieces of paper which are required to record an assault is actually required, maybe you could recommend to the Home Secretary that this is something which could well be thinned out.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): We are already doing that. It is worth also mentioning what I said before; just the recording of crime, the way it is currently done, can be a deterrent to activity. If police officers search your house and find a gun, that gets recorded as a gun crime, despite the fact that there is not a victim. In terms of the overall numbers they would have been better of not searching the house. We do need to do something about the way crime is recorded and registered to make sure that we are driving the right incentives. OK. Victoria [Borwick]?

Victoria Borwick (AM): This was building up because previously we talked about how well things were going in Harrow, particularly after various visits. When I was there they made a comment to me that they felt that the figures had dropped slightly so we were asking for a comment, please, on Harrow. In the last seven months total notifiable offences in Harrow rose 4%, robbery rose 16% and serious violence rose 10%. Perhaps you could let us know why you feel that that has been a disappointing change to the overall figures?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): As you say, Victoria [Borwick], it is a problem borne out of success; the fact that over a number of years now we have seen very, very good results in Harrow. Over the last five years incidents of robbery have reduced by 58%, residential burglary down by 17% and on and on. Exactly what you are saying. Sometimes that gets difficult because you are comparing against ever reducing figures. One of the complaints you get from borough commanders is you try to ignore the complaints and still push, despite the danger of performance culture, to say you have still got to do better and better each year. Of course, in Harrow now, we are talking about very small numbers representing significant percentage increases.

Lynne [Owens] might want to add to this. I do know there is a very, very good collaboration between the borough and the local authority in Harrow. It is particularly good and particularly integrated. They are targeting priority crime together, analysis on victims/offenders/locations, driving officer deployments and problem solving. Partner agency. It is a genuine contribution down there. At the moment there is three weeks to date in a new operation that is going on and that has seen a 30% reduction in burglary and a 27% reduction in offences of robbery. You then have to say they are big reductions but remember these are small numbers so small numbers become very dynamic.

They have responded to the fact that the figures have gone suddenly slightly the wrong way and that operation looks like it is driving down the figures once again. It is a problem borne out of success and I think we have to say Harrow has done very well, particularly the local authority as well, but we need to keep on the case.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Thank you very much.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Valerie [Brasse]?

Valerie Brasse (AM): Thank you. My question relates to our earlier discussion on delivering of savings as much as anything else. You referred to cutting business and

support cast, you referred to **CIPS**(?) and training modernisation. My concern is how that is going to impact on operational capacity, given that your aspiration is to attain that. It is not just about numbers but, of course, it is about what people and what the police do when they are out there responding to crime. My question is what decisions, if any, have been taken, or are in the pipeline, relating to the future delivery of specialist training for MPS child protection (inaudible) and extends into SCD2, Sapphire teams and other specialist units? It is really about delivery of specialist training by specialists to specialists.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Yes. There is a debate going on at Management Board level in the MPS about reviewing and looking at doing our training in a completely different way. I think it is the right debate. We are looking at rationalising our training to reduce costs so we can maintain operational capability because I do think we can significantly take out cost from our current training model.

We train in various business groups at this moment in time. It is not a sensible way to do business and most other sensible organisations try to deliver training in a different way than we do. Certainly the forces I have worked in do it in, I think, a more efficient way.

That is not to say the training is bad; I just think it is too expensive. That debate is ongoing and particularly, whilst there are large levels of agreement across the Management Board about the general rationalisation, there is a lively debate going on as to how we should deliver certain specialist training. That debate has not come to a conclusion. I have asked for further work to be done. I keep an open mind at this moment in time and I expect that work to come back to the Management Board in due course for us to look at what is the best way to do this in the future. We want to maintain the excellence of our training but make sure we are doing it in the most efficient and effective way.

Valerie Brasse (AM): I accept that but, as I say, I am very strongly concerned about specialist training being given by generalists to practitioners. That, to me, would be a complete disaster --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Valerie [Brasse], there is no intention to do that.

Valerie Brasse (AM): I would just like to quote because SCD5 has just been running some excellent training, as you are probably aware, the **Macy**(?) training. It is now piloting a one day set of training. This is for child protection professionals. This is feedback from a social worker who attended the first of these pilot training days. He says,

"I have attended many courses since qualifying but I cannot recall ever feeling a sense of seriousness, real seriousness, that the MPS has taken in this particular aspect of its work. It was such a professionally charged environment to be in and I am sure other participants felt similar. So positive and is having a real impact on

how I am working today. The difference is palpable. This was a superb and highly professional learning event. It was the highest standard of training I have ever had since I qualified.”

That is an extraordinary commendation for the MPS and it would be a terrible shame if that were to be lost in a move towards training being delivered by generalists. My concern is you simply cannot give specialist child protection training to a generalist and say, “Deliver it”. You cannot.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Valerie [Brasse], my concern is, if somebody is feeding you that line, then they are misleading you. There is no intention to deliver specialist training by generalists --

Valerie Brasse (AM): I have that assurance. That is excellent.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): -- and we do get special **pleading**(?) from time to time. It generally is not very productive. There is no intention to do that so, if you have been fed that line, you need to feed back to them, “Stop misleading you”.

Valerie Brasse (AM): I have that assurance. That is terrific.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Thank you. Valerie [Shawcross]?

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Thank you very much. This is just indicative of a general concern I think about how efficiently back of house services are provided. We all want to protect the police service from cuts but that means that there is no excuse for inefficiency in non-core activities. It seems to me to be strange that something like providing your own in-house catering could have survived into the 21st century when it is so far removed from your core activity. I wanted to have some assurance that you were going to be looking for more sensible ways of working in terms of dealing with this area. It is one area where we know there is such a well developed private market available. Do you agree with me, Chairman?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Totally. As the Commissioner pointed out, there is a big savings programme, particularly in catering, but in other areas. I think it is fair to say that the list the Commissioner read out, whether we had a CSR settlement that was challenging or not, we would be doing them anyway because they are about efficiency as well as cost saving. Does that answer your question?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I take the point; it is surprising that a number of things have survived into the 21st century so I entirely agree with you, Val [Shawcross]. I have got a long answer here. I will not give that. I --

Valerie Shawcross (AM): No, no. Another time.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): -- can give you the figures of what we are doing to reduce - because there is inefficiency in there, but we do have a very, very effective catering manager who has been with us for some time now. 30 years' experience. What we are trying to do is drive down the costs so that we can take the cost out of there and not offer it to the private sector. We are doing this in a number of areas. Then say to the private sector, "Come and do it better". We are in the process of driving down the cost at this moment in time. Frankly, if we offered them at this moment in time I think we would waste some public money. We need to take some of the cost out ourselves and then offer it to the private sector if, indeed, they can do it better. I think we need to do that with a number of parts of our business.

There is a more interesting debate about how we better, in the MPS, understand the client/contractor relationship so we can drive down cost and then challenge the private sector to do even better than we do. I think catering comes into that category. We do need to reduce the cost.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): I think that is probably enough on catering but I just wanted to raise the point that it seems to be --

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It is on the radar. Do not worry.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): OK. London Resilience quickly?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, please.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): This is a little bit more of concern. I noticed that there was an announcement that came out about changes to the chairing and the management of the arrangements for planning for major incidents in London, and perhaps the two issues are confused in this question. I was concerned that a key task had been given to the Statutory Deputy Mayor where it had previously sat, as I remember, with the Minister and the Mayor themselves. I wanted some assurance that the MPS, as the lead agency if there is a major incident in London, is absolutely on side with these arrangements and has no concerns because these arrangements have worked well in the past and it is not entirely clear to me why they should be changed at the moment.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Toby [Harris], did you want to ask your question on this as well?

Toby Harris (AM): It is about civil contingencies. I would be interested to know what arrangements the Commissioner has put in place, for example, in respect of 5 November 2010 and the implications of the Fire Brigade essentially being on fire strike then? What arrangements has he put in place in terms of police officer cover in the event of incidents that night?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Do you want to answer those?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Firstly, again, I have a long answer here. I have to say we are generally content. It is not a matter for me, who Chairs it, but we are content with the arrangements. We are part and parcel of that structure and we have seen no change in the determination to make the structure work.

One particular question you ask is, “How does this escalate?” The escalation will be as previously because that is managed by the Government liaison role that is part of that body and any escalation will work as previously, up to the Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR) if necessary. We have been part of that, we are content with the arrangements, we do sit there, we are passionate about London resilience and if I was at all concerned I would raise it with the Chair and, indeed, to higher levels if I thought we were weakening our position on this. I am certainly content that the escalation point you raise is catered for by the Government as part of that body.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It is worth just saying on the Resilience Board, my involvement with the Resilience Board gave me the impression that the Ministers who were there to Chair it were not quite sure why they were at the meetings in terms of buy in, so giving it a greater London focus and a more local focus, we think is a positive move.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): I think perhaps these things have a life cycle and early on, when it was necessary to get public organisations, civil servants and utilities actually motivated, it was necessary to have a head kicking/head cracking Minister and a Mayor there.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Head kicking?!

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Tell your Ministers they are there to smack heads! I would hope that the effectiveness of that decision making driving entity is not lost in all of this.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. Do you want to answer Toby [Harris]?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Toby [Harris], we have put some contingencies in place. Firstly, the one thing I can assure you is Ron Dobson, the head of the Fire Brigade, is entirely content with the work we are doing with him. He is very satisfied.

In terms of 5 November 2010 we have a policing plan for that day. We are providing some additional staff of one sergeant and seven deployed at nine locations. Whilst we are not going to escort every call we are going to be available to be called on if there are any particular difficulties. Our job is to make sure we stay impartial and our job is to make sure we police the law, but our job is also to make sure that in a time of - it is tricky and it is a particularly difficult day to have the strike. It is right that we put additional

arrangements in place to have additional staff available to respond to any difficulties that the fire tenders face. We do have a plan for it.

Toby Harris (AM): Is it not also likely that you may well find that there are 999 calls directed to the police for what would normally be a fire service incident? Again, what arrangements have you put in place for those?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Commander Broadhurst is manning Gold. We are opening up an information room to make sure we can ensure the right direction of calls to the asset that is available. We have got a fully operational contingency in place.

Toby Harris (AM): Thanks.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK. Caroline [Pidgeon]?

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): My question is do you value the recommendations from MPA scrutiny reports?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): In short, yes.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): That is very good to know. I know in the G20 report, which was touched on earlier, there are a couple of recommendations that were not taken on board. I am wondering if you want to update us on those? Particularly, one of them went off to Portsmouth University for a piece of research to be done which was due to report back a year ago.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I will happily bring the detail. I did not know you were going to ask about that specific recommendation. I will happily let you have a note, and the rest of the MPA, on that.

Just to your general point. If we look at the recommendations of the various panels, the MPS Civil Liberties Panel, we have put in place now 85% of all the recommendations, plus. That shows we really do value these recommendations and we are very open - and I am very open with this Committee - where I do think it is mine to implement or not, and I am very open when I am saying, "That is not a recommendation we are going to take up". It might not please the Committee but I certainly do not hide the fact we implement the vast majority of all the recommendations that are made.

I will bring back specific details regarding that Portsmouth University study.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): I think that was Stockwell actually. That was not G20.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Sorry, did I not say Stockwell? Apologies.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): We have implemented 86% of those recommendations.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): Sorry, have I got myself muddled on that.

Referring to the G20 report, Civil Liberties, obviously we have not seen that yet. Are you going to be supporting all of those recommendations or is that the one you are saying you are only going to support 85%?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Is this the one coming out of the MPS Civil Liberties Panel?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): What we have said there is, out of all the recommendations, there are 22 recommendations, 18 have been completed. There is one that is not for us to complete; that is Section 44 which Government is now consulting on. We have provided the rationale why we did not accept three of those, and I think that has been provided to this Authority and the Civil Liberties Panel. That is an 85.7% compliance rate, so I think it does demonstrate we do value the recommendations.

Caroline Pidgeon (AM): When it moves to the London Assembly, when all the changes come through, will you be saying a similar yes and implementing 85%/90% plus of the recommendations that the Assembly will be making?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I think, first of all, we have got to find out what is the role of the London Assembly and nobody has yet told me how this is all going to pan out. I know the Mayor has made a proposal that the London Assembly will be a scrutiny body so I think that will change the relationship, but it is not for me to decide on the format of the governance of policing. That is for others to do. I will wait and see what the GLA role is.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): OK? Jenny [Jones], your question on officers in the rape command?

Jenny Jones (AM): Yes. We have had a report in the *Evening Standard* that the number of Sapphire officers would increase to 470 from April 2011. I wondered is that officer and staff and a budget increase?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Approval for (inaudible) strength(?) of SCD2 was increased by 117 offices from 1 September this year, making a total of 477 as you said. To date we have got 435 of those officers recruited and recruitment continues with internal open days and advertisements seeking to fully staff that unit by April 2011. Of course, in December 2010, you are having a detailed 12 month update report of the activities of that new command, what they have achieved and what the challenges are.

Jenny Jones (AM): We are going to have a lot of reports in December 2010 aren't we? We will be struggling to read them all over Christmas.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): It is a good report. I have read it.

Jenny Jones (AM): Thank you. I look forward to it.

Could I ask you about the stop and search as well? You know I am not a big fan of stop and search. On the Section 60 stuff it has been reported that new draft Home Office guidance will allow police to stop and search on the basis of ethnic origin. Have you been, or will you be, consulted on the guidance?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): We have received a draft proposal but I think we need to just be clear on what, as far as we are aware, the draft proposal is. I am told it says - and I quote - "There may be circumstances where it is appropriate for officers to take account of the individual's ethnic origin in selecting persons or vehicles to be stopped in response to a specific threat or incident". It then goes on to stipulate that this must not be the sole reason for the stop. We then go on to say, "You have got to have reasonable belief you are doing the right thing".

There is a commonsense thing here of course. If you have got a specific incident and some specific information then you will base your actions on that information, not just that it is some rather silly attempt to get some sort of proportionality when there is absolutely no need to interfere with anybody's liberty who does not fit a description or a particular grouping. It is about commonsense. Actually, I do not think that what is contained in that new proposal alters the way in which we go about our business in the MPS one iota.

Jenny Jones (AM): I am sure you are aware the Press Association put out some figures today --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Yes.

Jenny Jones (AM): Out of 101,000 stop and searches there were no arrests for terrorism. 1 in every 200 did lead to an arrest, but not for terrorist offences.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): You could view that either way.

Jenny Jones (AM): That is a con. I think. Not by the MPS. It is a con by the Government. It is trampling on civil liberties.

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I think you are talking about Section 44 and, as you know, we did hugely redo Section 44 and now the position is, whilst the power is still there, we have not applied for further, effectively, **warrantry**(?) from the Home Secretary to use Section 44.

Jenny Jones (AM): Right. Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): It could of course be good news that that means that the stop and search is working as a deterrent. Who knows?

Jenny Jones (AM): You cannot prove that though can you?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): We have got to be honest about this. There is a review ongoing, and we are part and parcel of that review, as to what arrangements Government wants to put in place. I think that review goes up to December 2010, but I am not too sure of the date.

Jenny Jones (AM): December 2010 again! Lovely.

Clive Lawton (AM): Chairman, I am sorry to be unparliamentary but I want to say something congratulatory.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No, that is fine.

Clive Lawton (AM): The last few weeks have been a busy few weeks for me and I have been in five different countries. On each occasion that I go somewhere else I try to make some access to the police service and find out what local people think of their police service. The Commissioner referred, in his report, to the policing of both the Notting Hill Carnival and the Pope's visit. I am part of the Civil Liberties Panel and I enthusiastically joined in with the criticisms of the G20 policing where it went wrong. I think it is only right to report that people were hugely impressed by both of these events. Similarly, when trying to describe the community engagement dimension of the MPS and Community & Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs) and local borough activities and, indeed, meetings like this, people were really quite astonished that this went on.

I would want to say that the MPS appears, from this superficial survey, to be world class, except for the fact that that is not a great compliment given what I find out about what happens in the services around the world!

I just want to record that all of those encounters and all of those conversations were highly positive about the MPS experience. While I reserve the right to be critical on all other occasions I feel it is right to say good things when good things can be said.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Good. Thank you very much for that. Hear hear. We all applaud that sentiment.

That is the end of all the written questions. Did anybody have any supplementary questions? Victoria [Borwick]?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Thank you. Many of us will have read with disappointment - sorry to follow on from such a positive note - "Dangerous offenders charged with nearly 200 serious offences while monitored". Obviously it is disappointing to see that issued, I think, yesterday and again followed up again this morning by the MPA and disappointing

when I think we are thinking that, whilst people are being monitored, we are still safe on the streets. Perhaps you would give us an update on that?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): It is not the MPS' decision as to who to release on to the streets or not. We are part of the Mullet-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (Mapa) arrangements. I do have to say, Victoria [Borwick], that since the Mapa arrangements came in, it is hugely better than anything that existed previously and there are very, very good procedures between the various agencies to do everything they can to monitor and try to mitigate the danger of certain people on our streets because people have got to comply with the law or they go to prison. It will never be perfect. There are risks around this. We work extremely hard with local agencies.

We have got to be very clear about what Mapa can do and what it cannot do. Mapa can and does mitigate risk, but it does not remove risk.

Victoria Borwick (AM): I know that the Chairman is always very keen about talking closely about the working of the Criminal Justice System and yourselves and how to help that. I was concerned because, if you say it is better than it was before, God help --

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Hugely better. In the past we have used phrases such as 'manage these people in the community'. I am always very hesitant to use the phrase 'manage in the community'. I think what we are doing is engaging with other agencies to do everything we can - and we can always improve it - to mitigate risk. I think there is a slight difference in the way the people would understand it.

Victoria Borwick (AM): OK. We must constantly reassure the public, obviously.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Having witnessed it firsthand, the first step has been reaching a common understanding of risk around particular individuals, which is what Mapa does. That has aided things hugely, albeit there are, occasionally, problems and errors. We saw that with the **Sonix(?)** case previously. I do think one of the things --

Victoria Borwick (AM): And Warboys.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): -- that is going to come out of the CSR - which I have said previously - is what other people's budget cuts risks are going to present for us. There is a lot of work ongoing now, particularly through the London Crime Reduction Board, about drawing in those other partners and asking how we can much more collectively mitigate those problems. I know the Commissioner and his team are very acutely engaged in that process. OK?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Thank you.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Jennette [Arnold]?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Yes, Chairman, thank you. Commissioner, I want to take you back to the point that you raised that we sadly have to add two more to what Chris Greenwood from the Press Association - he is its Crime Correspondent - calls the police stab list and the toll of teenagers killed in London. There are a number of reasons. Regrettably, a number of these young people belong to families that I represent. The situation is across London. You have given us a list and you spoke again today about Operation Verano. What more is left to do? Where do we go? Do we commit ourselves to Verano being a standing force? Do we commit ourselves to having Veranos at a sub-regional level? What is the thinking? Where do we go?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Jennette [Arnold], our thinking is it is our job to respond operationally to these matters and we are putting huge amounts of effort and asset into doing this. Blunt 2 taskforce. When you say is it a standing taskforce? This is a standing commitment with a huge effort in the MPS, using the whole might of the MPS and coordinating across it, to put our cops out there on the street to try to deter young people from carrying knives and carrying guns. All those sorts of things.

When you say where do we go next? Where we should be going is the debate about how do we stop this happening? That is the real issue. How do we ensure that everybody - Government, the Mayor, the MPA, local authorities and local councillors - are all working together to get to the source of the problem? The MPS is not going to solve this problem. We will not solve it. I have said time and time again we deal with the suppression end and we have got to do it as effectively as possible with communities. We can always improve that.

When you say where do we go next? Will the MPS, through its operational activities, be able to eradicate the problem of kids killing kids in London? No, we will not. That is social policy change and it requires politicians and all agencies to work together. The narrative should be as much or more about that as it is about what the MPS' operational activity is about.

We can always do better and we try. We will always take on various suggestions. We need to ensure that we are all working together. These are long term social policy issues.

Jennette Arnold (AM): OK. Caroline [Pidgeon] spoke about the MPS' commitment to research and that came out of the Stockwell inquiry. Do you need to do some more research about looking at areas and practices that have worked? Over the years, in some areas where there was Home Office funding, with borough funding, with police funding and other partnership funding, that seemed to bring about a longer term change than we have in areas where the operations come in, and even though they stay longer, they do leave. Have we picked up enough of that intelligence through proper research about what has worked in some localities?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): Firstly, Jennette [Arnold], we are constantly doing the analysis to better target the resources that you give us to police

London. That analysis is ongoing all the time. Wherever the analysis shows something different we respond to that analysis. That research is ongoing all the time.

I am afraid I would challenge your assumption that, in the past, all this money, all this effort and all this research coming from various bodies has led to a longer term solution. Whilst there are far too many homicides still in London, if you look at the long term trend, we are in a much better position - including on youth homicides - than we were. If you ignore last year - which was extraordinarily low - than we were in the previous years. I do not think there has been any golden age. I do not think that a lot of the research has led to fantastic results.

I think what we have been doing is concentrating the research on how do we improve the operational deployment of policing when the research should be about implementing the long term social policy changes that are required to get kids in a position where they can make the right choices and we get families doing everything they can to protect them, in schools, and everybody else. That is where the research should be. Keep the pressure on me but the research has not done anything very much, in my opinion, historically, to change the position in London.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): As you know, Jennette [Arnold]?

Jennette Arnold (AM): Can I just finish, Chairman? I would say to you that the work of partnerships, and solid partnerships, has been very instrumental in some areas to deal with this issue and young people have responded and they, themselves, will witness and say, "If I had not got involved in this, then I would be dead". We can think about so many of these issues that have worked. Resource is important and partnership working is important. Will you assure myself and others who have this concern that you will be looking really very closely at any move away from resource to this area, especially where the indicators are, over the last year, those initiatives have been successful?

Sir Paul Stephenson (Commissioner, MPS): I would say the partnership working in the MPS is better now than it has ever been in the past. It is (inaudible) partnership working.

You have just flagged up one thing that I think the Chairman has already referred to. What we will be watching very closely is, whilst there are other agencies and local authorities whose budgets are challenged, where there might be any risk that, through budgetary challenges, they might not be part and parcel of the partnership with us. We are determined to maintain our partnership. I cannot speak for other agencies. We will watch that very closely. That is a risk.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): That is what we are reviewing on a systematic basis through the JEM process with every borough one by one. Of course, do not forget the Mayors' Time for Action programme which is now really gathering momentum in terms of specific preventative work that is required through young people's lives to make sure that when they reach their teens they are not involved in crime.

I am conscious that we are over time now, Jennette [Arnold] --

Jennette Arnold (AM): Can I just say your JEMs work is all very well. I would also like clarification that it is borough commanders who are reporting back to either Lynne Owens as soon as possible (ASAP) as it happens in their borough, week by week and day by day, rather than the three month **trip**(?) you do. Do we have that assurance that this is a priority for borough commanders to be reporting back because any withdrawal from partnership monies will have consequences and that consequence will impact on the young people in some areas of London?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. OK. All done? OK. Fine. That is it for questions.

We have got reports from Committees. Is there anything to report, Chief Executive?

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive, MPA): I do not think so, Chairman. Unless anyone has any queries on the report that has been circulated?

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): No? OK. Any other urgent business?

Jenny Jones (AM): I put my hand up, Chairman.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Did you? For what?

Jenny Jones (AM): A Member of the MPA has not turned up today, did not send apologies and is, therefore, absent. Can we record that in the minutes and can you perhaps, as Chairman, deal with that? I just think that is a bit rude.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. The absence is recorded. It is half term.

Jenny Jones (AM): Apologies would have been appropriate.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes, it would. Not everybody gives apologies. OK. Great.

Can I just raise something that arises from our earlier discussion? I think all of us on the MPA, when we are using this public forum to question the Commissioner, have to be extremely careful about the language that we use because what we say gets reported virtually immediately. Despite, I am afraid, Dee [Doocey], your apology for your use of language earlier, that use of language is now already running in the media. That is an extremely unfortunate situation and I am afraid, Commissioner, we will have to offer you our collective apologies for that. I would just remind Members about their responsibility. We as a group have a responsibility for maintaining confidence amongst Londoners that both the MPS and we are doing our job. Admittedly this is often a robust forum and it should be robust. I think we just have to be careful about, sometimes, the language that is used. I include myself in that as much as everybody else.

OK. Thank you very much. Sorry if I appeared slightly testy to start. It was a late night last night. Thank you for your cooperation.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Just a point. It was not at Sir Paul [Stephenson]; it was more about our own improvement and being critical of our own performance in view of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report that did not, I think, put us as one of the top four police authorities in the country. It is always important for us to look at how we can improve.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. I wish you had asked me that during the Chairman's report but, yes. We will perhaps talk about that next time we are here.

Victoria Borwick (AM): As you had not raised it; the etiquette was not to raise it. I am trying to follow the guidelines you set up.

Kit Malthouse (Chairman): Yes. Thank you, Victoria [Borwick]. Thank you very much.