

Transcript of the meeting of the Metropolitan Police Authority held on Thursday, 24 November 2011 at 10am in the Chamber, City Hall, SE1.

Present:

Members:

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

MPA Officers:

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive) and Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive)

MPS Officers:

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner), Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner), Anne McMeel (Director of Resources) and Gary Pugh (Director of Forensic Services).

United Families and Friends Campaign:

Samantha Rigg-David

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Good morning, colleagues. It is 10am. We are going to start the meeting. The first item on the agenda is apologies for absence. We have apologies from Kit Malthouse, Bob Atkins and Neil Johnson.

Kirsten Hearn (AM): Reshard, can we go round? I would like to know who is in the room.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I beg your pardon, Kirsten. Before we start can we just go round the table? I am Reshard Auladin, Vice Chair of the Authority.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive): Catherine Crawford.

Jane Harwood (Deputy Chief Executive): Jane Harwood.

Graham Speed (AM): Graham Speed.

Toby Harris (AM): Toby Harris.

Clive Lawton (AM): Clive Lawton.

Amanda Sater (AM): Amanda Sater.

Tony Arbour (AM): Toby Arbour.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Joanne McCartney.

Jenny Jones (AM): Jenny Jones.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Victoria Borwick.

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

Faith Boardman (AM): Faith Boardman.

Dee Doocey (AM): Dee Doocey

Cindy Butts (AM): Cindy Butts.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Valerie Brasse.

Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Cressida Dick.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Bernard Hogan-Howe.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Three more people have just walked in. That is ...?

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Val Shawcross. Sorry about that. Trapped in the lift!

Victoria Borwick (AM): John Biggs and Jennette Arnold.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Apologies for absence. We have apologies from Kit Malthouse, Bob Atkins and Neil Johnson. Kit, as you know --

Dee Doocey (AM): And Caroline Pidgeon.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Kit is on paternity leave as well as you may have heard that he has suffered a family bereavement.

Item number two. Members' declarations of interests. Toby?

Toby Harris (AM): Just to remind people that I am Chair of the independent advisory panel on deaths in custody, given the question that we have got.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): That will be noted. John?

John Biggs (AM): I have a tradition of declaring when we have a budget meeting that I am the Chair of the Budget Committee at the Assembly. A two headed beast, Chair.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Item number three is the minutes of the last meeting on 27 October 2011. Are you happy for those to be signed? There is one item, item number 38, on stop and account.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive): Yes, Chair. It is a matter arising effectively, rather than a correction of the minutes. Members will remember the discussion on stop and account and the decision which was taken to retain the process within the MPS. At that time the British Transport Police (BTP) had decided to stop recording stop and account counters. This seemed to us to be potentially a confusing scenario for people in London because they were likely to be treated differently by two separate horses in the same jurisdiction. We have had discussions with the BTP as a result of that. They have now reviewed their decision and will be consulting with their own AIG network in the very near future with the intention of changing their position and aligning with what happens already within the MPS and the City of London, so there will be a continuity of approach across London which I am sure Members will welcome.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Any other points on the minutes? No?

Item number four. We have a question from Ms Samantha Rigg-David who would like to submit a question on behalf of the United Families and Friends Campaign. Over to you.

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): I am a family member. I am the sister of Sean Rigg who died at Brixton Police Station three years ago and I am a member of the United Families and Friends Campaign. I am submitting a question on behalf of the United Families and Friends Campaign (UFFC). It relates to the policing of the recent Deaths in Custody march in central London on Saturday, 29 October 2011.

The UFFC, a coalition of bereaved families, has been hosting the annual procession for 13 years in remembrance of loved ones who have died in custody or state care. The stewarded march led by family members entails a silent procession from Trafalgar Square to Downing Street. Following this family members share experiences of the loss of their loved ones and then deliver a letter to Downing Street containing a list of recommendations for consideration by the Prime Minister.

Traffic is often temporarily blocked in the process for a short time. Although this is an emotional event the march has always passed peacefully and typically disperses around 4pm. The march provides a rare opportunity for grieving families to come together, to highlight concerns to those in authority and also provide mutual support.

Policing of the march in the past has appeared to be proportionate both in response and to the sensitive nature of the event and also in recognition that it does not pose a threat to public order.

This year, at about 3pm, after delivering the letter to Downing Street, family members and friends found themselves subject to aggressive and degrading treatment of the hands of a large deployment of what we believe were Territorial Support Group (TSG) officers and, in addition to this, a helicopter was flying overhead and we also noticed a Forward Intelligence Team (FIT) team had been deployed. The sudden deployment of around 100 officers in addition to the large number of uniformed officers already present and the ensuing treatment caused panic, physical injury and distress to the remaining marchers. Attempts were made by stewards, legal observers and marchers to talk to the police, informing them that this move was provocative and appealing for restraint - but this was ignored.

The officers performed a sweep of the road as if clearing it of rubbish, pushing aside and trampling on anyone in their way. We believe there was only a small crowd of marchers in the road at this point with around half of the march on the opposite side of the road. The actions of the police caused marchers on the opposite side of the road to move forward to join those being swept in an attempt to provide some sort of safety in numbers against this attack. Many of those that the police swept were vulnerable, bereaved families including parents, grandparents and children. At one point officers picked up the mother of someone who had died in custody by her arms and legs and deposited her on the road like a sack of potatoes. Children were screaming in fear.

After this the police began to form a kettle which caused widespread intimidation and forced marchers to disperse in an undignified and cajoled manner without any proper closure to the march. Those who attended the march have told me they feel traumatised by the experience. We understand it is not the role of the MPA to investigate the actions of individual officers on the March, however it does hold responsibility for holding the police to account over operational and tactical matters.

We believe it was both entirely unwarranted and unnecessarily confrontational to deploy these officers and wish the MPA to fulfil its public duty by assisting us in scrutinising how and why this decision was taken. I am here raising this question in person.

We are fully cognisant of the climate of the times in terms of heightened public interest around deaths in custody and the levels of tension around public order policing. However, we believe this calls for intelligent and sensitive policing. We do not accept that the response of the police was justifiable, proportionate or in accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance about keeping the peace.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): The Chief Executive is now going to reply.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive): May I start by thanking Ms Rigg-David for raising the concerns about the way in which the annual United Families and Friends Campaign march was policed on 29 October this year so very clearly.

As you acknowledge in your letter the MPA has no remit to investigate the actions of any individual officer or to influence operational decisions, but the Authority does have a scrutiny role and I have therefore taken advice from the MPS about the events on 29 October.

I am told that, unfortunately, the organisers made no contact with the MPS before the event. Nor did they seek permission from the Greater London Authority to assemble on Trafalgar Square. Since it was apparently not possible to identify an organiser plans for the policing operation were based on the United Families and Friends Campaign website supplemented with information from a contact in the community who did not, in fact, claim to be an organizer.

The MPS understood that the UFFC's intentions were to hold a rally in Trafalgar Square before a silent march to Downing Street for a noisy protest including speeches. The police operation took account of the sensitivities around the march and those attending it and was planned to be low key, closing Whitehall to traffic south bound, so that the group could move on to the east pavement once the march was opposite the gates of Downing Street.

On the day about 200 people assembled on Trafalgar Square. Stewards were present but there was still no identified organizer. The community contact was informed that the road would be closed and that once the group reached Downing Street they would be required to move to the side. Once the march reached Downing Street the group stopped in the road and a series of speeches were made. Requests for people to move on to the pavement were ignored. A line of police officers was therefore formed on the west side of the group to prevent people moving into the north bound lane which was still open to traffic. Police requests to move continued to be ignored for over an hour. During this time Transport for London raised concerns over the impact of the continued road closure on the bus network.

The group then moved across the road to Downing Street where a letter was attached to the gates. All Whitehall was now closed to traffic.

I am informed that police reserves were brought forward and that, following further requests to move out of the road, a sweep was made to move people on to the pavement in order to open the road to traffic. One person was arrested for highway obstruction after sitting in the road with a number of others who stood up after that arrest. Once on the pavement the group dispersed.

It is quite clear from your letter that these events caused great distress to many of those on the march but I have no further detail from the operational commander on individual encounters.

Since the march took place, in the light of concerns raised at the time and in your letter and following discussions with a member of the independent advisory group, the operational commander has, as I understand it, attempted to contact the people involved but no one has yet responded to his emails. He is still keen to have a discussion and assures me that the lines of communication remain open. The Commissioner is also aware of your concerns about the policing tactics deployed during the march and he may want to comment further.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): First of all I am concerned to hear what you have said. Obviously the people involved have had an experience over the last few years which has been different so I am concerned at the issues that you have raised and I am quite happy to go away and look at it again. I hear what was said in the audience but if we are to establish a dialogue then it is helpful if we have someone to speak to. It would be helpful if someone could be put forward to discuss further what we have in the letter and to hear some more detail --

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): We have submitted a complaint to you, Mr Hogan-Howe, already.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): OK. If we could have that contact that would be really helpful. I am quite happy to keep talking. I have asked for the CCTV footage, which is available, of what happened on the day for me to be able to review and I am quite happy to do that and then share it if that is appropriate.

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): Nobody has emailed us or tried to contact us. We have received a letter in response to our letter saying that the letter has been received and it has been passed on. Nobody has tried to contact us by email.

Really for bereaved families we have got very legitimate concerns. If you were to hear some of the detail of what has happened in some of these cases some families have been waiting over 20 years for justice and there has been a great wall of silence. We are trying to engage with the process, the complaints process and the inquest process, but it is extremely long, it is extremely expensive and it is very, very **(inaudible)** and we are not getting anywhere with this inquest system.

The whole system needs complete reform. We are very, very unhappy with the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) who are crawling with ex-police officers. There is a strong bias towards the police and this is why families have to find themselves on Whitehall. We are bereaved. We do not pose a threat. We are very peaceful. We are very dignified. We have very, very legitimate concerns and we need to see the Government, the MPA and those who are in charge of holding the police to account doing something - actually doing something about it - because we feel we are not being listened to and it is really not fair and it is unethical. We really need the Government to take note of this issue. It is very serious.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. As you have heard the Commissioner has now opened the line of communication with yourself. As the Commissioner has said he is going to try to look at the CCTV and at some point will come back to you.

Can we take questions and comments? Cindy?

Cindy Butts (AM): Can I start by thanking the representatives for coming along and posing what I think is an important question. Clearly there is some disagreement about the events and what happened and I have actually seen some of the coverage over the internet and it does not make for pleasant viewing - regardless of what you say about how it started and all the rest of it it does not make pleasant viewing. Families have the right to demonstrate on such an important and emotive issue.

I welcome what the Commissioner has said about developing a relationship and I think it is important that you go away today and review what happened, not just on the day, but there are issues about how communication was or wasn't conducted, why it was that a march that has happened every year for the past X amount of years you did not see that coming and, if you did see that coming, what efforts were made to try to communicate with organizers. As an Authority we are aware of the MPS making extremely robust efforts to communicate with various organisations in the past over demonstrations and I wonder why that might not have been done on this occasion. It is important that you review, that you look to seek to find any lessons that could be learned and that you commit to working with the organisation and their representatives.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Any other questions or comments? Toby?

Toby Harris (AM): Yes. I certainly welcome the statement by the Commissioner that he is personally ready to review the CCTV material and to talk directly to the group. I have to say I am surprised at the account we have been given in terms of the problems about contact between the police and the group because this is, as I am well aware, a long established regular arrangement. I am surprised those things broke down. I do think it is important that there is now a proper dialogue about what happened and hopefully there can be an agreement as to the sequence of events so that there can then be a discussion about what progress can be made in terms of managing these events in the future.

I do think we have to recognise that this event has happened many times in the past and has not been associated with significant problems and, therefore, to have these concerns expressed - and I was certainly aware of them within a few hours of the event taking place - and from a variety of sources, I think we do have to look at this very carefully. I trust that it can be reported back to this Authority before this Authority is wound up but, in any event, we would expect the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and no doubt the London Assembly Panel to be picking up these issues in the future.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Clive?

Clive Lawton (AM): First of all I want to reiterate this feeling that if this is a march which has happened year after year it seems very odd, somehow, that this time we could not contact anybody and we do not know who they were or where they were or something. They do not strike me as a particularly shadowy or secret group so that sounds odd. It sounds further odd, subsequently; I have tried to email people, I do not know who to contact, I have got no response.

I fear that this relates to something that we explored in the Civil Liberties Panel when talking about public order policing and the difference between lawful protest and peaceful protest. Everything that I have seen and heard and, indeed, the two statements expressed today, suggest to me that there was nothing here which was particularly unpeaceful. It might have been somewhat disruptive but not unpeaceful. If that is the case the nature of police engagement with the demonstrators, even on the description as expressed, sounds to me to have aggravated matters rather than to have calmed matters. On the face of it, even with the description from the police officers concerned, it sounds as if this was aggravating rather than increasing peacefulness on the streets of London.

I also welcome the fact that the Commissioner is intending to look into this. I am sure that the group would want to engage with that encounter and whatever the two different perspectives I think, given the heightened concern about public order policing that exists now - and we are in a very different place to where we were a year or two ago and everybody recognises that - I think it is really important that the more robust policing that I think we all accept needs to exist now in the changing climate does not, when we come across well established and well understood and basically peaceful protests, get swept up in this nervousness which understandably exists.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Jenny?

Jenny Jones (AM): Thank you, Chair. Every time we think we have made progress on an issue, particularly like public order policing, because we have given lots of advice through this Authority to the MPS which appears to have been taken up, it feels then there are a couple of steps back. I think this is a classic case of where the police seem to have felt that, in spite of the fact it was a peaceful protest, it was somehow unacceptable.

When you look into it, Commissioner, I would be very interested - there was a use of words that the Chief Executive mentioned which was a noisy protest with speeches. Well protests often are noisy and they often have speeches. It is fine for people to be noisy in the centre of London if it is a protest.

Secondly, I would like some sort of idea on this timeline that happened. I understand traffic was blocked but democracy is messy and traffic gets blocked sometimes and it is fine to let traffic be blocked for a period of time. How quickly were the police trying to clear the road? At other demonstrations I have been to the police have often said, "We'll give you 30 minutes and then you have got to go". Was any negotiation of this kind attempted?

We also need to know who made all these decisions about what was appropriate behaviour towards these people who are essentially grieving over losses of deaths in custody so already the police are looking like oppressors and then to treat these people in that way just makes everything so much worse and it is bad for the MPS's reputation.

When you look into it, Commissioner, it is quite important to have as much detail as possible so we really can get to the bottom of how we can improve policing.

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): And not to happen again.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Joanne next?

Joanne McCartney (AM): Can I thank the questioners for bringing this to our attention and for the way you presented it today.

Just to the Commissioner really. We have also got a letter from Inquest to all Members, and independent organisation who also states that this year the approach seems to have been radically different and resulted in rapid escalation. When you are reviewing that and you are talking to the questioners and other interested parties, would you also get Inquest involved because, if they are an independent organisation that were there observing, they might be able to give a very good view on this as well. Thank you.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Dee?

Dee Doocey (AM): I too welcome the fact that the Commissioner is going to review the CCTV but I also wonder if he would also look at the internal processes and procedures of the MPS and how these things arise. I would be very interested to see the copies of the emails that were referred to by the Chief Executive that the police sent to the group and I think it would be useful for us to be able to review that. I am sure that will be part of the investigation you conduct.

I suppose my main concern on this - and it goes without saying that I am extremely concerned about the issue of course - is that this would not have been discussed publicly if we did not have an MPA that has these public meetings because there would not have been an opportunity for members of the public to come here and to share their concerns. Under the new system that is going to happen in mid-January 2012 there will not be such a system and I really would like to place on record, once again - because I know Toby has said this on many occasions - it is not going to help the democratic process of holding the police to account and that is very, very regrettable. I believe that any investigation that you conduct needs to be all the more robust because of that.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): John?

John Biggs (AM): I was going to say two things but I will say three. The first is off the back of what Dee Doocey has said and it is that, yes, there is a concern that the abolition

of the MPA will create a democratic deficit but I have no reservation - other than the amount of time it will take up, but democracy is time consuming - that the Police and Crime Committee of the Assembly, if the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPC) is not transparent and open to representations like this following the abolition of the MPA, then I think the Assembly Committee will have to step in to those shoes. That is as simple as that.

The second thing is I agree with everything that everyone has said so far from the Police Authority and I greatly respect the work of Inquest, an unelected representative. Too many of my constituents have had reason to be in contact with the organisation down the years and obviously people work with you in areas where they are not satisfied and where they are frustrated with the actions of the authorities, including the police.

The third thing I wanted to say is something that has not been said which is that, as a Police Authority - and I do not want you to take this the wrong way because I totally support your right to demonstrate and I would like to think that it would not be contentious that you should feel free to demonstrate in front of Downing Street and the the offices of power which you feel are not properly taking account of your concerns. Obviously, given the events of the past few years, the police are in a position where they can't win. That does not mean that they were not over the top on this from the accounts given but we had an occasion a couple of years ago where there was a demonstration in which the police were perceived to lose control and now we have had other demonstrations where the police are perceived to be over-reacting. It seems to me, from the accounts we have heard, that there was an over reaction and over zealous policing but, clearly, following events in the past year and given the need to have a risk based approach to managing demonstrations, if there is not a communication between demonstrators and the police it is quite hard to manage other than with some assertiveness.

I say that. I know I am not making myself popular but I think there are police officers in our city, the overwhelming majority of whom are good, honest, decent people like the rest of us. I am not saying that suggests that anything but a tiny minority aren't. They want to provide a good public service and they are doing so in circumstances which are stressful. So communication is very important.

Our job is to support the police but also to speak up for the community and we need to get that balance right.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. Lastly I have got Jennette.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Chair, thank you. Can I add my words of support to the work that you do. As an Authority we have known about the work that you have been doing and, under Toby's chairmanship, I know that we did a piece of work with you to understand and to take many of your concerns to Government and elsewhere.

I want to say that, for me, I am looking forward to the Commissioner's report and really, after that, I will say more because I do think we need that report. I would also ask the Commissioner to include in that report concerns that have certainly been raised out-with your response to him because I have certainly written to the Commissioner based on constituents that have written to me around the arrests that came out of that demonstration.

I want to follow on as well from what Toby has said. I am a bit perplexed because when I heard about the police response I did not for a minute match it with your organisation because of the knowledge that I have had with your organisation so something went wrong. What we have got to do is find out what that was and we have then got to look to see how you are going to be given the support and work with the police service and with the new bodies that will come to fruition in the New Year.

Certainly in terms of the lack of democratic accountability, no Londoner can say that they are not represented. I would like to assure people that there are 25 Members of the Assembly who people can write to and you are well versed in campaigning so this issue that, without this body there will be a gap - of course we won't have this forum but I would say to people write to your Assembly Members and write to your Members of Parliament (MsP) because we have got to continue to work to get to the truth of what happened in the loss of lives with the many families that you represent.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I am going to bring the Chief Executive in and then we will close this item on the agenda.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive): Thank you, Chair. I am not of course going to comment on the merits or demerits of the change of the system of oversight but, as Jennette has made clear, there are other avenues. I am pleased that it has been possible to give you this platform today and that the Commissioner has said that he will follow up the concerns that have been expressed. I will undertake to make certain that we have a report back on what might emerge from that review to the last meeting of the Authority which is on 12 January 2012.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. Would you like to say anything?

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): Yes. Just to say it is regrettable that Boris Johnson [Mayor of London] is not here today because the buck is going to stop with him in January 2012 and we want to make sure that he is going to be tough on police accountability. This total policing style did destroy our demonstration. We need a serious, serious review on that whole style and approach.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. We do now have to bring this item on the agenda to a close. Thank you.

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): Can I just say something?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): No, I think we have given you enough time. Certainly the line of communication will remain open. We will be getting back to you as some point and the Commissioner has given you an undertaking that he will be reviewing what happened on that day and hopefully you will get a reply from him as well. Thank you.

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): Is there a timescale roughly of when we will receive a reply?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): A timescale?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): If it helps, if we establish a contact immediately and then we just need to meet and then we will produce a report by the next time we meet which is in January 2012 so between now and Christmas is when we will have the dialogue of some kind, whoever you would like to speak on your behalf.

Samantha Rigg-David (United Families and Friends Campaign): We will speak, ourselves, on our own behalfs.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): OK.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. Thank you for attending.

Moving on to the next item which is item number five the Chairman's update, I think you have a copy of his update in your papers. The only thing I would need to add is, as you may all have heard, Tim Godwin, the Deputy Commissioner, has announced his retirement. I think that will take place in January 2012. I am sure we will all join together to wish him well for the future.

Item number six is the Commissioner's report.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Thank you, Chair. First of all just to add my own comments about Tim Godwin's departure. Just to say that I have said publicly in other forums and we issued a press statement at the time which is that, for me, Tim has been - and remains at the moment - one of the leading officers of his generation. Great integrity, works incredibly hard, great intellect and has led an awful lot of innovation in the police service including, in particular, our criminal justice which has generally been an area which has been under supported by the police. He will be a loss to the MPS and he will be a loss to me as part of the team although I wish him well obviously in his future.

In terms of updates since the last time we met we have launched the drug warrants operation today which is Operation Hawk. The Mayor and I have been out this morning in Peckham. There are over 300 operations of which 200 were warrants. This is a renewed emphasis really on tackling drugs crime where the major check of whether or not we are acting in a proportionate and legal way is whether a magistrate would give a

warrant. We have supported it by a lot of media coverage to hopefully get out the message to Londoners we are acting on their behalf and acting on their information to act against drugs but also against other crime where we can act on the same day right across London.

I want to provide an update on the officers who were stabbed in Kingsbury on 19 November 2011, which was last Saturday. For everybody this was a truly shocking incident in which four officers were stabbed and I would like to thank them for demonstrating such outstanding bravery. We have had members of the public stopping officers in the street in that area to ask for the condition of those officers and send their best wishes and I would like to thank the people in Harrow for their support, particularly I believe the Hindu community who have done an awful lot to show their support for the officers at the time and since.

Two of the police officers remain in hospital. Two have managed to go home to recover. I would like to wish them all a speedy recovery. I think this incident highlights the dangerous situations our officers deal with on a daily basis keeping Londoners safe. A man is in custody and has been charged and therefore I am unable to go into any further details on that incident.

I thought I would say a few words, although it may come up in questions, around the comments I made around tasers. I wanted to be clear what had happened there. First of all, as I explained to some Members - and we have now, I think, had a chance to send an email round to explain what I said on the Nick Ferrari show on Monday - we had already started a piece of work which Commander Powting was leading to look at whether or not we should have wider availability of tasers. That was really in response to officers on the ground who were saying that they appreciated the benefit of taser but often it got there too late for when they needed it.

Then over the weekend obviously we had the weekend's events I have just described and on Monday one of the armed response vehicle (ARV) officers who was attending that incident rang me on air and said they thought that we should have wider availability because they could not get to the scene in time to help. It was in that context that I said wider availability but it was intended to be an incremental change although we have to wait for the outcome of the review and that that review will be brought back to discuss with the Authority given the history. Probably I will take questions later if anybody would like to ask them.

In terms of the present situation against uninsured drivers. We also have had a further operation about uninsured drivers targeting criminals who use the road. Last week, 16 November 2011, saw a further day of action and that brought the total number of vehicles seized over those two days alone to nearly 1,000 vehicles and the total number of people arrested in those events were 247. It is just to make clear that we do not tolerate uninsured vehicles. One of the reasons is that it allows people to get away with committing an offence and people who collide with them do not have the benefit of somebody who has insurance. As importantly, it affects the mobility of criminals given

that 80% of the people who have no insurance generally already have a criminal background or criminal record.

In terms of performance you already have my report to the Authority. I thought I would highlight some issues in terms of performance throughout October. In terms of violent crime the reduction remains steady at around nearly 9% for the year to date, which is down to 82,000 offences from 90,000. We are experiencing reductions in all major areas of violent crime which includes harassment, common assault and violence with intent or serious violence.

Gun crime continues to reduce. It is down nearly 15% which is about 250 fewer offences. That has been right across the capital for the last three years. Of those offences where a gun has been fired and it has been discharged these offences are down by nearly 23% so nearly a quarter.

Reported domestic violence is down 5%. Racist and religious crimes are down and homophobic offences are also down by around 15%.

However, there is an increase in knife crime which remains up at 15% and this increase is something which has been gradually occurring across the capital over the last three years. Within this offence, where knives are being used to injure, they are also up and that is a more slight figure of around 1%. We have got knives generally being seen to be used 15% but actually where an injury is caused around 1%.

In terms of rape the sanction detections remain below the level recorded last year which is 61 detections fewer which have been recorded in the year to date. We are taking a number of steps to improve on that and Caroline Bates -who I know that Members of the Strategic and Operational Policing (SOP) Committee have been meeting with - included joint working with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to improve our case tracking, management information support to be provided to Specialist Crime Directorate 2 (SCD), which is our rape crime investigation unit, to help identify and monitor more closely those activities which deliver a broad range of outcomes in addition to sanction detections and a review by the Homicide Command of unsolved rapes to see whether or not there are any investigation opportunities that previous investigations have missed.

We continue to face an increase in property crime but that is of the order of about 1%. Within this the bulk of the increase continues to be seen across robbery, theft from the person and burglary. They are the major factors that are increasing the property offences by about 1%. This is, however, against a backdrop of over the last decade a significant reduction in property crime generally.

Confidence in local policing stands at 66% for the year to September which is up 1% on **April(?)** to September but slightly below our target which was 67%. In terms of victim satisfaction for the last 12 month period we stand about 75% which is below the target of 78% so, therefore, there is more work to do there.

Finally, just mentioning the targeted operations we have got running at the moment. First of all Operation Autumn Nights which is a seasonal crackdown on crime and antisocial behaviour associated with the dark nights; Halloween, bonfires and other events that happen at this time of year.

We have got school officers giving safety tips, after school patrols at key locations, screening arches and wands as part of wider detection tactics to deter the carrying of weapons which continues to be a challenge for the reasons I have already outlined.

We have got a burglary awareness campaign which is Operation Bumblebee which started on 31 October 2011. This accompanies our ongoing operational activity as we continue to target offences.

In terms of public order, some of which we have discussed I know a little today, in recent weeks we have seen further student demonstrations and significant deployments of officers to ensure the dignity of the various Remembrance events. I was particularly pleased with the positive outcome in terms of the student protest that took place a few weeks ago but that did require somewhere in the order of 4,000 police officers to be involved. Even an organisation the size of the MPS struggles to meet that on a regular basis and we did, on that occasion, need support from other forces and around a quarter of the officers who we used we had to get from outside London.

There are more demonstrations and protests planned over the coming weeks including a national day of action on 30 November. Our aim will always be to facilitate peaceful protest and the only information we have there is that we expect something of the order of 10,000 to 15,000 protestors on the streets of London and we will work hard to make sure that we work with the organisers to facilitate that peaceful protest. Chair.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. Can we take questions on the Commissioner's report first of all?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Can I ask a question of fact? Looking ahead to next Wednesday - because this is obviously the last time we are going to meet - have you agreed a route with the protestors first because one of the things we have talked about before is the need to communicate clearly and this is an open forum so it is a very good opportunity perhaps to clarify that?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): The route is agreed ahead of time. What we did with the student protest was to make sure it was a condition of the agreement of route that people did not depart from it and that is not always the case in all our marches. That proved particularly helpful when tents went up in Trafalgar Square although there were other things that helped us too.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Can you clarify what the route will be next week because this is an open forum and it is sensible, if you say that you have communicated and agreed a route, to communicate that?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): We do have a process for communicating it. I could not tell you exactly street by street.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Is it going to go from somewhere to Trafalgar Square? I am not saying every street.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I do not know the exact route from and to. We can let you have that if you need it. There is a process of communicating that through the press generally anyway.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): We are going to take questions on the Commissioner's update and report first and then we will come to Members' questions as they were submitted afterwards.

Jenny Jones (AM): Some of the Members' questions are relevant to the Commissioner's report.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): You could ask those questions then. If I start with Cindy and Dee who have got questions on taser. Is your question on taser, Jenny?

Jenny Jones (AM): No.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Cindy first.

Cindy Butts (AM): Thank you, Chair. Some Members may be aware that I chaired the Taser Oversight Working Group and I think it is important to understand the journey that we went through in terms of the MPS introducing tasers. At the time the majority of the Authority - not all - including myself were really quite against the introduction of tasers. For that reason we rejected the MPS' first proposal to us to introduce tasers. We said to them, "Go away. We don't like the proposals you've come up with. You can think about ways in which you could improve the governance of tasers, the issues around training and who will have it" and we sent them away and asked them to produce a report that would satisfy our concerns. They went away, produced a report, came back to us and we said, "We're not happy. Go away. Do some more work on this". The MPS went away, produced another report, did the work on it and came back to us and we said, "We're not happy with this".

That happened at least three or four times and finally the MPS came up with a proposal which we were reasonably happy with. I think it represented a very tight governance structure in which tasers could be used, it was a very small amount of officers, they would be highly trained, there would be careful monitoring, there would be an assessment of disproportionality in particular against black and minority ethnic (BME) groups and also special population groups such as those with learning difficulties and mental health issues. We said that we would only accept it if an oversight group was developed. That was done and, as I say, I chaired it.

Now, following the work of the oversight group for over two and a half years I think what emerged out of all that work was a successful introduction of tasers. I do. I think the reason why it was so successful is because we were so stringent in the way it was governed and it was so tightly controlled. I have got to say that I was extremely concerned when I heard the Commissioner talking about extending the use of tasers, not least because it is never a good idea to announce policy on the Nick Ferrari show, but also I felt that there was not the evidence base to support the introduction of tasers and I was concerned that the very stringent controls which we developed, if they were to be relaxed, would leave Londoners - and in particular black and minority ethnic communities and those who are suffering from mental health issues and learning difficulties - exposed and be at increased risk.

I have said this to the Commissioner. We had a discussion about this on the phone the other evening and I did say to him, "You've got to see this issue in the round. Within the last few weeks we have heard in the same sentence the MPS and rubber bullets and water cannons and now the extension of tasers". You have got to see this as a very concerning development because, at the end of the day, yes, we have had some very concerning issues that have happened in London, not least the difficult riots and it has been extremely difficult I know. But we have really got to be determined, moving forward, to not have knee jerk reactions as a result of some very difficult circumstances whereby we will see ourselves sleepwalking into a style of policing that we have fought so long and hard to move away from.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Dee next. We will take all the questions on taser and then we will get the Commissioner to answer.

Dee Doocey (AM): Sorry, I just wanted to clarify. You said in response to Jenny that we could raise our questions. That just seems to me a strange way --

Reshard Auladin (Chair): No, Jenny was saying that one of her questions is about ...

Dee Doocey (AM): So it is only if it is on taser?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Yes.

Dee Doocey (AM): Fine.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): At the moment I am just taking questions on taser.

Dee Doocey (AM): OK. I echo everything Cindy has said. I absolutely agree with it. I think there is no place in British policing for plastic bullets, water cannon or anything like that. My main concern is that I understand that it is the Commissioner's job to run the MPS and it is certainly not an easy job and I would never pretend it is but, yet again, Members of this Authority are getting our information from the press. This is just happening all the time. There does not appear to be any system in place whereby it

would take something like less than two minutes to send us all an email to say, "I am considering rolling out increasing the use of tasers. I have discussed it with the Mayor and the Chairman of the Authority - which is not the same as discussing it with the Authority I would point out - and I am about to say this on a national radio programme". I would have thought common courtesy, yet again, has been thrown out to one side. This Authority is just not treated with any degree of courtesy at all and I regret that.

My biggest concern is there appears to be no corporate memory in the MPS. We sit there in various Committees and permutations and we make decisions about policy areas - not operational areas. A couple of months or a couple of years later back comes exactly the same proposal that we had absolutely vehemently turned down. I have got the minutes of the meeting that Cindy was talking about of the Full Authority and it says here very clearly, "Agreement to participation in a pilot of tasers did not imply approval to subsequently roll out more widely on a permanent basis". That is absolutely crystal clear. Why did the Commissioner of the MPS not get that information given to him before he made a statement like this on national radio? If he did, would it not have been sensible and courteous, even if you did not think you were going to take any notice of what we thought, to just send us an email saying, "This is about to happen".

I really, really am very, very concerned that I wonder what is the point of us making decisions if they are just going to be overturned. I have got some other examples that I gave to the Commissioner privately of things that have happened in my particular neck of the woods. It is absolutely clear we make a decision and then back it comes two months or two years later from the MPS totally disregarding what we agreed.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Steve?

Steve O'Connell (AM): Thank you very much, Chair. Unsurprisingly I take a slightly different view from my colleagues although I have great respect for the work that has gone in in previous years around tasers, led by Cindy, which is before my time. It is a little bit of a constitutional point really. John is normally the one who quotes these. I think this debate is moving along to really support the idea of going forward to an elected commission from January 2012 onwards because, at the end of the day, the elected commissions will be responsible to the public for the safety of themselves and their families - not unelected organisations and unelected scrutineers which there have been in the past. Going forward I think there is a positive there.

Talking about tasers, ordinary Londoners out there look to you, Commissioner, to protect them and their families without fear or favor. Could you kindly, Commissioner, please give us, now you have had the opportunity to perhaps but perhaps not defend yourself, your rationale why you think there could be a case for tasers being available to, for example, response cars throughout London? There must be a rationale in your mind? Can you please explain that to us, Commissioner? Your thoughts around it, given time.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Ladies and gentlemen we do need to get on with the business if we possibly can. We are addressing these concerns and, in proper time, these issues will come back to the Authority.

The next is Jennette on taser. Jenny, do you want to come in on taser? Can I clarify this again?

Jenny Jones (AM): I think they are a dreadful idea. That is all I really want to say.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. I have got Jennette, Joanne, Graham and then Clive.

Jennette Arnold (AM): I am going to pick up from where Cindy left off because I was part of that original working group. I support the use of tasers. I do not think they are a dreadful idea. I support the use of tasers because I have visited too many homes where when the gun has been used it has ended up in the death of someone. So I would prefer a taser to be used. I do not want to go there because - well I do because his name has been used in the Chamber and I think inappropriately. If a taser had been used in the incident with Mark Duggan that man might be alive today.

Let's just put this in context. I think there is work to be done on this. I think the work that we did in 2007 and the guidelines are absolutely there and I think that what we need now, if the Commissioner has decided - and I thank him for his conversation that he had with me about this because I was concerned when I was getting telephone calls. I do not listen to Nick Ferrari so he can't send messages to me through Nick Ferrari but many of my constituents listen to it and then phoned me. I welcomed the conversation I was able to have with him and I have received an assurance from him that he did not say that he is going to roll out taser use; he is saying that, in the context he finds himself in, he is considering reviewing. I would expect that review should be a wide review and that he will be consulting with representatives of Londoners and with Londoners and therefore I look forward to that review. I would also ask him, in that review, to remember that it is not just about adults - there is a whole generation of young people who have not been part of that debate and make that review as wide as possible.

I certainly am looking forward to seeing how the elected Commissioner is going to pick up something like this and what that dialogue is going to be like between the Commissioner and the elected Commissioner and the rest of Londoner because this is where we are going and, at the heart of this, is how we are going to maintain policing by consent. I said to the Commissioner that one of the things that concerns me is if we ever end up at a stage where we accept the use of water cannons, the use of rubber bullets and the use of a taser in every police car, if we were ever to get there, then can somebody tell me what the response from the criminal fraternity will be. That is not the sort of London that I think we Londoners want to live in in the day to day. We want balance and we want our police there policing us with consent.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Joanne?

Joanne McCartney (AM): I think the nature of the debate we have had shows how sensitive the use of tasers and any potential roll out will be so I really want to endorse what Cindy and Dee were saying about proper scrutiny and proper monitoring of any proposals that come out. I suspect that when you have your review we will not be here anymore so I would hope that not only with the Mayor but you will bring that in advance to the Assembly's scrutiny panel and, also, when you are doing any review, that you do engage communities that will be disproportionately affected possibly by the user of taser.

Can I clarify one thing? That is the way this proposal or review was highlighted in the public. It was on a radio show but I understand that it was as a result of a phone in. Was it something that you had notice of beforehand or not? If not, I think, even if you were not able to give us the heads up before, to do that straight after may be best.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Graham?

Graham Speed (AM): Thank you, Chair. I think the thing we have also got to take account of is not only our responsibility to the public of London but our responsibility to the officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) who have a difficult and dangerous job to do policing London on our behalf. It is a very difficult balance to strike between the points particularly raised by Cindy and the need to protect our officers. I believe that the scheme that we have got at the moment has worked very well because of the stringent controls that are in place which go right back to those very difficult times when the use of tasers was first considered and the controls were put in place to allow their roll out.

However, I think we do need to consider the protection of our officers and particularly - and this was a good example - at the edge of an out of borough at a time in the day when resources are perhaps lower than they might be elsewhere and at a time when officers may not be expecting something like this. Those officers equipped with tasers were probably some distance away. Now I do not know if that would have had any bearing at all on this particular case - perhaps it would not - but I think it raises a good example of what protection do those officers get in those situations.

On that basis it seems to me that there may - and I say may - be an opportunity for some incremental increase in the deployment of taser subject to the strict controls and regulations that are currently in place. If there is to be a consideration of that clearly it is not something that is to be done quickly or in the situation where I think, Commissioner, you were probably put in a difficult position at the time because of a very live issue. Consideration must include appropriate engagement, consultation and the sort of processes that Cindy and her team went through some years ago.

I think there is an opportunity to look at this in a more considered way. There are risks and we do need to think about the safety of our officers.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Clive?

Clive Lawton (AM): First of all I want to associate myself with Jennette's comments about tasers being a good thing in the sense of being better than firearms in most circumstances and obviously that is preferable but we had always understood that British policing and London policing generally did not want to use firearms if at all possible and therefore I am concerned that there is a kind of creep potentially that goes on here. All right we won't use firearms, we will use tasers and so it creeps in and increases.

For other reasons I was in Baltimore this weekend and, by chance, met the recently retired head of the Maryland State Police who, when he heard I was a Member of the Police Authority, we started talking about police matters and he asked what kinds of things the Police Authority did. I mentioned precisely this discussion about tasers. Not in the light of your news broadcast which, you may be disappointed to know does not get to Baltimore! I simply mentioned the fact that this was exactly the sort of thing that the Police Authority did; robust discussion and debate, a challenge to the police service and establishing a rich and tight manner of utilising a useful tool in a careful way. His comment was, "We've let tasers get out of hand here and it's going to be a lot harder to get them back under control". That was his comment about tasers in Maryland.

I was astonished then to return to hear this discussion going on. From what I gather you were a little bit ambushed by the chap who phoned in and said, "What's happening with tasers?" but I do think that, even if it was something that happened at the moment, to speculate on so sensitive a matter, even without making commitments or just asking questions in the air, is the sort of thing that does not help in an extremely febrile environment. I think that we would have to have extremely good reason to want to revisit an arrangement which was made after very vigorous debate and consideration.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Toby?

Toby Harris (AM): I think there is a real difficulty about this debate because, on the one hand, you have people who say, "Tasers are inherently safe". I am not one of those. I do not think they are necessarily a safe weapon. However, if the contrast is between using a taser on an individual rather than shooting a large hole in them then clearly a taser is preferable. I suspect it may also be preferable than hitting them on the side of the head with a baton. That is the context in which we need to look at this.

The question then is whether tasers should be more generally available within the service. There are a number of factors to take into account. Importantly obviously is public safety and also the safety of officers. We had the appalling incident in Harrow the other weekend. The other question is then about how many officers would have access to tasers, under what circumstances would they then be used - have you lowered the threshold in which a significant level of violence is used by police officers - and what are going to be the guidelines and training associated with that? Those are all things which have got to be looked at.

What I welcome about this discussion is that the Commissioner has clearly recognised that this is not just an operational decision for him alone but it is one where there is

legitimately a debate in this Authority and a wider debate should be possible about this. What I would hope is that what will follow from this is that there is proper consultation and discussion about whether or not this is a sensible further step to take. Police officers on the ground will have their view. Community representatives and community organisations will have their view. Those are all things which must be taken in the mix. Quite clearly it is not just a matter for the Commissioner to make that decision; it is one where there is a wider public interest and it is one where Steve O'Connell has a fantasy about how wonderful it is all going to be when the Mayor has direct control of all of this -

Steve O'Connell (AM): I never fantasise about anything, Toby. I am too old.

Toby Harris (AM): -- That is fine. If the Mayor wants to make that decision on his own he will then be held very clearly accountable for that --

Steve O'Connell (AM): Democracy.

Toby Harris (AM): That is the process which is being set up by Government. What I hope - and what I am sure that the Mayor of London will wish to make sure happens - is that there is wide discussion and consultation before such decisions are taken. The danger of course in an arrangement where there is a single individual to whom the Commissioner reports is that the single individual says, "Yes, I'll go with that" and that is the end of the matter, without any further consultation and discussion.

The Commissioner has clearly indicated he recognises that it is not just an operational decision for him alone, he has recognised the willingness to discuss more widely and to consult and I am sure that the Mayor of London will follow a similar approach.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I will take one last comment from John and then I am going to ask the Commissioner to respond.

John Biggs (AM): I agree with what Jennette said and others have said that, clearly, there are circumstances in which using a taser is preferable to using a gun but, given that they do cause injury, they should be used with a similar order of gravity to possessing or using a handgun and the routine possession of them would, for me, be a problem. It is useful having these discussions and I continue to worry, as Dee Doocey does, that, following our abolition, there will not be such an obvious public forum for discussing things of concern to Londoners.

I wanted to make one other comment which is meant to be supportive of Mr Hogan-Howe. I know that he likes going on chat shows and I think that is very welcome. I think Londoners would like to have a Commissioner who is accessible and responsive but obviously the last but one Commissioner - we get through them at quite a rate in London but he is going to be here for decades I hope - got into some trouble because some of his media affluences were seen as becoming the story. We need to be very careful - and I am sure he is aware of this - that, whether intended or otherwise, there is a little hint of a risk

of there being a slightly gung ho approach to policing. That belongs in the movies and not in London of course and I know he knows that.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): First of all thanks for the opportunity to respond. I think, clearly, there are some politics going off in part and I am not going to respond to politics.

I have a duty to look after the people who I lead and, therefore, if they raise something with me, I have a responsibility to listen to their concerns and then to review what they tell me and see whether it is accurate or see whether there is a way to deal with that. That is what we started doing a few weeks ago.

Now the point was made it was raised on the Nick Ferrari show and Joanne said did I have notice of the question. I did not. I hope I made clear - perhaps I did not - at the beginning it was one of our armed response vehicle drivers who was on the route to Harrow on Saturday who rang. I did not know he was ringing. I gave an honest reply to what was, as far as I could see, a straight question. That runs certain risks, as John has said, but I suppose what you will get from me is a straight response and not one as a politician. All I said I think --

Dee Doocey (AM): Excuse me. To me that is deeply insulting.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): That is offensive, Chair.

Jenny Jones (AM): Could you please take that back.

Dee Doocey (AM): That is deeply insulting.

Jenny Jones (AM): It is really, really, really rude.

Dee Doocey (AM): How dare you suggest that politicians don't give straight answers. That is absolutely disgraceful, Chair.

Jenny Jones (AM): That is very rude.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I think if I had been allowed to finish my sentence you would have heard the rest of it.

Jenny Jones (AM): You have interrupted us in the past.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): If I was allowed to finish my sentence then you might be able to respond.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): If we allow the Commissioner to respond and then you will come back on the points he raises.

Jenny Jones (AM): OK. I want to respond to that.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): It is fairly straight forward and if I present it inelegantly then that is my responsibility. What I was trying to say is you will get a straight answer to a straight question. I will not try to dissemble. I will not try to give you a policy that you might prefer that I told you about. You will hear what I think at the time. Now that has its risks and I am probably experiencing the consequences of it. But I would prefer me to be as I am, not to play some political game. That is the only point I am making. If it was inelegant I take the feedback but I am not changing my point.

Tony Arbour (AM): Quite right.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Now in terms of what I was dealing with here, we did have some terrible injuries to police officers over the weekend and I have to respond to that event. Now I gave a straight answer to a straight question on the Monday. It was not an announcement of a new change of policy; it was an announcement I was prepared to review our present one. I take the point that there has been an awful lot of work carried out over the last few years and it has been a sensitive issue in London - I acknowledge that. I have to say the same types of debate went on around the rest of the country. It was not unique here. There were similar safeguards put in place and I think the evidence shows in fact taser has not proved to be the terrible thing that everybody at least was concerned about. That is a damned good reason why it needs to be introduced carefully with all the measures that were put in place and all the monitoring that was there.

In answer to the question should we have it more widely available then I said I thought it should be more widely available and I gave a series of options as to what that could look like. At one extreme you could give it to every officer in every car and, at the other extreme, you could have one more car per borough to do it. The only one that was reported as can happen is that in fact the one in every car to 6,000 cars. I respect the fact it is an accurate account of what I said. I do not think it is a fair representation of what I meant but that is what happened.

In terms of how we go forward I just want to distinguish tasers from some of the other things that were raised in the same debate. The first one raised was rubber bullets. I know there is a question later in the meeting about that. The reason that that raised is because of a comment that a commander made in preparations for the student protest. Again, he answered a straight question with an honest reply. Rubber bullets are no more available today, nor has our policy changed, compared to the day before he mentioned it. During the last year we have actually authorised the movement of rubber bullets I think it is on 22 days because it is a reasonable preparation if we expect there may be some risk of a problem. Those baton rounds - which is what they are more properly called - are only available because the Government allows us to have them. They are licensed. They are only available within the police service because the law says that they are available. Those have not been discharged on the UK mainland as long as they have existed. They

have been discharged in Northern Ireland where, of course, the circumstances are quite different. If you realise the only reason we are talking about this, together with water cannon, was because the political response to the police's failure to control that riot in Tottenham was other things needed to be considered. That is the reason --

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Can I stop you for one moment. It is becoming very difficult to conduct a debate. Can I ask you please to respect peoples' views. You have had your opportunity to speak. I am going to be in your hands as to whether we do something about the disruption or not.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Ask them to go.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Can I ask you whether we should ask the people who are disrupting the meeting to leave?

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes, they should get a warning and if they continue to disrupt the meeting they should be asked to leave.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): You have heard what Members are saying. I think all of us are feeling we are being disrupted here.

Toby Harris (AM): This is not disruption. Disruption is a lot more serious. What I would suggest is that colleagues speak a bit louder so we can all hear them.

Steve O'Connell (AM): This is disruption. Pure and simple.

Dee Doocey (AM): It is ridiculous.

Steve O'Connell (AM): We have got young people over there trying to (inaudible). Come on.

Toby Harris (AM): Let's just carry on and talk a little bit more assertively so our views and voices can be heard. Then everybody can hear.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Young people are here. Maybe we could respect them.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): We are going to continue with our debate.

Dee Doocey (AM): It is just going to get worse now. They are disruptive.

Clive Lawton (AM): At this point we are disrupting the meeting ourselves by discussing this. I would like to ask people in the gallery to make it a little easier for us to have our discussions but Jenny already made the point that demonstrations are sometimes noisy and I think that that is life. It would help, to enable us to discuss matters, without too much disruption but we recognise people have opinions and they are going to express them.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): To recap, in terms of the baton rounds, the reason that was discussed was because of the commander's comments prior to the student protest march. He answered a straight question honestly and openly but probably, if he had been more political, or politick, he would probably have said, "No, there is no change" because there is no change. Nothing has changed since before what he said than afterwards.

In terms of the water cannon, the only reason that has been discussed is because after the riots central government challenged the MPS and others about how it responded and how it considered all options to see whether or not there should be more available. That is the only reason that is being discussed. To run the three together I think is both inaccurate and wrong so I will say that straight.

In terms of tasers, I do recognise that there is a debate to have and that is what I think we are in the process of starting. It may not have been the most structured start and I take the point about communicating with people after the programme but, frankly, I think the story got out before probably we could have sent an email. That is my responsibility for which I take full responsibility. I had no notice the question was coming. We were doing a careful piece of work which we would have brought back to the Authority at a later time.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): There are quite a few items on our agenda but I know Jenny and Dee would like to come back on what the Commissioner said.

Jenny Jones (AM): Commissioner, you just accused politicians of lying. That might be something that goes down very well in the MPS but it does not go down very well in a chamber of elected people. It was not inelegant; it was downright rude of you and I think you actually owe an apology to all the elected people round the table. We do not play political games. We care about London. We want the MPS to own up to its responsibilities and we really do not want a Commissioner who has never been elected in his life to anything to actually sit here and tell us that we lie. That is so offensive.

Dee Doocey (AM): I certainly did not hear you said that we lied. What I did hear you say is that you are a straight talker. I think you might agree that I too am a straight talker and I do not play political games and I take the greatest exception to the suggestion that we, as politicians, do. I absolutely accept that you were under pressure from some members of central government who came out with knee jerk reactions immediately after the tragic circumstances that happened earlier this year but I do not think that that is a good excuse in order to go the opposite direction and play the macho man - I am not suggesting you did but certainly when I watched one of your officers on TV making the point about - and I quote, "Plastic bullets have been authorised should the need arise". I totally accept what you have said, that it is not that simple and it could not happen instantly, but I have been a Member of this Authority for seven years, I did not know that. I am sure the great British public did not know that. I would suggest that whoever was

playing macho man on TV should have been more careful about what they were saying and it should have been explained.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): We are now going to move on. We have at least another 15 questions from Members to go through. The Commissioner has something to say.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Just as a matter of fact I do not think I accused anybody of lying.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Right, so questions. Caroline is not here so we will move on. We will group the questions in batches as we normally do. The first two. One is from Dee about sergeants sharing wards and the other is from Joanne on safer neighbourhood teams (SNT) sergeants. Dee, would you like to read your question on sergeants sharing wards.

Dee Doocey (AM): Are you happy with the decision that borough commanders have taken about which wards should share sergeants in safer neighbourhood teams?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Joanne, yours about SNT sergeants?

Joanne McCartney (AM): We have had 150 SNT sergeants taken out this year. The original plans were for a further depletion of 150 safer neighbourhood team sergeants this forthcoming year. Is that still the case and what is the timetable for that process?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): In terms of the first question, am I happy with the decisions that borough commanders have taken about which wards should share sergeants, broadly yes. I have picked up from Members that there are some cases where people still remain unhappy about some of the decisions that have been made. I know this has been through an awful lot of consultation up to now and I suspect this type of issue is never easy to resolve but we are still prepared to take further comments and consultation if people are able to share that with us. We will always reflect on it.

I suppose that some of the new arrangements are starting to settle in and there is a danger that it is so settled that it would be difficult to disturb. That does not mean to say that we are not prepared to listen if there is further feedback that people can give. We are still prepared to work on it but, from everything I have looked at, it does look as though an awful lot has been done already to try to get right but this was quite a big change and I suspect quite a few people are having to take time to get used to that both within the service and in the community.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Dee, did you want to come back?

Dee Doocey (AM): Can I just come back on that. My concern is that, in the area where I live, the borough covers the two Parliamentary constituencies of Twickenham and Richmond. Twickenham has 11 wards and Richmond Park has 7 wards. The decision was taken that four sergeants needed to be cut. I am not arguing whether that is right or

wrong at this stage. What I am arguing is that the borough commander took a decision, against the advice of the local Member of Parliament (MP) and councillors and I also made recommendations, that all of the cuts would be on the Twickenham constituency rather than sharing them.

Now I do accept that there might have been operational views that more cuts should have been on the Twickenham side than the Richmond side. I accept that, as does the MP, but not that all of them should be so I am very pleased that you are going to look at it again and I would like to write to you and to give you the facts of the case.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): To add further, when that information comes in, I will ask the Assistant Commissioner in charge of Territorial Policing to look at that and work with the borough commander to see whether or not there is a better solution that could be found.

Dee Doocey (AM): Fine. Thank you.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): The next batch of questions - sorry, Joanne.

Dee Doocey (AM): I have got two other questions haven't I?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Yes. We will come back to you in a moment. Sorry. Joanne's question?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): About whether we intend to continue with the further depletion of the 150 neighbourhood team sergeants next year and what is the timetable for the process. At the present stage with the present London business plan - which I think you are going to come back to later in the meeting - we do plan to make savings of the further 150 in 2012/13 and it is currently planned that a business case will be brought forward during 2012 to deliver those savings.

This will be an issue I will discuss with Simon Byrne who is the new Assistant Commissioner who arrives on 5 December 2011 as any further reductions in management on costs within the safer neighbourhoods requires an assessment of the changes being taken forward within Territorial Policing (TP) already.

I think there are two things I am trying to say there. New person will have a new look. Number two is we will see exactly what budget we are offered by the Authority, the Assembly and the Mayor to work out what opportunities there are for the future. I know there has been an awful lot of concern about loss of the sergeants. If there is anything we can do to help with that I am always prepared to consider it but, at the moment, the plan goes forward at present as stated. We are very dependent on what the money will be at the end.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Steve on neighbourhood sergeants?

Steve O'Connell (AM): Connected to that. Again, thank you very much. Across my two boroughs, particularly in Sutton, they completely accept that they lead the borough commander. In Croydon also although there is some concern about Fairfield Ward which I am sure he will address.

I have heard news today in Croydon that there is a surge, led by Borough Commander Musker, of 400 officers to crack down on anti-social behaviour. Would you not agree that, by giving more freedom to the borough commander to make decisions, it gives them the capacity to free up resource for exactly that sort of initiative which I and my residents welcome very much?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Yes, generally. I think they work best when they have got flexibility. The thing we try to impose is some kind of consistency across the MPS. The trouble is that consistency is the thief of local discretion. We are always trying to get that balance right. It seems to me, broadly, it is in quite a good place where Members here or GLA Members can make representations and try to affect those decisions that are very difficult decisions, they are not easy ones, because there generally are not enough officers to go round. That is what we are always trying to balance.

I was just trying to signal in my answer to Joanne that I remain open minded about any potential on the SNTs about the sergeants. If there are opportunities we will try to take them. I do not want to commit myself to something that I cannot be absolutely sure I can deliver.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): The next batch of questions are on public order. We have got one from Dee. That is on baton rounds. Tony on water cannon and then Steve on maintaining law and order. Dee, your question please on baton rounds?

Dee Doocey (AM): I think my question has been covered in the debate so far.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Tony in that case please on water cannon. I think that has been answered too would you say?

Tony Arbour (AM): Pretty much but I do want to make an observation. I have sat here as a politician from the inception of this Authority and I have never until this morning heard the politicians who sit on this Authority being so thin skinned. Absolutely extraordinary. I have to say to the Commissioner I welcome your plain speaking. Do not be intimidated by us. I am sure you will not be. I am similarly quite certain that you will not be intimidated by people who come along to disrupt the proceedings of democracy. Thank you, Chair.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Steve on maintaining law and order.

Steve O'Connell (AM): The question I wanted to ask particularly was on drunk driving.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): We are coming to that. I think you also had a question on law and order. You do not wish to continue that?

Steve O'Connell (AM): I will pursue the point about the demonstrations which has already been touched upon earlier. All I wanted really is reassurance from the Commissioner that he would continue with his wish to implement total policing in London and also to ensure that the proper right of residents in London to demonstrate, quite properly and peacefully, will be protected and guaranteed, but we have several weeks of campaigning coming up and demonstrations coming up and Londoners want to be reassured that you will continue to ask your officers to police those with the appropriate control and discipline?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I know it has been said today that it is linked to total policing about protest policing. It is not, other than we need to make sure that people can protest peacefully, that they do not commit crime and that other peoples' rights are respected. I think that is really important.

Now what we saw in the student protests was we had a large number of officers there to make sure that that happened and out of a crowd of about 4,000 we made 24 arrests. It could hardly be said to be over aggressive or, I do not think, disproportionate. Of that 24 12 were in Trafalgar Square because they put tents up where the bylaw says they cannot put tents up and they were asked to move them and they refused. There was a window smashed in Lloyds bank in the Strand and the people who did it were chased and caught. At a very early stage in the protest some people were arrested who appeared to be ringleaders of trouble. The vast majority remained good people protesting in a quite appropriate way and we would never seek to interfere with that.

All we will do is try to police proportionate to what the problem is. There is no great benefit for the MPS or the community of London in putting lots of police officers on protests where we do not need to do it because the only pool they come from are the boroughs and the wards and that deteriorates the policing for the rest of London and there is no way that I want to do that. These are sometimes difficult times at the moment and we just need to make sure that we try to get that balance right.

Steve O'Connell (AM): I am grateful for the reassurance because the flip side, as you say, is that by applying a very large number of resources to demonstrations there will be a drain on boroughs and none of us want to see that drain on boroughs. As ever it is a balancing act but I have faith that you will be able to walk that line.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): To put one fact in the middle of that to show the difficulty of that balance. If you remember the student protest of the previous year where the Conservative Party headquarters was invaded and there were other issues that developed there with a slightly bigger crowd I think - I was not here but I believe a bigger crowd - there were about 250 police involved. Yet on this one march we had 4,000. I suspect somewhere between those two numbers we need to settle but the difficulty is what we could not see was that type of thing happening again. I think we

would have been criticized badly had we not made reasonable preparations. That is all we are trying to do; be reasonable. Landing that number on a button is quite difficult and, professionally, I cannot promise you I will get it right within 30% sometimes. It is very difficult to predict. We are trying our best in, I hope, a reasonable way, to get that balance right.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. The next two questions are on knife crime. Steve, you have got a question on knife crime and, Jenny, on stop and search.

Dee Doocey (AM): Haven't I got a question first because my last question --

Reshard Auladin (Chair): We are doing them in batches. You have had one. You have got two more to come.

Steve O'Connell (AM): I am sure we have got time for all of us. Commissioner, there has been some questions recently about knife crime. We are pleased, first of all, to celebrate the fact that violence as a figure is going down 10% year on year. There has been - scaremongering is probably a strong word but some figures picked out to say that knife and youth crime are going very much the wrong way. The figure that is used a lot is the knife used figure. The intimation of a knife where a knife has not actually been seen. The point I would like to really make is that the key figures, which are violence against the person and knife used to injure, is it a fact that those figures are going down - which I think we need to celebrate and concentrate on- and some other figures that have been used in this Chamber and elsewhere about knife crime going the wrong way have mainly been around the figures of where a knife has been intimated but may or may not have actually been used in an incident? There is a differentiation would you agree, Commissioner?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Jenny on stop and search. Your question?

Jenny Jones (AM): Hold on. I am getting confused now because I have got a question on knife crime.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I think you do. You say in the light of the recent --

Jenny Jones (AM): It is stop and search but it is also about knife crime.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK.

Jenny Jones (AM): In the Commissioner's report - that is interesting, no page numbers - there is a little chart that shows clearly that knife offences are going up. We all want to bring those offences down. They have been going up for three years now. We want to bring them down. Is your approach to stop and search actually going to make a difference to these figures?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. Two questions.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): First of all in terms of the issue of knife crime it seems to me that it remains a serious issue within London. There are too many people carrying knives. Knife crime, in terms of performance, is up 15% from April to October this year compared with the same period last year. If we go below the overall figures of where is a knife involved, violence against the person where a knife or a sharp instrument was used to injure, as opposed to being present, was down very slightly. They were down by about 0.7% and that is 14 less offences. I do not think you could draw any conclusions from that really. Violence against a person offences where a knife or sharp instrument was threatened, or an attempt was made to injure, is down by 10%. That is 99 less offences. That is more evidence but I do not think a huge difference either way really.

I think it is important to recognise where we have come from in London. Knife crime peaked in 2008 where 30 teenagers lost their lives, so that is a significant change now. In response at the time the MPS launched Operation Blunt and the MPS reduced knife crime by 64% between 2008 and 2011. All that said, for me it is a very big issue. Too many people are carrying knives and there is too much casual violence in the streets.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): In terms of stop and search?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): In terms of stop and search the first question that Jenny asked is whether or not this will start in January. I am looking, as I think I said last month, to new Assistant Commissioner Simon Byrne to focus his attention - he arrives on 5 December 2011 - on stop and search. I have said there are two particular things I am interested in. One is about the work with crime stoppers and making it knife stoppers. We had a meeting with the Chairman of the Authority on 1 November 2011. Also to focus on those who had previously been convicted of carrying knives and see what more we can do to prevent them committing that offence in the future. I do want this renewed approach to start in January 2012 but I am mindful that taking communities with us is important and I want to make sure that when Simon arrives he has got some opportunity to consult and talk about how we do that.

In terms of --

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Are you taking questions on ...?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Once you have finished Jenny wants to come in.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): The second part was what else are we doing. We are enhancing our use of ground sweeps which is search trained officers to recover stored weaponry and to disrupt planned conflicts. We have refocused our efforts with trading standards using our volunteer police cadets to conduct test purchase operations to deter and detect any illegal sale of a knife to young people. We have again revisited activity with schools and colleges to ensure the appropriate use of screening arches to deter young people carrying weapons. Operations are also being run at key

transport hubs to ensure the transport system remains safe and our efforts to deter young people from involvement with knives are continuing and will be enhanced in coming weeks to a further pan-London marketing campaign to discourage the carrying of knives. Work within schools using projects such as growing against gangs and viral campaigns such as choose a different ending are being delivered within schools and colleges.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Jenny?

Jenny Jones (AM): It is quite difficult isn't it to be sure you are going in the right measures if you do not know what the causes are? Is there work going on at the MPS at the moment about understanding the causes for the changes in the knife crime?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I am not sure, Jenny, whether there are particular research projects ongoing. I am not sure I have picked up any in particular. I suppose as usual with the police we concentrate on prevention and detection but in terms of the causes I think that is not at all clear.

Jenny Jones (AM): How can you prevent it if you do not understand the causes? Somewhere someone must understand the causes. You need that work before you can be sure that your work is best value.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I agree. What I would encourage anybody who is working on research who is able to work with us or any group who thinks that they have got a better understanding, and we have already indicated some of the groups we are working with, that would be helpful. Certainly the carrying of knives generally I condemn and I also encourage other people to condemn them too.

Jenny Jones (AM): I think we all do.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Cindy on stop and search and then I will bring James in.

Cindy Butts (AM): Just a point of clarification. Leaving aside your knife stoppers idea, when you talk about changes in stop and search what will that mean? What will be different and what are the success measures that you will use to assess whether or not your new system is working?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): There are two things, Cindy. First of all I will not try to go through it now because that is the work we are carrying out now and I want to bring that back and we want to consult on it. I have indicated two other strands. I think a third one is that some of the searches we do, Section 60 searches which are concentrated on an area where there has previously been violence, I still believe that there is a lack of communication with people who are in those areas about the fact that Section 60 is in place. I would want to see far better communication.

In terms of the success measures I think those are things that I would certainly be interested in talking to the Authority and others about but certainly one of them is do we

see a reduction in the types of violence and do we see a reduction in other things we are trying to stop and number two is are we successful in our searches? The majority of people we stop are they carrying knives or are they carrying other things that are illegal? If the answer is no then we either need to improve it or reduce it in its number.

I cannot give you an awful lot of detail. I am trying to respond to the point that Jenny raised, when will it start? We are aiming for January 2012 but as Simon --

Cindy Butts (AM): But I want to know what it is.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): -- Byrne arrives I want him to bring back the plans he develops and not as I dictate it.

Cindy Butts (AM): I want to know what it is, not when it starts. How can we know when it starts if we do not know what it is?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I have just said Simon, as he arrives, will have the opportunity with the work that is already started to develop that. I cannot give you the work that he has not started because he is not here yet. That is all. All I have tried to give is a direction of travel for the things that I think are important. I think that we are, therefore, able to improve the intelligence of our stop search, better communication, but the reason I cannot give you the detail is just because he has not had the opportunity to address it. That is all. I am not trying to avoid the question; I cannot give you a straight answer I am afraid.

Cindy Butts (AM): Do you think we will be able to get that in time before the next meeting?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I am going to do my best. It is just that he does not arrive until 5 December 2011 and there are quite a few things. Anything I can do I will share.

Cindy Butts (AM): I would be really keen to see that because the very first piece of work that this Authority did in the year 2000 when this Police Authority was formed was on stop and search because we recognised that it was such a contentious issue given all of the disproportionality around young people, black people and Asian people who were being stopped and searched in the capital. It is so important that we have those issues brought back to this table so we can interrogate them and make sure that any introduction that comes into place is better and not worse than what we currently have.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I agree with you. If you remember this is not the first time this has been mentioned. I have mentioned it at least two previous police authorities and at most venues where I have spoken about stop and search because I have picked up the concerns that people have about it. I think this approach is likely to lead to less and not more stop and search and I believe it will lead to a better one.

Cindy Butts (AM): Fantastic.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): When we have developed some ideas then we can share them. It is just I do not have all the ideas. I have just tried to give the strands of the thinking.

Cindy Butts (AM): That is really very helpful. Thank you very much.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): James? Your question on stop and search?

James Cleverly (AM): It is specifically with regard to knife crime figures. When proactive things like search arches and wands are used and knives are recovered those get recorded as knife crimes don't they? One of the things that concerns me is that there is almost a perversity in that proactive preventative measures with regard to knife crime are counted in the same figures as injuries and that kind of stuff. Wouldn't it be a good idea if we could separate those out because one of the things we would like to see is more focused and more effective proactive policing and a reduction in the violence and hopefully one would lead to another. At the moment we have got this strange situation where the greater the level of proactivity that the force puts in place around this the worse the top line figures look. How would you respond to that?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): That is a good point. It is not only in knife crime. We see it in drugs work and we see it in public order situations at night time. The more arrests we make the more it seems we are getting worse. Knives are up and we are intervening.

It is a good point. We could probably discriminate within these figures better. I am quite happy to do that to show what we are trying to do to avoid the knife crime, as opposed to arresting people after they have committed the offence.

James Cleverly (AM): I appreciate definitions come now from the Home Office and they are often far from perfect, however, I think for our internal use it would be useful if there could be a separation out of knife crime as a direct result of police proactivity and the rest. One we are happy to see increase because it is preventative work and the other we want to decrease. That would be useful for us.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): OK.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Val, you wanted to come in?

Valerie Shawcross (AM): Yes, thank you, Chair, just briefly. I was going to make this comment under the section on confidence and satisfaction in the Commissioner's performance report but I think it relates very much to what Cindy is saying. If I can just offer you an insight from another elected democratic representative, Harriet Harman [MP for Camberwell and Peckham] did a very interesting study of Peckham post-riot and did some focus group work with young people. Very properly organized structured focus

group work. It confirms I think a feeling that many elected representatives have been picking up that there is a growing hostility between young black men - young men actually - and the police and it is a serious and growing problem and it is a dangerous problem for the future.

We have all supported actions to tackle knife crime. I know Operation Blunt was very, very widely supported so I am not making any party political game playing here. What I am telling you is there is a serious problem growing and it does need attention because we cannot allow for a young generation of young men, decent young men, to fall into such a bad relationship with the police and it needs attention.

I would say one of the things about this report, which I think is very helpful, is the problem between young people and the police now is at such proportions that it would be good to study it more closely, to actually have some differential information about young people's attitudes towards the police and to actually concentrate on this issue in terms of positive relationship building. We will not tackle knife crime unless we have got the confidence of young men in the community because they are also the principal victims.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): The only thing to say in response is the very reason that this work is being considered is because of the very feedback that you picked up and so have I. It is not intended to say that what we have got is ideal. What it is saying is that there is need for improvement and it is recognising that. It is quite a complex area, as has been mentioned. It is not always fully understood. I am determined that we improve the way that we do it so anything that anybody can do to contribute to that I am very happy to hear, but I agree that we do not want to develop a relationship which is bad.

Valerie Shawcross (AM): I think, Chair, my point was that this is now urgent and pressing and it needs more than a passive approach. It does need a (inaudible) programme.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I think that is the very thing I am saying which is that the reason that we are spending three months on my arrival and getting that work ready and why I have been challenged about when are you going to do it is there is a tension between saying are you doing it in January 2012 or not and saying can we see the work. I am afraid that is the tension between a rock and a hard place I think we are in.

Cindy Butts (AM): We do not want to see the finished product. We can see it as it is developing.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Cindy wants it in January 2012.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Joanne?

Joanne McCartney (AM): It is really just adding to James' plea for a better breakdown of figures - not only knife crime figures but stop and search figures. I know Valerie will back me up on this. Whenever we look at the monitoring reports on stop and search and we look at the monitoring reports on knife crime there is no read across between the two so we never know what stop and search as a result of Blunt 2 has had an effect on knives recovered. That has been a real issue for us to judge the effectiveness of Blunt 2 and the more intensive use of stop and search. If you can provide that. We have been told that it can be provided. The next meeting we are told it cannot be. We are really at a loss on this one so some clarity over that would be useful.

Valerie Brasse (AM): Can I just add on that it really is important because we have asked time and time again? If Blunt 2 is part of your bit of armoury that is supposed to be dealing with this problem and yet we cannot get the data that says, "If you do this this is the result". We just have not got that data. We are told over and over again no one collects it in that way. How is that possible? How could you ever evaluate such an extraordinary initiative as Blunt 2 without knowing what the data is around it? We must be able to do better than that.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): In short I agree. I am surprised that with the Authority's holding people to account that has not happened.

Valerie Brasse (AM): It has been a long time.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I did not say that. I just said what I said.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. Can we now move on to the next two questions which are on road traffic. I have got Jenny on cyclists and pedestrian casualties and Steve on drug driving. Jenny, your question on cyclists?

Jenny Jones (AM): You do not want me to read it do you?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I think, yes, we do.

Jenny Jones (AM): All right. I welcome the approach to tackle the problem of illegal vehicles through the use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) but I am interested in what else the MPS is going to do to tackle the large number of pedestrians and cyclists who are victims of hit and run because they are disproportionately affected by hit and run drivers.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Steve, yours on drug driving?

Steve O'Connell (AM): Yes, my question is how many people have been prosecuted for drug driving in the last year and how many have been prosecuted for drink driving? My thoughts around this, Commissioner, is the movement, as I have said before, over public attitudes to drink driving over the last 20 years has changed completely and that problem

has not disappeared but is much reduced. I would like to see a public awareness campaign or support from the MPS, with the same attitude and the same close to zero tolerance, around drug driving as I believe over drink driving we have seen over the last 20 years.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): First of all, Chair, in terms of Jenny's question which is about pedestrian and cyclist casualties the numbers are not that straightforward to obtain but we have done our best and we have also worked with Transport for London to see whether or not they have got even more information.

First of all, in terms of what we have done, this week, as it happens, is road safety week led by the charity Brake. In the MPS this will be led by the Traffic Department and supported by the safer neighbourhood teams across the whole of the MPS. Within the week's activities are themes. They are specially targeting vulnerable road users including cyclists and pedestrians. In addition to enforcement the MPS works with a number of partners to improve road safety through engineering and education that local authority members here will be aware of.

The only information I can give you at the moment in terms of hit and run incidents where cyclists have been involved is that we believe that in 2010 there were 13 fatalities of pedestrians and cyclists as a result of hit and run collisions and there have been eight fatalities by the same measure between January and June this year. Of course they are not direct comparisons. One, the 13 is for a year and 8 is for the period for half a year. That is, I am afraid, all the information we can give but as we get any more information of course I will share that as soon as I can.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Do you want to come back on that?

Jenny Jones (AM): Yes. The figures I have are that the percentage of hit and run casualties for pedestrians is 26.5% when the total number of casualties is 18.5%. That is quite a lot higher - pedestrians hit by hit and run. For cyclists it is 19% of casualties whereas the total is 14%. They are significantly more.

A couple of things have been suggested as ways forward. For example, video evidence from cyclists - because a lot of cyclists now use head cams and things like that. One cyclist in particular has been told that the police cannot use the evidence because there is no audit trail but I am told by a barrister - he has given me some advice on this. I will spare you most of his comments but he says it is rubbish. In fact it is no different from common assault. I am quite happy to send this advice to you because I think the police are missing a trick here when so many cyclists are now wearing head cams and so many are being hit.

The other thing is policing 20 mile an hour zones. This is something again and again the MPS has said it will not do because of ACPO advice but, in fact, ACPO does say some enforcement may be appropriate in 20 mile an hour zones. I just think we have got to use every opportunity we can to catch these drivers.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Victoria, on the same issue?

Victoria Borwick (AM): One on bus accidents on pedestrians. I would like to raise the case of Tom Kearney who, after almost two years, has now had a visit from the police, and he was very pleased with that visit and very pleased that he was able to have an honest and frank discussion about what happened when he was hit by a bus. He is a constituent in Brian Coleman's constituency but because of my work in Oxford Street I have taken up the case on his behalf.

The problem is that when we go back to looking at these accidents where people have been hit and live then it is not clear what investigation takes place or what record keeping is kept. As the detectives who visited him explained, if he died, obviously there would have been the usual full investigation but, very fortunately, he has lived, although he has life changing injuries.

I want to highlight here it is not just cyclists, it is also pedestrians, and when you go back to Transport for London to ask for details, it does not seem to keep detailed figures of exactly how many of these accidents happen. We seem to be quite good at keeping records when people die but not when there are serious accidents. I want to make sure that I use this meeting to highlight that as a problem because it must be very difficult for the police, when people make complaints and want to know what has happened, to find that it is quite difficult to have the proper information. Maybe that is something else you could store and have some time to look at.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): First of all in terms of Jenny's points I agree with the barrister advice. It sounds like it is rubbish in the sense that it is possible to be evidence. Now whether it is for a court to establish but we need to be sure about the authenticity. It is certainly true that any evidence that is gathered and information that is shared with us should be examined and investigated. I have no problem with that at all.

In terms of 20 mile an hour zones I agree they can be enforced. It is possible. I encourage members of the community to get involved as well and where I have seen it be most effective is when not only the police but also volunteers get involved and trained in the use of speed guns too. The biggest challenge around 20 miles an hour - which I support because, of course, when a child is hit over the speed of 30 miles an hour they will probably die. Under the speed of 30 miles an hour they generally, hopefully, will live. 20 miles an hour is a good thing. The challenge is always the volume of the enforcement. That is the only challenge that we always stood with. Anything we can do with communities, particularly volunteers, can be helpful.

In terms of the point about the information you are quite right, we do need to accurately record it. On the whole it is not only people who die; it is also people who are seriously injured and also those injured where it should be recorded. If the police attend then that is what will happen. It is not the only source of data. The near misses are the difficulties

sometimes but, generally, that information is kept pretty well. I cannot say absolutely comprehensively but we do make a serious attempt for us and local authorities to get that. I have to say local authorities, on the whole, have developed that pretty well - probably better than the police - because they are being really good at the road engineering and the traffic regulation which has meant that a lot of the safety improvements have been down to road configurations and engineering.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): On drug driving?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): In terms of drink driving, during the financial year April 2010 to March 2011 the MPS charged 353 people for drug driving offences, so about one a day. At the same time, during the same period, we charged 8,041 people for drink driving offences, so a substantial difference.

In terms of question two, how many accidents were linked to drugs in the past year and how many were linked to alcohol, during the period April 2010 to March 2011 - so the same period - there were 22 collisions where impairment by drugs was recorded as a contributory factor and, at the same time, there were 397 collisions where impairment by alcohol was recorded as a contributory factor.

The only thing I will say about the recorded drug linked driving collisions is it is often difficult to spot before you start an investigation, whereas with drink people can smell it and they can see the effects quite easily. With drugs it is not as obvious so I am not sure that that, in both cases, in both sets of figures I have given you, it could be a gross under recording. The second thing is not only is it difficult to spot but our investigation mechanisms are not as straightforward either. We have a breathalyser for alcohol. We do not have a similar device for drugs. We have officers who are trained to test people on the street with physical tests - not a piece of kit - that makes it far more straightforward.

Steve O'Connell (AM): Thank you for your answer. Picking up on that point clearly there is a very large disparity in the figures between drink driving and drug driving offences. I believe abroad, in other countries, there is a kit that can be used. I believe in Germany there is a kit that can be used by officers who can flag down someone who is driving in a way that is erratic, for example. Clearly, as you have mentioned, our officers do not have the kit.

To me drug driving is an issue, a major issue, perhaps a hidden issue. Certainly in Croydon in the local papers there there is campaigning around the fatality of a young lady a while back through drug driving.

Two points really, Commissioner. One again is I am anxious for you to join us in trying to raise the profile of drug driving and how it can ruin people's lives. That was successfully done over 20 years through drink driving. Not as successfully as we want because we have got some figures there that are not so good. Also, by your own admission, we do not have the kit. Your officers are not able to challenge these people

properly and scientifically. I wonder whether this is something we can look at within very difficult financial constraints, that I am sure we will hear about for the next hour, and something can be done to give your officers the necessary tools to actually address this problem, Commissioner.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): OK. The different types of device we have, certainly around alcohol and it would be true around drugs, have to be authorized by the Home Office. There is a process to go through with the Research Department to find out which ones are suitable and which ones are dependable. That said, I would certainly, myself, support further availability and that type of kit which is available throughout the rest of the world and seems to work quite well. I agree with you.

As I said, I think it is under recorded. There are two types of drug affected driving. One is prescribed drugs and the other one is controlled drugs - drugs that are illegal. Both matter --

Steve O'Connell (AM): There is a difficulty there.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): -- but it is the latter probably that we are most talking about.

Steve O'Connell (AM): I understand. Thank you.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Next question. Dee, on promotions?

Dee Doocey (AM): Yes. How many people have the MPS promoted within the last year who are within one year of reaching their 30 years service? Please break down by rank.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): For officers for the rank of sergeant to superintendent within the period 1 November 2010 to 31 October 2011 the following were promoted into the ranks shown within 12 months of before or after they have reached 30 years. First of all detective sergeants, two. During the same period, overall, 73 were promoted so 2 of the 73 were promoted within that year. Detective inspectors, four. That was of a total of 26 promoted. Detective chief inspectors, two. That was of 14. Chief superintendent, one. That was a total of 11. Detective chief superintendents, two. That was a total of nine. Within the detective chief superintendent total there was one officer. I told you about two of nine. Plus one officer who had 31 years service so somebody had gone over the 31 years.

The breakdown does not include any officers above the rank of chief superintendent as they would be promoted by the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA). We were talking about this yesterday. I do not believe that anybody the MPA has promoted is within that period.

The only final thing I will mention is I have tried to give you the figures which I think show it is a fairly low number. It is something we keep an eye on because it could have a

disproportionate effect on someone's pension which is a benefit for the individual and is a cost for the organisation or for the Authority. The numbers do appear low though, I think, given the numbers who are promoted.

Dee Doocey (AM): Thank you very much.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. Next one. Tony Arbour. That is on policing US security agents during the Olympics.

Tony Arbour (AM): I make no apology, Chair, for returning to this issue. I think it is the third time I have raised it but this is the first time we have had any indication of any numbers who might come. I am aware that Chris Allison has completely rubbished this but, even if it were to be 50% wrong, if this is anything like the order of security staff who are going to be accompanying visiting teams, it does look as though there will be large numbers of security type people - I say security in quotation marks - who will be in London who, with the best will in the world, will not be under the control of the MPS and I would like to know how we are going to restrict that?

I further note that it is said that 12,000 troops, British troops, are going to be involved in security in relation to the Games. On the face of it it does not look as though it is going to be a very peaceful Games, or there is no suggestion that because of the sort of figures which are being bandied about that these are going to be a peaceful Games.

I really want to flag this up and I do want to know from the Commissioner that we are going to take as hard a line as we possibly can in limiting foreign security staff coming to this country in relation to the Olympic Games.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): In a second I am going to invite Cressida to say a couple of words about the Olympics because Cressida is in charge of the counter terrorist planning around the Olympics, whereas Chris Allison is in charge of the operational planning around the various events.

The only thing that I will say, because I inquired into it having seen the *Guardian* report of last Monday, a week ago last Monday, what the truth of that situation is. What was not as well publicised was the American Embassy's press statement which was put out within 24 hours absolutely denying that it was at all concerned about preparations for the Olympics. I am sure that we are working with them all the time and they have always got questions - and quite proper questions.

A number of countries reasonably believe their residents may well be potential targets when the Olympics take place. One is America. The state of Israel is another. There are many more countries around the world who have reasonable concerns and that is what we are in the process of working through with people.

That press report did not come from America as far as we are advised. I saw the second person in charge in the American Embassy only last week and she personally guaranteed

me that America was not concerned in the way it was described in that article. I will leave Cressida to answer about the numbers. One of the things she said was we wish we had 1,000 to send over. I got no sense at all of 1) being unsure about the preparations or 2) that there were large numbers who were about to descend on this country. Probably better to leave to Cressida a little more detail because she is more directly involved.

Tony Arbour (AM): Thank you.

Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Just to reiterate what the Commissioner said, I had the opportunity last week to meet with a very large number of people from the various American law enforcement and security agencies as well as from the Embassy and they all regarded the article as laughable and the numbers as, frankly, ridiculous. We do speak with our colleagues not just from America but from many many nations who are bringing teams and dignitaries over, literally on a daily basis. You will be aware that we had a big conference earlier this week where we had officials from Embassies, Consuls and from home countries including of course people who are interested in security for their citizens, their teams, their dignitaries and indeed, sometimes, their Heads of State. There is a constant dialogue going on.

It is far too early for us to know people's detailed plans about precisely how many people from, for example, Heads of State, will be coming and precisely what sorts of arrangements nations are intending to bring with their athletes but we are in very close contact with them.

I fear there could be more, frankly, ridiculous speculation in the days and weeks to come and I would urge Members, as far as possible, to treat those with some caution and ask us about them. It is clearly an issue for good reason and it interests people but that article was completely speculative. We will be working really closely - we are - and we will do our absolute best to ensure that our liaison officers are very well engaged with the teams and we provide a safe and secure environment for them.

Tony Arbour (AM): Can I ask if there is any truth in the matter - and I quote - that thousands of British soldiers are likely to be posted at Olympic venues? Who is going to have operational command of these people if they truly are going to be made available to act as guards at the Olympics? This is from the *Telegraph*.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): The fact that troops are being considered is not an indication of the state of the treat; it is the fact that The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) is struggling to get the right numbers of security people in place for the Olympics. Now that the assessment is that it needs something in excess of 20,000 the security market is not that clear that it can meet that need at that time. Therefore all options have been explored. One of the other things is people have to look at cost. Those are the only reasons that we are aware of.

In terms of the command and control issues then they remain in the leadership of LOCOG. It runs the venues and these people will be working for it. They are not there to directly respond in terms of security; they are there to make sure they are a preventative measure and not a response measure.

Tony Arbour (AM): Thank you, Chair.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Dee, you wanted to come in on the Olympics?

Dee Doocey (AM): I wanted to make a very brief comment wearing my hat as Chair of the MPS' Olympic Sub-Committee and also the fact that I represent the MPS on the Olympic Security Board. Just to say that I have not heard anything at either of those fora which gives me cause for concern and I certainly do not recognize any of the statements that were in the recent press as accurate in any way. I think I speak for the other Members of the Committee when I say that every time we have asked questions about security to the MPS we got clear unequivocal answers and we are very clear about what the arrangements are and we are very happy about the situation of people coming over from foreign countries and it has all been done in probably the most collaborative way than has ever been done at any previous Games.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): John, you wanted to come in as well.

John Biggs (AM): Just a tiny one. I really do not want to delay the meeting but I think it is a matter of some public interest whether we have learned from the behavior of what I would describe as the Chinese minders who came with the torch to London previously where there was a lot of public disquiet that they were physically manhandling members of the public. We need to be clear about what roles people can activity pursue.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Just to reassure you that would not happen again. We have our own people who are training hard now to keep pace with the torch! It is not proving that easy for some of our traffic cops even on motorbikes! Anyway, in short --

John Biggs (AM): There is a wider issue then I guess about ...

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): -- the idea is that we are providing that support. There is no other country doing it.

John Biggs (AM): In terms of the public acceptability, leaving aside that particular event and incident, the public sensitive of, say, American enforcement officers who do not bring guns with them but, nevertheless, have a license to manhandle members of the public. We need to be clear about the protocols that surround that sort of thing.

Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I would reiterate really what Dee has said. As we speak there will be protected principals in London any day of the week who come from all over the world. They bring with them people who are concerned for their

security. We have very, very detailed and very definite protocols and extremely good relationships and that is what we will have during the Olympics.

John Biggs (AM): OK.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Chris?

Chris Boothman (AM): I just wanted to add to the reassurance because I attended the conference earlier this week. Two of the things that were mentioned there that seemed to be most important were, firstly, that all the personnel that come with different missions are going to have to go through a vetting process so there should be a means of understanding who is coming and if they are bringing in weapons or even radios, those are things that are going to get picked up, hopefully.

The other thing is that, as I understand it, for protected individuals, there is going to be a tighter regime in terms of who they can bring with them so that if they are bringing any security those people have to be part of their allotted number of people that they carry with them, so there will be less of a means for them to bring lots of security personnel with them.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you. It is now 12.05pm. We still have to deal with the budget and the policing plan as well as the report from the Civil Liberties Panel. I wonder whether Members would wish to see their questions answered in written form or do you still wish to go ahead with your questions now?

James Cleverly (AM): Certainly of my two there is one that I would particularly like to raise.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. Jenny, yours about undercover police officers?

Jenny Jones (AM): I am happy to have a written answer if it is a fairly full answer. Thank you.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. Joanne, you want to ask yours now?

Joanne McCartney (AM): I have two, yes. One is on integrated prosecution teams and it is what will be the effect of the removal from boroughs of integrated prosecution teams and what representations has the MPS made on this issue?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): First of all the MPS and the CPS fully support this move and the opportunities it allows for both agencies. The new model of working is based on - it says here - "Virtual integration via a digital case file". That will be something that is better streamlined if it works exactly as we hope.

At the moment there are 27 boroughs who have the integrated prosecution teams which are no longer sustainable in the current financial climate --

Joanne McCartney (AM): They are working very well. They can get instant advice.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Let me just finish and then attack me! - or indeed necessary with the migration to a digital case file. There are two things happening. One is the money pressure and the other one is the digital case file which seems to present a new opportunity.

The value of co-locating MPS and CPS teams has been mixed but it is the financial pressure which is causing the biggest issue.

There is only one thing I would add to this, Joanne, which I think is important. Within the last two weeks I met up with the Attorney General which was really an introductory meeting and within the next week or so I am meeting up with the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). What the Attorney General alerted me to was that the DPP would want to raise this issue particularly because he believes that the CPS has probably been left with some of the costs of integrated prosecution teams while the police has attracted the savings. Overall there is a net saving but the police take all of it. I think that is about the gist of it.

I am open minded to what he is going to say so there may be more information after I have had that meeting but that is where we are at the moment.

Joanne McCartney (AM): Some borough commanders are very unhappy about this. They see the co-location of CPS in police stations as being a very good move and a very good move at getting cases to court quickly and disposing of them quickly. A return to CPS sitting outside those joint hubs - I used to work in a court. The amount of time that was wasted in court about saying the police have not sent things in was great and many Justices of the Peace (JPs) around the room can probably testify to that. I do have concerns. I wonder if you could raise them when you have that meeting.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I have got a query. I think an integrated prosecution team is a good idea. When I was in Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) area we looked at it. The evidence was it was being inconsistently managed so a good model was not delivering what it should. There was evidence that it can save money but the costs were falling to CPS. With that in mind I am quite happy to talk to the DPP and then come back to you with more information when I have it. I need a little persuading about this plan but it is trying to get the costs out that is causing the problem.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I will add a plea to this. We have been through this process on a number of occasions. We had Glidewell and then we have had this. We have spent, as a service and as an Authority, an enormous amount of energy and resources getting this plan to where it is now. If we are going to make some changes let's have some considered facts and then decide how we move forward.

I think your next question is on misconduct?

Joanne McCartney (AM): Yes, my next question is following the misconduct hearings on the Enfield crime squad officers which found they had used an overly aggressive approach and discreditable conduct, what work has the MPS done to audit whether there are other borough operational command units (BOCUs) operating in a similar manner? Have other practices been found and what is being done about them? I particularly refer to the specific uniforms the Enfield crime squad were using that were not standard issue and the kit they were using, ie baseball bats.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Cressida is going to add a little detail in a second about other similar practices identified. Just to make a very clear statement by saying that the overly aggressive approach by the officers at Enfield crime squad concerned was unacceptable and, as such, the Board has rightly sanctioned it. I have to be a little careful because there are ongoing misconduct proceedings against many if not all of the officers involved there, some of whom remain suspended, so I have to be a little careful about how much further we go --

Joanne McCartney (AM): Which is why I asked the question about it happening anywhere else.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I can only say that this case has not yet ended. Let's put it that way.

Joanne McCartney (AM): That is why I asked the question is it happening anywhere else and, when this came to light, did you look at practice across the board?

Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Absolutely, Joanne. Lynne Owens, in her lead there for TP, and I as my then lead for covert policing in general ensured that that did happen. There were a number of elements of organisational learning which were very quickly cascaded across the various boroughs and a number of audits were carried out. For my own bit of the world, for example, we carried out a full audit of all the covert assets and we now have, in place, a very good system for ensuring that we manage all the items of equipment that we use in covert policing, know where they are, who has got them and the level to which they are authorised.

We also did a full audit of our ripper operations at that time and, as I say, we sat down with all the borough commanders and encouraged them to carry out a variety of different things but that included regular checks in vehicles, in offices and in rooms.

There have been some isolated incidents identified subsequently. For example, there was an operation called, for some reason, Catboat, and we received intelligence that officers were stealing prisoners' property. We carried out a professional standards covert operation and some officers have been arrested and we are looking at whether they should be charged at the moment. There are a variety of things going on but we did take it enormously seriously and the checks are still there.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Victoria?

Victoria Borwick (AM): If I may, one final quick question?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I think we have got a couple of others and then I will bring you in.

Victoria Borwick (AM): OK.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I think the rest of your questions, Joanne, you will be happy with a written response I understand. James, your question?

James Cleverly (AM): Thank you. It is with regard to the work of Project Azure. I wanted to know how many convictions have been made in London in the past year in relation to Project Azure work and what more can, or is being, done to drive down female genital mutilation in London?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): The answer to the question is that there has never been any conviction for female genital mutilation in the United Kingdom. A lack of prosecution does not reflect a lack of progress or rigor in the tackling of this issue. All allegations are rigorously investigated and receive a senior police officer's scrutiny. Prevention, awareness raising and working with families always occurs but legal challenges include victims rarely prepared to give evidence against parents or other family members, which is a constant challenge.

Since 2009 there have been 64 allegations of female genital mutilation. 56 were received from partnership agencies and 5 direct from victims. These resulted in substantial support to the victims and family but also the MPS or CPS finding insufficient evidence to prosecute. Three allegations are ongoing at present and those investigations continue.

The MPS continues to raise awareness with young people at risk, working with partner agencies such as the Kids Taskforce and the Home Office producing a secondary school DVD and teacher training packs. The CPS and the MPS provide guidelines for prosecutors and the British Airways Authority at Heathrow Airport raises awareness among travelers.

The straight answer to the question is that, at the moment, there are no prosecutions or convictions.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): James?

James Cleverly (AM): The figures you have given me confirm the figures that I thought would be the case. I know there has been much focus on the preventative work and it is fair that that is recorded. However, it is quite obviously the case that the preventative work, whilst important, is not enough. The figures that I have indicate that whilst overall the numbers are relatively small there has been an increase in the numbers over recent

years and, obviously, for the victims involved this is an incredibly significant attack on them and needs to be dealt with as seriously as other forms of child abuse and other forms of domestic violence where the MPS has made good work in recent years. I would like to see the work that the MPS has done in these areas reflected in the work it does in the Azure work.

One of the points about the difficulty in getting convictions is there is self-evidently a failure in parenting if a child has been subjected to female genital mutilation. Since 1985, when this became an illegal activity, I find it horrifying that we have not been able to bring a single successful prosecution when it is a self-evident fact that that child has, at worse, been abused and, at least, has been neglected. Would it not be sensible for us to look at coming at this from the obvious neglect element of it to send a very, very powerful message that female genital mutilation is taken as seriously as other forms of child abuse and is taken as seriously as other forms of domestic violence? Otherwise, work that has been done by third sector organisations in this area indicates the feedback that they get is that this is not something that the police pursue. Now I know that is inaccurate but if that is the message that is coming across within communities then that is very, very corrosive to the successful eradication, which should be our ultimate aim, of this practice.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): The challenge you make is a good one for me - to which I do not have a straight answer. I do not know if, Cressida, you have anything else you would add to that?

Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I suppose it is a few months ago now but we did do a fairly detailed report on Azure and the associated issues to SOP and, at that event, we did make it clear how incredibly seriously we do take this and the efforts that we do make to enforce. As I think you probably know, it is the same command that is responsible for this as for other child abuse investigations and they do apply all the learning they have from those as well.

It is an incredibly difficult offence to bring to justice. It is very complex and it is very difficult to actually get a conviction. That said, I entirely understand what you are saying about the message it sends to the wider community if we are continuing to be unsuccessful.

James Cleverly (AM): I hear what you say, Cressida. The arguments around difficulty, proof and prosecution are exactly the same arguments that have historically been used about domestic violence. It is difficult --

Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Similar.

James Cleverly (AM): - and I completely understand which is my suggestion that if abuse is difficult to prove then neglect is self-evident and perhaps it should be that that is the angle that we come at in order to send a message out that this is something that absolutely must be eradicated.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I think Jennette wants to come in on the same point.

Jennette Arnold (AM): Chair, I welcome James bringing this up. I do not know where we take this debate because this is work in progress for so many organisations. I think, James, there is another side to this whole thing. Can I just say I have been campaigning on this issue since 1960 and I started when I was in nursing practice. This is not just an issue for the police. In some instances they are the last agency to know about this.

I do want to temper what you have said about parenting. If it was as easy as that then we would have really resolved this many years ago. It is an incredibly complex issue and I am not, as you can see, in any way justifying it, but I think what we have to do is find the appropriate local organisations who are working and who are getting through to communities and who are then working in a collaborative way with social workers and schools and areas like this. Maybe it is a matter of how we can share information because if you have Metropolitan Police Service with the communities who have got these concerns I know other communities and other areas of work where they have explored these concerns and are doing some incredibly worthwhile work in support of the police.

This might be the last time I speak on this Authority because I will be sending my apologies in January 2012 because I must attend my son's wedding and a trip to Antigua is always welcome as well! Seriously, I just want to say one of the best things that we have done as an Authority was to raise this issue and I am proud that I was part of that group who did raise it way back, three Commissioners ago, and also the work that Lead Officers have done in this work and in the last 11 years or so there is whole record of working with the communities and working with non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) as far as the World Health Organisation. In the previous Mayoral administration there was absolute support from that led by somebody who is in the audience today but I do not want to get him going on that. I think there is a body of work that we should be building on and if there are concerns we should be able to talk and find out what those concerns are and help work with those communities.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Val, you wanted ...?

Valerie Brasse (AM): I wanted to reiterate what Jennette has been saying. There has been an enormous amount of work that I know that I have been involved with and an unelected Member of this Authority in this particular area. In fact only last week I was involved with a conference here at City Hall on traditional harmful practices and how we were addressing that. It is this point about partnership. This is absolutely not something the police can do on its own. I accept the point that we have had no prosecutions here, I accept that if you go to France they have got prosecutions but the way they go about it actually is just not our way; it is extraordinarily intrusive for the young children concerned.

That is the point about this with domestic violence. We are dealing with younger children. By and large we are dealing with young children and the tensions it creates in them. Do they know what has happened to them is a crime? It is not something they want to go through. This divides families. Mothers who do not realise that fathers are taking their children out to have this done to them. Those sorts of complexities need to be tackled in a really sensitive way.

For me, it is about the police being absolutely on side with those communities who are working with them and us collectively, and for the MOPC going forward, to ensure that those NGOs who have got the reach into these communities have the funding to get on with that work. My real concern is that they are going to be out of the picture and this is all going to be over for them because the funding is being withdrawn. That is the plea. I do not think the police can do this without them. They just simply cannot. We collectively need to make sure that that piece is all stitched up.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Again, I will just remind you that we are now running in overtime. We have still got two more items. I have got four more people who want to ask questions. If you can be brief as well as if you can accept a written answer that would be very useful. I have got Cindy, Chris and Victoria and then John. Cindy?

Cindy Butts (AM): Thank you, Chair. In light of recent activities regarding alleged racist abuse on the football pitch and the recent racial abuse that black celebrity chef, Lorraine Pascale, received via Twitter, can you reassure Londoners, celebrity or otherwise, that unlike Mr Sepp Blatter, the MPS will take seriously any allegation of racist abuse or racially motivated violence?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Certainly, Chair, I can assure you of exactly that.

John Biggs (AM): Chair, my question is more or less in exactly the same area so shall I just read that in to the record? I have been contacted by a constituent and this was reported in the press. Her name is Nabila Ramdani and she was abused through Twitter. She is a journalist. She is asking essentially the same question; whether her case is being investigated - I am happy to take that in writing - and whether, in any way, Londoners can be expecting a second class treatment if they are not celebrities? There is a concern about that, Chair.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Chair, the MPS expects officers to report and investigate crime properly. Every allegation of race hate crime should be taken seriously and any officer failing to meet the high standards required will be subjected to either an unsatisfactory performance or a misconduct process and it does not matter who they are.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Are you happy with that? OK.

John Biggs (AM): If I submit this can I have a written reply and some more detail, Chair?

Cindy Butts (AM): Chair, I do think there is something about asking ourselves what the challenges are that are particularly presented by way of social media and through Twitter in terms of being able to investigate and bring those to justice - not just race hate crime but all hate crimes - and using that as a medium to inflict that on victims.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I agree. It is real challenge because we are not used to it. We are not used to the investigation. It is so often a balance between defamation and criminal acts. Our responsibility is around criminal acts. We are going to have to get more nimble. I accept for some officers it is going to be a challenge - it is for me - to work out how social networking works so I suspect it will be for some others. Not so much how it works but how to investigate it because to prove the offence will require more than a statement. That may be leading to some of the responses but obviously our job is to provide a professional response.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Chris?

Chris Boothman (AM): Yes. Commissioner, at this meeting we have heard calls for more staff, more numbers, more equipment, weapons and more initiatives but I wonder if you would agree with me that the success or failure of policing in London is likely to turn, essentially, on staff morale. By staff morale what I am talking about is how front line officers, police constables (PCs) and sergeants, feel about the daily challenges they face, more for less, how they feel about their leadership and how they feel about the different communities they are expected to police. My question to you, in your short time in office, has any work been doing or is any work planned to assess and address staff morale in these three different contexts that I just spoke of?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): First of all it is a constant challenge for any organisation or any leader to make sure the organisation they lead has high morale. At various times there are going to be challenges. The first thing is that we do monitor regularly things like sickness, which is not the only arbiter of whether morale is good or bad, but there are things like that, where there are grievances and civil litigation from our own employees, let alone from the community. We do do that and there are staff surveys that have taken place over the years. We are just addressing, again, how we do that now.

The staff surveys in the past have resulted in very low return rates. That is not unusual for questionnaires given that everybody is busy and nobody really wants to fill a questionnaire in. We have looked again at how we will improve on that but, of course, every time we change the questionnaire we have not got a benchmark from which to work out whether things have improved. We are a bit torn with that.

The only thing I would say to you is that I really am committed to making sure we find out how our staff feel about things. We are doing our best to communicate with them. One of the best ways to keep staff motivated is to keep explaining to them what you are

trying to do, listening to them to what they want as well and obviously trying to get a right balance between what they want and what the community needs. There is a constant challenge all the time there. With 52,000 people that is a big challenge but I am determined to do it.

I hope to reassure you that, first of all, we monitor the more objective measures, the sickness and retirements and people leaving us - turnover if you like - and also the exit questionnaires, and then the final one is the one that we intend to do regularly - ie every year - to see if we can find a benchmark for how are people feeling. What we do find, as you know, is that there are many causes of good and bad morale and often the most definitive cause is local management.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. I think one last question from Victoria?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Thank you, Commissioner. I think we would be neglecting in our scrutiny role if we did not ask for an update on Mark Duggan. You have said to us today that you are going to give us open answers so perhaps you would just complete this morning, before we move on to the next topic, with a bit of an update as to how that investigation is going.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): As you all know this is an Independent Police Complaints Commission investigation so I am afraid I cannot give you an update on its investigation. We know that it is working hard to try to come to a conclusion as quickly as possible and it is keeping us, broadly, up to date with how that is going. I am afraid I cannot give you too much information about that.

I would say that I wanted to let you know, if you were not already aware, that the MPS has decided to report to the Press Complaints Commission the concerns about a headline in the *Guardian* newspaper last week. I believe that the IPCC is also concerned about that headline. That was based on, we are told, a leak of the IPCC investigation. We do not know whether it is an accurate leak because we do not know what the source of the story is. I think reporting like that certainly is not helping what, everybody has described, is a pretty difficult situation.

We all await, with an open mind, what the result of that investigation are but I am afraid I cannot give you any detail about its investigation.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): One last point on this from Joanne. Very briefly please if you can. Joanne?

Joanne McCartney (AM): Can I ask you, as Commissioner, when you do talk to the IPCC to please ask them to give local police and local communities a bit more notice about when it is going to make statements. I know we have got a statement today but we had the last statement on a Friday afternoon - which is never a good time to get news out. I understand local police were only given ten minutes' notice that the IPCC was putting a statement out. They desperately tried to get the community in to talk to them and to see

what the implications of that IPCC statement were. Some better coordination from the IPCC so that local communities and the local police, who have to manage that local skepticism about what is happening, would be useful. The best time to release a statement is never a Friday afternoon.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I broadly agree. I have to be careful. It would be easy for me to have a go at the IPCC because that might gain a few votes but I have to be careful and clear --

Joanne McCartney (AM): This is not ...

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I used the word votes but for goodness' sake all I am saying is that it may get me a bit more support than I might get otherwise. It is a fairly clear point.

The point I am trying to make is just that the IPCC has to show its independence from the police. Every time it gives us information it may be that people believe that it is giving us prior information about something that is supposed to be independent. That is the only point I am trying to make. It is easy for me to say I wish it would tell us lots of things earlier - and there is an argument for that - and we do need to know about some things to be able to react in the way that you describe, certainly locally and at a force level, so I am not objecting to that point. I cannot (**inaudible**). That is my only point.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Finally, Victoria you did ask about the route for the march on 30 November 2011. I think that is available now. Do you want to hear it now?

Cressida Dick (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I can read it out if you like. It will not take a second. The information is that the march forms up at Lincoln's Inn Fields at midday on 30 November 2011. It is expected to move off at about 1pm. It goes to Victoria Embankment via Kingsway, Aldwych, Strand, Northumberland Avenue and Victoria Embankment. There is also anticipated to be a rally on the Embankment between 2pm and 3pm.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you.

We then move on to item number seven which is the London Policing Business Plan. Dee?

Dee Doocey (AM): Could I just suggest, Chair, in view of the time, that one thing we did at this time last year was to note that because this was a moving feast the Chair allowed Members to express any concerns they had and put anything on the table so that this could be picked up and then we agreed, as an Authority, just to note it, rather than to agree it. I think that might be a way forward.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Thank you for that. I was going to suggest that we had a discussion at SOP last week on this paper. Clearly not every Member here was at that

meeting. This is a first bite of this cake. It will come back again certainly to the Members of the GLA on two further occasions. So if you do have points that you have not made previously at SOP and you wish to do that now those could be made and we could not them. Then we will do exactly what we did at SOP which is to note the recommendations rather than agree that the draft will go to the Mayor. That will save us time but, at the same time, if you do have points that you have not made and you wish to make now, if you do make them now we can note them for the future debate.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive): Can I add to that, Chair? At item 7(a) we have a very brief summary of the points that were made in some significant detail at the meeting last Thursday.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Graham?

Graham Speed (AM): Thank you, Chair. It was really just to support and endorse the comments made by Dee and really supported by yourself. I think we did have a very full discussion. We had a lengthy briefing and a fairly full discussion at which there were some fairly strong views that were held and expressed. I am not quite sure what we are going to gain if we were to repeat the whole exercise again here and now. There may be some other odd items but I am happy to support that as a proposal.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): In that case there are four - sorry, Jenny?

Jenny Jones (AM): I support that but I think, if we have not raised anything, then now is the time to do it because we are constantly told, when we want to raise things, this is only the first or the second or the third opportunity --

Reshard Auladin (Chair): I did also say raise your points now. We have had a number of points raised at SOP and I think that is in here. Whatever you raise now will be noted and taken into account at the next occasion. Jenny, please go ahead.

Jenny Jones (AM): Thank you. At SOP I did raise the issue of somebody somewhere has done some sums about closure of front office counters but we do not know what it is. It was not actually reported in here. Anne [McMeel] is hoping to find some information for us on that at some point but it was not actually reported in the paper.

The other thing I wanted to mention was that overtime is set to rise in 2012/13, presumably because of the Olympics, and then to fall back but, even so, the overtime bill is huge. I am concerned. I would like to know whether or not that has actually been adjusted at all.

I would also like to suggest there is an opportunity to reduce the number of ACPO officers. It seems that they are highly paid. There are all sorts of consequential costs associated with senior officers. Are there any details - is there going to be any cost cutting on ACPO officers?

Finally, as more police officers get trained in public order, does that mean that the Territorial Support Group (TSG) is going to be reduced? Is that a factor in the budget? Thank you.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): John next.

John Biggs (AM): Very quickly, I agree with Dee and I had an opportunity to make a number of representations at the Committee. One question of the Commissioner though. Not everything I say is political although sometimes it both is and is not. Guidance was given by the Mayor's office which suggested that, in return for an additional sum of money, he would expect you to comply with his requirements for police numbers over the next few years. I just wanted you to clarify, possibly consistently with your predecessor, that actual decisions about operational strength of the police are an operational matter for you and you cannot properly be guided or instructed by the Mayor to comply with such a request if it was to diminish the operational capacity of the police service.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Joanne next.

Joanne McCartney (AM): I too had an opportunity last time to put concerns about the state of the MPS' finances and certainly the cuts are going to significantly shrink the force, which the business plan makes quite clear. I think all of us round the table want to see police numbers kept high.

My question really follows John's. One is are you happy, Commissioner, to guarantee police numbers for the next three to four years as the Mayor requests, despite being only promised a one off payment of £30 million for this year? Secondly, what sort of financial package will you need to guarantee that if you are not satisfied?

My second question really is to Catherine. In this are there any savings in the MPA budget with regards to the transition to the MOPC?

Reshard Auladin (Chair): There is one question for you. I do not know whether Anne will be taking the rest?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): Anne, do you want to do the overtime?

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): I can try, Commissioner!

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): The rest I will have a go at.

Anne McMeel (Director of Resources, MPS): In terms of overtime, overtime is an area that has been scrutinised as we have gone through this budget. The trend in the MPS in recent years has been a reduction in overtime. Jenny is right; there will be a peak because of the Olympics in terms of overtime but the concern that we have at the moment and some of the discussion going on internally at the moment is the impact particularly on

overtime of the increased level of public order activity in the capital and that is one of the operational issues that we are looking at in terms of what the impact of that is on finances.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Again, we have said those questions will be noted and possibly taken back to you on the next occasion but there is just the one question about direction that you may want to answer from John.

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I suspect the last two. I do not know; I will try to answer all of them. In terms of the point about the strength, is it an operational decision, it is something that we always work on together really. The thing is I could propose that we want 45,000 police officers and then expect the politicians to pay the bill. That cannot be right. It has to be an agreement and a negotiation. I think that is generally what has always happened. I do not anticipate that will change in the future because, of course, you cannot have someone like me saying, "I have to have this" and then expecting someone to pay the political bill. I expect the future will be no different to the past. It seems to me that usually comes from an agreement. It has worked pretty well on the whole.

The second point which is about the cuts over the next three to four years. I am not sure I am in a position to guarantee what police numbers we have or what numbers of staff we have until I see the money. Until we have a guarantee of the budget that we will have it is very difficult to be absolutely sure what the shape of the MPS will be. Obviously we see it for next year. That will be the first step and then we have to see what will happen in succeeding years. I do understand that obviously for central government, as with local government, the present economic position means that some of the old certainties are not there anymore, so I suppose we are all in a territory where we are having to work hard together to see exactly what it will look like.

I am not trying to avoid that answer but I think it is a genuine answer which is that people do work together on these things and it usually is a result of negotiation. I do not think it is for the Commissioner or any Chief of Police to impose a level of policing on an area that they are not prepared to support financially.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Joanne, you wanted to come in?

Joanne McCartney (AM): Can I just follow that up? Firstly on John's point you are a professional and it is your duty to tell the Mayor, whoever it may be, "To do a good job I need this amount of officers" and it is up to the Mayor in a sense whether he will find the wherewithal to pay for that.

Secondly, I appreciate that you cannot say how many officers you are going to have because you do not know the financial implications yet but can I read it from that that the Mayor decides, as the guidance currently states, that the MPS will get an extra £30 million for the forthcoming year but you have to guarantee police officer numbers at

a certain level for 2015, that you are not sure whether you are going to accept that offer yet?

Bernard Hogan-Howe (Commissioner, MPS): I suppose the best explanation I can give on how I would approach that discussion, whether it be with the people in this room or with the Mayor, is that if someone said to me, "I am going to give you £X million" - let's pick £100 million out of the air - "and I can give you that as gross but I expect you to make some savings to contribute to the new organization, £5 million/£10 million" it would be fairly unreasonable for me to say, "Actually I'm not going to make any savings. I just want the money". It seems to me that negotiation always has to be ongoing. If, however, anybody said, "I am going to give you £5 million but I want you to give me £100 million savings to compensate the £5 million" I think that is where we would part company.

Somewhere along that spectrum there is a reasonableness test. What I could not support professionally - and I would not advise you nor the Mayor professionally - is if someone says, "I want you to keep policing numbers at 40,000 and the only way you can do that is to get rid of all the PCSOs and all the call handlers". That makes no professional sense. There is no great science to how many police officers we should have in London. I would urge you to double them but if you push me I could not convince you whatever the number was.

It always has to be negotiation. There is a political element which is clear what can the budget stand. That is my approach to it. I do not approach it with a figure in mind that it has to be that number. I think it is what we have to work with with the money we have got.

Joanne McCartney (AM): OK.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK? Thank you. So we all agree to note this report and, as we have said, it will come back to the GLA Members. I do not think we will be seeing this in the January 2012 Full Authority meeting but it will be coming back to the GLA Members in due course. Thank you.

Item number eight then is the MPS response to the Civil Liberties Panel review on the DNA database. I think we have got Gary [Pugh] here for the response. I will invite Victoria to say a few words.

Gary Pugh (Director of Forensic Services, MPS): Firstly an apology. The paper is slightly dated. It was prepared a little while ago and it has taken a little while to get to this Committee. I will try to briefly summaries. Essentially we are accepting all the recommendations of the Civil Liberties Panel and in the paper I set out the work that has already been undertaken to address those recommendations.

If I can be brief I think there are probably two themes to this in terms of our response. The first is around a big issue of community engagement and public understanding and the second is around process changes and improvements that the Panel recommended.

On the community engagement and public understand this is a challenge to get across the benefits of DNA profiling but also to demystify some of the uses of DNA profiling. In the paper we set out some of the ideas we have around that. Jennette has gone now but, again, she has very helpfully agreed to assist us in that. I have set up a group within the MPS, drawing on people like Denise **Malarney**(?) and Simon **Foy**(?) and others to help us devise really a narrative. The MPS needs a narrative around DNA profiling that we can develop and can be endorsed by Management Board. I think perhaps we have missed that in the past although we have had a couple of runs of that previously. In the light of the Freedom Bill we do need to develop that narrative which we all understand and sign up to. That is part of the dressing there.

There will be a programme of community engagement as the paper outlines and I am grateful for your support in putting that together. We will use the report, as highlighted last time when it was presented. It contains a lot of very good information about DNA profiling and about some of the issues that the public of London are concerned about.

Finally on that piece what we will do in terms of the timing of that. The Freedom Bill is due to get Royal Assent in probably May next year so that is the time in which we can take the substantial changes that will be made through the Freedom Bill in DNA retention, combined with our own narrative around DNA profiling, to embark on a much enhanced engagement with communities and the citizens of London and to use the Freedom Bill as the catalyst for doing that, because it will make substantial changes.

On the second of my themes, on process improvement, there are a number of things within the report which we accept. Issues around defining processes clearly. Giving information in custody. The evidential sampling issue which we accept and we will suspend doing that. We set out issues around Section 136 of the Mental Health Act and how we will deal with that. Also around removing demographic data from forensic providers and destroying volunteer samples and putting in systems and processes to make sure that is robust. Those issues do not need to wait for the Royal Assent and Freedom Bill. We are already working on those and in the paper we set out how we are going to do that and the timescales by which we hope to achieve that.

In broad summary that is our response to the Civil Liberties Panel (**inaudible**). Thank you.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Victoria?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Thank you very much indeed, Gary, and thank you again to all the Members of the Committee who worked extremely hard to put this quite technical document together. I think the most important thing is we are delighted that the recommendations are already being taken on board.

Because this is a public meeting I just want to make absolutely clear that there was something that was not perhaps technically clear on page 23 of our report which was discussing the DNA obtained from Schedule 7 examinations and whether these are examined and then loaded on to the database or not. Of course if, when they are examined, they are found to be a match then obviously they are loaded but if they are examined and found not to be a match obviously they are not loaded. I appreciate for those of you who have not followed some of the technicalities of all of this you may say what am I talking about but I do want to use this public forum just to clarify that point and obviously I am happy to speak about it.

I think the most important thing is to go back to what we are really here about today which is talking about community engagement and I think that is one of the things that has come up in a way as a theme of today's meeting about the need for open communication and for everyone to act in a transparent manner.

I would like to pay tribute to Jennette who has already been in touch with **Stacey**(?) and members of Gary's office and, if I may précis on her behalf, to say that she has already agreed to have a first engagement process in January 2012 in order to look at the most important point which is how do we make it very clear as to what this tool is and how it should be used and, most importantly, we are here as a Committee to protect the innocent. Thank you.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Any comments or questions? Dee?

Dee Doocey (AM): Just a brief one. As one of the Members who served on the Committee I would like to pay tribute to the huge amount of work that Victoria in particular did on this and the wonderful help we had from the MPS.

I just have one slight concern and it is about Recommendation One, "People who have their DNA taken should be provided with the following information in writing at the point when their DNA is taken". Now we have got Appendix A, B and C showing very, very good charts which address all our concerns. I suppose that the reassurance I want is that this is going to be up in police stations pronto and it is not going to sit there with the word draft written on it.

Gary Pugh (Director of Forensic Services, MPS): There is a difficulty there because, clearly, we will need to put a process up that reflects the Freedom Bill so I am afraid there will be a delay because, otherwise, we could confuse people, but also we could spend a lot of money putting up posters and communicating when, actually, the law will substantially change those processes and therefore the guidance and information we give to people in custody.

Dee Doocey (AM): I understand that, Chair, and I do not normally disagree with Gary, who is a great expert on this and I am not, but I do think that this is one of the key concerns that we picked up from every community, not just the black community, and I

think that it will not cost any money for a letter to go from the Commissioner or from whoever to all police who are in charge, the borough commander or the sergeant, to say that this is the current process that should be done and we should not wait for the Freedom of Informations Bill to become law before we change the process because the process is wrong at the moment. It is very, very confused and it is essential that we get this right.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. Cindy?

Cindy Butts (AM): I would like to support Dee's last comments but, more importantly, her former comment which was to thank Victoria and the rest of the Panel for all the work that they have done. When we think about the experience of all of those black men who voluntarily gave their DNA samples in pursuit of the so-called night time stalker, as a result of that case finally coming to a successful conclusion their DNA would not have been destroyed. On the account of this really important work it means that if the police do take up all the recommendations as they have said, practices like that will no longer exist, so I think it is a real tribute to Victoria and her doggedness and all of the work that she has put into this that we have such a successful set of recommendations.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Can I add my voice of thanks to Victoria and also to the officers of the MPA and the MPS who worked very hard. I think Gary has done an enormous amount of work with the Panel. That again shows the value of the Police Authority and I do hope that the GLA Members on the Committee will look at their scrutiny role and I am sure the MPS will welcome that. Thank you.

I think the next item, very quickly, item number nine is reports from Committees for you to note.

All: Noted.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Then we have item number ten which is an urgent action taken under delegated authority. That is for your information.

All: Noted.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): If you do have any questions I think we will have to go into exempt if we want questions on that one.

Then, finally, item number 11. We have an urgent business. This is an update from Catherine on the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive): Chair, this is effectively for information. I will confess that the reason for urgency is because the printing press broke down; not because it is last minute, although I think it was circulated at the same time as the other papers in the event. What it boils down to, in summary, is that the plans for the

establishment of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, MOPC, continued to be promising in terms of the operation date of 16 January 2012.

We will have a final meeting of the MPA, where I hope to have a report on what the Authority has achieved over the whole of its existence as well as the reports from all the Committees and the important work that is in hand now to identify legacy issues and suggestions as to how they might be pursued under the new regime on 12 January 2012 but I have already noted Jennette's apologies for that.

I am very happy to take any questions but it is a paper for information. Thank you, Chair.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): Joanne?

Joanne McCartney (AM): I have a number but I am only going to raise one. In 7.1 it is proposed that the governance and public transparency will be achieved in a number of ways however, as there is only a very short window between the creation of the MOPC and the Mayoral elections in May 2012, any new structures will be implemented post the Mayoral elections. If we are going to go for the transparency straightaway and try to make the public confident that this process is going to be transparent those structures need to be up and running and that transparency apparent from the off, not waiting for a period of months until afterwards. Even if they cannot be fully up and running I think there should be something in place that has that transparency.

Catherine Crawford (Chief Executive): I think, if I may say so, that is really a piece of careless drafting on my part. I would like to separate out governance and public transparency. The structures that I think it would be imprudent to recommend to the incoming MOPC to put in place would be around the appointment of non-executive advisers because they would potentially have a very brief period. Any mechanisms that we introduce to have transparency such as the decision log and public meetings will happen with immediate effect. They will not be delayed until the election.

Reshard Auladin (Chair): OK. Thank you. We have got one minute to go before 1pm. Thank you. That is the end of the meeting.