



Public Services Committee

Oral evidence: Designing a public services workforce fit for the future

Thursday 31 March 2022

9 am

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Members present: Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top (The Chair); Lord Bichard; Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth; Lord Davies of Gower; Lord Filkin; Baroness Pitkeathley; Lord Porter of Spalding.

Evidence Session No. 10

Virtual Proceeding

Questions 76 - 83

Witnesses

I: Robin Wilkinson, Chief of Corporate Services, Metropolitan Police; James Zuccollo, Director for School Workforce, Education Policy Institute.

Examination of witnesses

Robin Wilkinson and James Zuccollo.

Q76 **The Chair:** Good morning, everyone. Welcome to this unusual Thursday morning session of the Public Services Committee in the House of Lords. My name is Hilary Armstrong. We are very pleased to be able to welcome two witnesses this morning: Robin Wilkinson from the Metropolitan Police, and James Zuccollo from the Education Policy Institute. We had to postpone our earlier session with you because of Covid, so we are very pleased that we are able to go ahead this morning. Before you answer the first question, could you introduce yourselves so that if people cannot read who you are on screen they will at least be able hear from you and identify you?

We are looking at how the public services can develop a workforce that is fit for the future, and clearly training will be a very important part of doing that. That is what we will concentrate on this morning. Given that training and development during your work is so important, what do you think needs to change in the way we have been doing it so far?

Robin Wilkinson: Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I very much appreciate it. I am chief of corporate services at the Met, one of two deputies to the commissioner. My remit is across all our corporate activities, the non-operational side of policing. I have been in the Met for 10 years. Before that, I was the HR director for the National Offender Management Service and a non-executive director on the College of Policing board.

There are three strategic training and development issues on my mind. One issue is how to move this from a conversation about a nice to have to a fundamental requirement, and I will come back to that, if I may. The second issue that I suggest is important is supervision, and the third issue is planning.

On the first, I come from an environment in which every day the demand for public services, the demand for policing, far outstrips our ability to meet that demand and the demands of the public and of victims. Every day, the organisation, the Metropolitan Police and every police service, will be making a choice about how to deploy its resource and making choices that we know will disappoint some. In that context, the judgment about how much time and effort to invest in skills development, taking people off front-line duty to enable them to improve their skills and capability, is a hard choice. It should not be but it is, and it is a hard choice because we know that at the end of the day there are victims and members of the public who want to see police officers.

The investment in skills development that would deliver a more quality service in the long term comes up against the short-term requirements of day-to-day delivery. That is where the hard choice in making skills development a requirement. The Police Foundation talked about a licence to practise, and the College of Policing has explored that notion in the past. I think there is merit in thinking carefully about that and a

requirement for you to maintain your professional capability by ensuring that you have delivered skills uplift over the previous two to three years.

The breadth of that is huge, and I would like to see the College of Policing setting out a three to five-year development plan that every police officer must go through to maintain the requirement—a force employer, if you like, to meet that. CPD is too often seen as a route to promotion. Somehow we need to change the construct of that and see whether there is a route to good-quality front-line service delivery so that it is a requirement for everyone, not just those who want to progress up the promotion ladder.

I have not seen a lot on first-line supervision in the evidence to the committee so far. It is vital that we think carefully about the quality of first-line supervision. Sergeants in policing are instrumental in creating an environment in which their officers can thrive and flourish and see development as essential. The first-line supervisor is the coach, the mentor, the trainer, as well as the overseer of work activity. They have a hugely difficult job, and I think we underplay it.

On long-term planning, particularly in relation to workforce numbers, I think this is the case for all sectors, but certainly in policing over the 10 years our front-line workforce has increased, decreased, and increased in splurges. I will never say that increasing police officer numbers is wrong. It is not; it is right. This current growth is fantastic, but maintaining quality and supervision at pace brings some challenges, so long-term planning is vital.

The Chair: Thank you, Robin.

James Zuccollo: I lead the school workforce research at the Education Policy Institute, which is a small independent research institute based in London focused on improving educational opportunity for all children across the UK, particularly in England.

We think—[*Inaudible.*]—an enormous amount of training, which I think was recognised at the DfE evidence session earlier. In the offering for teachers from what they call an early career framework these days, they follow years of intensive coaching and practice through to the national professional qualifications that the DfE provides, where you can do, say, 15 months/two years of training to train as someone who—[*Inaudible.*]—leadership, someone who is a leader, who will be what we call an executive leader where you lead across several schools. There has been a huge training offer already for teachers and—[*Inaudible.*]—over recent years.

I fear I will be very boring in saying that I think the DfE is heading in exactly the right direction here. It has recognised where there are problems. There was a poor retention of teachers earlier. Perhaps I will step back for a moment and mention the context of that. I know you have heard about teacher retention before, but certainly over the last decade fewer people have been going into teaching and more teachers

have been leaving the profession. That has relaxed a bit over the past couple of years, but it seems extremely likely that that is a temporary blip due to the pandemic. It is very unclear what will happen after that or what the change in trend is, if there is indeed a change in that trend. That is why the DfE has been putting these things in place. It has recognised that a lot of people are leaving the profession early on.

My computer is telling me my connection is unstable, but I presume someone will tell me if I start cutting out for you.

The Chair: You cut out a very short amount, but I think we got the gist of what you were saying.

James Zuccollo: They have been leaving, so that early career period where you move from training—

The Chair: You have gone again, James. Robin, I will quickly come back to you. I thought it was very interesting when you began to talk about the sergeant and the supervisor and the support, because I think that is central. It is not something that we externally associate with sergeants. Do they get time and consideration for this activity?

Robin Wilkinson: If I am honest, no, not yet. This is a real challenge. I speak from a Metropolitan Police perspective, and I suspect this is similar across policing. Over the last five to 10 years, as we have worked through austerity and different funding periods, we have reduced supervision ratios to protect front-line policing. We had to take conscious decisions four or five years ago with the demand for us to put more investigative resource into rape offences, schools officers and prevention activity. We have increased management ratios. Some sergeants are managing 10 constables, so that is a line management/functional management kind of responsibility, which is really difficult.

As a management team in the Met, we are actively considering whether—it will be “whether”, I think, and when—we will put more sergeants into the system to give them a chance to properly and actively supervise, coach, mentor, train their people. That is essential with an increasingly inexperienced workforce as a result of the great opportunity that the police uplift programme brings, but we need to dig deep with the College of Policing and think about whether we are equipping new sergeants with the skills and capabilities that they need. Are we really clear that they are moving from a practitioner role to that critical practitioner/manager/leader role, coach and friend, mentor and challenger? It is such a difficult role that fundamentally, no, we are not setting them up for success yet.

The Chair: Thank you.

Q77 **Lord Bichard:** I want to press Robin a little bit. I agree with everything you said, Robin, on the priority for training. I think the Chair was asking, though, whether we need to change the way in which we deliver training. For example, should we have more reflective learning, mentoring and coaching rather than taking people off their activity for a long period,

which as you say is quite difficult? Should we have more joint training with other agencies, because the impact on the ground increasingly depends upon the various agencies working effectively together? Could we do that? Could we use apprenticeships more? I think we are interested in whether we could do things differently in order to have a greater impact and to encourage people to stay in the police force.

Robin Wilkinson: Thank you, Lord Bichard. I am not complacent about this, but retention is not our most significant issue at the moment. That may change, but we are still seeing relatively low turnover rates among police officers. Apprenticeships are vital. For police recruitment now, as you know, through the police education and qualifications framework, new police officers either come in with a degree or enter with a high-level apprenticeship route, which is fantastic. I am a very strong supporter of that. I believe it will improve quality in the long term.

The first parts of your question are key. In theory and in principle, I agree that there are opportunities for doing joint training. Some takes place at the moment and we could extend it. Coaching, mentoring; absolutely. However, I think there is a base requirement for us to find ways of equipping front-line police officers, response officers, to maintain their competence, knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues, mental health, dealing with people in mental health crises, substance abuse, child abuse, domestic abuse. There are so many issues where their skilled knowledge of process and policy needs to be kept up to date. That requires us to think in a structured way about how we impart that knowledge, that basic transfer of knowledge, and how we get the way in which they engage with the public and with victims in the right places—those kinds of softer but critical skills from a policing perspective.

For me, there is a graduated approach here. Let us have apprenticeships, yes, but let us get the basics right for the workforce that we have. Where we have opportunities for joint training, that is fantastic, but if we focus just on the joint training, we will miss, from a policing perspective, some basic steps that we still have to put in place.

Lord Bichard: Clearly I am not suggesting that we switch entirely. I am just asking whether there is an opportunity to do more of that sort training. Presumably you are doing more online training. Are you involving users, members of the community, in your training? That is the sort of thing that I was interested in hearing you talk about, because otherwise we will carry on doing the same old things and then you get the same old results.

Robin Wilkinson: Yes, 100%. Blended learning, absolutely, moving away from the concept that you have to be in a classroom to learn towards just-in-time learning, giving officers who are approaching a job they know will be difficult the ability to access bite-sized learning that will remind them of the policy, the process, the practice. All of that is essential, as is how we can ensure, with our local partnerships, that we are connecting with local health services, local authorities and social

services to make sure that our people are learning together when they can. I completely agree with that.

The change needs to be in us valuing that protected learning time. It is the whole sector, from Ministers and government downwards, accepting that it is a necessary investment and not a distraction from the challenges of a workload that will always exceed our capacity to meet everybody's demands and expectations.

James Zuccollo: I hope that you can hear me now and that I am not all garbled. I echo so much of what Robin said about the difficulty with protecting time. It gives me great pleasure to be able to say something good about DfE here, since I spend a lot of my professional career criticising the DfE. Teachers get a 10% reduction in hours in their first year of employment, 5% in the second year, and guaranteed access to coaching over the first two years of their career. These are very recent innovations for teachers, but they are likely to make a big difference.

We know that when teachers are asked, "Why don't you do more training, even though you say it's so valuable?", usually they say that it conflicts with their work schedules. It is the hardest thing, particularly for mid-career teachers, when they have young children and a very busy home life and are trying to fit things in. They do not have the time to go to after-work seminars and conferences. Teachers are already working typically 50 to 60 hours a week on average—it is more for senior leaders—so they work exceptionally long hours during term time compared to most other professions. Obviously they get long holidays, but their term-time hours are very long and it is hard to fit training around that. On the other hand, we know, as Robin said, that when teachers do effective professional development, even though they spend some time out of the classroom doing that, children's learning increases and they can do more.

It is certainly about changing the culture within schools, and the leadership part of that is so important. Often we focus on training for younger teachers, but in fact when we look at the barriers to more training it is often that the school culture does not make time for that training or does not value it as much as the research that we and others have done suggests it should be valued. In a way, although it is a hard thing to say, more training for senior leaders is crucial to help them to understand the balance between manipulating timetables and working on their resourcing to make the time available.

I think the DfE is doing fantastic work at the moment in pushing for early-career teachers and with new national professional qualifications for mid-career teachers. The question is what the uptake will be. How will people make the time to achieve it, particularly people who are not so good at scheduling and managing their time that they already make the time to do all these things? I think the worry is that the easiest to reach and already extremely effective teachers are likely to be the ones who access the new qualifications. That is a challenge that still remains.

The Chair: That is a very interesting thought.

Q78 **Lord Davies of Gower:** Good morning, panel. This is a question for Robin. I speak as somebody who has been through the training and development in the Metropolitan Police, and I am very pleased to hear what you say about the development of sergeants and below inspector ranks. I suggest to you that it is all about the way you deliver training and development. Once upon a time there was a centre of excellence at Hendon. I believe that things for training and development have been devolved more to local areas now. Do you agree that that coincides with the lowering of standards, which are fairly evident in the Metropolitan Police at the moment?

Robin Wilkinson: There could be a long conversation about that last point, Lord Davies, but of course we have to increase standards in the Metropolitan Police, and competence, capability, is critical to that. It is important in the early years, and I just reinforce what James said about teachers. Police officers who have been police officers for three, five, seven, 10 years are many years away from their basic training at Hendon or a university, and so much will have happened. How do we access those officers and give them protected time? They will possibly have young families, being stereotypical, but they will certainly be under pressure for time at that stage.

Quality of training provision is essential. We have recentralised most of our training provision at Hendon. I do not know if you have seen our new facility at Hendon. It has been transformed. Most of our early training is now delivered on university campuses, not at Hendon, but we are developing a new blended curriculum with a new team at Hendon as the centre of expertise. I would like to see the sector go further. I think the College of Policing has a critical role to play in instituting a framework requiring skills development over a three to five-year cycle. Why not accredit the quality of training in police forces? How can we ensure that internal training delivered from our people at Hendon is delivered to the right standard, the right quality?

I agree with what you said about how training is delivered. Those delivering training have to be inspirational to our officers. They have to instil the right culture, the right values, and they need to be forward thinking and not backward thinking in how that training is delivered. There is a lot in it, but ensuring that we can equip our people to have the skills to do their jobs and can equip our supervisors to ensure that they are inspiring and managing their teams effectively is one of the challenges we have as a service.

Lord Davies of Gower: I do not think I can disagree with you there, but I will say that I am not so sure that the College of Policing in its current form is capable of doing that.

Robin Wilkinson: We cannot flip flop. We have had different iterations in policing of essential training facilities. The College of Policing is there and it has a new chief executive and a new chair. We have to give it a

chance to set. I was horrified to learn from the chief executive this week that the College of Policing has a 5% cut in its resources this year at a time when, surely to goodness, we need a quality central resource that has confidence in its long-term future such that it can help to drive the changes needed across policing. I do not disagree, but let us stick with it.

Lord Davies of Gower: Nick Herbert's report is quite interesting.

The Chair: We are not going there this morning.

Q79 **Lord Porter of Spalding:** Robin and James, you have both spoken at length about the importance of training to deliver a quality workforce. Probably one of the implications of what you both said is that the workforce needs to have more time away from the front line to do more training to deliver quality. My issue is: what training do either of you see we could be putting on to bring more people into the public sector workforce? That is the problem we are trying to address. It is not the quality of what is being delivered; it is the fact that we do not have enough people to do front line across the whole of the public sector workforce. Are you aware from either of your experiences of some sort of training route that will encourage people to come into the public sector?

Robin Wilkinson: We have recruited 9,000 new police officers into the Metropolitan Police Service in the last three years. We need to recruit another 4,000 this year. We have a lot of great people, a lot of inspiring people, who want to be police officers. It is not just about their training route; it is about their strength of purpose, what they think they will get from the culture of the organisation. It is about pay and pension, and the balance between the two. It is about family and work/life balance. All of that needs to be right to create an environment in which we can attract people with the right culture, the right standards and the right capabilities. Training is an important part of that.

I would like us to see a greater focus through latter schooling and tertiary education into broader public sector-focused degrees. There is a pre-entry degree focus in policing now. It is fantastic, and we have 1,000 graduates of that programme now, hopefully a high proportion of whom will come into policing. How can we broaden that base and see that as a valuable career opportunity? My worry is that, in the public sector, it is less valued, less respected, and the discourse on policing from some in leadership, the media and elsewhere means that it is a less attractive proposition than it was 30 years ago. That is what I worry about: that the people who have the right values and ethos are possibly no longer quite as attracted to this fantastic role and job as they might otherwise have been.

James Zuccollo: I am not aware of any training that will recruit more people. I am not sure that people entering a profession know much about what they are getting into before they get into it. There are big recruitment shortfalls in teaching, but they are almost all in secondary schools. We recruit enough primary teachers, just not secondary teachers. We recruit twice as many history and classics teachers as we

think we need, but half as many physics and maths teachers as we think we need. It is easy to hold on to teachers outside London, relatively speaking, but hard inside London.

These differences are probably not due to the access to the training, but I think there are pretty obvious differences in how much elite maths and physics graduates earn as opposed to history graduates, and how much people earn in London as opposed to outside London. As Robin said, it is boring to say this, but in a way salary matters enormously here and seems to massively outweigh the importance of these training routes. Because of Covid we overrecruited teachers by a few per cent for the first time in over a decade. There was a 7% increase in the number of people who wanted to enter teacher training, which also happened in the last recession back in 2008. These things cannot be coincidental.

I agree with Robin about status. People in teaching often talk about status. How do we improve the status of teaching so that people value it and want to be teachers? I do not think it is too controversial to say that a lot of people think that going into a finance job in the City of London is very high status. I do not think it is too controversial to say that the social contribution people might think of from teaching, policing, being a doctor possibly outweighs the social contribution of working in M&A, as valuable as that is to some people. Why is that status so different? The obvious answer is because one of those groups earns multiples of what the other group earns. I know it is sometimes unpopular to say that if you pay people more, maybe they will value the profession more, maybe they will be more likely to stay, more likely to want to become one of those people, but I think it is fairly obviously true. There is no good evidence that training can offset that.

Lord Porter of Spalding: Thanks, James. I do not know whether I need to declare this or not, but as a bricklayer by trade I kind of agree with your sentiment about some of the things that we do for a living being held in higher or lower esteem by the world collectively, but I am not sure who the people are who actually say those things. It cannot purely be about pay now, because a good bricklayer will earn £2,000 a week but will only be as respected as he was two years ago when he was not earning £2,000 a week, comparatively. I am not sure it is about pay, but thanks for your insight and your belief that there is a way to train our way into a bigger workforce. There are other things that we will need to do to get to that space. Thank you.

The Chair: We have been looking at, and other people have been talking about, a stepped approach. I remember when we had a lot of teaching assistants, and that was one way in which people who would not have been eligible for initial teacher training were getting into seeing what a good job it could be and moving up. We had someone yesterday talking about special constables in the police, and that was also a way of identifying people who were interested and was there a way you could convert them into mainline. I think it is about whether there are steps and stages as well that could increase the numbers. We interviewed

someone from New Zealand who said that the basic premise they are now working on is how they make sure that the public service values are accepted and promoted much more generally to attract people who are interested in service.

As you are answering other questions, maybe you can think about forms of entry other than the graduate one. I know that is not true for all police, although I understand that most of the entries are now at graduate level. Maybe you can think about that when you are answering the next question, from Baroness Pitkeathley.

Q80 Baroness Pitkeathley: Thank you for your answers so far. My question follows on from Lord Porter's, because it is about how you get people from the broadest range of backgrounds to come into public service. That is one of the things that we have been looking at: do we recruit from too small a pool? How can training extend that and encourage people to come into public service who otherwise perhaps would not have thought of it, and pursue a career in some form of public service? Could you also address the question, which Lord Bichard put to you briefly, about how service users and front-line staff could be involved in the design of training or in the delivery of training?

James Zuccollo: How we can open new routes into teaching is an important question. As Baroness Armstrong said, there are a lot of teaching assistants these days. Since about 2000 to 2010, the number of teaching assistants expanded enormously, and about a quarter of staff in schools these days are teaching assistants. I think a lot of people hoped that they would go on to become teachers and solve a lot of our problems, but it does not seem to have done that, unfortunately. Many of them remain teaching assistants, or at least we do not get enough new teachers to replace the fall in the number of other people entering teacher recruitment.

However, other routes into teaching have been extremely successful, such as Teach First, which started about a decade ago. I understand that when it started in about 2010, most teacher training was attracting about three applicants per place that we funded, but Teach First was attracting about eight applicants per place that we funded, despite being far more selective. People were asked to apply only from degrees at prestigious universities and so on.

There is something about the way it is marketed and the way you present it. I know that the DfE is working at the moment on how we can improve the marketing. I understand that Teach First used to appeal to the public-spirited ethos of people but found that a more challenge-based promotion worked much better in bringing people in: "Are you the kind of person who can succeed at this challenging career of teaching?"

It would be much more radical—I do not know that any of these things are good ideas, to be clear—to reduce the barriers of entry to teaching. At the moment, teaching is a graduate profession. There have been some suggestions that maybe you should need a master's degree, more

education. We could ask: do you really need a degree to go into teaching and be a good teacher? There is lots of evidence from the US that it is very difficult to know who will be a good teacher before they become a teacher. Their grades, whether they have a degree and that sort of thing, do not really tell you much about how good a teacher they will end up being. The only way to find out is to give them some experience of teaching and then see how they do. Some people flourish and some people do not, and picking the right people is really important.

Putting all this together, maybe the barriers to enter teaching are quite high. Still only about a third of the population get a degree by the time they are 30, and we know that they are disproportionately from some ethnic groups and backgrounds. Is that really necessary? Are there alternative routes that we could open up? To pick the right people you need lots of applicants. If you have only one or two people applying for each position, it is very hard to pick the people, or, if you overrecruit, to thin out the people who applied after the first or second year of training. Trying to encourage more people to apply perhaps by dropping those barriers to entry into teacher training could be worth considering.

Those are big deviations from what we do right now where we ask people to go through a degree and then go to university again postgraduate, typically, and there are a lot of other implications. I do not know whether that is a good idea, but it is one direction you could go in to open up entry.

Baroness Pitkeathley: Could you address the question I asked about service users being involved in design and delivery?

James Zuccollo: Yes, apologies. By service users, I presume you mean parents and students. I do not have any expertise in parents and students informing the design of programmes, although it is certainly the case that a lot of the people who design programmes for initial teacher training are former teachers, so there is a huge input from that direction.

Robin Wilkinson: I thought that James's points were fascinating. My daughter has just left university and is doing a year as a teaching assistant in a primary school before she takes teacher training. She is one of your oversupply, James, in primary school education, but it is interesting how her year as a teaching assistant will either make or break her as a teacher. It has been a tough year, being thrown into a classroom working with some great but challenged pupils. I do not know the extent to which peer support in that profession is necessarily there.

Policing is going in the opposite direction to what James has just suggested and is moving into a degree-based profession. It is still contested in the profession and massively in our workforce. We need to set out clearly that the job of a police officer is complex and that the problem solving that is tested at level 6, the degree-based level, is the kind of cognitive capability that you need to be an effective police officer. The portable qualification of a degree has been applied for that.

The critical thing has been the apprenticeship route. I do not think policing would have adopted this without the apprenticeship levy, which has effectively said to employers, "You will lose money unless you can invest in apprenticeships and bring it back". It has been a useful lever, but that is a way of attracting a wider group of people, people who have not been to university and, instead of going to university and incurring debt, take a high-level apprenticeship and succeed in becoming a police officer.

It is the personal attributes that you want from a police officer, someone who will be willing to be the caring, compassionate, victim-focused person as well as the brave, courageous person who is willing to confront danger. Do you have the right attributes to be able to do both, plus the cognitive capability to work in complex and problem-solving environments to be an effective police officer? It is quite a tough ask. That is why we have moved into a degree base, but we must keep the apprenticeships. We are working in the Met on internships. We have a very vibrant cadet scheme, which is very diverse, and it is fascinating and inspiring to talk to those young people. Creating pathways from them through the high-level apprenticeship into policing is very important.

One of the challenges is the workforce model. On the Chair's point about stepped progression, PCSO is a great opportunity to do a similar front-line role but without all the police powers. Ten years ago we had 5,000 PCSOs in the Met and a number of them would have gone on to be police officers. The workforce and funding models have changed, and funding has gone towards police officers, and we now have just over 1,000 PCSOs. We are therefore not recruiting many people into the PCSO profession every year, which means that you are not getting the opportunity then to bring people through. There is a workforce structure issue here that needs a big political decision, because the funding model currently does not support it.

We have recently introduced community members into our training for new officers at Hendon. We have community members training people and telling them what it is like to be policed by the Metropolitan Police and how they can improve their interactions. It is very rewarding and it is a very important change in approach.

Finally, on the value point of public service, we will never compete with the private sector on pay. We must not forget that public sector pensions are still very attractive compared to many in the private sector, but unfortunately a 20 year-old is not thinking very effectively about pension. They are thinking about paying off their student debt, their rent, how they create a deposit for a house. It is a difficult balance, but what matters to people is the signal that the country sends to them in pay awards. It really matters to colleagues what it says about how their contribution is being valued when government and others are making decisions about the affordability of pay progression every year. I know that there are wider economic considerations at play, but I am not sure

that the value of public service and how that feels to our hard-pressed public servants is sufficiently high in the annual deliberations.

Baroness Pitkeathley: Thank you. That is very important.

Q81 **Lord Bichard:** I am tempted to say that they need a pension without the student loan the way we are going at the moment, but that is a separate issue.

I am interested in degree-level entry. The committee is looking at how we can get more people into the public service to meet the challenges that we know we have and the targets that you now have. Yet sometimes I think that we raise the level of entry to a point where people cannot get in. Do we really need degree-level entry police officers? Did we really need, 35 years ago, to say that every nurse had to have a degree? Now, 35 years later, we are saying that we do not have enough nurses who are empathetic and sympathetic and have the skills that you and I expect when we are in a hospital bed. I am just asking you to comment on this. I wonder whether as a committee we should not be urging caution about future increases in entry levels, because it makes it more difficult to fill the posts. Is that not one of the problems we have at the moment? Robin, do we really need everyone to have a degree or a high-level apprenticeship to be a good bobby?

Robin Wilkinson: I encourage you to be creative about how you test this as opposed to reaching a conclusion that a degree is the wrong choice, but I do not think you need a degree per se to be a police officer. You do not need a history degree or a degree in economics to be a police officer. You need an amazing set of skills to do that job well, as I said. You need to be brave and courageous, compassionate, full of integrity, but let us not lose sight of the fact that it is a massively complicated job. How do you therefore test the capability to do that complex job and to understand complex legal and societal issues, and the ability to risk assess and make judgments in the moment? I have also seen in your evidence so far how we get portable skills across the sector, and of course a degree is viewed as one of those factors.

The other issue I ask you to consider is that some parts of our community who are very aspirational will be reluctant to see their children going into careers that are not degree-based because they see it as not sufficiently aspirational.

It is a complex issue, but I encourage the committee to think about the issue of policing being a degree-based profession. It is a profession that ensures that our officers, after their training, have a degree-based qualification. We are open to anybody who has two A-level entry qualifications, sufficient literacy and use of English language—they need to communicate with people—but we train people and certify their training on the basis of degree level. That is very different from it being a degree-based profession, and I would not want us to get to saying that you must have been to university to become a police officer. It is

powerful to say that we want to give you that qualification at the end of your training.

Lord Bichard: Thank you, Robin. That is a helpful point.

Q82 **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** Thanks very much to James and Robin. It has been a fascinating session. You have both spoken of some success, and James talked about a culture for training. I am interested in how we nurture in all parts of the public services and how we support people to develop skills and access high quality training. As a country, private sector as well as public sector, we do not stress the importance of training enough. I am interested in how you think we can do more to encourage staff to take up opportunities across the public sector and, as I say, nurture that across the public sector.

James Zuccollo: It is a very difficult question. I think it is critical to ask why people are not already doing this training. If it is so valuable as all us policy people say, why do people not do it already? As you say, in the private sector people often do not do a lot of professional development throughout their careers. Probably one of the biggest reasons is that the person who pays for it, who is usually your employer, and the time they have to give up, does not get all the benefits, because probably in a year or two you move on to another employer and someone else gets the benefits. These are the externalities that the economists talk about.

I am often in favour of leaving things up to head teachers—the people on the ground in schools know most about the situation and are best placed to decide how to run their schools—but I think we can see that the benefit for the whole profession, for society, of having people do more professional development throughout their careers could be greater than the benefit to any one school or one place where they do the training. As we have done for early career teachers, where we have carved out some time and said, “In pay and conditions, we will carve out 5% of your time to just do training, to have mentoring”, we perhaps need to consider whether there are some similar or equivalent things we could do later in teachers’ careers.

As the teaching profession, of course, the Department for Education has a lot of control over teachers’ pay and conditions at many schools, or a great influence anyway. Is there some way to fund that? Robin and I have both said quite a lot about whether, if you spent more money on it, you could get better outcomes, and I understand that this is another one of those situations.

Robin Wilkinson: I agree with James. I think that the employer has to take more of a responsibility and that this is not just something to leave with an employee. I know that there is a philosophical debate about individuals taking responsibility for their own learning and such like. As I said at the start, this is challenging when faced with demand that outstrips supply and targets that are focused on outcomes in the short term, so you focus on the short-term issues.

In the long term, going back to Lord Davies's point about ensuring that we have highly-skilled officers to deal with the highly-complex job that we have, somehow we need to make it an employer's responsibility to build in the time, not just in early years but throughout careers, to ensure that colleagues are getting the skills and knowledge refreshed to do the basic job as well as wider skills to develop them as individuals. If we are not careful, CPD is seen as the optional thing to develop someone.

We need to think about training as the requirement to do the job well, whether you have been in the job for three years, five years, seven years, 10 years or more. That has to be an employer's responsibility. How does the performance framework that we have in place give more emphasis to this as opposed to the importance of direct outcomes for the public at this time?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Is there a case—perhaps this happens to a degree, but I do not think it does—for having some core skills that are transferrable and are taught to all people across the public service and are about the values of the public sector, and are seen as transferable skills, or is that just too difficult to contemplate?

James Zuccollo: It is a very tricky question. More and more in education we are realising that skills are about what you know, and knowing is really context-specific. It is very hard to transfer skills—say, critical thinking skills—from history to maths if you do not know a lot of numbers or arithmetic, because you cannot apply them without the context. Teachers say about their training requirements, "We need to know more about teaching children with special educational needs, more about assessment practices, more about individualised learning". I think that to make training useful such that people want to do it and value it, it has to be integrated into people's practice and it has to be contextually specific to the needs of the school and the needs of the individual teacher at the time. I am a little bit sceptical of pan-public service training

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: I see Robin agrees. That was just a stray point. Thanks.

The Chair: That is interesting, because of course if you are teaching in a school you may well have a child who is vulnerable and you suspect there is abuse, but you are not an expert on that and you need to know how to talk to a social worker. It is that sort of thing that really does not happen enough. I suspect the same is true for policing. I have long been arguing for particular things that all public-facing workers need to know about.

Q83 **Lord Filkin:** Let me ask an impossible question. We have heard a lot of eminent good sense that I think many of us would support and hope will be implemented, but given the scale of the challenge that we are beginning to unearth in a society with massive change, that is unpredictable, with insufficient resources over the next decade and a labour shortage in most sectors of the economy but particularly in the public sector, it will be essential to transform services better to cope with that.

Do you agree that transformation is fundamental? Given that it is on Robin's job description, it would be very good to hear a succinct view about what importance he gives it, and what he is doing about it, or how we can learn more about the Met's transformation plans, and certainly James's view too. Where is the potential for transformation in education, rather than just teaching at schools?

James Zuccollo: I am not in favour of transformation. I think that the constant improvement of what we have, an extremely strong and well-functioning school system, a higher education system that is the envy of much of the world, is the right way forward. I think that transformation risks throwing out too much. Change is often extremely costly, and the direction we are heading in at the moment with improvements in training, focusing on supporting early career teachers, improving salaries for them and job conditions for all teachers is the right way forward.

In fact, implementation of these things is the hard part. We have come up with a lot of ideas about how to improve. The huge challenge here is how we implement those and make sure that it reaches the people who need it the most across education, including the early years, alternative provision, and people with special needs. No, I am not so in favour of transformation.

Lord Filkin: Why have you not knocked it out of your job description?

James Zuccollo: Sorry, is that a rhetorical question?

Lord Filkin: It is in your title. It is one of your roles.

The Chair: No, it is Robin's role.

Lord Filkin: Yes, that is what I am talking about. It is a question to Robin.

The Chair: Yes, but that was James who was talking. Robin?

Lord Filkin: Was it? I will go back to sleep.

Robin Wilkinson: There is always huge change, and we are always running to catch up with multiple changes in society, in law, in people's perceptions and, in a policing context and a Met context, how we respond to incidents, to issues. How do we deal with that as well as dealing with a fantastic—*[Inaudible.]*. There has been change over the last 10 years, and there is an ambitious programme for the next five and 10.

Let us not say that everything needs to start from scratch. We need a long-term plan for the sector. We need a long-term plan that has confidence in the College of Policing, that is driving a skills agenda for the long term. We need confidence in a long-term funding strategy that means that we can understand what the size of the workforce will be and how we can invest in our first-line supervisors. We need a pan-government, pan-society view about the importance of public service and the value that it puts on public service, and we need to find a mechanism

to make skills development quality, the quality aspect of what we do, as important as the quantity. I do not know the answer to that in a performance framework, but that is what we need to do.

The important thing from a Met perspective is that we have a workforce that is respected and trusted in London to do the difficult job that it is required to do in London in relation to the scale, the quality and the diversity. That is an unbelievably difficult kind of conundrum to work with, and we need lots of help to achieve that transformation, but that is the transformation that we need. That is what we are trying to do. All our effort is going into that activity.

Lord Filkin: Interesting. That would be another half an hour. I do not think we will get a long-term funding plan, but whether we get a long-term plan is open to considerable doubt. What we are certain of is that we will get complete uncertainty and it will be very different. Let me leave it at that. There is no time for that.

The Chair: Yes, there are lots of things that we would like to keep pursuing. I was interested, going back to where we started with you, Robin, in how you enable proper mentoring and support. I think that is a key issue for teachers too, because I do not think that happens enough. That goes back to your bit about context. There are lots of things we could have kept discussing. If there is anything you think about afterwards, anything you think we have missed, please let us have your views in writing. Thank you enormously. I was impressed with how you had worked out what other things we had been hearing before you came before us today, and that is very reassuring to us. Thank you enormously, and thank you to the committee, too.