



Public Administration Select Committee

Oral evidence: [Crime Statistics](#) – HC 760

Wednesday 8 January 2014

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on Wednesday 8 January 2014.

Written evidence from witnesses:

- [Stephen Greenhalgh, Deputy Mayor of London](#)
- [Tom Winsor and Olivia Pinkney, HMIC](#)

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Members present: [Mr Bernard Jenkin](#) (Chair), [Alun Cairns](#), [Paul Flynn](#), [Sheila Gilmore](#), [Robert Halfon](#), [David Heyes](#), [Kelvin Hopkins](#), [Greg Mulholland](#), [Lindsay Roy](#), [Mr Andrew Turner](#)

Questions 284-462

Witnesses: **Stephen Greenhalgh**, Deputy Mayor of London and Sir **Bernard Hogan-Howe**, Commissioner, Metropolitan Police, gave evidence

Q284 **Chair:** May I welcome our two distinguished witnesses to this session of the Public Administration Select Committee on crime statistics, and particularly recorded crime statistics in the Metropolitan Police? Can I ask each of you to identify yourselves for the record, please?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Good morning, Chairman. My name is Bernard Hogan-Howe, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

Stephen Greenhalgh: Stephen Greenhalgh, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.

Q285 **Chair:** Thank you for coming to us today. Can I also invite you to give short and sharp answers? We will do our best to ask short and sharp questions, and I will pull up colleagues—and I will pull you up—if things are getting a bit protracted. If I may kick off, do we all accept that the general concern about the integrity of crime statistics is legitimate?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Yes, certainly for me, Chairman. It is vital that we have crime statistics that we can trust. I have said numerous times, following from your Committee meeting, that there are two big reasons why we need to have trust in our crime stats. The first is for the benefit of the victim. They need to make sure, obviously, that their crime is recorded accurately. Secondly, it is really important that we know how

much crime there is and whether it is going up or down, so that the police can take action. Frankly at times, I suppose, the police and others want to take the benefit of reducing crime. We can hardly take that benefit—that we did something that was good—if we have crime statistics that we cannot rely on. For many reasons, it is vital that those crime statistics can be relied on.

Stephen Greenhalgh: Absolutely. It is the reason why, back in March 2013, I asked a body that is independent of both the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Metropolitan Police Service to look into the integrity of crime recording. It has looked at the systems and processes, and its report will be available at the end of this month. It is a legitimate concern.

Q286 Chair: Sir Bernard, when PC James Patrick appeared before us, we found his evidence quite compelling, and you responded saying you would like to get to the bottom of this and find out what he is alleging and how widespread it is, and talk to Mr Patrick about his concerns. Have you done so?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: What we have done up to now is that, first of all, what I said was I want an inquiry into his concerns. One of the things we had to watch is that, first of all, we were approaching the Christmas period, but probably more importantly—as you are aware—we were actually asked by this Committee, when we approached him about his welfare, whether we were trying to interfere with his evidence to this Committee. For that reason, we have been a little careful about approaching him directly. You are also aware—I think it has been put in the public domain by this officer and this Committee—that there is a misconduct process around him. So for various reasons, we have not approached him directly about that inquiry, but we will within a short period of time. However, we have started an inquiry internally, led by the Deputy Commissioner, to look at his claims, of which we have made some assessment. Obviously, what will be really helpful is when we can talk to him directly.

Q287 Chair: When will you speak to Mr Patrick?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I would expect within the next few weeks. As I said, we were a little compromised by the fact that, as you know, the Clerk to this Committee asked us why we were approaching him after his appearance at the Committee, and whether we were trying to interfere with his objectivity, which we were not; we were checking on his welfare. We did have to take some cognisance of that before we approached him, but we have not been idle in that time. I think there were 20 claims in the papers we initially received. We have made some assessment of those 20 claims.

Q288 Chair: How concerned are you that he has been raising these concerns in the hierarchy of your organisation for many, many months, if not years, and it is only by appearing in front of our Committee that you make a commitment to see him—a commitment that you have not yet fulfilled?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I did not say that I would see him. What is important is that we have an inquiry, and I will not lead that inquiry. The other issue that we have to keep an eye on is the fact that there is a misconduct process going on. That is why we will make sure that it is done in a proper, appropriate and objective way. I agree with you that

if he has been making these claims for a long time, it would have been best if they had been resolved before now.

Q289 Chair: What lessons do you learn from that?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: One, which we have already looked at, is what we can do to support whistleblowers.

Chair: I beg your pardon?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Whistleblowers: people who do what this gentleman did when he came to your Committee. He talked about something that he says he has not been able to get resolved by the internal mechanisms.

Q290 Chair: Which is more important: the disciplinary action against PC Patrick, or the possible truth of what his claims are?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Sorry?

Chair: It seems to me that you are prioritising the disciplinary action against PC Patrick, rather than wanting to get to the bottom of what he has been saying.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think that is quite incorrect. That is not what I am saying, and I do not think it is what has happened.

Q291 Chair: Why do you not suspend the disciplinary action?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Sorry; what I cannot do at this Committee is talk about an individual's case.

Chair: Well, you can, actually.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am not prepared to.

Q292 Chair: That is a different matter. I am just asking why you do not suspend your disciplinary action so that you can have a conversation outside the disciplinary action. You can resume the disciplinary action afterwards, but it would seem to me that the question of the integrity of your crime statistics is more important than the disciplinary action against PC Patrick, particularly as you now recognise him as a whistleblower.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: It is very difficult to talk publicly about an internal misconduct process. I know you would not want me to compromise that process. We are doing certain things as a result of this Committee's hearing to make sure that internal misconduct goes forward—that is quite proper. For example, we have taken separate legal advice. We are asking a separate force chief constable to consider his case and to see whether that should go forward, but that is quite different to saying that we should suspend it. I would not want you to think that we are ignoring the risk or that we are victimising somebody who is bringing forward information we may not find palatable. We are looking at that separately, but I do not think it is right for me to start talking here about the potential for suspending a misconduct process that is internal.

Q293 **Chair:** When an officer brings a complaint up the management chain of the Metropolitan Police and suggests that this complaint should be dealt with by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, why would you block that?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am not sure that I have blocked that, and I am not sure whether we have blocked that. There are various mechanisms for getting an officer's concerns raised, and I was going to go on to explain those. For example, we have an internal reporting line called Right Line.

Chair: I just want to stick to this question at the moment.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: It is just really important that we get this out. There is a process of internal management: somebody tells a manager, and that resolves many issues. There are things that are more sensitive, and we encourage people confidentially to be able to report on an internal line things that they are worried about. To give you an impression of how seriously I take that, this Right Line report—which often can have 30 reports in a four-week period—I see myself every four weeks, and I want to know what the report was and what has been done about it. Sometimes the person names themselves, and sometimes they will not; either is fine. We investigate the claim. So you say, “What could we do?”—

Q294 **Chair:** I am sorry; I am asking the questions, if you please. How concerned are you that a complaint by an officer that he wanted to go to HMIC, as he alleges, was blocked? How concerned would you be about a situation like that?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Certainly, if there was a truthful complaint that needed to go to the HMIC that was blocked, I would be against that. I would expect it to go through them. There is nothing to stop an individual approaching them directly.

Q295 **Chair:** There is, actually. They are not allowed to apply to HMIC with a complaint about their own constabulary.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: You may be telling me something I am unaware of, but I have not seen that. I would not complain if that happened. It seems to me that a whistleblower has a perfectly good right to do it.

Q296 **Chair:** So if there is such a rule, you would like to see it changed?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: If there is such a rule, yes, I would. It seems to me that if you have a complaint, you can come to a Committee of Parliament, so why should you not be able to come to someone else who can actually investigate that claim?

Q297 **Chair:** So if any officer had a complaint to HMIC blocked by his own command chain, you would be quite concerned about that?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Yes. Going back to your original question, I want somebody who has a genuine concern to be able to raise it internally, ideally, and if they cannot trust that, then to be able to raise it with somebody who they feel will investigate their claim.

Chair: I think I may mean the IPPC, not HMIC.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Sorry. That I would understand more, but I would be surprised if HMI could not receive a complaint from a member of the force.

Q298 Chair: I am referring to the IPPC. I beg your pardon, but the same applies. So you are quite happy for an officer in your command chain to block a complaint from an officer going to IPPC?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: No, not really; it depends. One thing you have to watch, obviously, is that the reason some of these rules are in place is that some people make an unreasonable decision to arc all the systems in place, because they personally think that something is wrong or they would like to see a certain line of action taken. Sometimes that is self-interested.

Q299 Chair: That is the nature of whistleblowers. They tend to be rather awkward people, don't they?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: How you perceive them depends on your position as to who they are complaining about and what they are saying. I agree, but I think on the whole, many whistleblowers have a point. The question is whether you entirely agree with their judgment, but if we stick to this case, this officer has raised concerns. They are serious, and I would expect us to get to the bottom of them. There is no dispute from me about that fundamental point.

Q300 Chair: In reaction to PC Patrick's evidence—we may return to the whistleblowers question, perhaps even in a future inquiry, but we will leave that for the moment—you also claimed that it does not relate to recent history. PC Patrick, as you know, has submitted supplementary evidence pointing out that the robbery downgrades referred to were in 2011 to 2012; that the burglary baseline analysis referred to was in 2012-13; and that the rape statistics he referred to were in 2012-13. Why did you believe that this was old data?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think, to be fair, Chair, this was an answer in the Home Affairs Committee, which was fairly shortly after your questioning of PC Patrick. I think what I said—I have not got it in front of me—was that some of the claims were historical, i.e. a little older than a couple of years, which is the area that I am particularly interested in, because that is my tenure. I want to know that, during my time, we have been doing things properly and into the future. I believe I said “some”, and I think that is accurate. Some of the things that PC Patrick talked about were more historical, and some of the concerns that were expressed—for example about the no-criming of rape—are things that for police, and for others, have been a real issue over many years.

Q301 Chair: But you are not concerned about that now.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: No, I do not think I said that. What I said was that I am particularly concerned about the period of my tenure. I want to make sure that what we are doing now is accurate and honest, and has integrity. Of course other things matter, but I was merely making the point that I have been particularly prioritising the time for which I have direct responsibility.

Q302 Chair: You also claimed that HMIC had described your crime recording procedures as “competent and reliable”, and yet, actually, HMIC has described this as a matter of “some cause for concern”. Why did you misquote HMIC?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I suspect you will be aware, Chair, that I was the author of that report. Therefore I was not quoting someone else; I was actually quoting my report. I was the person who was HMI for the Met.

Q303 Chair: How credible is it to quote your own report in defence of your own performance?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I was going to go on to explain why there is an apparent disparity.

Chair: How credible is it for you to quote your own report?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Can I just explain why I think there is a disparity? When I was preparing for the Home Affairs Committee, there were a number of issues that were raised that we believed they would raise. One of them, we anticipated, was around what had happened at your Committee. We were briefed for about 15 things. This was one of the things; it was not a very full briefing, but it was a briefing. The only part of the briefing was the executive summary, which I think I reasonably provided the context for, which was “generally competent”. If you were then to go on to look at the findings, you would see quite properly that there is cause for some concern.

When I was refreshing my memory—well, not my memory, because at the time I had not realised it was my report—I did not have the benefit of seeing the whole report. I could not, over a two or three-year period, remember what was in the original report; I relied on the summary. I was not trying to mislead anybody. I do not think anybody is suggesting I did, but there was a disparity between what was in the executive summary and the point about “cause for some concern”. I would stress that the point made was “some concern”, because at the time this was a national assessment of all crime data, and there were some forces for which there was very great concern. I think those forces were directly dealt with. That is the only account I can give you of the disparity. It is partly about the brevity of the briefing; secondly, it was my report; and, thirdly, although there seems to be some contradiction between the two aspects, there is a consistency, I believe.

Q304 Chair: But how credible is it for you to quote your own report in defence of your own performance?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I can only say that, first of all, I had not realised it was my report.

Q305 Chair: You did not realise it was your report.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Let me just explain. It was published in 2012. I became the Commissioner in September 2011, so it was based on a report that we have produced. In that sense, that is the only reason I had not actually realised that fact at the time I read the account at the Home Affairs Committee, but I bring it out so that you are aware.

Chair: I am very grateful for that.

Q306 Lindsay Roy: How big is the disparity? If we take a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is excellent and 1 is completely unsatisfactory, where does “competent and reliable” sit? What is the score for that, compared to “cause for concern”?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: This is from memory, so please excuse me if it is not entirely accurate. Bearing in mind that all 43 forces were looked at, there was a sample made of the number of crimes in each force. For example, if you looked at the Met, we have about 800,000 crimes a year at the moment—something of that order. The sample size, back in 2011 for the crimes, was about 200.

Lindsay Roy: That is a very small sample.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: It is relatively small, but I think statistically it can be valid. I am not objecting to that; I am merely observing it was a relatively small sample. Within the samples, as you look around the country, I think the worst example of inaccuracy was about 25%. This is from memory, but I think that was the worst example. I think the best example was something of the order of about 5% inaccuracy, and I think the Met was at 11%. On that spectrum, they were not at the best end, but by no means were they at the worst. In terms of your “1 to 10” scale, that is probably the best I can do. That was from that date. I would hope it has improved from then.

Q307 Lindsay Roy: Can you give me a numerical score for “competent and reliable” and “cause for concern”?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I do not think it is a precise science. I am just trying to give you a professional judgment of the way I would see it. To add a little, if I was asked to judge professionally, looking at these now—if I was an HMI, as I was before—I think in any human system, you cannot remove more than 3% human error. We all make errors. Probably 5% is understandable. When you are getting towards 10%, there is some cause for concern, and beyond that, you have to start looking quite seriously.

Q308 Chair: More than 10% you would be worried about.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: You would at least have to consider it. That is my only point, and the reason that I mention the sample size is that, of course, when you are looking at the 800,000, the vast majority of crimes can fall into the criminal damage category or into shoplifting. Then, at the other end, you have some very serious crimes that thankfully do not happen very often: murder and rape. I think you have to distinguish between the two, because some of the crimes have different issues, and rape and sexual offences are one category for which different considerations apply.

Q309 Lindsay Roy: As a former headteacher who used to work with HMI, I would be putting “competent and reliable” on a scale of about 7 or 8, and “cause for concern” at 3 or 4. That is quite a wide disparity. Can you tell us what you have done since we last met to deal with these allegations?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: First of all, I did not realise this at the time, but the Met did respond quite a lot to that report. They took it seriously, and we have pursued that ever since. The present system we have is that, first of all—though this was not a direct result of the report—we do have a crime registrar, who is independent of the territorial

policing command who are responsible for crime and how much burglary there is, etc, and we have a separate incident registrar.

One of the things we have to watch, and the HMI will check, is if things are not getting recorded in the crime system, whether they are falling into the incident system or the antisocial behaviour system. If it is getting recorded anywhere, is it put in the right area? We have separate registrars to look at that. Secondly, this crime registrar has, in the past, reported to the Assistant Commissioner for Territorial Policing. I trust him, and he does a great job, but one of the things we are going to change this year—not as a direct result of this report—is that the registrars will report to the Deputy Commissioner. It will establish a further level of supervision.

Q310 Chair: What grade is the force crime registrar?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: In Met terms, I think it is a Grade B. If you were to assess that as a police officer, it may be something of the order of Chief Superintendent. I will have to check that; sometimes I get the gradings wrong. It would be quite a senior person, but what they do have is access—this is the point I was trying to make. First of all, they do their work. I think they have a team of about 10 or 12 people. That may be something that is relevant to this that we have to look at: have we got enough people carrying out the sampling?

Q311 Chair: Can you explain what Grade B is? Is it Deputy Commissioner, or Commander?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: The best comparison I can make is, I believe, something of the order of Chief Superintendent, so you have a senior middle manager.

Q312 Chair: How many layers are between you and the force crime registrar?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: In the Met, you are probably talking about three. In another force, you could be talking about one.

Q1 Chair: So if the force crime registrar has a problem, they have to go through three layers of management to get to you?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: That is what I was about to explain. The registrar has access to a commander. In the Met, we have a Commissioner, a deputy and a board consisting of Assistant Commissioners. We have another team, which no other force has, called “Deputy Assistant Commissioners” because of the size of the organisation, and then we have Commanders. So the Commander, who is a chief officer at director level, meets with the crime registrar every four weeks. They have a meeting, which I think is called the SCIRG meeting. What it means is that they look at the integrity of our crime data—so a regular, frequent check. The crime registrar also meets the Assistant Commissioner for Territorial Policing every 12 weeks, and they produce reports that are then audited—and can be audited—by our Deputy Mayor. In fact, that is one of the things that we share with them, too.

Q313 Chair: You are statutorily responsible for the crime statistics in the force. How often do you meet the force crime registrar?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: In the past, we have not met, but as a result of your Committee's inquiries I will be meeting them in future twice a year. Now, you might say "Why is it that you have only just started doing this?" The fact is that the Met is a very big beast, with 50,000 people. It is a very big city, and of all of the priorities, it has not been the major one. Broadly, as I have said earlier, I was reassured that we have good systems. But this officer has raised issues, so I think I have to ensure that I am happy, not only that the systems are happy, and therefore I will be seeing him twice a year.

Q314 Chair: Why would the FCR not have access to you whenever he needs to have access to you?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I actually saw him in preparation for this Committee. I saw him yesterday for two reasons: one, to establish the new system, but as well, just to take the temperature of how does he feel. Does he feel bullied? Does he feel as though he is not getting a hearing if he has a concern? I have said two things to him, and one is that is what we will arrange if we thought that was reasonable—twice a year. But, if there are any concerns in between, he can ring me. He can find me; he can e-mail me—I read all my e-mails. In any case, every four or five weeks, I have a breakfast meeting at New Scotland Yard where anybody can come. He can come to that if he cannot get through any other way. I meet our staff every four weeks; we have a group of about 200 to 300 people, put together. My broad point is, at the moment, I have just been describing our system. Now, on top of that, there are our internal systems. We have the Deputy Mayor, who I am sure may talk about—

Q315 Chair: Sorry, we will come on to—

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Then we have the HMI.

Chair: Sir Bernard, I would like Lindsay to ask the next question.

Q316 Lindsay Roy: It seems quite detached and remote. Have you any inclination to upgrade that position?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: That is what I was trying to explain. In the future, I expect a twice-yearly meeting. We are going to move the line management responsibility to the Deputy Commissioner, who is independent of the Assistant Commissioners who control serious crime and territorial policing. I think there is some argument for simplifying some of the Home Office rules. The rules have grown up for good reasons over the years, but I think there is some need for simplification. One of the issues that, I think, the Deputy Mayor may come to in terms of the audit report is that sometimes our supervisors need to understand the rules, too. It is fine to say we need more training, but equally there need to be some simple rules that can be applied.

Lindsay Roy: Mr Greenhalgh, why have you chosen to send in auditors to the Met Police now, and what exactly have you asked the auditors to inspect?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I have not. I think you misheard me. I said I instructed the director of audit, risk and assurance to look into this issue at the beginning of 2013, so that

is almost a year ago. It is not as a result of this Committee. Certainly, the Committee and the allegations of James Patrick I take incredibly seriously, and I have been following the written evidence as well as the oral evidence given before this Committee, but it is fair to say my concerns predated the hearings of the Public Administration Select Committee.

Q317 Lindsay Roy: What has been the outcome of the audit and monitoring so far?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I have only seen an executive summary, and therefore I am only going to give a very high-level view. It points to two areas of concern, one that has been touched on by the Commissioner, Sir Bernard, which is around getting supervision right in places of risk. Essentially, we are looking at a process that is quite lengthy and complicated, and ensuring that there is adequate supervision is a key to this. The second area is technology. In the written evidence from PC Patrick, part of the drivers of some of these concerns is that you have two different systems. You have a system for the recording of crime-related incidents and a separate system for the recording of crime. These are not joined up and integrated. It is fair to say that some of this is not because of a front-end culture fiddling the numbers; it is because the technology is inadequate. Again, that is something that is not a surprise to me, given the size of the technology challenge for the Met, but there will be more information on that particular issue in the report. Those are two areas of concern.

Q318 Chair: On that particular point, I think what PC Patrick was saying is that because there are two systems, it shows that different data is being entered into the different systems, and the real question is: why is that data being entered differently—often by the same people—on to two different systems?

Stephen Greenhalgh: That is not my understanding. I have met the force crime registrar as well, and my understanding of this—you may want to ask the Commissioner—is that a crime-related incident relies on a third party giving information about what they see as a crime that has happened: “A burglary happened next door.” Therefore, in order for it to be a crime, you need to find a victim and have that substantiated. It is the transfer from a crime-related incident that is driven by the third-party report to a crime that can often be blocked because of inadequate technology, not because of a systematic fiddling of the numbers. That is the point; it is not that they are different things being reported on two different systems. I must say, if that is the allegation from PC Patrick, that that is not my understanding of his point. His point, I think, is that you are seeing this disparity around crime-related incidents on the one hand for rape, and the recording of crimes on the other.

Q319 Lindsay Roy: What focus has there been on professional development or training of staff, in relation to crime recording?

Stephen Greenhalgh: That is probably something for the Commissioner to respond on, but certainly as an issue, ensuring the integrity of crime figures is something that we are absolutely very keen to ensure that we get right. What we have done as MOPAC is to instruct that our assurance professionals and auditors look at the process, map the process, and find the areas of significant risk.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: In terms of training, when people are first promoted, one of the things we will reflect on as a result of this Committee’s findings, and also as a result

of the audit report, is whether more training is needed. Now, one thing I will offer you is what I think is a great opportunity that the Met has that many organisations do not: we have 50,000 people. We have, broadly, about 10,000 leaders. I have an opportunity to talk to them directly, so I have done that once on my arrival, within the first year, and I am going to do it again this year.

One of the things that we discussed was integrity. We have values that we have established, which are about moral and physical courage, integrity, caring and professionalism. All four of those impact on how they do their job—the supervisors and the managers—and that gives me a great opportunity to say two things. I do want crime to come down—I think it is a public good—but I do expect crime stats to be right. Now, if they say, “Actually, we do not always understand the rules,” that is my opportunity to provide some training. You will realise—as I hear your professional background—that there is a constant stream of priorities for training, but if this is something that we establish we need to do something about now, particularly for the supervisors, we will do it.

Q320 Lindsay Roy: Given the issues that the Chairman and I have raised, when do you expect outcomes of the investigation to be made?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: There are three things happening that we need to weave together. The first thing, as I have already said to the Chair, is that we have started the preparation work for the inquiry that will now happen internally. Now, I believe that that would be a thorough thing. If I were in your position, I would want some reassurance that there was some objectivity.

Chair: I agree with that, and we are reassured by the way you have responded to this.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: First of all, we will do something internally, because I want some reassurance—I want to know. No. 2 is that the Deputy Mayor has got his auditors to look at the system. As he said, that has already happened, but I want to share the findings of that inquiry with the auditors. The third thing is—I have not discussed this with the Deputy Mayor, but I am sure he will agree—that we will share the findings of both with the HMI. I know that the chief of HMI is going to appear directly after me, but we know that he has agreed to prioritise us as I think the first batch of inspections, which will start on 3 February. I want to make sure that they will have shared with them everything we find from our inquiry, and whatever the auditors find, so that we have a comprehensive look. Now, I cannot say how long it will take the HMI to report.

Chair: I am going to stop you there, Sir Bernard.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Just finally, if you do not mind, I suspect this will take something of the order of three to six months. I do not want to mislead and say it is days.

Q321 Chair: In summary, Sir Bernard, to what extent do you recognise that there are means, practices and habits that lead to the alteration of crime statistics and tend to make them less accurate than they should be?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: It is a constant challenge. You saw Lord Stevens appear at the Home Affairs Committee yesterday and make a reference to his period of tenure and service. It is a constant challenge.

Chair: Okay, a constant challenge.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: In short, it is a challenge; what we have to do is make sure that we rise to it.

Q322 Chair: How accurate do you think James Patrick's allegations actually are?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Some of them, I think, are worthy of further investigation together with him. We need to know a little more detail. Some of them, I think, are incomplete; I think he gives one side of the account, and there is another side, where you would want to hear a bigger account before you accepted his judgment. Occasionally there might be some inaccuracies, but I think, on the whole, there is a truth there that we need to hear.

Q323 Chair: To what extent do you accept there seems to be a divergence of view between you and Tom Winsor, the chair of HMIC?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: You would have to ask him whether or not he sees a divergence of view. I think he was merely commenting as I had commented on my report at the beginning in the way I described, so he is quite right in saying that, in the body of the report, it says that there were some concerns. I quoted from an executive summary I had available for a briefing. I do not argue with him about our eventual conclusions. The conclusions are there to see for everybody. It was a public document, back in 2012.

Q324 Greg Mulholland: Just to follow up, there is a discrepancy with the evidence given by Tom Winsor on 17 December to the Home Affairs Committee. First of all, Sir Bernard, have you responded?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I have, yes. I think when Tom Winsor appeared at the Home Affairs Committee, I had not had the opportunity then. I think the letter went back on 18 December, although I suspect with the Christmas period, he may have received it a little later. But he certainly has received a letter. In fact, if he were content, I am quite happy to share that with the Committee. I think we may have shared it with the Home Affairs Committee already, but I am quite happy to share it.

Q325 Greg Mulholland: Does that deal with the discrepancy between your description of crime recording being, and I quote, "competent and reliable", and his saying that there is some cause for concern, and also him saying it is not a question of if it is happening; it is a question of how much and how severe?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: It certainly tries to, in the way I have tried to explain to this Committee. I do not think I have said anything different in the letter to what I have said to you this morning.

Q326 Greg Mulholland: Would you briefly want to explain that discrepancy with him saying that it is happening and it is a question of how much and how severe? How much, and how severe, do you think it is?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I have done my best, Chair, to explain to you the discrepancy. In the executive summary, it is, I think, fair to say that the issue of there being some concerns was not included. It was not in my mind when I appeared before the Home Affairs Committee. When you look at the report, I have already said that I think the figure is something of the order of 11%. We might have different views about whether 11% is “some concerns” or “great concerns”. I have no dispute about the accuracy of the fact that, in the findings, it said there are some concerns.

Q327 Greg Mulholland: And how would you answer the question that he has posed—that it is happening, so the question is where, how much and how severe?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am sorry; could you just explain that a little more?

Greg Mulholland: Mr Winsor said to the Committee that the manipulation of crime figures did occur; the question was where, how much and how severe. How would you answer “where, how much and how severe”?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am afraid I do not know enough of what Mr Winsor said to the inquiry.

Greg Mulholland: That is precisely what he said.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: My understanding was that he was talking generally, rather than that particular report. I suppose you would have to ask him exactly what he meant by that. I would agree with him—if this is what he meant—that we need to get to the bottom of these allegations. We have to find out whether it is universal, and if it is not universal, where the problem is—whether it is within the Met or without the Met. I am with him on that.

Q328 Greg Mulholland: But how much and how severe? The word “severe”, obviously, is a strong one.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am afraid it is not my word, so I cannot really comment.

Greg Mulholland: No, but that is something that he has said, and he is Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary. He is saying it is happening; it is a question of where, how much and how severe, so is it happening in the Met? How much is it happening, and how severe?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Well, that is what we are about to embark on a series of inquiries to try to get to the bottom of. You have PC Patrick’s allegations; we have a two-year-old HMI report. We have made an initial assessment of his claims, and over the next few months, as I have said, we will try to get to the bottom of it. I cannot predict what the outcome of all those inquiries will be.

Chair: Well, let us look at a particular set of statistics.

Q329 Alun Cairns: How confident are you in the accuracy of the data on serious and sexual offences?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think it is a lot better than it was, if we took it back five to 10 years, but I am not yet sure that we can entirely rely on it. As you will probably be aware, there are all sorts of complexities, and I have decided—partly on the back of this report, but because of some other issues of well—to do two or three things to establish whether we should be entirely content with where we are. The main issue about sexual offences, as you obviously understand, is the issue of consent. That is usually the issue, whether it be rape or any other sexual offence, and that is quite a problem to establish. Sometimes people later claim either no consent or change their mind about consent. Occasionally, people go back into relationships with the person who attacked them.

For many reasons, it is quite a complex area. We already know that around 80% to 85% of victims of sexual offence do not even bother reporting it, so we have a huge unreported amount of crime. For lots of reasons, it is a complex area. You might have seen in the *Evening Standard* yesterday that one of the things we are going to do is invite academics to review quarterly our no-crime reports to make sure that we get better at that. Secondly, I am going to invite a public figure to look at how we look at sexual offences generally. Thirdly, you will have seen that we are going to change the standard for no-criming sexual offences to “beyond reasonable doubt”. It is a constant challenge in this area. Am I confident? Not 100%. Am I determined that we do more in the future? Yes.

Q330 Alun Cairns: The Deputy Mayor earlier tried to offer an explanation of the recording on the two systems between crime-related incidents and crimes, in relation to burglary, which I can understand because it relates to a third party. Can you offer an explanation in relation to rape and serious sexual offences, because very often there will not be a third party?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: The test of no-crime, as I am sure the Committee is aware, is whether or not the crime ever happened, not whether somebody later decided to change their account. In terms of sexual offences, the real challenge is whether consent was present or not, and the initial allegation that consent was not present is always from the victim. There is a constant challenge in this area of whether consent was genuine, and what we know already is that 80% of the victims who do report are vulnerable. They are usually vulnerable for one of three reasons: drink, drugs, or psychiatric illnesses.

Q331 Alun Cairns: Absolutely, but I want to try and drill down on the data. How would you explain that the number of crimes recorded in relation to rape has decreased, while the number of related incidents has increased?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think you will find that the number of crimes recorded has increased over the last three years successively. I think you will find that recording has increased by about 1,000 rapes, for example, per year. Some of that this last year has been down to some of the Savile and other historical allegations, so we saw a surge around that, but over the last three years we have seen an increase in the number of recordings. I think what you are referring to is that there has been a decrease in the number of no-crimes, but an increase in the number of what are called CRIs—crime-related incidents.

Q332 **Alun Cairns:** Pressing the case that Mr Mulholland sought to pursue a little bit earlier about the accuracy, or inaccuracy, what conclusion have you drawn from PC Patrick's assessment that up to 25%, or 25% to 29%, have been kept off the books?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: It is certainly true to say that about 25% are not recorded as rape or sexual offences. The question is whether that was accurate or not.

Q333 **Alun Cairns:** What is your view?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: The reason we have asked for an inquiry is to get to the bottom of it. I do not want to give a view unsubstantiated by evidence; I am sure you would not expect that. What we are asking is for the internal, the auditors and HMI all to look at that particular issue. If there was a systematic bid to reduce rape reports, we would not have seen 1,000 more rapes recorded, but there is clearly something that PC Patrick raises that we need to get to the bottom of. I would add one other thing. We may come on to target setting and whether that is a wise thing, but one of the things that this Deputy Mayor has done that I think is helpful is to take out certain crimes of the general crimes for which we will be held to account. We have a target to reduce crime by 20%, but those are only about seven crime types. What they do not include are domestic violence, sexual offences, rape, hate crime and other crimes that we intend to increase the reporting of. We are not held to account by the Deputy Mayor or publicly for crimes that we want to see increased reporting of.

Chair: Sir Bernard, we will come to this point later on.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think it is integral to this.

Chair: It is very important; I understand that.

Q334 **Alun Cairns:** You mentioned to the Home Affairs Committee on 3 December that you were going to revisit many of the cases over the last two years related to rape and serious sexual offence. What progress have you made with that, and what early conclusions can you draw?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I got some feedback as a result of that instruction. The charities that help victims of sexual crime were concerned about if we went back to victims where we had no-crime their crime and said "Why did you change your mind? Why did the police decide to no-crime it?", they may see that as a second victimisation. Many times, they have gone into another relationship. They have not always revealed to their friends and partners the first offence; it may be something that they have kept confidential. Their advice was that we, the police, should not approach them. We are now going to work with some academics to ask how we can go back to those victims over two years where their offence was no-crime—or, as you said, is on the crime recording incidents—and say to the victim "Can you tell us what changed your view? Did the police put pressure on you, or was there something else that accounted for that?" What I do not want to do is for a police officer to ask the victim, "Why did the police not do it?" I am just trying to explain why we are going to be carefully approaching it, and getting academics and some independent person to carry out that research.

Q335 **Alun Cairns:** I am picking up two messages. Are you telling me that you are not going back over the last two years? You are talking about academics. I would not have thought that it is academics who will be going back researching over the last two years. Maybe you will use the charities to do that, rather than a police officer, because I respect the point about victimisation.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: My first point is that the independence will be helpful. We would like the charities to be able to help; I think they have some doubts about whether this is wise or not, so we have to be careful of that. All I am saying is that I want to do it. We want to talk to those victims and get their account in a way that I can talk about to the Deputy Mayor, HMI or whoever, and that persuades us of why those people changed their account and why we made it a no-crime. All I am trying to highlight is that it is quite a sensitive area. We are taking a little time to make sure that we do it properly. My view would be that the academics can help in that to make sure that the contact is sensitive, and that the follow-up inquiry is.

Q336 **Alun Cairns:** There are allegations of significant inaccuracies here. When would you expect that, if you looked at the cases over the last two years, you would be able to have a definitive answer, precisely, of whether that 25% suggestion is accurate or not?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: As I said earlier in answer to an earlier question, I try not to pin myself down too much, but something in the order of three to six months. I suspect, in six months, we should have a very clear idea. We may not have a complete one, but we will have a very clear idea of whether we have a real problem here, or particular problems we need to address.

Q337 **Alun Cairns:** Will that specifically tell us what percentage rate was inaccurate or not? The rate of 25% is pretty significant.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Well, you keep saying that it is inaccurate. All that we can agree on is—

Q338 **Chair:** You yourself said that more than 10% would be a cause for concern a few minutes ago.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: He is saying that this is inaccurate. That is why we are having an inquiry. We have no-crimes, which have gone down. I think we were running at 20%, and that went down to 9%.

Q339 **Chair:** Can I just point out that what the crime statistics show is that the no-crime issue is now under 10%, but there has been a concomitant rise in crime-related incidents related to rape, so the 25% inaccuracy remains the same. Does that not raise some concern?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Only, Chairman, if you accept that the no-crimes are all inaccurate. There will be some that are no-crimes quite appropriately.

Q340 **Chair:** The no-crime issue has gone down—

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I realise that.

Chair: —but it has been offset by a rise in the transfer of rape to crime-related incidents.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: That is your allegation.

Chair: No, it is not the allegation; it is in the figures.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: No, what you are seeing is two sets of figures that clearly establish that concern. Let us say, for example, that we find that 90% of the no-crimes are right and 90% of the crime-related incidents are right—they have been rightly recorded.

Q341 Chair: So you think that 25% is okay.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Unless we are going to stop no-criming things, which is entirely possible if Parliament—

Q342 Chair: Yes, but the no-crime is not the issue. The issue is about the transfer of rape to crime-related incidents. That is now the issue, and it has grown. Why do you think it has grown?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I cannot say any more, other than the reason we are having an inquiry is to establish why it has grown.

Chair: It seems to me that you are accepting—

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Chairman, you are establishing a concern that I am sharing. I cannot give you an answer to the findings of an inquiry that has not yet reported.

Chair: I think that is the right answer, Sir Bernard. There is a cause for concern.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: But I have said that. I think I have said nothing else.

Q343 Chair: I do not understand why you are being so defensive.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: In answer to Mr Cairns's point, I have set out a series of things that we are doing. I am not doing that because I am unconcerned; I want to get to the bottom of it. I have set out a number of points that we are going to carry out. If I was saying that there was nothing to worry about, I would not be having inquiries; there would be no point. I am agreeing with you. I am only challenging how I can come to the conclusion, as you have, about the findings it might establish.

Q344 Alun Cairns: So in three to six months, you will be able to come back to the Committee to present the evidence of the conclusions of your investigation that will tell us whether the suggestion of a 25% inaccurate figure is fair or not. Is that the case?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Yes.

Q345 Alun Cairns: What would you think is a reasonable level of inaccuracy, bearing in mind the complexities of some of the cases?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am going to try not to tie myself down too much. As I said right at the beginning, I have given a broad idea, which is that I think 3% inaccuracy is a human error factor and, beyond that, you have to start asking questions at least. I will not tie myself down to 8%, 7%, or whatever, and I am not sure the Committee could give me a percentage that it would like to see, either. It is very important that we get to the bottom of it. Certainly 90% is obviously unacceptable; 20%-odd clearly would be. Whether it is 5%, 3% or 10%, we could argue all day, but I am not going to try and predict the outcome of the findings, nor how we apply our judgment. I think we could all agree that something like 25% inaccuracy would clearly be wrong. I just want to find out whether they are all inaccurate.

Chair: We are grateful for that.

Q346 Paul Flynn: Mr Hogan-Howe, I was at the Home Affairs Committee yesterday and in December. Do you now regret your posture and demeanour in December when you appeared to want to rubbish the evidence of Police Constable Patrick? Have you now changed your view on this?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I disagree with your account of me rubbing out or demeaning here. I am afraid I cannot retract something I do not think I did.

Q347 Paul Flynn: What is your basis for saying that the remarks of Lord Stevens yesterday referred to his time, which was what you said?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Is this a separate point, or is this to do with the Home Affairs Committee?

Q348 Paul Flynn: Do you believe that Lord Stevens's remarks yesterday were referring to the past or the present?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am only going on the *Telegraph* report and nothing else. If you were there, you have a better account than I have.

Paul Flynn: I would suggest you read the transcript.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I have certainly not had the chance to be there, or to read the transcript. I am not sure it has even been delivered.

Q349 Paul Flynn: The point I wish to make is that, since you gave evidence to the Home Affairs Committee, there has been the evidence of Tom Winsor, there has been the rebuttal by Police Constable Patrick, and there is what was said by Lord Stevens yesterday. He went to great pains to refer to the fact that he was addressing the current situation, not the past. Does this not give cause for you to pause and consider whether there is a great deal more in Mr Patrick's claim than you previously thought?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: If I have left this Committee with any other impression than that I am seized of the importance of this subject—that we are going away to carry out inquiries, objectively assessed and carried out by other people—I have misled you. I

have tried to make clear that I think this is a concern. I think it is really important that the only opportunity I have had to consider Lord Stevens's comments is the very brief account in this morning's *Telegraph*. If I understand it correctly, as it reports, he makes two broad points. I think he refers to some extent to his own experience when he was a junior officer, and he then refers to a meeting he had with some Cheshire sergeants about a year ago. Those are the two things.

Q350 Paul Flynn: I do not think it is particularly helpful for you to go on if you have not seen the transcript of what was said.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: But it was not me who introduced it. You did, and now I am trying to answer your point, and you are trying to stop me answering your point.

Paul Flynn: You cannot possibly talk about evidence that you did not hear.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: You asked me to make a comment, and I am just trying to put the position, to be clear, because I think my answer has been interrupted a few times. I am just trying to make clear my position, and why I said what I said.

Q351 Chair: May I intervene, just to ask the question? How much importance do you attach to Lord Stevens's comment, "Ever since I've been in police service, there has been a fiddling of figures"? When asked if it was still going on, Lord Stevens replied, "It is. In certain forces." When talking to police sergeants, "All of them said the biggest scandal that is coming our way is recording of crime." How much importance do you attach to his opinions?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: That is important, because I respect him, and I respect his opinions. And I respect this Committee. If I have left you with any impression that I am unconcerned about this, I have misled you. I do not think I have. I am concerned, and I want to get to the bottom of it.

Q352 Paul Flynn: The record will show what you said when you referred earlier to Lord Stevens' evidence.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think I was interrupted, and I have just given you the account of what I was talking about, which is the *Telegraph* account. It talks about two aspects.

Paul Flynn: There is no point in us going round in circles. I have some other points I wish to raise.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: No but, Mr Flynn, you are trying to tie me down to one comment, and I am trying to be clear.

Q353 Paul Flynn: How many of the MPS's ACPO officers are on performance-related bonuses that relate to reducing recorded crime?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: None. There is no system presently where the police are rewarded by bonus payments.

Q354 Paul Flynn: Was there in the recent past?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: There was previously. Before the police reforms that Mr Winsor recommended, which I think came in three to four years ago—I may be wrong about that—there was a bonus system, but that stopped with those reforms.

Q355 Paul Flynn: What was the last occasion in which an officer—a member of the police staff—was subject to misconduct procedures for manipulating crime figures?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I cannot tell you that, but we can discover that for the Committee.

Q356 Paul Flynn: Is there any penalty for senior officers who oversee areas where figures are called into doubt?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Of course. There have been occasions when senior officers have been challenged about that.

Q357 Paul Flynn: You were the HMI for the MPS before taking over as a Commissioner. What preparations did you do for the new job, your new role?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: For the HMI's role?

Paul Flynn: Yes.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Preparations in what sense?

Q358 Paul Flynn: Are you aware of the previous audits and reviews carried out by HMI, the MPA and the Audit Commission?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I cannot remember now whether I was when I took over, but if you look around the country, there are various reports produced about various forces.

Q359 Paul Flynn: Are you aware of the 2011 report commissioned by your ACPO colleagues, *Understanding Crime Recording*?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I cannot remember that offhand, but I am sure I would have been aware at the time.

Q360 Paul Flynn: The report appears to be all about dealing with bureaucracy from an ACPO perspective and hardly mentions victims of crime at all, other than describing many of them as being “unwilling”. Is this typical of the ACPO approach? Is it excessively bureaucratic?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: It is not my report, so I had better not comment on a report that I have not read more recently, but probably the overall point I would make is that both this Deputy Mayor and I support it. We have done two things, which have been

helpful in getting a good culture in terms of what we are talking about. We are going to come to the issue of target-setting, but it is a public good to reduce crime. We have been set a 20/20/20 target, which is a 20% reduction in crime—

Paul Flynn: I know what the 20/20 targets are.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: A 20% improvement in confidence.

Q361 Paul Flynn: I want to get on to that. It does not help for you to answer questions that I have not asked.

Deputy Mayor, you referred to a special audit that was taking place—a review. Is this the normal rolling audits that take place, or something special?

Stephen Greenhalgh: No, this is the first of its type. I commissioned it back in March. In discussion with the head of that particular directorate, it is probably something that we will build into the work programme as a constant, because this is clearly something that will not be resolved in this one-off, detailed review of the process.

Q362 Paul Flynn: You announced it in an earlier answer, so it is not special. It is not something that is distinctive and arises from the concern.

Stephen Greenhalgh: It is very distinctive; it is a first of its type within the Met. What I am saying to this Committee is that it is something that we initiated back in March. We will be building in future iterations in future years, but it is a process that is not going to be covered by one particular report.

Q363 Paul Flynn: Do you accept that the whistleblowing procedures in the MPS are clearly ineffective? We have heard evidence from the federation of many officers who are not confident to report their concerns to senior officers. What are you going to do about that?

Stephen Greenhalgh: We have had a look at the current process. MOPAC does have an oversight of that. It is fair to say—I am not sure how aware officers are of this—that if they feel they cannot raise something with the Metropolitan Police Service, there is a procedure in place to make a complaint or raise that with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, and indeed, if they do not feel that is effective, to go to the IPCC. I need to have another look at that, frankly, to see whether people are aware of the opportunity they have to raise particular areas of concern.

Q364 Paul Flynn: I think you told us that you are prepared to give an assurance that, if there are concerns about crime statistics or other matters, they can be raised with you and with your managers?

Stephen Greenhalgh: Absolutely.

Q365 Paul Flynn: We have heard mention of the 20/20/20 targets, which clearly seems to be a headline-grabbing attempt to gain some publicity. It would be very unlikely

that 20% was the appropriate target in the three categories involved. Would you not agree that there was more spin in this than a practical attempt to reduce problems?

Stephen Greenhalgh: No, I do not accept that this was a headline-grabbing move. We were given a target to take costs out of the Met by, frankly, the Home Office. It set us a 20% reduction; that is just a fact. When I started in this particular role back in June 2012, I was struck by the very, very high victimisation rates, and that led me to think that it was sensible for the Met to focus on victim-based crime—high-impact, high-volume crime that does blight London’s neighbourhoods—and that was why we focused on the MOPAC seven. That was a very, very conscious choice. Secondly, we also focused on public confidence in the Met. Frankly, the confidence in the Met when we started, when you look at the crime survey of England and Wales, was very, very low. I think the force was around 22nd to Surrey, and we wanted to see that rise. A 20% rise does take it to the top of the table. We think that that, as a target, is a sensible one, and it is a target that cannot be gamed. It is a survey that takes place on a quarterly basis.

Q366 Chair: So that is not dependent on the recorded crime statistics?

Stephen Greenhalgh: Absolutely not. It is a survey of Londoners that is organised centrally by the Home Office and is published for all forces. It is very important that the Met does not just focus on crime reduction. Reducing and cutting crime is important, but the challenge that the Met has—and, frankly, that it had in the middle of 2012 in particular—is to reconnect with the public and see a boost in public confidence. We want to see that, and it is very important that those three things are objectives.

Q367 Paul Flynn: Can you tell us what research you did that made you decide to settle on 20/20/20, rather than 18/20/24?

Stephen Greenhalgh: As I pointed out, the research around confidence and costs did not require very much at all. We wanted to see the Met at the top of the table, not at the bottom of the confidence league table. That necessitated that kind of boost. The reduction in crime and the focus on the seven involved work with my private office, with officials, and with Professor Betsy Stanko, who was working within the Met, on those crimes that would see a reduction in the number of victims. It effectively focused on those seven ones.

Frankly, one of the things that is being talked about is playing the game, where you categorise a burglary as criminal damage, or robbery as theft. It included all those crimes to ensure that we are counting all that, so it is very hard to game this, for instance. We picked those crimes so that it is hard to do that.

Chair: Mr Flynn, could you draw your questions to a close?

Q368 Paul Flynn: No, I cannot. I am afraid I am unable to ask the questions because of the ridiculous length of the answers. We have asked for brief answers. Can you answer this one briefly? Did any MOPAC staff advise caution with these figures? These are the people who should be advising you.

Stephen Greenhalgh: No, they did not. Nobody advised caution with these figures.

Q369 Paul Flynn: Did you change any of the targets as a result of advice?

Stephen Greenhalgh: One of the points that PC Patrick has made is that these targets were initiated by mistake. That is certainly not the case, and I have written to the Chair of this Committee to explain.

Chair: We have taken that on the record, yes, and he has not disputed that.

Stephen Greenhalgh: Okay.

Q370 Paul Flynn: I understand that MOPAC staff were stopped from attending oversight meetings with MPS when these crime issues and other matters were being discussed as soon as you became Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. Why did this happen?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I don't understand. I certainly did not stop oversight of the Metropolitan Police Service as soon as I became Deputy Mayor.

Q371 Paul Flynn: Did MOPAC staff at that time advise you against this?

Stephen Greenhalgh: No. I am not aware of anyone giving professional advice not to go about the 20/20/20. I am not sure where you are getting your information from.

Paul Flynn: You are denying that MOPAC staff—

Stephen Greenhalgh: I am denying that I had advice in my advice folder that said "Do not pursue this. This is a bad idea."

Q372 Paul Flynn: But you are agreeing that MOPAC staff were told they were not allowed to attend these oversight meetings.

Stephen Greenhalgh: No, I am not agreeing that. I am not sure what you are saying. I certainly have changed our approach to attendance at committees because I did not think that just mere attendance at a committee was necessarily the best way of overseeing the Metropolitan Police Service.

Q373 Paul Flynn: Are any of the MOPAC officers on performance-related pay related to reductions in recorded crime?

Stephen Greenhalgh: Certainly not to my knowledge at all. No.

Q374 Paul Flynn: Do you accept that manipulating crime figures presents risks to officers and risks to the public as well, and that it is a matter of great seriousness? What sort of level of misrecording crime do you think would be acceptable?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I think that the Commissioner has given some figures. Speaking to the force crime registrar, the Audit Commission looked at this area. It is absolutely right to be concerned about a systematic, wilful misrecording of crime. The public have a right to expect integrity in crime figures. It is absolutely right that this Committee considers it; it is a very important question. I think that the Audit Commission said that 95%-plus would be excellent. If the force achieved that level of accuracy and compliance with the Home Office accounting rules, that would be excellent. A figure of

90%-plus would be good. Frankly—I think the Commissioner has alluded to this—anything below 90% is cause for concern, and in some cases, considerable concern. That is probably my answer.

Q375 Paul Flynn: I understand that it has been proposed that the force crime registrar and the force incident registrar should report directly to MOPAC to improve transparency. Can this be done?

Stephen Greenhalgh: It is possible to move those particular posts, but what I would like to ensure is that we have a proper system of oversight. The system of oversight we have is that the independent directorate of audit, assurance and risk looks at this separately, independent of both MOPAC and the Met, and that is the area that I look to rather than whether the force crime registrar reports to me. Actually, I have met with the force crime registrar, and I also wanted to institute a six-monthly meeting with him, and I am cited on his monthly reports on levels of compliance with figures.

Q376 Paul Flynn: And there has been no resentment that you are aware of among staff in the Metropolitan Police Authority, including those in the Mayor's Office themselves, about the way the crime figures are being reported and changes are taking place since you took over?

Stephen Greenhalgh: On the contrary, I think there is an understanding that this is an area of risk and considerable concern. There is some cause for concern, in particular, around technology and supervision. The moves that have been made, following on from the reports back in 2011, indicate moves in the right direction. I am not saying we are there yet, but the Met were absolutely right to centralise the recording of crime. To have 32 different versions of how to record crime would patently increase the ability to get this wrong. Centralising that is right, and I think the moves to have the force crime registrar separate from operations are also right, and also to have the auditors looking at this as a matter of priority is another right move.

Chair: Thank you. Mr Hopkins.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Chair, I know you are trying to move on, but just very quickly: Mr Flynn makes a reasonable proposal, which is about whether or not the crime registrar reports to the Deputy Mayor. That is certainly something we have not discussed, but I am open-minded to it.

Q377 Kelvin Hopkins: I know this has been denied, but I have to put it on record today that Constable Patrick said that the 20% figure arose as a result of a speechwriter's mistake and that the Mayor wanted an 11% reduction in one term and a 11% reduction in his second.

Chair: Mr Hopkins, I think we have dealt with that point.

Stephen Greenhalgh: I can actually give you the specifics of how we reached the target.

Chair: Please do not waste time on it.

Q378 Kelvin Hopkins: A key point I want to make is that, in a public service, having performance-related pay effectively, and bonuses and that kind of incentive, is completely inappropriate. The driver should be the sense of public service and the public service ethos, and introducing this actually has demoralising effects.

Stephen Greenhalgh: Let us be very clear: the targets that MOPAC have set are around victim-based crimes, but also public confidence in policing. We know the drivers of public confidence are how the police engage with the public—so, community engagement—but also how they use their special powers, so whether they use just authority or not and how they conduct stop and searches. The fact that we are focused on both crime reduction—which is, as the Commissioner says, a public good—and public confidence does, I think, follow on from your point around this being about how you deliver a very, very important, critical first public service for London.

Q379 Kelvin Hopkins: One is very concerned, as well, that the most serious crimes for many of us are crimes against vulnerable people, sexual abuse, violence against women and so on, and yet these are not actually included in the list of the seven targets.

Stephen Greenhalgh: The Commissioner has been absolutely clear, and pre-empted my comment, that we felt it would absolutely be wrong when we know that there is woeful under-reporting of rape and sexual violence and the potential for misrecording of these crime types, to set a crude target. In fact, I would prefer much more of a balanced scorecard approach, where we welcome increases in reporting. If 85% of rapes are not reported, we want to see an increase in the reporting of rape. As far as I am concerned, I welcome that we are seeing more rapes recorded within London. I would like to see more, and see more charging. I think that charging is up 6% to 7%, but it could be more. More importantly, what we also want to see is far greater and swifter justice. Therefore, we are tracking court delays for rape and sexual violence and looking to introduce a dedicated court system. Finally, we want to see the numbers of people convicted for rape and sexual violence going up. That is much more of a balanced scorecard approach to this issue. We have not set a crude target around reducing crime in this area.

Q380 Kelvin Hopkins: We are, I think, leaning towards the conclusion that the target approach is actually wrong, and that pursuing every case where there is an apparent failure to deal with a rape accusation properly is the much more effective way. As a Member of Parliament, people come to my surgery from time to time with a complaint against the police. An individual case is not a number, and if that is pursued to a satisfactory conclusion, that is surely a better way forward than having simply targets and league tables.

Stephen Greenhalgh: I agree that crude target-setting, particularly when it comes to rape and sexual violence, is absolutely wrong. You do need to take a balanced approach to this. Our approach to this when it comes to the reporting of crime is that we want to see a greater number of reports, more reporting, more confidence in the system, and better recording of these crime types. We are not setting a crude target.

Q381 Chair: Briefly, how much do you accept the criminologist Marian FitzGerald's suggestion that, in fact, your 20/20 targets are in conflict—that if there is more confidence in the police, you will have more reporting and your reported crime will go up?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I do not accept her point that they are in conflict. What I see, having attended a meeting of the borough commanders across London, is a relentless focus for the first time—given the high victimisation rates when it comes to burglary, robbery, and those kinds of crimes—on how you prevent burglary happening again; how you prevent repeat victimisation; and how you ensure those burglars that commit multiple burglaries are eventually caught and brought to justice. The focus on crime prevention and the focus on repeat victimisation cannot but be the right things for London. Therefore, I do not agree with the academic's view that this is in conflict.

If you look at the last year and a half, confidence in the Met since the riots has gone up. Despite all the issues we talk about, we have seen roughly an 11% boost in confidence in the Met, and we have seen crime come down. When I started this job and I first appeared before the Home Affairs Committee, we were chastised that London was lagging behind the rest of the country when it came to the reduction of crime, but at the moment, as a result of the focus on victim-based crime we are seeing that London's reduction is, frankly, now propping up the rest of the country. That is the right direction, but the issue around the integrity of crime recording is an absolutely critical one.

Q382 Robert Halfon: In terms of the target culture, what has been the effect of the removal of national targets?

Stephen Greenhalgh: The great thing is that it has enabled us to think about the issues at a local level. To have a national crude target is absolutely wrong. London faces the issues of a metropolis: a great place that drives the economy, but also has very, very high victimisation rates. The focus on these victim-based crimes is right, and that is right for London. It is not necessarily going to be right for a rural area or another part of the country, so I think the move away from national targets is a very good thing.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am not a million miles away from the answer the Deputy Mayor has given. I would take this opportunity to make two broad points. I think it is a public good to get crime down. I do not think any of us are going to sit here and say we would like crime to go up. We want to see fewer murders, fewer rapes; not the recording of it, but the actuality of it. It has to be a good thing, and as soon as we say that, we establish a target, because we say we want it to be less than it was. In that sense, I support targets. I have always believed that you want the trend to go down, and we have seen that over the last 30 years. There are fewer murders; there are fewer cars stolen; there is less burglary. Objectively, we can show that, and that is a good thing to celebrate. What we have to guard against is the risk of target cultures. That is where you have to mitigate the risk, not remove the target.

Q383 Robert Halfon: Do you think there is an extent to which targets can influence the misrecording of crime?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: That is the reason we are talking about it. Turning back to what Lord Stevens has said, over the last 30 or 40 years, the risk is that if the police are

the ones recording the thing that they appear to be measured by, there is a risk—I put it no higher than that—that, in fact, sometimes they misrecord for the wrong reasons. We have to accept that risk. What we have shown over the last 10 years is how much better we have got at that, but we are talking about it because we are clearly not perfect.

Q384 Robert Halfon: Can either of you give examples where you believe that targets have influenced the misreporting of crime statistics, or skewed them in a certain way?

Stephen Greenhalgh: One of the reasons I was very clear that we were not going to set detection rates was the problem of doing that as it relates to rape and sexual violence. We have seen this, and it has been well documented within the Met with the controversy over Sapphire. It is an area where you have to be very careful about crude target-setting driving, on the one hand, an under-recording of a crime, and also the moves to cautions and other things to boost detection. We have moved away from any kind of detection target. We want the police to solve more crime, but we have not followed the approach of the police and crime commissioner for Kent, who has set a 37% detection rate for Kent.

Q385 Robert Halfon: Why?

Stephen Greenhalgh: Because we think it can distort and lead to the wrong kind of behaviour, as it has done historically in the Met. You start to say, “Actually, it is better not to have this crime on the books; let’s show a detection rate by doing this,” as opposed to doing what is in the interest of the victim and the public. That is why we have not set a detection rate.

Q386 Robert Halfon: So you think that what the constabulary in Kent has done is wrong.

Stephen Greenhalgh: I would not have personally set detection rate targets, but I am giving you an example. Everyone has now taken their own approach to this. Other police and crime commissioners have set no targets at all.

Q387 Robert Halfon: There is concern that crude performance measures will be inappropriate and create perverse incentives, promoting the pursuit of simple quantitative targets, and that there is a lack of trust in the ability of the police service to operate a robust performance appraisal system on which to base decisions about individual officers’ performance. What is your view about that?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I think we have, throughout this morning, said that we recognise that there is an issue and a concern around recording and the integrity of crime figures. That does not mean to say that I believe that it is wrong to set a target all the time, particularly around victim-based crimes, but I would not extend that to crime in general. We have not set a target around all crime, whether that goes up or down, on the basis that so many crime types—as the Commissioner has said—are woefully under-reported. That would be wrong.

Q388 Robert Halfon: If you are wary of targets, what do you regard to be the best way of measuring whether you have been successful?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I will give you specifically the MOPAC seven. We are focused on those, and we are concerned about whether the Met is gaming those numbers. For instance, we have looked at the MOPAC seven crime-related incidents before the police and crime plan when we officially set the target, the period since then, and the period before then. Unlike rape and sexual violence, the rate is broadly the same: around 5%. We have looked at the no-criming rate around the MOPAC seven to see if they are being gamed. Actually, the no-criming rate has gone down since the target, interestingly enough, from 3% to 2%. The no-criming rate is broadly flat. We are looking at this and we are aware, but what we do not see is any evidence of a systematic gaming of the numbers around the MOPAC seven.

Q389 Robert Halfon: Generally, do you believe that targets are a good or bad thing, and if you think that they are not helpful, what do you think the best way is to raise and measure performance?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: As I was trying to say in my earlier answer, whether we like it or not—whether we be Parliament, the Government or police commissioners—we do set a target and say we would like less crime. If crime goes up, everyone wants to know why. Inherently, that sets a target, and that means that we keep asking our borough commanders—we have 32 boroughs in London—“What are you doing about it? Are you getting more burglary or are you getting less, and if you are getting more, what are you doing? Are you catching the burglars? Are you warning people?” Inherently, we are going to keep asking that question, so there is always a risk in that that somebody tries to please. That is true of all organisations, whether it be the health service, the police, or anybody else. We have to accept that there are some risks in recording systems. What I always try to guard against—I think I have been consistent in this, whichever force I have been in—is that, yes, I would like to see a downward trend, but I do not care too much whether somebody gets 19.3 burglaries or 18.6. I do not understand how to change between the two, but I do like to know that overall, we are seeing less burglary.

Q390 Chair: Could you just summarise how you address Tom Winsor saying that “performance measures will be inappropriate, creating perverse incentives and promoting the pursuit of short-term, simple, quantitative targets”? Those are his words. How do you address that when you are setting your targets?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: You have to do two things. First, you have to be careful in setting the targets, and I have tried to say I am always looking for a trend, not a precise thing in May. Whether or not a target is met is the start of a conversation, not a conclusion about a result. Someone might say, “Burglary went up in November.” That is what happens in November; as the nights get dark, we do see a rise in burglaries. It is not to say that somebody not reaching the target is a bad thing, but it is a reason to ask a question. Secondly, we mitigate the risk by having all the systems we have in place, and the point is that we not only measure crime reduction, but give a balanced account. A measure of confidence is one. We also measure satisfaction, so what we do is to measure the confidence of people in the police. I think last year we surveyed about 29,000 people, which is a very large number—it is a very big city, but that is a very large number—and asked them “Are you confident in the Met?” The Deputy Mayor referred to those results. We also asked them whether they were satisfied when they meet the police.

Chair: I must pull you up. I am very sorry, but we must press on. We are nearly done.

Q391 **Greg Mulholland:** Can I just follow that up briefly with one question, please, to you, Sir Bernard? This debate has been going on for a long time. The Home Office said even back in the 1990s that police statistics are an unreliable guide to the extent of crime. There are targets. There is pressure from politicians, both Government politicians and Opposition politicians, who jump on figures and say they show one thing or the other and how good or awful they are. There is also the fact that if police numbers rise and if police success increases, crime figures go up, which is perverse. People have suggested that the only way to deal with this is actually to stop recording police crime statistics completely, and to rely simply on a national crime index to take this pressure off and get away from this, which has been damaging to the reputation of some police forces, which is something no one wants. Is that potentially the answer?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: In theory it has an attraction. In practice, I do not know how it would work. If you are a victim of crime today, you expect the police to do something about it. You report a burglary; you expect us to come. If we can catch the offender, we do. If we cannot, we do our best to help the victim. In that process, we will record it. We have no choice. If we have a flare-up of burglary in a certain area, we want to know where that is and to apply our resources, so that we can ask people what they are doing about it. The police are always going to record crime in one way or another, and a way to help to mitigate the risk is the things I have already mentioned, and then to compare it with things like the British crime survey. The British crime survey is incomplete, but it is a measure of crime. It is an anonymous report, but it excludes young people.

Q392 **Mr Turner:** To what extent do you think that accurate crime recording is a question of ethics, rather than a technical or procedural matter?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: You are right. There is no doubt for me that it is. As I tried to say at the beginning, for the victim's sake, the public's sake and the police's sake, we need accurate reporting, and the ethics are very clear that it needs to be accurate and it needs to have integrity.

Stephen Greenhalgh: There is an ethical dimension, and there is professional judgment involved as well. Those are the two factors but, yes, there is an ethical question there.

Q393 **Mr Turner:** How do we identify whether this ethics is affecting what is going on?

Stephen Greenhalgh: You ultimately have to look at the level of compliance and have the oversight to say whether they are following the rules or not. The next question is, "Why are they not following the rules?" That is why we have instructed our auditors to look at the systems and processes, and to identify those risks, and definitely front-end culture and the ethical question is one of those areas of concern.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: The only thing I could add is that it seems to me that there are two possible reasons for it being inaccurate: an error, where somebody has genuinely misapplied a rule or genuinely misunderstood what has happened; or if somebody is doing

it for another motive. If the motive is a dishonest motive, obviously we cannot support it. An error can be made because somebody just does not understand and has made a genuine error, because as I said, the rules are not straightforward. Although I would not bore this Committee with some of the examples of dilemmas we have in how we record, there are some genuine dilemmas, and 600-odd pages of advice will not help the officer on the street to reach the right conclusion. That is why we have now sadly had to—I say “sadly”, but we have had to—invest in these crime data registrars who help people understand what the rules are.

We have concentrated today on records of crime that have either been no-crimes or have been less seriously crimes. We have actually got clear evidence from the registrars of where it has been more seriously crimes when it has been less seriously crimes by the officer at the scene. The system tries its best to give an accurate account, and sometimes the numbers of more serious crimes exceed the numbers where they are downgraded. This is something I am sure the HMI will look at; it is one of the indicators for me. Finally, I would perhaps mention quickly that if you look at all our no-crimes, I think we are running at about 2% to 3% of all the offences we have. We have crime reductions far in excess of that, so even if all the no-crimes were inaccurate, we are not very good at fiddling the figures to bring down crime. It is just an element of it, and we want to ensure that they are accurate. I do not think it is clear evidence of systemic problems, but you are entirely right; we do need to look at the ethics, too.

Chair: Very briefly, Mr Roy, because we must move on to our next set of witnesses.

Q394 Lindsay Roy: Can you tell us what is in the new draft code of ethics that was not there before?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: What you will find in the draft code of ethics is a pulling together of some things that have been written in other places. It attempts to do two things: to draw the attention of the police to the issue of ethics and integrity; and to make it a succinct, memorable list, rather than what in the past has been a succession of long, unmemorable lists. That is a genuine help, because it helps to educate officers and set a clear priority.

Q395 Paul Flynn: I just have a clarification to ask of the Deputy Mayor. Can you confirm that you said that you did not take decisions to restrict attendance at the strategic crime and incident recording group in 2012? That was what you said.

Stephen Greenhalgh: I took a blanket decision at the time to review attendance at all committees, and that may have included that, but it was not a decision specifically to remove attendance at that committee. At the time, my officers were attending the committee, and I as the Deputy Mayor felt that we needed to review attendance, so I stopped attendance at all committees. That may have included that committee.

Paul Flynn: Okay, thank you.

Stephen Greenhalgh: Does that help?

Paul Flynn: I do not think it is exactly the words of what you said earlier on, but we will study the transcript with great interest.

Q396 **Chair:** Can I thank you both very much? You have been on the witness stand for an hour and 20 minutes, which is quite a long time. Can I just ask two questions, finally? Given that, Sir Bernard, the whole target culture became embedded in policing in this country over a long period, and you yourself are still wedded to the idea of specific targets in specific cases, how surprising is it that the habit of manipulating crime statistics is ingrained in the culture of the police?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think, Chair, to be fair, I am not sure I said that. I think what I said was that if you accept it is a good thing to reduce crime, you accept there will be a target. What I also said in answer to the question from my left was that, therefore, I always like to see a trend of crime going down, but I do not like to see more victims, so that I agreed with.

Q397 **Chair:** I want to ask this specific question: how concerned are you that there is a culture, and ingrained attitudes and behaviours, of, “This is what you do with this certain type of crime, and this is what you try and do with this certain type of crime,” and that this is a habit that is in the culture and used to be in the training—at least in the informal training of front-line officers and people on desks and computer terminals? How concerned are you that that habit is still ingrained in the culture.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I was only trying to get to that I do not agree with specific targets. That was my only point. The second thing is that, if I stand for anything, it is about fighting crime. What has happened to the police over the last 30 or 40 years is that there has been an awful lot of effort registered in recording it, and I would like somebody to get down to stopping it.

Q398 **Chair:** You are not answering my question, Sir Bernard. Have you understood what I am asking?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I think so. I understand entirely what you are asking, but I am trying to give an answer that will come back to your point. My point is that I want officers out there fighting crime, and the only way you get that is to say, “What are you doing about arresting that burglar or that robber?”

Q399 **Chair:** What are you doing about the behaviours and attitudes that lead officers to misrecord crime?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: That is not quite the question you asked.

Q400 **Chair:** Do you accept that that is a problem?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: Only in the sense that I was trying to answer. You were saying I am part of this target-setting regime, but I stand for having fewer burglars and fewer burglary victims. That is what I stand for. How we get there is a systems thing. We do not want any risk that our officers think that their only job is to record crime, and to record less of it. The aim is not how much you record; it is how much is happening. We are here to stop it, and that is what I believe in. If cultures grow when people think that their only job is not to record it, I do not support that.

Q401 **Chair:** Since we started this inquiry, I have made it my habit to talk to police officers at the gates of the Palace and out in the streets, and not one of them has suggested to me that crime recorded figures are not fiddled. They all believe that this is the case. How concerned are you about that?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I am. This is now a third area that you are talking about.

Chair: Well, it is the same question; it is about the culture.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I cannot say it any more than I have in all the time—an hour and 20 minutes—I have been before this Committee. I am concerned if the figures are inaccurate.

Q402 **Chair:** How do you change that culture?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I have set out that we are going to get to the bottom of this PC's allegations to see how widespread it is. We are going to have to do two or three things, which are about supervising and also about our IT. The other thing is that we have to look at the culture and the ethics, which I accept. One of the things I have started since I have been in the Met is that all our sergeants and inspectors, for the first time in many years, are receiving training. Part of that is about integrity and professionalism, which is partly about the ethical dimension. You can talk all day about the list of things they address, but I have accepted that for many reasons—some of which we are talking about here today—the police need to concentrate very much on being professional, having standards and integrity, and then making sure that we carry out our job professionally. We are training people to do that. There is obviously always more that we can do.

Q403 **Chair:** How hard is it to accept that you need to change the culture of your organisation?

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I have said that already. When I took up the post of Commissioner, there were three "C"s I said I wanted, on the basis of which, I believe, the Home Secretary appointed me: to cut crime; to cut costs; and to continue to change culture, in that I acknowledged there were many aspects of the Met's culture—and perhaps of the police generally—that I thought we needed to change. I have not changed that view. We have not got to the end of the road. I accept that we are not perfect but, in many respects, we have a lot to be proud of.

Q404 **Chair:** I am meant to be asking questions, but my only observation would be that by being less defensive about what needs to change in your culture, you could change it much more quickly.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe: I would agree, except that I do not think I have been defensive. I have sat here and tried to explain facts, which you may not find helpful, but you need to understand in terms of making a judgment. Secondly, I have accepted from the start that, in fact, there are more things to do.

Q405 Chair: Thank you. Deputy Mayor, a number of police and crime commissioners have actually abandoned targets altogether. Why do you think they have done that?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I have spoken to those who do not have any targets at all, and I have been very conscious of the need to focus our efforts based on the position we found ourselves in. Not every police and crime commissioner has responsibility and oversight over somewhere like London, a metropolis where there are very high levels of victimisation and relatively high levels of crime. For London, it is right to have this dual focus, if you like, of rebuilding public confidence.

Q406 Chair: Those police and crime commissioners accept that targets create perverse incentives to misrecord crime. Why do you not accept that?

Stephen Greenhalgh: I accept that a crude target-setting culture, if applied thoughtlessly—as it was to rape, and sanction detection around rape—can lead to a perverse culture. However, so far, I do not have any evidence that there has been a systematic abuse of the system around the crimes that we are measuring and seeking to reduce. That is the reason why I still think it is the right approach to focus on those victim-based crimes.

Chair: Thank you both very much indeed. You have both been very frank and helpful to this inquiry. We are very grateful.

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: **Tom Winsor**, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, and **Olivia Pinkney**, Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, HMIC, gave evidence.

Q407 Chair: Welcome to our next set of witnesses. May I ask you to identify yourselves for the record?

Tom Winsor: I am Tom Winsor, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

Olivia Pinkney: Good morning. I am Olivia Pinkney, Assistant Inspector of Constabulary with HMIC.

Chair: We are going to be very short of time, so with shorter answers and shorter questions, colleagues, we will get through the brief. If you need to make any supplementary evidence in writing because of the brevity of this session, I apologise for that, but please do send in further written evidence.

Q408 Kelvin Hopkins: I have a question for Tom Winsor. There seems to be a difference of view between you and Sir Bernard about the accuracy of recorded crime in London. How accurate is police-recorded crime in the Met, in your view?

Tom Winsor: We do not know yet, and that is why we are doing a 43-force inspection. It is already under way; we will produce an interim report in April this year and a final report in October.

Q409 Kelvin Hopkins: You are obviously concerned, and there is some sort of evidence that things are not right, or otherwise you would not be doing an inquiry, presumably.

Tom Winsor: We have not been prompted to do this investigation only by any perceived failings in the Metropolitan Police. We are concerned about crime data integrity all over of England and Wales. It must be said that honesty and integrity in policing are essential core values and characteristics, and accurate reporting of crime data is essential to enable police commanders to deploy their resources where they are most needed, where they will be most efficiently and effectively used and, of course, to support victims of crime and ensure they are properly treated.

Q410 Kelvin Hopkins: How will you carry out this inspection? It is a difficult job to do, I imagine, but have you got some specifics you could give us?

Tom Winsor: The inspection is going to cover 43 forces, as I have said. It is already under way, and we are going to be asking the questions and determining how confident the public can be in the effectiveness of police crime recording. We are going to be looking at the effectiveness of the leadership and the supervision of crime recording; how effectively victims are placed at the centre of crime recording decisions; and whether the crime outcomes suit the needs of the victims as well as the public. We need to ensure that the no-crime decisions that are made correctly adhere to the national crime recording standard.

Q411 Kelvin Hopkins: At a recent evidence session, we heard from the Kent commissioner, contrasting a report done by HMIC that had been done for police forces in general with some statistics for Kent, and then she specifically requested a more rigorous report into Kent again, but with rather different statistics. Is that contrast exercising you? Hopefully you are going to pursue your research with the kind of rigour that was done for the second Kent report.

Tom Winsor: The inspection certainly will be rigorous. It follows from the commission we received from the police and crime commissioner for Kent in 2013—sorry, earlier than that—where we concluded more needed to be done in Kent. The necessity to do this was prompted by what we did find in Kent, so we are going to look at all 43 forces in a depth and with a thoroughness that has hitherto not been the case.

Q412 Kelvin Hopkins: One final question: there is concern, and I think we are all concerned, about recategorising crimes to adjust to statistics. Will you be looking carefully to make sure that crimes are not being recategorised in your report—particularly, I think, crimes of sexual violence that are put down as assault or whatever? That kind of recategorisation has, apparently, tended to deter people from reporting crimes of rape, which is a serious concern.

Tom Winsor: It is extremely important that people are not deterred from reporting crime, and that the decisions that are made on the recording of crime are sound. It is

important that there is a material difference between the legitimate exercise of professional judgment as to what crime has been committed, and dishonesty. Things can go wrong for a variety of reasons: it can be mistake; it can be a misunderstanding of the rules; it could be an error of the process; it could be dishonesty; and it could be laziness. Depending on the extent to which we find these things, I have no evidence or present expectation that what we are going to conclude is institutional corruption.

Q413 Chair: I do not think we have used that term today. Can I just ask: do you think our questioning of Sir Bernard resolved the apparent disagreement between him and you about the quality of recorded crime figures in the Metropolitan Police?

Tom Winsor: Almost, yes.

Q414 Chair: Would you like to add anything?

Tom Winsor: Sorry, are you talking about the discrepancy between what he said at the Home Affairs Committee and my subsequent letter?

Chair: Yes.

Tom Winsor: I wrote to Sir Bernard after his evidence because there was a discrepancy. I received his reply on 23 December in which he very frankly acknowledges that he was reliant upon the executive summary of the HMIC report, which did say “broadly competent and reliable”, but that the body of the report did say “cause for concern” and said why. He has emphasised that at no time did he intend to mislead or misrepresent the findings of the review. I have no belief that he did intend to do anything of the kind. I think that the discrepancy has been properly cleared up, and I very much welcome the approach that he has taken.

Q415 Chair: The Audit Commission used to monitor annually the implementation of NCRS, but stopped doing so in 2006-07. What is your reaction to that?

Tom Winsor: We are happy to be doing it now?

Q416 Chair: So there is now an annual external audit of every constabulary’s recorded crime figures.

Tom Winsor: Pretty close, yes. The present inspection—prompted, as I have said, by what we found in Kent—is a 43-force inspection, concluding in October. The Committee may have noticed that on 19 December, the Home Secretary published a written ministerial statement in relation to an increase in HMIC’s budget of £9.4 million. That will enable us to do an annual inspection of core policing in every force, every year, in perpetuity, whereas before we had very largely done thematic inspections into particular aspects of policing and crime data recording—homicide, rape or whatever it may be. Now—in addition to all of that, which is going to be undiminished—there is going to be an annual, boots-on-the-ground core policing inspection, and I have every expectation, although we are still doing the planning on this, that the integrity of crime recording will be part of that.

Chair: Thank you. That is extremely helpful.

Q417 David Heyes: We have heard that the trend is very much away from target setting—in some areas, abandoned altogether, and very drastically curtailed elsewhere. Is that likely to lead, in your view, to an improvement in the quality of recording of crime?

Tom Winsor: There are good targets and there are bad targets. There are some targets that create perverse incentives, and there are other targets that are perfectly legitimate. It is extremely important that targets have their proper place and do not themselves distort policing behaviour. Targets are a management tool, which in some cases can be quite legitimate and quite helpful. However, there is a very material concern that the existence of targets and the perception of police officers that their performance and, perhaps, their advancement will be dependent upon meeting arbitrary targets has led to the wrong policing decisions.

Measurements of performance are absolutely essential, and the measurements are part of the input data in the making of policing decisions, but what the police always need to concentrate on is threat, harm and risk, not necessarily just getting figures down. For example, probationers in some forces are given a target of three arrests per week. That could be three burglars, or it could be three violent criminals, but it is much easier to get three cannabis detections if you go onto the student campus and just lift three students. That is clearly the wrong approach. What we need to do is concentrate on threat, harm and risk, but performance does need to be measured—there is no doubt about that. If you are not measuring performance, you do not know how well you are doing.

Olivia Pinkney: I would share that. The issue of bad and good targets has been well set out. I have been a police officer for over 20 years now, and my experience throughout that time is that the targets themselves are not the problem; the problem is if they are misunderstood, poorly led, and have perverse incentives alongside them. My personal worry is that, if targets are removed altogether, one is not able to explain to the public what crime really is going on; one is not able to make good decisions, if one is a Chief Constable or a Police and Crime Commissioner, around where the resourcing should be. Similarly, other agency budgets are moved and resources are placed on the basis of where crime is taking place, so I think it is not necessarily a binary choice. That would be my view.

Q418 David Heyes: Is that not going to make your inspectorate duties more difficult, the absence of targets?

Olivia Pinkney: No, not at all, because we are looking at not only what happens—as has been discussed this morning—once a crime is reported and within a force, and the decision that is made about it at that point, but how those crimes come into the force in the first place. There are a number of routes by which crimes come in. The targets, whether they are there or not, are not the issue. As Tom has explained, one of the key issues we are looking at this year in the inspection is what it feels like to a particular officer, what they are told and how they are led, and what the policies say compared with what the reality is. We are going to work very hard to understand that in each of the forces.

Q419 Chair: You talk about the leadership around this, which is so important. In an earlier evidence session, we were told that the failure to comply with Home Office

accounting rules was often because officers—and I quote Mr Farrar—genuinely thought they were helping the public to deliver a service. In the minds of many officers, they think a falling crime rate is the service that they are delivering to the public. How concerned are you that police officers have been trained to deliver the wrong outcomes; that, actually, the outcome they should be delivering is a service to the victims of crime and to protect the public, not delivering falling crime statistics? There is a distinction between the two, is there not?

Tom Winsor: The primary purpose of the police is to prevent crime, so if crime is truly falling, that is their No. 1 priority. That is a good thing, but the real issue is whether it is truly falling, or if the statistics are being manipulated in order to make it appear to be falling.

Q420 Chair: I accept that, but I am asking something slightly different. If targets become very important in an organisation, they tend to override other considerations in what officers actually do. What feelings do you have about why officers behave in the way that they do, and what does that say about the leadership and the training of those officers?

Tom Winsor: The quality of leadership in policing, as in so many other organisations, is absolutely critical. The behaviour of the man and woman, and men and women, at the very top of a police force affects the whole culture, the whole approach, and the integrity and the honesty of their operations. If they believe their leaders are misbehaving in some way, that will affect the whole performance and culture of the organisation.

Q421 Chair: What factors do you think most influence the behaviour of front-line officers that leads them to misrecord crime?

Tom Winsor: If they believe that their senior managers do not care about the honesty and accuracy of the crime recording; in other words, that they are interested only in the figures, not in the truth.

Q422 Chair: To what extent do you think there is a residual cultural problem in the police on that count?

Tom Winsor: I cannot answer that until we have done the inspection.

Q423 Chair: But that is something you will be looking for.

Tom Winsor: Yes. There will be fiddling of the figures. I have no doubt that we are going to find there is a degree of fiddling of the figures. The real question is how severe is that, how extensive is it and in relation to what kinds of crime is it taking place. I do not anticipate that we are going to find, as I said, institutional corruption. I would be extraordinarily surprised if we do.

Q424 Chair: How much do you think it is just about attitudes and behaviours?

Tom Winsor: A lot of it is about poor training, poor leadership, poor supervision and misunderstanding, but some of it will be about dishonesty. People in all sorts of organisations will fiddle the figures. Once they have worked out how the performance system according to which they are measured works, they will operate that system so as to

make their own individual performance or their team performance look as good as possible. That is just human nature. Therefore the quality of supervision has to ensure that does not take place. It happens in health; it happens in education. For example, I was speaking to a very senior civil servant who was talking about his time at school. When the Ofsted inspectors came in, the pupils were told that when the inspector was in the classroom and their teacher asked a question, if they were certain they knew the right answer, they put up their right hand, and if they did not know, they put up their left hand. That is fiddling the figures. It happens.

Q425 Chair: How much are you, therefore, envisaging that your recommendations will be about leadership, training, culture and attitudes, rather than about systems and rules, which so much of our discussion of this tends to be about?

Tom Winsor: I cannot anticipate just what the relative proportions are going to be, but I would be extremely surprised if we did not have a great deal to say about the quality of supervision, governance and leadership.

Olivia Pinkney: Would it help if I gave a couple of examples? For instance, there is the nine-year-old child who is accused of stealing something. There is confusion by officers, because that is a crime and should be recorded as such, but the child is below the age of criminal responsibility and therefore cannot be pursued through the criminal justice process. They are different tests, and officers are confused by that, so one of the things we will look at as we go around the forces is what they understand and what training they have had. I know that there is confusion around that.

Similarly, there is confusion that can result in over-recording, and an example would be that a house burglary takes place, the car keys are taken from the hook by the front door, where we all keep them, and the car is stolen. That is a crime of burglary, and the theft of the car is not a separate crime, because it is all wrapped up into one. But sometimes an officer will not know that, and would in good faith put two crimes into the system, so there are lots of complexities around this. The basic principles are simple—I believe them to be simple—but there are complexities, and we will be looking very carefully at what front-line officers know and understand, what they are told and how they are trained; and, if they do not know, where they go to find the answer, and how easy is it for them to find the answer.

Q426 Chair: What should be the overriding principle that governs the behaviour of a front-line officer?

Olivia Pinkney: The overriding principle is around service to the victim, and the accounting rules are very clear that that comes first.

Q427 Chair: And how confident are you that that is at the front of most front-line officers' behaviour today?

Olivia Pinkney: How confident am I that the victim comes first and the service comes first? For the vast majority of officers, I am very confident. There will be some where it does not, and there will be forces where these messages have been mixed, and we will look at that and report on it.

Q428 Kelvin Hopkins: Just following the Chairman's question, and also acknowledging Tom Winsor's point about crime reduction, a measure of success in some cases might mean a police force saying, "Yes, we have prosecuted more rape cases than anyone else, so we are getting our rapists." In a sense, having more crime prosecuted would actually be a measure of success for the police, not reducing the apparent level of crime.

Tom Winsor: Certainly. What the public are interested in is the truth. I think the Commissioner mentioned, and this is certainly the research that I have seen, that it is estimated that 85% of rapes are never reported to the police. Similarly, there are other kinds of crimes, particularly involving children, that never come to the attention of the police. Now it is extremely important that, as far as possible, they do come to the attention of the police, that they are recorded as such, and that therefore the victims can be given a service and of course the perpetrators, if they can be found, can be brought to justice. It is extremely important that what happens in crime recording is honest. If that means that there are more recorded offences in a particular category because that category of offences has historically been under-recorded, yes, that is a good thing.

Q429 Lindsay Roy: In your external inspection, how much focus is there on the quality of the internal audit of the force?

Tom Winsor: We will certainly, in every one of the 43 forces, be assessing the quality of internal audit, and we will be having a great deal to do with the force crime registrar to ensure the consistency of approach and the proper adherence to the rules for recording crime.

Q430 Lindsay Roy: Do you believe that the crime registrar is in the proper status within the commission?

Tom Winsor: Yes, I think so, but we will take a look at that. The force crime registrar does have to be detached and independent, to report directly to a member of the chief officer team, and to have a sound and un-interfered with approach to the recording rules.

Q431 Lindsay Roy: What lessons have you learned from external inspections, and what are you planning to introduce as a result?

Tom Winsor: We have not finished the inspection yet, so I am reluctant to say what our emerging thinking is, because we have an interim report in April.

Q432 Mr Turner: Could I just ask a couple of questions? What does a mother do when one of her weapons is to get the police in when she is at the end of her tether but, on the other hand, allowing things to come to the police's ears now seems to make it too formal?

Tom Winsor: Too formal? What do you mean?

Mr Turner: Well, recording will be done wherever there is a responsibility to respond. The mother might be afraid that the report will turn into a formal report.

Tom Winsor: I see. So she is at the end of the tether with her child.

Mr Turner: Yes.

Tom Winsor: Sorry, I thought you meant with her spouse. It may very well just be that it is a cry for help from the mother because the child is out of control and she fears that, if not brought back into some kind of discipline that she is unable to impose, the child will go on to become a criminal. Of course she will be anxious that that child should not be criminalised, so she will be asking the police, probably, for advice, and maybe just to give the child a good, hard, firm talking to.

It seems to me that the police have a discretion, and the police are almost unique in investing in their lowest-ranking personnel the greatest amount of power, which is the power to arrest people, of course. Police constables, unlike members of the military, have a huge discretion as to how to act in particular circumstances. The qualities of a police officer, including bravery, personal commitment and dedication to the public service, also include the exercise of intelligence, judgment, self-control—all these factors. Therefore a mother should not, it seems to me, hesitate—if she believes that it is necessary for the child to be given words of advice from a figure in authority, assuming she believes that the child will respect that authority—to call the police. This does not mean to say that the child is going to get a criminal record.

Olivia Pinkney: Just to add to that, absolutely, there is a difference between a police officer being called, very much listening to what that mother wants, and then having discretion and a number of options about what to do, which one hopes they would discuss with the mother. The other aspect that is important is that the new outcomes framework seems to be in place, so what happens with crime once it has been recorded? There will be a much greater breadth of explanation for the public, and there will be an option there whereby there is a suspect—if one is going to use that rather pejorative term for that child—but actually prosecution is not supported and not in the right interests, and if that is what the victim, in this case the mother, wants. That outcomes framework will help to explain much more clearly than is currently the case for those kinds of situations.

Q433 Mr Turner: Good. HMIC will inspect crime data integrity this year. What systems should be in place for overseeing crime data integrity in the longer term?

Tom Winsor: Sound leadership and governance, and a proper adherence to the national crime recording standards and the Home Office accounting rules. It is extremely important that people are well-trained and they do understand what those rules are, but they should not allow their judgments—this is one of the potential difficulties—as to what crime should be recorded to be determined by their perception as to what the Crown Prosecution Service will charge or any other misunderstanding. If a crime has been committed, it should be recorded as that crime, whether or not the officer in question believes that it will lead to a prosecution for that offence. It may lead to a prosecution for a lower offence. It is extremely important that they do not mix up their perception as to the course of the investigation with what the crime is.

Olivia Pinkney: I would add a couple more to that, in terms of the success factors. One is a performance framework that is hand in glove with the integrity of the information. The best leaders who do this will celebrate, as an example, a reduction in

robbery, but they will be checking that that is accurate and that, actually, recording of theft from the person has not gone up at the same rate as robbery has come down. One ought to have hand in glove between the performance framework and making sure that one is also looking at the data. You should, in a force, be able to see how those both matter and are seen very much and very overtly to matter.

The other aspect is around the systems that a force has in place. Some of those are IT-enabled and, as we have heard previously, there is a whole plethora of IT around the country in terms of policing, but there are forces where their IT really helps them with this. They are really confident, and are able to be confident, around what the public tell them, however it comes in—be it in person, on the phone, on the internet or whatever else—and they are able to follow that and track that through. Whether it ends up as a crime, whether it ends up as no-crime—which is not necessarily a bad thing—or whether it ends up as a crime-related incident, which may or may not be a bad thing, they are able to show and demonstrate that throughout. There is another aspect where a member of the public is able online to track the progress of their crime. Some forces have that and, again, that is a real plus point in terms of that transparency.

Q434 Mr Turner: To what extent is HMIC sufficiently independent properly to carry out this role?

Tom Winsor: We are completely independent. HM Inspectors of Constabulary are Crown appointments. We are not civil servants, we are not Ministers; we are Crown appointments. While our inspection programme has to be approved by the Home Secretary, and we can be commissioned to do work by the Home Secretary that we must do, and we can be commissioned to do work by police and crime commissioners that we may do—depending on resources—none of those elected authorities has any power to interfere in the judgments that we make and the contents of our reports.

Q435 Chair: You do have ex-police officers and police officers who might become chief police officers serving on HMIC. Is that correct?

Tom Winsor: Two of the five Inspectors of Constabulary are former Chief Constables. For the first time since 1856, a majority of the Inspectors of Constabulary—because I am one of them—are people who have never served in the police service. Yes, a high proportion of our staff are seconded police officers—about 35—and the other 65% are Home Office civil servants, but they are the people who assist us in making the judgments. The judgments are made by HM Inspectors of Constabulary, and we have no allegiance, other than to the public interest and to the law.

Q436 Chair: But how comfortable are you that Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe should finish up quoting a report that he effectively authored in defence of his own performance?

Tom Winsor: I was a little surprised that the report came out seven months after he became Commissioner of the Met. I do not know what process took place in those seven months to alter the report and why there was a delay if it was ready and he had finished it before he left HMIC, so I just do not know how that worked. I think the Commissioner is entitled to quote HMIC's report; he in no way concealed the fact that he was the HMI responsible.

Chair: No, he was completely open about it, but it does look slightly introverted or incestuous.

Tom Winsor: It is not unprecedented for one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary to leave HMIC and go back into the police, but in most cases, it has not happened. There have been some cases. Tim Hollis became Chief Constable of Humberside after serving in HMIC, and Sir Bernard was a HMI until he went to the Met, but it is unusual.

Q437 Chair: How comfortable are you with that limited degree of separation?

Tom Winsor: I think that it is not as limited as your question might imply. It is a complete degree of separation. Nobody knows what they are going to do when they leave HMIC, least of all me.

Q438 Chair: Of the £9.4 million that is going to be devoted to these regular annual external audits, can you confirm that it is all for crime data inspections?

Tom Winsor: No. By no means is it all for crime data, and we would not need all that money just to do crime data.

Q439 Chair: How much will be devoted to crime data integrity?

Tom Winsor: I cannot tell you now, because we are still working out the relative balance. The £9.4 million is to enable us to do what you might call boots-on-the-ground, core policing inspections as to efficiency and effectiveness across the piece in each force. Crime data integrity, I anticipate, will be a material part of it, but it certainly will not be all of it.

Q440 Chair: What systems did you inherit for supervising the integrity of crime data?

Tom Winsor: None, I think.

Q441 Chair: So you do need to create some new systems.

Tom Winsor: Oh, yes. We are working extremely hard on all of that right now. We got the Home Office's green light just before Christmas, and we are already hard at work on working out the detail of how that additional work is going to be done.

Q442 Chair: To what extent will devoting part of this resource to supervising crime data integrity be the first priority for this money?

Tom Winsor: It will be a high priority.

Chair: A high priority.

Tom Winsor: Yes, because unless we know the truth of what is happening, police force by police force, and unless we have confidence in the honesty and integrity of what the performance is, we are severely handicapped.

Q443 Chair: To what extent are you still going to be relying on police forces to ensure the integrity of their own data and auditing their own systems of inspection, rather than making a direct inspection?

Tom Winsor: We are going to be inspecting how they record crime. We are not going to be accepting their data. We are going to be looking at their data, and then checking it.

Q444 Chair: To what extent will that involve actually pulling on the string, going to the victim of that particular crime, and checking that they believe that the crime that was committed against them was recorded correctly?

Tom Winsor: A lot of that, yes.

Q445 Chair: So it will be actually physically verifying the individual bits of data.

Tom Winsor: We will be listening to the call, talking to the victim and looking at the investigation.

Olivia Pinkney: Absolutely. If I can perhaps help the Committee with an earlier part of your question, this year's crime data inspection is costing just over £1 million, to give you an order of magnitude. That is how much we are spending doing this one. Absolutely we are, as we did with Kent, intending to contact victims and ask them for their route through, and we will be checking what they explained to the officer, how that was reported and what happened after that. We will also be doing some unannounced visits to police stations and asking staff there and looking, so we are not at all simply relying on an audit that a force does for itself. A good force will be doing its own audits; it should not be waiting simply for HMIC to turn up. They should be doing this as routine, and we will be interested in the depth, breadth and frequency of that audit. But, certainly, we do not rely purely upon that. We very much do our own audits with our own auditors and do our own checks, and that is what we report upon.

Q446 Paul Flynn: Will you be making an assessment of the value of whistleblowers, their work and the protection that is available to them?

Tom Winsor: No. That is not part of the inspection.

Q447 Paul Flynn: Is it part of anyone's role to do that?

Tom Winsor: It is not part of our inspection. That is not to say that it will not be part of a future inspection, but it is just not part of the programme at the moment.

Q448 Chair: How concerned are you about the treatment of whistleblowers in the police generally?

Tom Winsor: I have no present reason to believe that whistleblowers in the police are not treated appropriately.

Q449 Chair: I have to confess that I am a little bit surprised about that.

Tom Winsor: Well, I am aware of PC Patrick being subject to misconduct proceedings. Is that the source of your surprise?

Q450 Chair: Would you be prepared to meet people like PC Patrick and hear their views?

Tom Winsor: PC Patrick wrote to me just before Christmas with a considerable amount of material—much of it seen by this Committee, but I think there was some additional material—making allegations of criminal behaviour and asking HMIC to investigate.

Q451 Chair: How have you responded to that?

Tom Winsor: We do not investigate crimes. We are not a police force, but in so far as he is making allegations of systemic failures in police recording practices—he is certainly making that allegation—the evidence that he has presented to this Committee and to us will, of course, be given due weight and taken seriously?

Q452 Chair: By whom?

Tom Winsor: Us.

Q453 Chair: So you are going to investigate his allegations.

Tom Winsor: We are not going to conduct a criminal investigation.

Chair: No, I understand that.

Tom Winsor: But, most certainly, we are going to look at what he has said and the other witnesses to this Committee, and, indeed, this Committee's report is going to come out before our report. That is going to be a material input as well.

Q454 Chair: We are grateful for that. Generally, do you agree, then, that whistleblowers who feel that they have been blocked by their command chain should be able to come to HMIC?

Tom Winsor: There is no limitation of which I am aware on their ability to do so.

Q455 Chair: Should they be allowed to go to IPCC as well?

Tom Winsor: I would like to think about that question and write to you.

Chair: If you could drop us a line, I would be interested in your view on that.

Q456 Kelvin Hopkins: I have a very brief question about IT systems. I actually met our local Chief Constable yesterday, and our crime commissioner. We met the Home Office Minister for policing, and they are trying to develop an IT system where, from the tablet in the hand of the bobby on the beat making an arrest, right through to the court system—if all the systems match up—everything that is recorded at the point of arrest can be seen by the courts. At the moment, there are different IT systems for every different

institution and they do not match up. It is very difficult, and what our local police force is trying to do is to get that consistency right through to the courts.

Tom Winsor: The state of police IT is breathtakingly primitive in too many respects, and it is a material part of our current inspection on the way in which police time is used.

Q457 Chair: I have one final question. You will recall me pointing out to Sir Bernard that I have been casually talking to police officers on the streets about police recorded crime, and there is a very wide degree of cynicism amongst police officers. There is now a social media poll—I appreciate this is a self-selecting sample—where 90% of police officers who have responded say that they do not believe the police recorded crime figures. Do you recognise that there is at least a degree of concern about the faith of officers themselves in the information that they are providing to their superiors?

Tom Winsor: I am certain there is a degree of concern. I would be astonished if, were every police officer asked, that 90% mark were attained. You say they are self-selecting, and my experience of social media and the police is that those who participate in it are not necessarily a representative sample.

Q458 Chair: But you do recognise that one of the problems in police forces, particularly the Metropolitan Police, is a deep, deep cynicism about their own command chain.

Tom Winsor: I have met many police officers who have a deep cynicism about their command chain, and not just in the Met, but the vast majority of police officers do not spend their time complaining about their bosses. They spend their time preventing crime, looking after the safety of the public and catching criminals, which was why they joined. I think that those who participate in social media and blogs and so on are people who have time on their hands.

Q459 Chair: What recommendations should you be making to police forces to deal with the cynicism of officers about the command chain?

Tom Winsor: I think that a great deal depends on communication—for the men and women at the front line to have a very clear understanding of the simplicity of the direction of the police force and what really matters. That, I think, is absolutely key, and in so many respects, there is a long chain of command from the front-line officer to the chief officer team, and somewhere along the line, the message is getting distorted or even lost.

Q460 Chair: How important is it for the leadership to listen to their people?

Tom Winsor: Extremely important, and that is why I believe that chief officers who get out regularly and talk to the front-line cops and the police staff, who are doing an extremely valuable job, are doing the right thing. It is extremely important they remain in touch.

Q461 Chair: How much of your crime data inspections will be looking at how much the leadership listen to their front-line officers on the subject of crime data integrity?

Tom Winsor: It will form part of that, and it is extremely important, as I said in response to an earlier question, that the leadership have a very clear communication of the need for honesty and integrity in the recording of crime, which is but one element in the assessment of the quality of the performance of the police force.

Q462 David Heyes: If your efforts succeed and there is much greater integrity in the stats, we will see an increase in the levels of recorded crime. That is going to be, politically, extremely unpopular. We are not innocent parties in this, as politicians. It is very much the result of politicians of all parties over the years who have contributed to bringing about this culture. How are you going to deal with the fact that your success in your endeavours is going to make you extremely politically unpopular, potentially, for example, with the Home Office?

Tom Winsor: It is not inevitable that improvements in the integrity of the recording of crime will lead to an increase in crime. As AIC Pinkney said, it may be that we will find cases where more than one crime is recorded when in fact only one crime has been committed, but it is conceptually possible that it will show a rise for some crime categories. For example, on sexual offences, particularly sexual offences against children, or many of the other under-recorded or under-reported crimes, it would be a good thing. If the police know these crimes are taking place, they can tackle them and deal with it.

There is a lot of crime that is just not reported. Examples include paedophilia, child sexual exploitation, human trafficking, cyber-crime, identity theft, counterfeiting, undetected drugs, gun trafficking, money laundering and internal corporate fraud. A lot of these things are not recorded, and also the national crime recording standards do not include some things that everybody would regard as a crime, for example motoring offences. The example given to me by the Chief Constable of Derbyshire, Mr Creedon, is the uninsured drunk driver in an un-roadworthy car speeding in a built-up area and speaking on his mobile phone. That is not recorded as a crime, according to the national crime recording standards, but shoplifting a piece of chewing gum from a multinational supermarket counts as a crime. The data only tells you a certain amount, not the whole picture.

You mentioned, if we do conclude that there is more crime than has presently been recorded, that this would lead to a political dissatisfaction. As I mentioned in response to an earlier question, we do not operate according to political criteria. There are no political criteria in the Police Act 1996. We will not operate according to any political criteria; they would be irrelevant considerations in any of our reports, and we would be correctly successfully judicially reviewed if we allowed political considerations to enter into them.

Chair: Thank you. That was a Rolls-Royce answer at the end. Thank you very much. We are very grateful to you; I am sorry it was slightly curtailed evidence, but we covered a lot of ground in the previous sessions. If there is anything that you want to add that we have not had time for, please do drop us a line. Thank you very much indeed.