



Home Affairs Committee

Oral evidence: [The work of the Home Secretary](#), HC 299

Wednesday, 16 December 2015

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 16 December 2015.

[Watch the meeting](#)

Members present: Keith Vaz (Chair); Victoria Atkins, James Berry, Mr David Burrowes, Nusrat Ghani, Mr Ranil Jayawardena, Tim Loughton, Stuart C. McDonald, Naz Shah, Mr Chuka Umunna.

Questions 94 - 215

Examination of Witness

Witness: **Rt Hon Theresa May**, MP, Home Secretary, gave evidence.

Q94 Chair: I call the Committee to order and refer all those present to the Register of Members' Interest where the interests of members are noted. I welcome the Home Secretary for this final session of this year, as part of our normal inquiry into the work of the Home Secretary. Home Secretary, we have a wide range of issues to cover with you and we are going to do this on the basis of themes, and members will come in where appropriate.

I have to say that every time that you appear before this Committee, Home Secretary, you have broken another record. It was only a month ago that you passed Rab Butler's time in office, five years, five months and 29 days, to be the longest serving Home Secretary for over 50 years. If you stay until August next year you will be the longest serving of the 20th and 21st century. Are you ever going to go?

Mrs May: Well, thank you for reminding me of those particular records, Chairman. I think it is interesting for us to look at what the Home Office are doing rather than the length of time that the Home Secretary has served. But I have to say that I probably should congratulate you, Chairman, as I think you are the longest serving Chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee.

Q95 Chair: Maybe that is a message to both of us. Thank you very much. Let us begin with Prime Minister's Questions and the statement the Prime Minister and the Chancellor made last week concerning Donald Trump. I was very surprised that two members of the Cabinet, including the Prime Minister, seem to have made the decision that is really in your remit to decide whether or not Donald Trump should be banned from coming to the United Kingdom. Half a million people have now signed a petition saying he should not come here but the Chancellor last week, and the Prime Minister just an hour ago, have both said he should not be banned. What are your views?

Mrs May: First of all, we all agree that the remarks that Donald Trump made in relation to Muslims were divisive, they were unhelpful, they were wrong. In relation to the question of

banning individuals from the United Kingdom, given the role that I play in making those decisions, I do not comment on individual cases. Just if I may amplify the theme of division, I think it is imperative on politicians in looking at these issues that we ensure we work to bring communities together rather than seeking to divide them.

Q96 Chair: But looking at the words rather than the person, because of course this is in the public domain, it has been in Prime Minister's Questions, it is not something that is under the counter, he has said that some parts of the United Kingdom are so radicalised that the police are afraid to enter them. This is not just any old person from the Midwest of the United States, this is the leading Republican candidate for President of the United States talking about our country and saying that our police are not able to go to certain parts of the country. Do you believe that to be the case?

Mrs May: Absolutely not, and I think he was completely wrong in what he said about the British Police. It was nonsense to say there were parts of the United Kingdom where the British Police do not feel able to go or are not willing to go. Our police force does an excellent job for us, day in and day out they are going out there and working to keep us safe. I think it shows that he just does not understand the United Kingdom and what happens in the United Kingdom.

Q97 Chair: Given the current climate, do you think that the Muslim community in particular has been targeted? Clearly he does not want any Muslims to enter the United States of America so they have targeted that particular community.

Mrs May: Sorry, when you say "they have targeted"?

Chair: He has targeted that particular community.

Mrs May: Clearly he has targeted that particular community. Obviously the Home Office does a lot of work around the whole issue of community activity, the work we do within Muslim communities and others around the country. We are increasing the amount of work that we will be doing with our counter-extremism strategy, working with mainstream voices to try to ensure that we do not allow those who want to divide us, who want to encourage hatred within our communities to succeed.

Q98 Chair: Sure, we will be coming on to that. Just on the banning issue, you have banned 217 people from entering the United Kingdom since you became Home Secretary. You gave these figures in November 2014: 61 on national security grounds, 72 people who are not conducive to the public good and 84 hate preachers. Are those figures still accurate? Maybe you can write to us with the new figures. Since November 2014 have you banned even more people?

Mrs May: There will be some people who have been banned in the interim, Chairman, so I am happy to write to you with the new figures.

Q99 Chair: So on Donald Trump, you will make that decision as and when he decides to come here?

Mrs May: As I say, I do not comment on individual cases, and given the role I play it would not be appropriate for me to do so.

Q100 Chair: Sure, but in the normal course of events, it would not come before you until someone had decided they wanted to come? Not necessarily him but anyone else, like him, who wants to come to the United Kingdom, faced with a petition of 500,000 people and many Members of Parliament, and the words of others, you will make that decision based on the case at that time.

Mrs May: The decision to exclude somebody from the United Kingdom is one that is made by the Home Secretary on the basis of the evidence that is available at the time.

Q101 Chair: At the time, thank you very much. Let us turn to immigration. I do not know whether you noticed that you had ended up on somebody's Christmas card as Princess Leia. Today in *The Sun* you are one of the Fantastic Four, you have transformed yourself from Princess Leia into the Invisible Woman, because apparently—according to the newspaper article written by their political editor—you are leading a campaign in the Cabinet along with three other colleagues to tell the Prime Minister that he is not tough enough on immigration policy. Is that true? This is a Cabinet source, "Theresa was first to make her feelings clear to the Prime Minister some months ago that he had not asked for enough. Ian, Michael and Boris—Iain Duncan Smith, Boris Johnson and Michael Gove—have now joined her and this is a dangerous moment". Do you think it is a dangerous moment as far as immigration is concerned or is the Cabinet united behind the Prime Minister's position on migration?

Mrs May: The Prime Minister has always been very clear about the need for us to bring control into immigration. He has been very clear throughout the last five years, both in coalition Government and now in a majority Conservative Government that it is important for us to constantly be looking to see how we can ensure that we are able to welcome the brightest and the best to the UK, those who wish to contribute to our economy and our society, that we can root out abuse in the system, but we bring some control into the system given the impact that significant numbers have. So I work very closely with the Prime Minister on immigration matters.

Q102 Chair: But contrary to the cartoon that you were the Invisible Woman, powerful though the Fantastic Four are, you are quite vocal on this, you made it very clear that we need to be tougher on immigration and dealing with the EU. You have said so to this Committee before.

Mrs May: In relation to the European Union, yes. It is public because it was in the letter to Donald Tusk that the Prime Minister sent that free movement is one of the issues that is being looked at, particularly in the issue of access to welfare and the concept of people contributing before they are able to draw out of the system. Obviously I am also discussing a number of other issues on free movement, but I have been for some time. Issues around abuse of free movement, which we have seen. That, I think, is a very important issue about our ability to prevent people with certain criminal records from entering the UK, which of course depends on sharing the information around criminal records. So these are issues that I am dealing with and working on and continue to do.

Q103 Chair: On 26 November the figures that came out showed that you had yet again failed to reach your target on migration, that over the last year 336,000 people came into the country as a net figure. That is an increase of 82,000. Now that is a pretty blatant failure, is it not, because the last time you came before the Committee you said you hoped to meet your target because Nick Clegg was not breathing down your neck, I paraphrase, and the Liberals were not watering down what you would really like to do? But in fact the figures are even worse, they are the worst on record.

Mrs May: There is no gainsaying the figures, the figures are there and obviously they are not close to the target that we have of the tens of thousands. I think it is more than paraphrasing when you suggest the comment that I made was in relation to Nick Clegg. What is clear is—

Chair: Well, the Liberal Democrats in general.

Mrs May: —there were certain things that we were not able to do in the previous Immigration Act that was passed before the May 2015 election that we are now putting into the Immigration Bill that is currently, next week, about to start its passage through the House of Lords. It has made its way through the Commons. So, for example, on the ability to deport first and people to appeal after they have been deported from the country, we are looking to expand the category of people to whom that applies. We were not able to do that previously. So it is in that context that I referred to the difference between coalition and majority Government.

Q104 Chair: Yes, but this is your target, is it not, and you failed yet again? You have never met your target in all the years you have been Home Secretary. The situation is getting much worse and your own former Chief of Staff, Nick Timothy—who I am sure you will remember because he worked very closely with you—said that the Government had decided to abandon the target because the Treasury was relying on migration to balance the books. In other words, the Chancellor is saying, “We do not mind legal migration because it helps our economy” and you are saying to keep people out. But you are never going to reach this target, are you? If it is now 336,000, how on earth are you going to get down to below 100,000?

Mrs May: If you look over the period of the last five and a half years of course we did see net migration falling, the impact of some of the measures that we had taken did lead to a fall in net migration. As you say, we have seen this increase in most recent sets of figures. Two significant components of that: migration from the European Union but also students who have overstayed. But there isn’t a conflict between having an immigration policy that ensures that we can deal with the concerns people have about immigration, and having an immigration policy that is beneficial to the economy. As I said, we want to ensure the brightest and the best can come to the United Kingdom, those who wish to contribute to our economy and our society. We want to make sure we are fair to those who do the right thing and have come here and done it in the right way, and that we root out abuse from the system.

Q105 Chair: But you are going to meet that target, are you? Are you still going to maintain it? You are still going to tell the Committee you want to keep this target for the rest of Parliament?

Mrs May: The target was in our manifesto, we have that target, I am still working to ensure that we can look at the immigration system and see what further action needs to be taken. It is one of the lessons I learnt fairly early on in dealing with immigration is that you cannot just put a set of measures in place and then suddenly expect them just to do everything you want them to do, because, of course, people do try to find ways around the rules. You are constantly looking at this. That is why, I have to say, the Home Office has quite frequent immigration legislation coming forward.

Q106 Chair: But that is five and half years and one area where a predecessor of yours had to resign was over foreign national offenders, and there has been absolutely no progress with that. I rang the Polish Ambassador and the Irish Ambassador this week and I asked them why the top two countries are Poland and Ireland, two countries within the EU where between them they have roughly 1,500 of their nationals in our prisons at a cost of £44,000 for each prisoner. Again, in the

last few years we only seem to have removed a handful of foreign nationals back to their country. As far as the EU is concerned, it is Poles and Irish people with the Jamaicans, a Commonwealth country, in third place and Romania in fourth place. They are just not going back, are they?

Mrs May: If I may, Chairman, you are conflating a number of issues there. First of all, you say we only remove a handful of foreign national offenders. We have removed several thousand foreign national offenders, but of course there are different arrangements under which people are removed. In relation to countries within the European Union, of course the prisoner transfer agreement is important here, and not every country has implemented that prisoner transfer agreement and it is not possible, of course, for us to remove foreign national offenders from another country under that agreement unless the other member state has in fact implemented that.

Q107 Chair: But Poland has. Poland has agreed this. What the Polish Ambassador said to me is that if the Polish prisoner wants to stay in the UK they can stay in the UK, and most of them want to stay in our prisons. So here is the EU trying to prevent you from doing what you would like to do, which is to either send them back or, what the Prime Minister said over the summer, to build a prison in Jamaica at a cost of £25 million so we can send Jamaican offenders back to Jamaica. That remains your aim, does it? It does not seem to be working.

Mrs May: That is something that the Ministry of Justice is putting forward in terms of helping to support a prison in Jamaica. In relation to Poland, for some time they had not implemented the prisoner transfer agreement but we do make every effort and look at how we can improve the removal of foreign national offenders in a whole range of ways. As you will know, there are a number of reasons why it is difficult to do so sometimes. People have destroyed their documents, getting countries to accept that an individual is, indeed, the national of that country can sometimes require very lengthy processes and so part of our work is, of course, discussing with other countries how we can streamline those processes, how we can ensure that we can remove people perhaps on different documents. This is work that is always ongoing. I have the same concern that from your questions I suspect you have, Chairman, which is of course we want to see foreign national offenders serving their sentences but we then do want to be able to remove them from the country.

Q108 Chair: Like Michael Evans Clarke, a Jamaican drug dealer, who has now been given indefinite leave to remain in this country because officials at the Home Office used the wrong piece of legislation to send him home. So he is now here permanently.

Mrs May: I am aware of that case, Chairman, I do not think it is appropriate to comment necessarily on an individual case. What I will say is that we do make every effort to ensure that we are working to remove foreign national offenders. This is one of the challenges in the Home Office, sometimes we find that court judgments do not go the way that we would wish them to.

Q109 Mr Chuka Umunna: In July in a speech the Prime Minister said, and I will quote him, “Over generations we have built something extraordinary in Britain, a successful multi-racial, multi-faith democracy, it is open, diverse and welcoming”. I presume you agree with that, Home Secretary?

Mrs May: Yes.

Q110 Mr Chuka Umunna: He said also, “It is here in Britain,” and he said this today “where success is achieved not in spite of our diversity but because of our diversity” and I am sure you will agree with that as well. I presume you, like me, are pleased that the Prime Minister does not indulge in the kind of scapegoating of immigrants that we see from the likes of the leader of UKIP, who you will remember this time last year got stuck in a traffic jam on the M4 and blamed it on immigrants?

Mrs May: Yes, I would agree that we should not be scapegoating people in that way.

Q111 Mr Chuka Umunna: The reason for asking these questions, and I am just slightly puzzled by your response, is because you have claimed that immigration is responsible for people being forced out of work at a time when you and Ministers tell us our economy is strong. Your Department’s research on this is clear and it says—and I am sure you have seen the paper, it is a BIS Home Office paper—“There is little evidence that migration has caused statistically significant displacement of UK natives from the labour market in periods when the economy is strong”. Why do you contradict your own research, Home Secretary?

Mrs May: The research in this area is varied. I do not have the Home Office document to hand, but I think you will find there are some other quotes that are not quite as supportive of the position that you are taking in relation to this. It is very clear we have a very successful pluralistic society here in the United Kingdom. I entirely support and agree with the comments that the Prime Minister has made on that. But in order to ensure that we can maintain that, I think it is right that we say that we do need to try to control immigration into the country. There is evidence, and indeed this has been supported by the Migration Advisory Committee—the Independent Migration Advisory Committee, which advises the Government on these matters—that we can see people being displaced out of jobs. It is not a one for one, for every immigrant who comes in somebody who is already resident in the UK does not get a job, but the figures, from memory, that the MAC came up with was something like one to 23. But what that also means is that wages at the lower end of the income scale tend to be held down and that, I think, is the impact that a lot of people see in relation to immigration when they see significant numbers of people coming in in an uncontrolled way.

Q112 Chair: I think we will end there. I will adjourn the Committee and we will start again when we are quorate.

Sitting suspended for a Division in the House.

On resuming-

Q113 Chair: Do you need reminding of the question, Home Secretary, or had you completed your answer?

Mrs May: I think I had probably completed my answer.

Q114 Mr Chuka Umunna: I think the point that I was making, just for the benefit of the record, given we adjourned, we were just discussing the economic impact of migration. The Home Secretary’s view of that and the difference or not, as the case may be, with the research produced by her own Department. What I was referring to, Chair, were comments that the Home Secretary made in her party conference speech at the Conservative Party conference in October. Of course, the comments made in relation to immigration were not just around immigration generally but also

referred asylum seekers. Home Secretary, what percentage of immigration is made up of asylum seekers, as you understand it at the moment?

Mrs May: The percentage of net migration?

Mr Chuka Umunna: Yes.

Mrs May: It would be very small. I am afraid I do not have the immediate figure to hand. I am very happy to provide that, but this is a small percentage. I did say quite a lot about the asylum system and the refugee system in my party conference speech.

Q115 Mr Chuka Umunna: Yes, you mentioned it 30 times and you suggested—

Mrs May: It was the topic of the conference speech.

Q116 Mr Chuka Umunna: Sure, and you suggested that there was a problem with the system and that many of those who make it to your shores are young and fit, whereas more vulnerable people often do not make it. My questions is, why distinguish between the two? If you are fleeing a civil war, you are fleeing a civil war, so why set up a false choice between those who make it to Europe and those too vulnerable to get further than the refugee camps in neighbouring countries? Don't they all need our help where they are fleeing a civil war?

Mrs May: If I may, in a sense there are two sides of this argument, if I can describe them as such, which was one of the things that I was trying to draw out in the party conference speech. If you look at the refugee crisis in relation to people who are fleeing persecution in Syria, as we know something like 11 million, 12 million people in total have been displaced within Syria, something like 4 million of those are now outside of Syria in the various refugee camps and of course have made movements elsewhere. The point I was making was that those people who were in those refugee camps have obviously reached a place of safety and if we look at refugee status, of course, and asylum status it was fundamentally set up so that people who were facing fleeing war or facing persecution and fleeing persecution could reach a place of safety. When we then look at people who have reached that place of safety, for us, I think, we are doing the right thing in saying that the people that we wish to give most help to are those who are the most vulnerable from those who have reached the place of safety.

Q117 Mr Chuka Umunna: If I move on, you talked about the economic benefit of immigration, you talked about asylum seekers and in the same speech you went on to suggest that high immigration is the cause of a lack of school places, the lack of enough homes and it also puts a strain on our infrastructure. Is it not true that Government failure to build enough homes, to sufficiently invest in our schools, to invest in our infrastructure, is the primary cause of these problems rather than immigrants?

Mrs May: If you have a high number of people coming in over a very short period of time, then that is going to put significant pressure on infrastructure and it also does have a displacement effect.

Q118 Mr Chuka Umunna: But is it the primary cause of those problems?

Mrs May: If you have a number of people coming in over a very short space of time, a very high number of people coming in over a very short space of time, then it will put pressure on the infrastructure. Now, your question is about what the Government's response to that should be.

Q119 Mr Chuka Umunna: No, no, hang on just a minute. Sorry, Home Secretary, you are not answering the question. My question was, high immigration, as you put it, is it the primary cause of those problems?

Mrs May: If I may, what I think you are trying to tempt me to say is that Government should in some sense build infrastructure on the basis that we might then have high levels of immigration. I do not think that. We do have to look at the infrastructure that is available for people but I am tempted to say, Mr Umunna, I am afraid, if we look at the question of Government record on house building then it is this Government that is putting the effort in to increasing the numbers of homes that are available for people rather than previous Labour Governments.

Q120 Mr Chuka Umunna: Home Secretary, I wish you would just answer my question. My question was, the way your comments were interpreted would tend to suggest that all of those problems are primarily caused by immigrants. I am just asking whether you agree with that statement or not?

Mrs May: I am not saying that every single problem in relation to access to a home or to a school place is something that is caused by people who have migrated into the United Kingdom. No, I am not saying that.

Chair: Thank you.

Mrs May: What I am saying is that when immigration is high and when it happens over a short period of time then of course it puts particular pressure on infrastructure and has an impact on infrastructure. Indeed, when you have net migration volumes being high, then there is more likely to be a displacement effect at the lower end of the jobs market in terms of access to employment and—

Chair: Thank you.

Q121 Mr Chuka Umunna: The problem is I am asking these questions, Home Secretary, because in 2002 you lectured your party to stop demonising minority groups in society and you complain that people call your party the nasty party, and then you give this speech 13 years later that reinforces those stereotypes. Simon Walker, the head of the Institute of Directors, described your comments and the overall tone of that speech as “irresponsible and pandering to anti-immigrant sentiment”. Now, he is right. You are not some Nigel Farage tribute act, you are the Home Secretary and the language you used in that speech, and the tone of it, I do not think was responsible or temperate and that is what people expect of a Home Secretary. They might not expect it of Nigel Farage but they expect it of you.

Mrs May: You will not be surprised to hear, Mr Umunna, and the Chairman will not be surprised to hear, that I do not agree with the way that you described that party conference speech. These are not easy issues to talk about and I think we all recognise that politicians, you are right, do have a responsibility in terms of how we deal with these issues and how we address them. It is absolutely right, though, that as Home Secretary I should identify where I think there is an impact from high, uncontrolled immigration. I think members of the public recognise there is an impact from high, uncontrolled immigration, that is why it is incumbent on the Government to try to ensure that we are controlling the immigration system and that we are making every effort within the legislation we introduce to ensure that we root out abuse of the system and to ensure that we encourage those who are the brightest and the best and will contribute to our society.

Chair: Thank you. Let us move on. David Burrowes and then James Berry.

Q122 Mr David Burrowes: In terms of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, which has extended to welcoming 20,000, just focusing further on the questions in relation to where the focus is. My understanding is throughout the time it has been specifically on the basis of vulnerability of refugees and that has been the focus. Why though is there this limit to those in camps, they make up 3% of Syrian refugees of which there are no doubt very vulnerable refugees who do not make it into camps, indeed some will try to do the flight across through the Mediterranean?

Mrs May: Of course some refugees who are not in camps are in communities in the region, for example, Jordan. Will be living within the community rather than being within the camps. We are working with UNHCR and I think it is right that we ensure that it is UNHCR that identifies those people who are vulnerable and who therefore would be appropriate to resettle in the United Kingdom. A lot of work goes in obviously to making sure the support is there for those people who then come to the UK. But I think it is important that we take people from the region for a number of reasons. One is because I hope that discourages people from making what is still a dangerous journey. People are still dying as we have seen in recent cases that have been identified in the media. People are still dying making this journey, trying to come to Europe. I think it is important that we try to ensure that our resettlement scheme discourages people from making that journey and, despite the question that was put to me earlier, I still think that it is important that we ensure that we are relocating those who are most vulnerable.

Q123 Mr David Burrowes: The Prime Minister said in his statement of 7 September that our approach was to take refugees from the camps and from elsewhere in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. The Minister for Syrian Refugees also has said to our Committee that it is restricted to people within the vulnerability criteria as laid down by the UNHCR. These are people who are in the countries adjacent to Syria not just in camps. The majority of people, unfortunately, are not in camps, they are outside. So is it the case that it does cover refugees across the region?

Mrs May: Yes. Sorry I think I may slightly have misunderstood the question. Yes, certainly it is our intention that we do not just restrict to people who are in the camps but we are still relying on UNHCR to identify people that it is suitable for us to resettle.

Q124 Mr David Burrowes: Would there be the option of considering not just the relocation scheme to be able to deal with those vulnerable refugees but also a humanitarian visa process or something similar to that adopted by other countries, such as Brazil and France?

Mrs May: There are other routes by which people are coming. There are people who are claiming asylum, there are people who are coming through other schemes that we have in relation to this. I think the resettlement scheme that we have established is the right one for the reasons that I have set out in terms of enabling us to give support to those who I think have the greatest need, that is those who are the most vulnerable.

Q125 Mr David Burrowes: There is support in communities to provide sponsorship by community groups and churches and other organisations. Canada and Australia particularly have a community sponsorship scheme that I think we are looking at. Could that be extended financially, providing additional support, which I understand is one the barriers for such as a humanitarian visa

programme, to provide transportation costs and support into communities to help with that support? That we extend our community sponsorship into a humanity visa approach?

Mrs May: We are looking at the community sponsorship scheme. We are looking, as you say, at the overseas examples. There are countries, not just Australia, who do provide such a sponsorship scheme. There has been a huge wealth of generosity from the British people to wish to do that. I was at an event the other day where somebody's first question to me was, "I have some accommodation, I would be very happy to welcome some Syrian refugees into it". So there is a generosity of spirit there in the UK and we are working with that in a variety of ways, both in working with NGOs and other organisations to see what assistance can be given to those Syrian refugees who are coming to the UK, perhaps to help them to settle in to the UK, but also that community sponsorship scheme, the details of which we have not sorted out yet.

Q126 Chair: Home Secretary, just to be clear, the Prime Minister of course has met his target. We may not have met your immigration target yet but he promised 1,000 by Christmas. Have 1,000 physically arrived in Britain? He talked about a plane arriving in Stansted yesterday. One thousand are here?

Mrs May: Yes, as of yesterday, it is just over 1,000 that have arrived and there have been further planes today.

Q127 Chair: How many are on that plane?

Mrs May: So we are over that figure. We must be up to about—I do not have the immediate figure, I am sure somebody can find it. Could I just say that the Minister for Syrian Refugees, Richard Harrington, has done an excellent job? He has come in with this particular project, he has really put a focus on to it and worked with local authorities. More than 50 local authorities have given offers of accommodation. I would just like to thank those local authorities and congratulate them on coming forward.

Q128 Chair: Indeed, it is a great success for the Home Office. You have met your target, you have gone over your target, you will let us know the figures of people arriving today. This will now carry on on a regular basis, will it? Planes will be arriving.

Mrs May: We now have the overall target of the 20,000 by the end of this Parliament. We do not intend to give a running commentary all the time through that, but it is important that we have had the scheme in place to enable us to do the first 1,000 and, of course, we will now be increasing that number as we said we would.

Q129 Chair: We like running commentaries because it is way of monitoring—

Mrs May: I know you do, Chairman.

Chair: —what you are doing. As we have had a running commentary from the Prime Minister today, we always get running commentaries when there is good news but never when the targets are not met.

Yvette Cooper, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and millions of others have said, "We will open our homes", you talked about the generosity of spirit, what is happening to these offers because the offers are there, they are on the table? Are we going to look at these offers?

Mrs May: We are looking at all offers that have come forward from individuals.

Q130 Chair: So private individuals?

Mrs May: But I what I would say on the accommodation issue is, of course, from a Home Office point we work with local authorities, local authorities will obviously hear people's offers. I think in the first flush, so to speak, when people came forward with a lot of offers of accommodation, perhaps they didn't realise that what we were offering Syrian refugees was five years of humanitarian protection. For those Syrian refugees, by definition of what I have been saying earlier in terms of vulnerability, sometimes they have very particular needs in relation to accommodation, proximity to particular medical support, community support and so forth. So it is not always appropriate for the offers of accommodation that people have brought forward to be taken up. What we are trying to do is to work with people to see how we can turn those offers of help into concrete help for people that may be—

Q131 Chair: As it is Christmas, let us take the Archbishop of Canterbury and he has made this offer, you are saying to the Archbishop of Canterbury, "Thank you very much for your offer of a room at Lambeth Palace or wherever, instead we would like you to give other concrete support"? So the offers of accommodation in people's homes, which is the biggest issue in terms of where they should stay, they are not open, is that right?

Mrs May: Chairman, we work with local authorities and we ask people where they have offers of accommodation to make sure their local authority is aware of that. There is then a proper process to determine whether any individual offer of accommodation is appropriate for the resettling of Syrian refugees. If someone has somewhere that is available for six month then this probably is not going to be the right thing.

Q132 Chair: So what you are saying to this Committee today, which is very important because this is something we have not heard before, is where there is an offer from an individual, be it the Archbishop of Canterbury or whoever, they need to go through their local authority, they will in effect vet them, and if it is a period of time that suits what we are trying to do, the five year period, we might say yes?

Mrs May: It is up to the local authority to determine the accommodation that is available in their area. It is not just a matter of time, that is the only thing I would caution, Chairman, I use that as an example. But it is making sure that that accommodation is going to be appropriate and right for the particular Syrian refugees that the local authorities are looking after.

Chair: I am going to call on Mr Berry to ask his question because Kingston is one of those councils that has said, "We will help", so you are saying, "Local people, Archbishop of Canterbury, whoever, go to your local council and they will be able to help you". Mr Berry.

Q133 James Berry: I think local people in Kingston are well aware of that. We are looking forward to welcoming the first Syrian refugees in January, and I will pass on your regards, Home Secretary.

The polls consistently tell us that immigration is one of people's key concerns along with the NHS in this country. It is right that you are trying to do your best to control it. In your conference speech one of the things you focused on was social integration and the pressures on social integration caused by immigration that takes place at a high level and over a short period of time. One of the things that distresses social integration is the lack of English language because it can marginalise a migrant, it can make it very difficult for them to interact with core services in the UK.

Would you be willing to consider shifting the responsibility for teaching English to migrants who do not understand the language well enough from the state on to businesses who employ high numbers of migrant workers?

Mrs May: That is not an issue that I have looked at. I will take that as a policy suggestion from you, Mr Berry. What I would say on the English language issue in terms of integration. One of the pieces of work that is being done, in a slightly different context, by Louise Casey is looking at particularly isolated communities within the United Kingdom and looking at the barriers to integration, the barriers to cohesion and English language is one of the issues that is being looked at in that work. In due course Louise Casey will be reporting to myself and the Prime Minister on this and it may very well be that English language is one of the issues that comes up there.

The other thing that I would say is that we have, over the last five years, tightened up on the English language requirements for people who are coming into the United Kingdom and wishing to make a life here, for example joining family here.

James Berry: Thank you.

Q134 Victoria Atkins: Returning to the issue of refugees from Syria, we know from the press that people traffickers are playing a huge role in bringing very vulnerable people over on the dangerous journeys you have described. Can you help us understand what is being done to tackle people trafficking and, in particular, the very cynical exploitation of these traffickers with very vulnerable people, including charging them thousands of pounds per journey and instructing them to destroy their paperwork so that when they get to Europe they cannot be sent back home?

Mrs May: You are very right to raise this issue. If I may, I think there are two strands here. There are the people smugglers, who are taking large amounts of money to put people on unsafe boats and sending them, and then there are the traffickers, whose intention is not just to get somebody to Europe but then to effectively put them into slavery and exploitation of some kind when they are in Europe. Work is being done in relation to both of these areas. We have set up the Organised Immigration Crime Taskforce, led by the National Crime Agency but it includes our Border Force and others as well. We now have people in a number of countries upstream looking at these issues, looking to work more with some of the European member states—the French and Italians, for example—through whose countries some of these movements are taking place in order to ensure that we can break the gangs. That is a very important task and some of the stories that I have heard from the Border Force officials who were on the two Border Force cutters rescuing people in the Mediterranean were horrendous about the traffickers. I am pleased to say that on occasions both the Border Force cutters and, indeed, the Royal Navy vessel in the Mediterranean were able to identify some of the people smugglers and ensure that appropriate action was taken.

Q135 Victoria Atkins: Following on from the discussions earlier about measured language being used by politicians, how—well, I will not lead—what impact, if any, did Angela Merkel's comments at the beginning of the crisis welcoming refugees into Germany have on encouraging people traffickers and vulnerable people to make that dangerous journey?

Mrs May: Of course, since Angela Merkel made those comments we have seen large movements of people into the European Union. I would make the point when one is looking at these movements that they are not always movements of Syrian refugees, despite the fact that, of course, the very real intention of the German Chancellor was to be able to offer support to Syrian

refugees who were fleeing persecution. We have seen others moving and trying to enter Europe as part of these movements that have been taking place.

Q136 Stuart C. McDonald: Home Secretary, both you and the Prime Minister have spoken about the importance of hotspots in processing arrivals in Europe and, in principle, I think that sounds a very sensible approach. We also read evidence from the likes of the International Rescue Committee about chaos and increasing tensions and violence in these hotspots. What is going on with them and what can we do to sort them out?

Mrs May: I think the hotspot concept is one that is generally supported, the idea of ensuring that there are places where proper processing and registration of migrants coming through those external European borders is undertaken. There have been issues about the resource that is available. The United Kingdom has offered resource, some of which has been taken up, particularly to support Greece in the work that it is doing. We are also offering to provide some greater support in terms of ensuring that all the efforts are properly linked up to make sure that the hotspots are operating as well as they should be. We have seen movement. We have seen better operation of the hotspots more recently. There is still some more work to do there.

Q137 Stuart C. McDonald: One Commission update—and I think in fairness this was about six weeks ago—suggested that just a fraction of the requested personnel had been offered by EU member states. You are saying that Britain is definitely playing its part in offering personnel and equipment. Is there any more that we can do?

Mrs May: We have been playing our part. I am going to get detailed about this, but there are two ways in which support is being given. One is through Frontex. The UK is not a full member of Frontex but we have been supporting Frontex, for example, through the vessels in the Mediterranean that I referred to. The other is support through EASO. We have offered support to EASO. We have also offered people who can debrief, who can help to do various parts of processing at the border. I think I am right in saying that over the years we have been the single or second biggest contributor to EASO in terms of the support that we have put into the system.

Q138 Stuart C. McDonald: You also referred, I think quite rightly, to the necessity of linking up and co-ordinating the response here. Do you think there is a greater role for the UNHCR to play there or is there a controversy about it having a significant role within the EU, do you think?

Mrs May: The issue, I would say, is that this is less about something that naturally fits into a UNHCR remit. This is about actual processing, taking fingerprints, making sure people are registered and identified as they come through the border. It is less the job of identifying particular needs and vulnerabilities; it is that rather more processing role that is undertaken. It is right that we try to ensure that there is the support from those within the European Union who are able to help both in Greece and Italy.

Q139 Stuart C. McDonald: You have said that the UK to that extent is playing its part here. The other way I would suggest that it could play its part is by taking part in the relocation process. After all, 900,000 arrivals in one year is almost impossible for three or four countries to deal with, but spread among 28 member states and 500 million people it is a challenge but far more surmountable. Would the Government think again about its refusal to participate in this regard?

Mrs May: We are not participating in the relocation mechanism and we are not reconsidering whether or not we participate in the relocation mechanism. I think it is right that we look at

resettlement from the region rather than relocation of those in Europe and it is for the reasons that I set out earlier. I think that does enable us to give greater support to those who are most vulnerable and it does give a message to people that they should not try the dangerous journey, which is, as I said earlier, still leading to some people dying. I would also say, of course, that the United Kingdom can hold its head high in terms of the overall support that it has given to Syrian refugees as the second biggest bilateral donor in the region, over £1.1 billion now.

Q140 Tim Loughton: Home Secretary, can I come back for a clarification on the Syrian refugees and then just ask another about immigration numbers? Richard Harrington, when he came in front of us—and I agree he has done a very good job—did agree to go away and look at something in terms of who is going to house these refugees. Clearly, we were, many of us, inundated with individual offers: people who had spare rooms, be it the Archbishop of Canterbury's cottage in his grounds or the former Shadow Home Secretary, whose offer was later withdrawn, I gather, in any case. We can clearly see that there is a problem for a five-year commitment with an individual family, but there were many offers made through organisations, particularly local churches, where there was a network of people who would offer to take on responsibility for that family. It may mean looking after them for six months at a go or whatever and, importantly, a network of support around those families rather than just leaving them somewhere. He said he would look at that, but my understanding so far is that has not been taken up. Certainly, in the neighbouring authority to mine where they are taking on some refugees, it has all been done in private rented accommodation, which is taking accommodation out of the private rented market, but is not taking up those offers of spare rooms and available accommodation.

Mrs May: As I said earlier, we have been looking at the offers that come through and would encourage people to do this working in tandem with their local authorities. In many cases, I think there is going to be support that can be given by those who have come forward with help that may not be of accommodation but may be of the sort of network of support that you have talked about to Syrian refugees who are in the community. I would say I think if we are looking to accommodate people and saying that they are given five years' humanitarian protection here, we want to try to ensure that when they come here they are able to settle and are able to make a life here, for those who are able to get into the workplace, and so forth. A suggestion that their accommodation is going to be, by definition, moving around different places because accommodation is available for six months here and six months there, I think certainly is not the ideal in terms of being able to give people that longer term.

Chair: Sure, we understand that; you have said that before.

Q141 Tim Loughton: Okay, but I think the point is that people are getting a bit disillusioned that they have come forward with an offer, which may well be practical because they are part of a network, and they seem to have been rebuffed. It might just be helpful to get some clarification on that because the Minister did say he would go away and—

Mrs May: Certainly, I will ask the Minister to write to Mr Loughton on what is happening, particularly in his local area, if the local authority is putting people in private rented accommodation and there are other offers that have come forward.

Q142 Chair: But to be clear—sorry, Mr Loughton—if you have a room in your house or your flat and you want to offer it to a Syrian refugee, Christmas or not, you go to your local authority and you work with them. The answer at the moment is no, you do not want to place in private

rented accommodation, but you can offer support of networks and other issues that you have described, but no to private accommodation? Or is it yes?

Tim Loughton: Now you have confused it even more.

Chair: Well, clarify it.

Mrs May: I think it is your use of the term “private rented accommodation” that has perhaps confused it, Chairman.

Chair: Okay, accommodation.

Mrs May: People have come forward with offers of accommodation. I think for many, as I said earlier, they perhaps did not realise that what we were talking about was five years’ humanitarian protection for refugees from Syria. In many cases, the accommodation offers would have been short term and will not be suitable in terms of settling people here and ensuring that they can enter the workplace and so forth. If people have offers of accommodation that they think would be suitable, go to their local authorities. It is the local authority that is working and determining with the Home Office who they will be taking, how many, how much accommodation they have.

Chair: Thank you, very clear indeed. Mr Loughton, sorry about that.

Q143 Tim Loughton: Thank you for unclarifying my clarification, Chairman. On a completely separate, more straightforward matter perhaps, when we were examining witnesses regarding professionals coming from outside the EU and the numbers they contributed to the immigration figures—and clearly there has been action on tier 2 and nurses and things like that—the point that very clearly came out is that where there are skills that are not automatically allowed into the UK and where we are having to go abroad, and now employers are being deterred from going outside the EU because they are not allowed to, they are simply then having to look inside the EU to recruit, often at higher salaries as well. Effectively, there is no net lowering of the immigration figures. You are just replacing what might be a Philippine doctor with a Spanish doctor or whatever the profession may be. Certainly, that was the case with nurses. What is the strategy behind the whole tiered process whereby we are not going to lower the numbers of net immigrants coming into the country?

Mrs May: It is important and we had a commitment back in 2010 that we put into place for a limit on economic migrants from outside the European Union. Obviously, we are able to do that, to put that limit in place, and we have been operating that limit. As you will know, there is a focus on shortage occupations. That shortage occupation list is determined by the Migration Advisory Committee. The problem that you have identified I think has at its underpinning something else, which is the whole question of development of skills here in the United Kingdom. That is something that has been a problem over a period of time and it was something like three years ago that the Migration Advisory Committee in one of their reports said that they would not have to have the sort of shortage occupation lists they had had previous Governments not failed to ensure that people were being skilled up here in the UK. There is a challenge there.

There are other things Government can do and we are doing it. In fact, it was raised in Prime Minister’s Questions today, notably the fact that we—and the Chancellor announced this in his comprehensive spending review statement—will be making changes to the limits that have applied, for example, to nurse training here in the UK, which means that a significant number of people who wish to train as nurses have not been able to train as nurses. That has led to hospitals

looking to agency staff and bringing in overseas nurses, and by increasing the number who are trained here in the UK obviously I think we will see more UK-based nurses able to be employed.

Q144 Tim Loughton: Home Secretary, with respect, that could mean—I am expressing no view—that fewer people in this country apply to be nurses because they cannot afford then to pay for the fees that were previously covered by a bursary. My point is that it is a very crude system at the moment that where there are professions that we need to take on, if we do take them then it is at the expense of another profession because it is a crude overall number. Clearly, it would be much better if we can train those people in this country and those longer-term issues are just not going to happen overnight, but at the end of the day it means that we are just exchanging a net migration from outside the EU for a net migration from inside the EU, so the net figure overall does not change. What is it actually trying to achieve in the absence of being able to home grow some of these people in the shorter term?

Mrs May: You are right, migration from outside the EU is one where we have rather greater levers in terms of the ability to put a limit on tier 2 rather than migration from inside the European Union. I would take issue with your description of the approach as a crude approach in that what the Migration Advisory Committee does—and it is the MAC that is looking to see where the shortage occupations are—they are independent of Government. They determine where it is the case that skillsets do not apply here in the UK, are not available here in the UK, and, therefore, those occupations that should be given priority in terms of bringing people in from outside the European Union.

Chair: Thank you very much. We are going to move on now—we have spent an hour on immigration—to Vicky Atkins, who has a couple of issues to raise; she has to be away, Home Secretary. Then we are going on to counterterrorism.

Q145 Victoria Atkins: I should declare I am on the joint committee for the draft Investigatory Powers Bill and the reason I am having to leave is to go to that Committee. I want to ask a quick question about that Bill. It is becoming very clear during the course of the committee that this is a very complex area, both in terms of the technical side of it and, of course, the balance of civil liberties and the very real matter of life and death sort of decisions that will have to be made in the course of decisions being taken about warrants and so on. What plans are there to explain this Bill to the public so that everyone understands just how important it is, what is being asked for, and to dispel some misunderstandings that some people may have about what the Bill entails?

Mrs May: May I, first of all, say I am grateful to you for serving on that Committee and I recognise that we have given the committee a tight timetable, hence the number of meetings is perhaps rather greater and more concentrated than it would otherwise have been.

We have already undertaken a number of exercises and will continue to do this in terms of describing what the IP Bill is about and ensuring that it is done in a way that people can engage with and can see what the issues are. I am tempted to say, and this was reinforced by some polling that David Anderson did, that the majority of the members of the public feel that these are powers that it is important for the authorities to have and they want the authorities to be able to keep them safe and secure and see the benefits of these powers. But we will, of course, be continuing to try to describe these powers, to ensure that those who use these powers, like chief police officers, make clear to people what they use them for, what they are and how important they are. I gave a speech a while ago now, for example, explaining the warrant process and the Secretary of State's role in that process, which I do not think had been done

before. We are constantly trying to be more transparent with people. We do have proposals for continuing to do that.

Q146 Stuart C. McDonald: The second challenge I think with this, as well as obviously the tight timescale, is information and obviously we all accept to an extent we cannot have complete disclosure about the precise workings of MI5 and GCHQ and so on. For example, bulk datasets I think is a good example of where some of us on the Committee are not convinced yet there is not more information that we could be provided with. How can we write an intelligible report when we really have very little understanding about bulk datasets, how they are used and, in fact, what datasets we are talking about? Is there more that can be done to inform the Committee's work?

Mrs May: First of all, as I am sure the Committee recognises, there are some aspects of the Bill in relation to the interaction with the agencies where the Intelligence and Security Committee has agreed that they will look at some aspects of this Bill because of their ability to work with the agencies in a different way from a joint scrutiny committee. We have been very clear at the Home Office and the Security Minister has been clear with the chairman of the Joint Scrutiny Committee that we stand ready to provide as much information as is possible to the Committee to help the Committee in its deliberations. I would suggest if there is an area where you as a member of the Committee feel you would like to see more information, perhaps if that request could come through the Chairman of the Committee or via the clerks then we could look at that and see if there is more that we are able to do.

Stuart C. McDonald: I think you will be getting a letter very soon.

Q147 Chair: Let us move to counterterrorism and these are quick factual questions before I move on to Naz Shah. The issue of scanners, there is concern about Calais and the effectiveness of the scanners in Calais. Each of these scanners cost £800,000. There have been particular examples of people going through scanners and, having gone through scanners, 20 migrants are discovered. The problem is after Paris, of course, we need to make sure that our borders are absolutely secure. This Committee commends you and your conversations with Bernard Cazeneuve and the Prime Minister and his conversations with President Hollande and what you all did in the aftermath of Paris. Is there any concern on your part about the use and the effectiveness of equipment like scanners in places like Calais?

Mrs May: We do always, obviously, look to try to make sure that we have the best possible equipment that we use. Indeed, there have been plans to introduce some different equipment at some of our borders in relation to these issues. As I have said earlier, we have to try to ensure that the best equipment is there at the borders. Other people will constantly be trying to find a way in which they can get around the measures that we have put in place.

Q148 Chair: Of course. In terms of watch lists and travel bans, obviously preventing terrorists entering our country and alerting EU countries, especially now that we have joined Prüm, about people that they are interested in leaving our shores is extremely important. I raised the case with the Minister of Security and, indeed, with others of Trevor Brooks and Simon Keeler, two individuals who had been subject to Home Office travel bans who managed to leave the country and end up on the Hungarian/Romanian borders. Are we absolutely convinced that those who leave are being properly monitored?

Mrs May: We have, as you will know, Chairman, over the course of this year seen the introduction of the full exit checks in relation to various modes of travel out of the United

Kingdom. The point that you make about the information at the borders is an important one and, of course, we are looking again at the extent to which information is shared across the European Union and the extent to which it is possible to improve that. One of the issues that I have been working with colleagues on and will continue to work on is, for example, to increase the ability to exchange criminality data so that when people come to our borders we are better able to identify them.

Q149 Chair: In these particular cases, does it worry you that two people subject to a ban from your own department have ended up leaving the country and on the border between Romania and Hungary as a result of the Romanians they were handed back? It shows that there may well be a gap in our security at the border.

Mrs May: We are always working, Chairman, to ensure that we have the security at the border that we need. That does mean that we will constantly be looking at the processes that we have at the border, at the equipment that we have at the border, and working to ensure that there are no gaps. Obviously, this is just work that has to be ongoing.

Q150 Chair: Yes. In respect of the home and away debate—not the television programme but the discussion that is going on between the Home Office and the police and MI5—which is that where you have people who are terrorists and who may do our people harm and they want to leave the country, there is a view that they should be allowed to go, because if they stay all they will do is cause mayhem. I am thinking of the case of Mohammed Khaled, a senior Daesh fundraiser who left the country, according to *The Telegraph*, last Sunday and appeared to be allowed to leave the country. Where are you on this? Do we keep these people here? Do we take their passports off them even though they might do us harm or do we just allow them to go?

Mrs May: As you will know, Chairman, we have introduced a number of new powers for the police. One of these is the ability to remove a passport temporarily at the border where they have concerns about an individual, which enables them to investigate that individual further for a period of time. That may lead to further disruptive action; for example, the introduction of royal prerogative in terms of removal of the passport or other action.

Q151 Chair: How many passports have you taken away in the last year?

Mrs May: The figures for 2015 we have not yet published—they will be published next year—but for 2014 I think the figure was 24. Sorry, no, since we updated the way we did this in 2013 until the end of 2014 it was 30 times.

Chair: Thirty times?

Mrs May: Yes.

Q152 Chair: Someone like Mohammed Khaled, a senior Daesh fundraiser, is allowed to leave the country. That is not with the agreement of anybody. He just happened to be clever enough to be able to flee.

Mrs May: Chairman, obviously where individuals are concerned people will be looked at on a case by case basis. I indicated that there are now extra powers in relation to potential disruption of travel, but also, of course, we introduced the temporary exclusion orders, which would enable a managed return of people on a case by case basis from overseas who have been in Syria, for

example, and then on a case by case basis determining how individuals are dealt with. I will not comment on the individual cases that you mentioned.

Q153 Chair: Sure, but as a matter of policy if you find someone here who is going to do us harm and you know that they are about to leave the country, do we try to keep them here or do we just allow them to go? This is a big debate, isn't it?

Mrs May: Well, I am not sure it is a big debate, Chairman. The answer is that on a case by case basis judgments have to be made—

Chair: So some may go, some may stay?

Mrs May: —about an individual and, of course, if somebody does travel to a theatre where they are able to train, perhaps take part in fighting, were they then able to return then they might be of more concern than if they did not travel in the first place. These are decisions that have to be made on an individual basis.

Chair: I understand. We have Naz Shah and then Nusrat Ghani.

Q154 Naz Shah: I just want to pick up on one of the issues around Syrian refugees. I know we have resettled 1,000. Do we have the planning in place? I am very proud to be from Bradford where we lead the way in terms of integrated services for asylum seekers and refugees, in particular Syrian refugees. My concern is that the Government does not have the remaining local authorities in place to take on the 19,000 that we have still yet to take. Where are we at with that?

Mrs May: That work is ongoing. I do not expect that at a point of time in the new year we have 19,000 places set out. I think it will be over the next few years. We will obviously be working with local authorities on an ongoing basis as accommodation becomes available, as we match people who are identified by UNHCR with the accommodation and with the areas that are available. You are right, Bradford has indeed played an important role in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme from the beginning.

Q155 Naz Shah: Moving on to a question nicely from what the Chair was talking about, about people going out of the country, it has been suggested that one of the Paris masterminds, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, may have travelled to Birmingham while on a list that was known to security services. Do you think the e-border system is adequate in light of that suggestion?

Mrs May: I will not comment on any references that have been in the media to individual cases, but what I would say is that obviously we have been working with others across Europe to ensure that we have the information on border systems. Our rejoining SIS2 has been an important issue and we are operating in SIS2 and working with others across Europe to ensure that that system is operated in the best way possible with maximum information. It, of course, relates to criminality but it is an example of how we are trying to ensure that we enhance the information we have at the border about individuals coming through the border.

Q156 Naz Shah: Home Secretary, I have welcomed the appointment of Louise Casey to look into the issue of integration because I think that is fundamental in dealing with extremism and the radicalisation agenda. What I would put to you are two things. I struggle to understand the contradiction of cutting ESOL classes and not providing language learning abilities to communities where it is most needed, yet talking about integration. Also, coming back to the tone of your speech

at your conference, certainly the reporting of that would be exacerbating tensions between communities as opposed to bringing communities together. I put that to you. How do you respond?

Mrs May: First of all, I would say that the speech that I gave at party conference was setting out clearly why we believe that it is important to control immigration and the impacts that I think people feel when they see high, uncontrolled immigration here in the United Kingdom. It does have an impact on people. I have explained one or two of those earlier. Obviously, a lot of the speech, as I indicated to Mr Umunna, was about the question of asylum and refugees and making sure that we have a system that cannot be abused, that enables us to give protection to those who are in need of protection but cannot be abused. I think most people would be surprised that over a number of recent years something like 17,000 students who have come to the end of their student visa have claimed asylum, for example. It is about trying to ensure that we set out a system that is fair to those who need protection and roots out abuse in the system.

On English language, as I indicated earlier in response to Mr Berry, I would expect that this is one of the issues that Louise Casey would be looking at in terms of potential isolation and difficulty for integration.

Q157 Naz Shah: Would you accept that the connotations of the reporting of your speech were very negative to community cohesion?

Mrs May: I would hope that what communities overall in the United Kingdom would see is the importance of a Government that recognises the impact that high, uncontrolled immigration has on all communities within the United Kingdom.

Q158 Naz Shah: During this inquiry for extremism, we took evidence from many professionals and one of them included the Right Honourable Baroness Warsi. Overall, what she talked about was a counter-narrative being a central part of counter-extremism, genuine engagement. I put it to her that there is a list of people or organisations that the Government is not prepared to talk to about Muslim issues. We also heard from Inspire and the Quilliam Foundation, which appear to be the preferred people that the Government speaks to and certainly are the face of the Government according to the media. To me, there has to be a sort of counter-narrative as important as the message. Prevent, I put it to you that the Government is failing to explain its own duty under the new duties to its statutory organisations and putting people like Inspire and Quilliam, which are very much loathed by mainstream Muslim organisations, is that Prevent is failing.

Mrs May: On the Prevent duty, a lot of work has already been done in producing guidance for those parts of the public sector obviously that now are under that statutory duty. The word that I am getting from the ground is that that statutory duty is having an impact and is welcomed by many in that they are now looking at some of these issues in a way that perhaps they would not have done before. Certainly, that was the message I and the Prime Minister were given when we were in Luton, for example, when we launched our counter-extremism strategy.

I think we have made efforts. There is more training being undertaken in relation to the Prevent duty and obviously, as I said, the guidance was issued on the Prevent duty. Of course, we have to look at the organisations we work with and, as you have said, there are some that we do not work with and some that we do work with.

Q159 Naz Shah: I would suggest it is not working and the reason it is not working is because the evidence that was presented to this Committee would suggest otherwise. Just coming back, I did not hear your response to the ESOL question, the cutting of ESOL.

Mrs May: What I said on the ESOL question is that I think it is right that that is one of the issues that Louise Casey will be looking at, the whole question of English language, and I would expect that that was one of the issues that she would come back to us with. What I am saying is let us see what Louise identifies in relation to the English language in the work that she is doing.

Q160 Nusrat Ghani: Home Secretary, as my colleague Naz Shah said, we took a number of evidence sessions from people who wanted to help us counter terrorism. One thing that came about was that migrants since arriving in this country of the Islamic faith since the Second World War practised a much more spiritual Islamic faith, which has now become politicised. They feel that they are under siege in particular from Wahabism, which is intolerant and does not sit well with our democratic country. Wahabism seems to be involved in schools and mosques up and down this country and we are not sure which schools and mosques they fund, whereas a political party or a union has to declare where it gets its funding from. Can we do some more work to try to establish where overseas funding comes from into schools and mosques as well as overseas funding from extremist organisations as well?

Mrs May: Certainly, we have a commitment to do a piece of work on overseas funding, particularly overseas funding around extremism into the UK. That is something that I would expect the extremism analysis unit that we have set up in the Home Office to be taking forward.

Q161 Nusrat Ghani: Is this the same as the comprehensive review of extremism that the Prime Minister announced in November, which is reporting early spring next year? Is this the same review?

Mrs May: The piece of work on overseas funding was something that the Prime Minister announced more recently. He announced it two or three weeks ago, in fact.

Q162 Nusrat Ghani: Which is good news and we will look forward to how that report is going to present itself in the spring. My concern is that we are possibly not addressing the role of Wahabism within itself and the influence that it has on Islamic communities here, who feel that they are under siege from people who practise the Wahabi faith or are sent here to practise in mosques as well. Is there nowhere we can differentiate the role of Wahabism and the funding of Wahabi imams and Wahabi teachers within our schools?

Mrs May: I think as part of the overall work that we are doing in relation to countering extremism we will be looking, of course, at different influences on communities. As part of that, as I have said, there will be now a stream of work that is about funding from overseas that may be coming into communities. What I would say is if there is a particular concern around an issue that is coming up from the community, grassroots from the community, then I would be very interested to see the further evidence of that that can be brought forward by the community. We want to work with communities to ensure that they do feel both safe and secure here in the UK and able to be full participants in UK society.

Q163 Nusrat Ghani: Can I follow on from that? There were parents that exposed the Trojan horse situation in Birmingham and a number of those parents, who came forward after many years of speaking to their local authorities or their local councillors and felt they had not been heard, gave evidence against community leaders. They felt that they had been then tossed aside by the local authorities. Is there any way we can do an inquiry of duty of care to individuals who come

forward and expose extremism in local institutions or within local communities? Is that something the Home Office would be prepared to do?

Mrs May: One of the things that we have been looking at is how we can better provide for people to be able to come forward when they want to report extremism that is taking place and to be able to do so in a way that they are able to feel secure in doing it rather than feeling that in some sense they are going to be identified in a way that will lead to repercussions for them. That is something, certainly, that we are looking at.

Q164 Nusrat Ghani: A final question on the Commonwealth anti-extremism agency, which will have funding of around £5 million, is that correct? A part of that is £200,000 seed funding for the European counter-radicalisation youth network. How will that sit with the work that you are doing here in the UK? Because as we have seen with what has happened in France, there are a lot of these extremists that are interconnected. How does that fund work with the work that you are doing?

Mrs May: There are several pieces of work in Europe that are taking place. There is something called the Radicalisation Awareness Network, which is bringing member states across Europe together to discuss these issues around radicalisation and see what actions can be taken on a more collective basis or where good practice can be shared in relation to these issues. I myself attended an event that took place two weeks ago now where the Commission brought together some major internet service providers and member states to discuss the issue of extremism on the internet and what action could be taken with member states operating with those internet service providers to take down material. Indeed, Europol has now set up an internet referral unit, which is very similar to, indeed based on, the concept and the practice that we have here with our Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit. There are various strands of activity that are taking place where we are trying to knit together and share good practice.

Q165 Chair: On that, would you join with the Security Minister and the head of the NCA in commending organisations like Ghost Security Group that took down 2,255 websites and 19,568 Twitter pages that promoted extremism?

Mrs May: Chairman, the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit obviously works with the internet service providers in relation to reporting to them where there is material that is felt appropriate for them to take down. We also, as I have indicated in the European context that I recently attended, are talking to the internet service providers about their own terms and conditions and how they connect.

Q166 Chair: With respect, Home Secretary, it does seem to be a bit slow. There is an online group called Free Our Sisters, which has been described as the Mumsnet for jihadists, which continues to put forward this propaganda. Individual groups seem to be doing their work, but should this not be more centralised to try to get more of these sites taken down? I think we all now realise that is probably the number one area of radicalisation.

Mrs May: As I have indicated, I think the UK in many senses has been ahead of some other countries in having the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit. The pace at which pieces have been taken down from the internet has increased significantly in the last year. Of course, there are issues around thresholds of illegality. There is a difference between material that is clearly illegal and can be taken down from the internet and material that does not reach the illegality threshold but which may breach the terms and conditions of the companies themselves. That is why one of the pieces of work we do is we are talking a lot to companies about how their terms

and conditions operate and where they would feel able to take material down because it breaches their own terms and conditions.

Q167 Chair: You are still doing this? You started this with a summit at No. 10. I think the Prime Minister was involved, you were involved. This is an ongoing piece of work that is being dealt with appropriately?

Mrs May: I think the summit had a wider remit, but this is an ongoing piece of work.

Q168 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: Home Secretary, turning to recent events in Paris, the British Government has made clear that this country will stand shoulder to shoulder with French counterparts and the French people. What further precautions and lessons can we learn to safeguard passengers, for example, on the London Underground, particularly so following the terror attack in Leytonstone, and also for the people in London and in built-up areas in this country?

Mrs May: One of the pieces of work that we have obviously done post the attacks in Paris is looking at the whole question of police response, the provision of armed police in armed response vehicles. This is something that we had also done when we first came into Government. We did a major exercise on this and increased the number of armed response vehicles that the police had. Again, we looked at this post the Charlie Hebdo attacks. We have done another piece of work there and we are ensuring that there is funding available for an increase in the armed response vehicles from police so that they can upgrade that capability in terms of responding to incidents should they take place.

Q169 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: Are you content with the communications channels that are available on the London Underground network and the prospective move to new communications methods in the years ahead?

Mrs May: Obviously, this has been a major project in terms of the emergency services network that we are undertaking. A number of contracts have been let in relation to that and as part of that we are working with London Underground on that issue of making sure the communications are operable in the Underground as well as overground.

Q170 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: Turning to a different matter related to Paris, it was a revelation to many that many of the assailants had passed through Europe from Syria and some were EU citizens. Does it concern you that this was the case? Does the Government agree that it is absolutely right to remain outside of Schengen and is there something, anything, that the Government can do to strengthen the way that EU nations that are part of Schengen patrol their borders?

Mrs May: First of all, it is absolutely right that we are not part of Schengen and we will not be part of Schengen, but we can work with those countries who are in Schengen and who are member states of the European Union with external borders outside the European Union and are doing so. This is one of the things that has obviously been part of the work that has been undertaken particularly post Paris but actually was on the agenda anyway. It was looking to strengthen those external borders. Part of that work is precisely about ensuring that when migrants are moving across the external borders they are properly registered and properly fingerprinted so that the information and identification is there at that border.

Q171 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: It is interesting you have just mentioned fingerprinting and I will come on to that in a moment. Just on the borders themselves, what is your view of the proposed EU Border Agency as a next step for the Schengen area and how do you envisage any impact, positive or negative, with regards to the British border?

Mrs May: First of all, I think this new European agency has been described as, “We need more Europe” by the Commission. I have to say, this is not about more Europe, it is about ensuring that the task that needs to be done is being done better and properly. That is why we have already contributed, as I indicated earlier, in relation to Frontex and EASO to helping to strengthen Europe’s external border and we will continue to do that.

Q172 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: But this is taking it on a step?

Mrs May: Yes. I would caution that there is much discussion of what this agency might look like and the Commission has obviously produced a proposal. I think there is yet to be much discussion within the European Union context about exactly what shape that should take. The issue that many are concerned with is ensuring that there is resource available when a country perhaps finds it difficult to deal with the numbers of people coming across its external border, in terms of the EU border, and therefore that resource is available to draw down on that. That was the origin of this concept. Although we are not part of Schengen—so any organisation that is about Schengen we will not be part of—we will of course continue to look to see how we can help to support strengthening that external border, because that external border matters to us as well as it does to other countries.

Q173 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: Finally on this matter, turning to fingerprinting, which you mentioned a moment ago, we have agreed as a country to share information with European friends, but will the Government still protect British citizens from inappropriate action being taken by other foreign states, given that their tests and their thresholds are often much lower than ours?

Mrs May: Yes, we will. Certainly in relation to the decision that Parliament took to rejoin Prüm, we will ensure that there are thresholds, particularly in relation to the exchange of DNA information. We will put safeguards in by limiting the database from which the DNA samples can be checked against and by making sure that the requirement for accuracy is at a higher threshold in the UK than perhaps some others operate. So we are putting those safeguards in, but I think it is important that we have this capability of exchanging data.

Chair: I will say to colleagues that we want to go on to policing, so if we could keep our questions very sharp on CT. We cannot keep the Home Secretary a prisoner forever in front of us. James Berry.

Q174 James Berry: The police and the public are very grateful for the work you did in the spending review in protecting the police budget and increasing the CT budget. We have heard from the Met Commissioner that he has increased the number of authorised and specialist firearms officers in London. Are you confident that in major cities outside London there is sufficient firearms capability to keep us, or people in those cities, safe in the event of a Paris-style atrocity in another major city?

Mrs May: The piece of work that we did a while back led to an increase in the armed police capability in some major cities outside of London, but we have been looking at this again. As I said, there will be funding available for an uplift in armed police capability and the detailed work

is now being undertaken, as you would expect, as to how that is best provided and where it is best provided.

Q175 Mr Chuka Umunna: Just two quick questions. One was in relation to, Chair, your comments about Donald Trump. Home Secretary, would you agree that in some sense Donald Trump aids and abets Daesh, in the sense that through his comments and his actions he reinforces this view that western society is one that rejects Muslims, and in dividing people, that is precisely what Daesh seek to do?

Mrs May: I would revert to the comments that I made right at the very beginning of this meeting, Chairman, where I indicated that I think it is incumbent on politicians in looking at these issues to work to bring communities together rather than to divide them.

Q176 Mr Chuka Umunna: Absolutely right. My second question was to pick up on what Naz Shah was saying about some of the groups who, quite rightly, the Government has sought to engage with on the anti-radicalisation agenda. It certainly seemed to some of us on the Committee that part of the problem groups face—certainly historically Quilliam, but more recently Inspire—is that what the Government seeks to do is to actively support what are seen as mainstream voices, but in very actively doing so there is a danger of undermining the standing of those groups, which quite rightly the Government wants to engage with, in their own communities. In a sense, they have come to be seen as, if you like, a pin-up of the Government, when for them to be more effective they need to be seen as independent and objective.

Mrs May: You have probably set out a conundrum. One pillar of our counter-extremism strategy is encouraging mainstream voices.

Mr Chuka Umunna: Yes, quite right.

Mrs May: So we want to work with community groups who are those mainstream voices and to support those, and sometimes that support is just about perhaps providing some help in ensuring that they are able to get their message out, but of various sorts. I did a very good event in Birmingham some months ago now meeting a variety of groups working on anti-racism, groups working on a counter-narrative in terms of the Daesh narrative, a variety of groups. We do want to give that support, but obviously what we all want is people within communities to feel empowered and confident and able to provide that counter-narrative themselves.

Chair: Indeed, thank you. Nusrat Ghani and then Tim Loughton, then we must move on to policing finally.

Q177 Nusrat Ghani: Home Secretary, I would like to discuss Sharia courts with you, if I may. There has been some recent coverage that there are possibly 30 Sharia courts in this country, and on 10 December a number of women's organisations put forward a petition to challenge the role of Sharia courts. As far as they are concerned, they are far-right Islamist movements whose main aim is to restrict and deny rights, particularly those of women and children. 95% of Sharia courts oversee divorce or family proceedings. These Sharia courts are not going to be advising in line with the British rule of law and our rule of law trumps any pop-up Sharia court, so what can we do about it?

Mrs May: There is one rule of law in the United Kingdom, which is the rule of law that is set by Parliament, but there are of course religious communities within the UK who do have their own arrangements in various areas. It is not just the Muslim community, of course it relates to the

Jewish community as well. But I am very aware of the fact that there is concern about how Sharia law, in terms of Sharia courts, is operating in some circumstances here in the UK. That is why we will be doing a review of Sharia courts. I am not able to identify at this stage who will be undertaking that review on our behalf, but when we are able to, we will make an announcement on that, but that review will be in train soon.

Nusrat Ghani: That is very good news, thank you.

Chair: Thank you. Tim Loughton finally on the CT.

Q178 Tim Loughton: Home Secretary, when the Security Minister came to see us a few weeks ago, we raised with him the subject of airports and ports re security as well as immigrants coming into the country. He told us that there were reviews of the security of both small airports and ports going on at the moment, which was news to other officials and indeed Ministers in your Department. Can you clarify exactly what is going on?

Mrs May: Yes. Obviously we have been doing work on the security of ports. There are a number of aspects of this, but we are certainly looking, for example, at some smaller ports, at the whole question of physical security at the ports themselves, so there is work ongoing.

Q179 Tim Loughton: So there is a formal review of both ports and airports?

Mrs May: There is work ongoing in looking at ports and security issues around ports within the United Kingdom. Obviously a lot of focus over the summer has been on the question of juxtaposed controls and also looking at the ports here in the UK that are at the other end of those juxtaposed controls, but we recognise there are other ports around the United Kingdom and we are looking at the security of those.

Q180 Tim Loughton: On a separate subject, the contract for Cobham, which services the Border Force cutters I gather with their surveillance support based in Bournemouth, their contract comes to an end on 6 January, just three weeks away, and there is some concern that there are no arrangements to take over from them. What exactly is the situation, because plainly there is a security issue there?

Mrs May: Yes. The situation is that having looked at that contract, a decision was taken that that was not the best value contract that the Border Force could perhaps have, that we could do this in a different way, and so work is being done to ensure that we can provide the necessary capability we need, but it will be done through other means. Indeed, we are looking at, for example, not just Border Force operating on its own but combining with some other capabilities that are required in terms of any contractual arrangements.

Q181 Tim Loughton: But that contract comes to an end in three weeks' time. What is going to happen on 7 January?

Mrs May: I can assure you that we will ensure that the safety and security of the UK is maintained.

Q182 Tim Loughton: Can you be a little more explicit than that? Because clearly they have performed a role. I have no torch for Cobham, but they have a serious role, working very closely with

those Border Force cutters around the clock in all weather and they will not be doing that from 7 January.

Mrs May: Border Force has been looking at the alternative arrangements that will be put in place when that contract comes to an end.

Q183 Chair: Thank you. Closing CT, would you write to us with the figures on the number of websites and Twitter pages that have been taken down by the Home Office? At the moment we just have groups like Anonymous and Ghost Security Services telling us how good they are at doing these things. They may well be, but it would be nice to have some official figures.

Mrs May: We may be able to provide that in very short order, before the end of the meeting, but it is—

Chair: Which will be shortly.

Mrs May: —a very significant number. I think, from memory, there is certainly about 1,000 pieces being taken down a week from the internet.

Chair: While they are searching for that, we can move on to policing, our final subject. I want to start by thanking the Permanent Secretary—

Mrs May: Chairman, if I may, since February 2010, the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit has taken down more than 120,000 pieces of unlawful terrorist-related content that encourages or glorifies acts of terrorism. Over 100,000 of these have been removed since December 2013. We are currently removing around 1,000 pieces a week.

Q184 Chair: Excellent, and thank you very much for those figures, they are very, very helpful and well done to all those involved. It shows the scale of the number of websites there are.

Finally on policing, through you I would like to thank the Permanent Secretary for his letter that arrived today concerning the fiasco over the police funding issue. I know that this is a matter that you have been looking at and you were only informed after the Minister for Policing was informed. It does seem very odd, and this is his conclusion, “The base error was the confusion by analysts between the two filenames and datasets, but the error was compounded, not corrected, because they had insufficient understanding of the policy issues and context and because the policy officials had insufficient understanding of the technical issues and data”. I do not want to go on about what happened in the past because clearly there were serious errors, the wrong people were doing the work, it appears, or people who did not have the expertise in the particular area. Of course we accept what Mark Sedwill has said and we accept that there is going to be a management review and restructure in these areas, but in respect of the future, we have issued a report last week about the need to consult outside the Home Office. Please give serious consideration to our view that an independent panel should work with the Home Office, because we do want to get this right. There will always be winners and losers, but it is really important that people believe they have been treated fairly.

Mrs May: Of course we always look at Home Affairs Select Committee reports very carefully and very seriously, Chairman. We do. But what I would say in relation to this issue is that you are absolutely right, this is something we need to make sure we get right. The current funding formula is one that not only this Committee but indeed many people in policing say is no longer the right one. We do wish to see a new funding formula, but obviously having been through what we have seen and the error that was made, we are now looking very carefully at how we progress

on this issue, how we make sure. We are talking to both the National Police Chiefs Council and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners about how we can move forward on this.

Q185 Chair: You are reassuring us today that the right people who know about these issues will be involved, not people who do not have an understanding?

Mrs May: We will make sure. As the Permanent Secretary has made clear, he is looking at the structural issues within that part of the Department to make sure that future work has the right people attached to it.

Q186 Chair: Thank you. Just on some technical issues, today at Prime Minister's Questions, the Prime Minister said that he was speaking to you, the Metropolitan Police and others to make tasers more widely available following the events at Leytonstone. I accept that he has only just said this and you were sitting on the front bench, but you must be aware of conversations that you are having about this. Is this somewhere where you want to go? Is it likely that more tasers will be issued, because they were certainly very effective at Leytonstone?

Mrs May: Obviously the Prime Minister has already had a conversation with me prior to saying that at Prime Minister's Questions. Of course in operational terms, decisions about tasers are ones to be taken by individual police forces, so the number of officers that are provided with tasers will be a matter for the Chief Constable to take as an operational decision. Obviously the capability to use tasers is there because they have been accepted as a suitable restraint mechanism. It is a very sensitive restraint mechanism that is used and we have of course been doing some work with police forces and others to better identify the figures around the use of tasers, the circumstances in which those were used and the impact of that.

Q187 Chair: But if they need them, they should deploy them? You are happy with that?

Mrs May: I do not tell police forces what to do with tasers. It is for them to decide operationally what they believe to be the appropriate way.

Q188 Chair: Why is he having discussions with you then? If you do not tell them what they are going to do, why is the Prime Minister even raising it?

Mrs May: It is perfectly reasonable for the Prime Minister to talk to me about the value of tasers.

Q189 Chair: No, but is it just that, is it the fact that tasers are valuable rather than asking for your endorsement that they should be rolled out elsewhere?

Mrs May: I think what is important is that we are giving a clear message. This is what the Prime Minister and I have been talking about, that there is no suggestion that there is in any sense a belief that tasers are somehow bad or should not be used. By definition, they are available for police forces to use. It is then up to them to make that operational decision about which officers should have the use of tasers.

Q190 Chair: In respect of body cameras, I do not want you to get involved in any way—and this Committee does not to get involved—in what happened at Wood Green, but I want you to comment on policy and numbers. The Commissioner, when he appeared before this Committee, said that he was very keen on police officers wearing body cameras and had ordered 22,000, but undercover operatives were not able to use these body cameras because they are too large. Clearly

even if they are in camouflage or they are undercover and they arrive with a huge camera on their shoulder, people will know that they are not doing a covert operation. Do you think that this needs to be looked at so that undercover operatives who need to use these cameras should try to get new equipment? For example, if you go past a spy shop in central London, as I do every time I come to work in the morning—I do not stop there, I just drive past it—you can put a camera in a pin and you don't have to be James Bond or someone who follows these things, but you can have very small cameras in order to cover particular events. It just seems like a very odd explanation that undercover operatives are not able to use these 20,000 cameras because they are too big.

Mrs May: I have long been a supporter of body-worn video. I think this is important and it helps in the gathering of evidence. It also provides a degree of protection often for police officers in terms of their interaction with members of the public. But it is right, of course, that in covert operations the tools and techniques that one uses may be different precisely because it is covert and, as you say, you do not want the officers to be recognised. My understanding is that some work has been done about identifying the equipment that would be suitable in covert operations. What is important is to remember that there is a legal framework obviously for the use of body-worn videos, there will be issues around the collection of evidence. In all of these things there is an issue about the equipment itself, then there is a question about how it is used, the circumstances in which it is used and making sure that it is used in a way where the evidence from it can then be used as appropriate.

Q191 Chair: Finally, on the issue of the extension of Bernard Hogan-Howe's remit and time as Commissioner, when Stephen Greenhalgh was before us, the Deputy Mayor for Policing, he said that the Mayor was writing to you asking you to extend the Commissioner's time as Commissioner. The Commissioner, in evidence to us, said he was perfectly happy to do so if he was asked to do so. Have you now received the letter? Because we know from water cannons that it seemed to take a very long time to get correspondence approved between you and the Mayor, I think it took a year and many evidence sessions before we finally had a decision. Obviously you were thinking about it very carefully, but we cannot wait a year on the issue of the extension of the contract of the Commissioner. Have you received a letter as yet from the Mayor about this issue and when do you think a decision could be taken? I ask you not specifically on the personal circumstances of the Commissioner, though this is in the public domain. We are worried about the number of very senior officers—Peter Fahy, Chris Sims, Keith Bristow—who are leaving the force. We know you have other talented people running the police force, but this is a particularly important appointment. Have you received the letter from the Mayor and when do you think you can make that decision?

Mrs May: I have not yet received any formal representations from the Mayor, but I am conscious of the fact that the decision will have to be made in a timely fashion, because of the point at which the current contract of the Commissioner expires. I am not going to give you a date by which the decision will be made, because I am not in a position to do that at this stage.

Q192 Chair: Obviously before the contract expires, a decision would have been made jointly between you and the Mayor?

Mrs May: Yes. The formal process is that the Mayor puts a view to the Home Secretary and the Home Secretary makes the decision, which is then relayed and the appointment is one for Her Majesty the Queen.

Q193 Chair: The process has not even started yet, that is what you are saying?

Mrs May: As I said, I have not received the letter that you are referring to.

Chair: We will remind him. Mr Jayawardena.

Q194 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: Home Secretary, first may I commend the Government's objective to try to sort out police funding? I think the objective is one that no one should lose sight of. That said, clearly there were issues with the way in which some of the data was analysed, and indeed, the Committee has raised some concerns on any future funding formula and made some recommendations. Perhaps I could just cover three of those in passing. The first is around low-cost police forces, those forces that have already taken the efficiency savings before the coalition Government came into power and then made a second run of it between 2010 and 2015. Those forces per capita deliver very good value for money for their residents, yet in the funding formula proposed previously, quite apart from the data, it was suggested that it would be indiscriminate to the past efficiency savings that had been made. Is the Home Office giving any consideration on that point, to making sure that in effect the Government's objectives of making the police more efficient is embedded in the formula?

Mrs May: What we have been looking at in the formula is trying to identify both a simplified formula, which I think is important because the current formula, with all its dampings and so forth, can be quite complicated, but a formula that measures the extent of demand for policing in an area. It is about trying to say, if you like, what is the level of policing that is required through the likely demand in a particular area and hence looking at a number of measures that would enable one to look at level of crime and hence demand on policing and other issues. So it is from that angle that we are looking at the formula.

Q195 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: I particularly used the term "low-cost per capita forces" because I wish to draw that distinction between those forces that are genuinely low cost and those that have a low precept. I know that the Government has set out that it is willing to have a more flexible approach for PCCs to raise precepts, perhaps going above the 2%. I would be interested if you, Home Secretary, can say anything on that now or provide an indication when we might find out about that. But more importantly, there is that distinction, is there not, that there are some places in the country where people, taxpayers, through their local council tax, are paying far more for the same or potentially a worse level of service than people elsewhere in the country and that surely is not fair?

Mrs May: You are certainly right in saying that obviously the extent to which the proportion of the funding for police in any area comes from central Government, grant or from precept, varies across the country, so there are some where there is a very high proportion comes from grant and a low proportion of precepts and others where the opposite is true. But we did look in the work that we have done so far on the formula at whether there is any measure that enables you to take that into account in looking at the funding formula. In fact the views that we had from the police forces were, I think, overwhelmingly that it was not going to be possible to find something that itself was fair in its operation in relation to this issue.

Q196 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: So you would not consider rebating at a particular point in order to make sure that all taxpayers on day one of a new formula pay a common amount for a common service and then allow PCCs to flex that up or down in accordance with the service they choose to provide?

Mrs May: I am tempted to say given the variations that we see at the moment, the challenge in doing that would be significant.

Q197 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: Turning to another matter, cross-border crime was not considered in the formula at all. It talked about population density in a particular police force area, but between Hampshire Constabulary and Thames Valley Police, for example, the north of Hampshire will be affected by crime in Reading, for instance. That was not taken into account. Will thought be given to that?

Mrs May: Obviously, as I have indicated earlier, we are looking at how we will progress to the next steps in terms of looking at what a formula should include. The exercise that we have undertaken so far and the first exercise we undertook was precisely to ask police forces, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners, what were the measures that they thought were appropriate to identify what the demand for policing was. In the cross-border area, you are probably going to see pluses and minuses for every force, so for most forces there will be borders where they might see a level of criminality coming into the force area but others where perhaps they are seeing a level of criminality going out from the force area. It is quite difficult to find a single measure that would capture that in a way that everybody would consider to be fair.

Q198 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: But I am sure you are not advocating that we should just fudge the situation and say it would broadly net off. So you are willing to look at these things and that work will be ongoing, will it?

Mrs May: What I have said is that we will be looking and discussing with the APCC and the MPCC what the next steps should be in terms of determining what a funding formula should be for the future.

Q199 Mr Ranil Jayawardena: Last point, if I may, very quickly, Chairman: in terms of making Police Commissioners more accountable to people and given that the people of the United Kingdom roundly rejected the alternative vote in the referendum in 2011, will the Government consider bringing into use—not for this forthcoming PCC election, there would not be parliamentary time to do so—for the 2020 election first past the post?

Mrs May: I personally have always been a supporter of first past the post voting systems, but I have to say that decisions around the Police and Crime Commissioner elections have now passed from the Home Office to the Cabinet Office.

Q200 Mr David Burrowes: There have been 14 teenagers stabbed to death this year. What more can be done to counter and prevent the awful consequences of knife crime and do you also support the calls in effect seeking to ban the sale of online supplies of knives, particularly these so-called Zombie Killer knives?

Mrs May: I recognise the interest and concern that you have shown for a number of years now on this whole issue of knife crime. Obviously Government has taken some steps in relation to tightening up on the offences and sentencing in relation to knife crime. It is incumbent on us to recognise though that these issues are not only ones that will be dealt with through looking at the policing aspects or indeed the criminal justice aspects in relation to knife crime. You have raised the question of the sale of particular weaponry over the internet, and indeed I think there was a question raised at the Prime Minister's Questions today about the whole question of working with retailers in relation to this issue. It is a difficult issue with various aspects to it.

The other aspect to it I would say is—and I have met some very good groups doing this—just that work that is often done by voluntary groups and charities to help to educate young people

particularly about the dangers of carrying knives; the work that is still being done by Brooke Kinsella, for example, through her exhibition, which is excellent in showing youngsters that if you carry a knife, then you are more likely to use it because it is there. That is also part of the process, so I do not think it is all about what the Government can do in terms of issues like policing and sentencing.

Q201 Mr David Burrowes: Is the Department looking to see what Amazon is doing? In 2009 they said they were going to try to sort it out, particularly in relation to age verification purchases. Is that something the Department is looking at in relation to online sale of knives?

Mrs May: I am certainly very happy to perhaps write further to the Committee on what we are doing around issues around knives.

Q202 Mr Chuka Umunna: Three very quick things. On the body-worn cameras, I completely agree with you, Home Secretary, and I think they are absolutely vital, would you not agree, in terms of increasing trust in the use of police stop and search powers? It just adds a greater layer of accountability and transparency in that respect.

Mrs May: As I said earlier, I have long supported body-worn video. I think it is important and it enables evidence to be gathered, particularly in issues like when police are arriving at a scene of domestic violence perhaps, but also it can be a protection for the police officer in terms of when perhaps accusations are made against the officer.

Q203 Mr Chuka Umunna: In relation to tasers, you will be aware of the data that was released by your Department as a result of a Freedom of Information request by the BBC, showing that you are three times more likely to be involved in a taser incident as somebody drawn from a black or minority ethnic community. Thankfully, you are investigating that. When do you expect your Department to report on the reasons for this disparity?

Mrs May: I am not able to give you a date on that at the moment, I am afraid, but I think it is an important area for us to look at, as we have done on stop and search. As I said earlier, we are trying to look at a number of aspects of the use of tasers, so the circumstances in which they are used, as you indicate, are you more likely, with certain characteristics, to be tasered than somebody else and why is that happening? It is a piece of work that has a number of strands to it, so I am not able to give you a firm date at the moment.

Q204 Mr Chuka Umunna: My final question, Chair, is we have taken evidence from Sara Thornton, the Police Chief Head, and also the Met Police Commissioner on police funding for the child abuse investigations from past child abuse that they are going to be doing as a result of the Goddard inquiry. The Goddard inquiry is going to throw up over 30,000 likely police investigations, half of which will be in London. They are arguing for there to be a separate line of funding for the police in respect of these investigations. They made that argument, I think, to you and the Treasury in the context of the spending review. Why was their request not heeded, given the huge pressure these investigations are going to put on their resources?

Mrs May: First of all, what has been announced so far is the overall police—

Mr Chuka Umunna: I am sorry, I should declare an interest: I have a group of constituents, the Shirley Oaks Association, who represent survivors of past child abuse in Lambeth, who I work very closely with, and it is of interest to them.

Mrs May: I am sure we all want to see those cases where people do come forward with allegations being investigated properly, and where it is possible to bring perpetrators to justice for that to be done. The overall police settlement has been announced. Obviously the next layer of detail in terms of the police grant will be announced tomorrow, but one of the things that the Chancellor referred to in his CSR that we have been working on is a recognition that some of the issues that the police are having to deal with in terms of crime have been changing. Partly that is about crimes that they are now putting a greater focus on, around child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation, some of those are past cases, some sadly we still see are continuing today. Other aspects are about the changing nature of crime and one of the issues we are looking at is how we can ensure that in those areas where the police are faced with things that perhaps need a degree of transformation within the force that that is able to be accommodated.

Q205 Nusrat Ghani: I just want to follow up what Mr Umunna said. We had an inquiry into the sexual abuse allegations and the role of charities came to the fore. I want to put on record that NAPAC, the National Association for People Abused in Childhood, helped me organise a training session for parliamentarians, because it became very clear through the inquiry that there wasn't best practice in how we parliamentarians manage and care for constituents who come forward who are abuse survivors. Now, the Home Office currently has two funding streams for these sorts of charities, the Child Abuse Inquiry Support Fund of around £2 million, and the Child and Adult Victims of Sexual Abuse Support Fund of £2.85 million. These funds are due to come to an end by spring 2016. I wondered if you could explain how there might be funding after 2016, in particular for NAPAC, because I think their funding also comes to a conclusion and they are also concerned about dealing with the extra amount of phone calls and the service they have to provide.

Mrs May: I am well aware of NAPAC as an organisation, they do some excellent work. The two funding streams that you have referred to we were able to put in place. It was precisely a recognition from the interaction I had had with groups like NAPAC and others in the environment we have today, where people do feel more confident about coming forward with their allegations, that they were finding an increase in people drawing on their resources and looking to them for support. I am afraid I am not in a position to be able to talk to you about future funding in relation to these matters. I am aware of the significance of this issue and obviously the concerns of some of these groups, many of which are very small groups, but are having now to deal with large numbers of people coming forward to them.

Q206 Nusrat Ghani: Can I just say that they get around £222,000 and since the Goddard inquiry, the pressure on them to provide services has grown and grown. Will they have any news before March how their funding might be managed or will they have to wait until March? Can you let them know any time sooner?

Mrs May: Again, I am not able to give you a date as to when any information about looking at these areas would be. Obviously we have a process in funding terms, a sort of layered process, from the overall settlement that was announced for the Home Office as well as the policing. Of course what we were able to provide in the two funding streams that you referred to was money that came from the victims' fund, so it came from the Ministry of Justice.

Q207 Naz Shah: In a recent inspection by the HMIC, out of 43 police forces, three were found totally prepared and three totally unprepared on the issue of violence against women under the guise of honour. How have the Government responded to this?

Mrs May: I was able to have a presentation from the inspector who undertook that work about the concerns that they had. Obviously we recognise these very real concerns. We are now looking very carefully at the report and at how we can take this forward. Obviously this in a sense follows on, if you like, from the reports HMIC did on domestic violence, where we then put together a group, a national oversight group, to ensure that these matters were taken on by police forces. I am pleased to say that the recent HMIC report on domestic violence—although there is more to be done—did recognise that movement had taken place and there was a greater priority on this. So I am looking at what is the best route in order to be able to deal with this issue around honour-based violence. Obviously as a Government, we made some moves in relation to FGM and forced marriage, but there are other aspects of honour-based violence, I recognise.

Q208 Naz Shah: That brings me nicely on to my next question. On FGM, we have had no convictions, even though it has been illegal for 29 years. On forced marriage, we have had one conviction. The conviction that failed, the doctor was acquitted in 30 minutes, and that is not what the law was set out to do—it was a doctor who stitched a woman back up—and it was a failed trial. The forced marriage conviction, the first one we had in Cardiff, again it was not in relation to parents or siblings or family, it was totally different. My concern is we are not doing enough in terms of law and supporting the CPS to convict. Now, if we look at Rochdale and CSE and what happened there, it took somebody like Nazir Afzal to change the culture. Do we have an organisational culture issue in terms of policing when it comes to these two issues?

It ties in nicely with what my colleague, Nusrat Ghani, talked about in terms of the Sharia courts. Maybe we need somebody like Nazir Afzal to lead some form of review for the Sharia courts.

Mrs May: Yes. I was just looking at the NHS data that was released earlier this month, which showed nearly 1,400 newly-identified cases of FGM within the NHS between July to September of this year, so you are absolutely right to raise it. This is an issue that should be of real concern to us all. You made reference to what more we can do in a legislative sense. I think the challenge is perhaps less about the legislation now and more about the two sides, both ensuring that police are able to understand what is necessary in order to be able to bring prosecutions, but also that people are able to feel confident enough to be able to come forward. We obviously have the reporting duty that has been produced in relation to the NHS.

Q209 Naz Shah: In terms of reporting duties, we do not need a child to tell us that a child has been abused or give evidence and if we do not require the evidence from a baby at a trial to convict parents, why do we need evidence or people to come forward when we have clear medical evidence of mutilation? We should not need the testimony of a victim to tell us that there has been abuse when there clearly has.

Mrs May: This is a matter that I have to say goes slightly beyond my remit as Home Secretary and more into the Justice Secretary and the Attorney General's roles in terms of the prosecution and the courts looking at these matters. I take the point you are making, but the important point is that increasingly people are recognising the evidence that is coming forward. There is something about the system as a whole, not just recognising the significance of these actions that are taking place in terms of FGM, but the system as a whole working to ensure that collectively the police, CPS and courts are able to take through the prosecutions. That is partly about the police understanding, it is about evidence-gathering, it is about when the CPS is ready for charges to be made and prosecutions to be taken forward and then courts understanding the evidence.

Q210 Chair: Thank you. We are coming to the end now, you will be pleased to know. We are sorry that Keith Bristow is going, he has done a great job in setting up the NCA, but one of the points that he mentioned was the computer system Elma, where there is a dispute, or there appears to be a dispute between the Home Office and the Treasury. Is this going to be resolved? Who will pay for the new system?

Mrs May: I am not sure that I would describe it as a dispute between the Home Office and the Treasury. We have done a lot of work on the whole question of the suspicious activity reports. Indeed, this was an issue that has been raised with me at a round table I co-chaired with the Governor of the Bank of England and so what we are looking at is what should the reporting system be that is going to enable us to get at this money-laundering activity—

Chair: But they need more equipment, don't they?

Mrs May: —and then what is the computer system, the IT system that should support that. Now, of course the NCEA has a significant transformation programme that has already started and will be continuing in relation to their IT platform. Obviously part of this will be looking at, as regards this particular aspect of their activity, what IT system they need to support it.

Q211 Chair: The Hacked Off campaign has said that there was a betrayal of the Prime Minister and what he has said in respect of the victims to Parliament following the decision of the DPP not to proceed to end the investigations that have been going on for the last 10 years. They made that comment about betrayal in respect of Leveson 2. Has a decision been made? Because I was one of the chairs called in by the Prime Minister when the whole Leveson saga began and he did promise that there would be a second inquiry once the first was completed. Has any decision been made as to when Leveson 2 would start? Obviously not with Leveson, because he has gone off—and he did tell us very clearly that he would not be around to do the second part—but when we can get part 2 of this?

Mrs May: We are very clear the decision on part 2 would be made when any cases that were being taken through in relation to these issues had completed. They have not yet been completed.

Q212 Chair: Yes, so when they are over, then a decision will be made to start Leveson 2?

Mrs May: We are clear that those cases need to be over before a decision can be made.

Q213 Chair: Do you know how many are left?

Mrs May: I believe it is a very limited number. I think two cases remain outstanding.

Q214 Chair: Two cases. Are you glad that the DPP has now said the whole inquiry is at an end, because it has cost a huge amount of money? It was important that it was set up. Is this the right time to close phone hacking?

Mrs May: The decision that the DPP takes is entirely a matter for the DPP and was an independent decision taken by the DPP.

Q215 Chair: In wishing you and your staff and your Ministers a happy Christmas, perhaps I could ask you for next year, what would be on your wish list, one thing that you would like to see happen for the Home Office next year?

Mrs May: Chairman, the nature of the Home Office is such that it is always difficult to put one's finger on one thing that the Home Office is going to do. We have quite a full agenda for the next year in terms of the completion of police reform, the Investigatory Powers Bill that will be going through and there will be hopefully a new Policing and Crime Bill coming through, so there is a lot of activity that we will be doing. I have every expectation, Chairman, that there will be further requests to appear before your Committee.

Chair: Well, in the spirit of Star Wars, may the Force be with you this Christmas. Happy Christmas, Home Secretary.

Mrs May: Happy Christmas, Chairman.

Chair: That concludes our sessions for this year.