HOUSE OF COMMONS

# Home Affairs Committee

## Oral evidence: Policing for the future, HC 515

Tuesday 19 June 2018

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 19 June 2018.

Watch the meeting

Members present: Yvette Cooper (Chair); Rehman Chishti; Stephen Doughty; Tim Loughton; Alex Norris; Douglas Ross, John Woodcock.

Questions 528–643

### Witnesses

I: Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service; and Scott McPherson, Director General of the Crime, Policing and Fire Group, Home Office.

II: Mike Cunningham QPM, Chief Executive Officer, College of Policing; and Sir Thomas Winsor, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

# Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP and Scott McPherson.

**Chair:** Minister and Mr McPherson, welcome to the Committee. Thank you very much for your time. We very much appreciate it. This is a session of the Home Affairs Select Committee's inquiry into the future of policing. Minister, we would like to start by looking at some of the new and changing demands and pressures on policing and then move on to some of the core ongoing business of policing.

Q528 **Tim Loughton:** Minister, we have heard a lot about child sexual exploitation as one of the new features post-Savile in particular, which is taking a disproportionate amount of police time. We have had Simon Bailey who leads on these matters for police chiefs and he told us that 438 men are being arrested every month for viewing indecent images online, very few of them are getting prosecuted and an awful lot are not getting arrested. He has made the suggestion that we should not be pressing charges on some of these, not least because of the pressure on police. Are we taking this seriously as what is a crime with victims and where does it feature in the priorities of police in trying to deal with not only historic child sex abuse, which is obviously taking up an awful lot of time, but also contemporary child sex abuse if it becomes known that effectively you might get off scot-free?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We can't let that happen. The short answer to your question is that the Home Office attaches a high level of importance to it. Victoria Atkins leads on it, as you know. The reality is that it is part of this landscape of not just growing demand on the police system but increasing complexity of that demand. As you pointed out, there is a situation with historic cases; there are more cases coming forward that perhaps reflects a high level of confidence in the ability to come forward; there is a big technology challenge in what technology now enables and the ability of people to use it for terrible purposes. All of this is symptomatic of some of the broader challenges on the police system, but as an increasing crime, as an increasingly complex crime, as a crime that has devastating consequences on young people and their families, I think it is being given the highest level of priority. At the local operating level, we come back to the model that we have, which is that the local policing priorities are set by the PCC in its local crime plan. That is the model that we have for local prioritisation and accountability for that.

Q529 **Tim Loughton:** Don't you agree that a major deterrent for individuals choosing to view illicit images of minors online is the fact that they might get caught and the book will be thrown at them with all the consequences that that brings? When you have the police chief lead saying that perhaps we should not be charging those cases that come on their radar, let alone, therefore, rehabilitation and support being available to see why people are seeking to exploit vulnerable children by viewing pornographic images online, that is sending out the wrong signal, isn't it?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I would need to understand the context in which he said that, but the basic principle is an absolutely fundamental one. It is essential for any crime type, but particularly the more complex ones, that there is an understanding and a very clear sense that people will not be immune, that they are likely to get caught and the consequences of them getting caught will be severe. If those are not in place, crime is likely to be encouraged. I would like to understand the context of his remarks but I don't think the police system should be sending out a signal that they are not interested in investigating and charging crime, because I don't think it is the case in this point.

Q530 **Tim Loughton:** There is a disconnect between Government policy and what the police chiefs are saying on this that you might want to investigate.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I don't know if that is fair, but I was very impressed recently by a case where an extremely sophisticated offender was brought to justice by an incredibly complex police investigation led by the NCA, given how sophisticated this individual was and how much resource and time was taken to basically get him charged and sentenced. I have seen very clear evidence of police taking this very seriously and going to extraordinary lengths to bring justice.

Q531 **Tim Loughton:** We have as well and it is in no way to undermine the effort and the extraordinary sophistication of the police in apprehending some serious abusers, but some of those serious abusers started off as low level abusers and continued to get away with it. I think that is the issue we have and you might want to revisit it and have a conversation about it. I have always been very impressed with Simon Bailey and his understanding but it is because of the pressure on police resources, that this is not something that they want to see.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** If it is an issue of resources, if that is the context of his remarks, which was not clear—from what you were saying, I thought it was an attitudinal issue that I did not really recognise. If it is an issue of resources, that is part of a wider debate about whether the police system has the resources they need, which I am sure will take up some more of our time in this session.

Q532 **Tim Loughton:** We will come on to that I am sure. As for my bit, on the other side of the coin is the social media companies. You will be aware that we beat them up on a regular basis in front of this Committee, your colleagues in your Department beat them up on a regular basis and now DCMS seems to be beating them up on a regular basis, which is all very encouraging but who is in the lead on this? Who is responsible and what are we going to achieve?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We work very closely with DCMS on this. For example, in a different context but where the conversation is about the same thing, which is about the responsibility of the social media companies, Margot James from the DCMS sits on the Serious Violence Taskforce alongside

us. She was in the session we had recently with all the big social media companies, making the Government's position absolutely clear that we expect more action from them in the context of action against hideous exploitation of children. I have been to visit the team at the NCA to hear directly from them and their frustration is not just about how long it takes to take stuff down but that these companies, with the technology they have, should be working with us to get ahead of this and be able to be proactive in stopping stuff going up in the first place.

With the way the technology is developing so fast, we are not far off being able to do that but we need their co-operation with that. Those conversations continue to develop. It feels like we have had to drag them along too much but I sense, certainly from the conversations I have listened to about serious violence, that there is a growing realisation that their historic position of, "We are not responsible for the content" is unsustainable.

Q533 **Tim Loughton:** The perfectly legitimate answer that you have just given was one that could have been and probably was given by your predecessor, by the Home Secretary and previous Home Secretaries, and yet still social media companies are profiting from being the platforms for extremist content, violent content, anti-Semitic content, hate content and still too much child abuse content. There has not been any change in the legislation to which they need to adhere. In terms of you bringing them along and getting them on side, how much longer are we going to play this "they will do the right thing" card rather than say, "You have had your chance; this is now what you are going to do or else you will get fined or prosecuted"?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I completely understand that point. We are still at that stage of calling them out when we have evidence that they have got stuff on their platforms that should not be there. Some of it is breaking the law if it is inciting violence. If we have evidence of them being too slow to respond we will call them out, but certainly from the conversations I have been part of it has been made quite clear to them that if we don't see more progress the Government will consider their options on regulation. I sense from the conversations I have been part of that there is a shift in mood but not as fast as my colleagues and I would like.

Q534 **Tim Loughton:** Does the timescale come from your Department or from DCMS?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** As I said, we work closely together on this because we have to, and we do. It is quite genuine. But timescale is a conversation between Secretaries of State that will be led by our sense of the progress we have made. I think there is a recognition that quite a lot of progress has been made against extremism and terrorism. We are challenging them very hard now on the serious violence side and on the exploitation of children side. I can't give you a firm timeline on that, Tim. I am not in a position to do that. What I do know is I can see colleagues and I have

been part of those conversations where these companies have been called to account at the highest level to show more responsibility.

Q535 **Chair:** This is glacial though. I accept they are doing more than they were but we are writing this week again to the major social media companies because we have found banned extremist material on their platforms that they should have taken down. Why does it take us to keep chasing them? Why don't you have a system, why don't they have a system, that actually makes this happen?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We do have a system of regular engagement at the highest level on these issues. The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and various Home Secretaries have been vocal on this. There is a system of meetings at which they are invited to discuss progress, but if collectively Government through our processes and Parliament through your processes conclude that what they are doing is not going far and fast enough there has to be a response. You will obviously be free to reach your own conclusions in this report.

**Chair:** I think a timetable might be helpful. If either you or the Home Secretary was able to write to us with a timetable, that would be really helpful.

Q536 **Rehman Chishti:** Minister, one of the key issues that affects many people at the moment is online fraud. Nearly one in five crimes estimated by the crime survey will be committed online and there is a different structure and approach for recording and dealing with online crime by different forces. From your experience and from the information that you have, are you saying it is being dealt with in the way it should be dealt with?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We are nowhere near where we need to be on this issue. You are quite right. Most of our constituents are far more vulnerable to crime online through the computers in their homes than they are walking down the streets of Gillingham or Ruislip and that is reflected in the crime statistics. Last year I went around the system talking to every single police chief and I always asked the question, "In your area, which victims of crime get the worst deal from the police?" Invariably they say victims of online fraud, cybercrime, and they are right. The public know that because although the polling and surveys show very high levels of public confidence and faith in the police, that breaks down quite sharply by crime type and there are low levels of confidence in getting a good service from local police in response to what we might call loosely cybercrime. We have one of the fastest growing areas of crime where the public have low confidence and then you have the chiefs' own analysis suggesting that only a third of local forces have anywhere near the kind of local capability that they need in this area. You can see that this is an unacceptable and unsustainable situation, so there is a response.

The other element to this is that I know my colleague Ben Wallace, the Security Minister, who leads on this, is very clear in his mind that

capabilities need to be aligned more intelligently between national, regional and local. There has been resource capability building at the national level and regional level but it is the local capability that needs building up. The Derbyshire chief is leading on this in discussions about how that is best done.

There is some very interesting innovation in this area. My colleague from the College of Policing is sitting behind me here and the College is doing some excellent work in upgrading its digital training for officers. There is some interesting innovation in here. For example, Hampshire—I don't know if there is a Hampshire MP here—has led the field in encouraging what they call cyber specials, which is basically encouraging volunteers from the public who have skills that would take forever to develop inside the police system to come in and offer those to the force. Other forces such as Merseyside have connections with their universities to do something similar.

There is an urgent need for the police to build their capability in this area. It is being built at national and regional level. It needs to be built up more at the local level through whatever means and then these capabilities need to be aligned in a more intelligent way. That is how I see it.

Q537 **Rehman Chishti:** Minister, I think we are all agreed that how people subject to online fraud are being treated is completely unsatisfactory and you have accepted there are challenges on that. The Home Office has a Joint Fraud Taskforce and there are questions being raised about the transparency and competence of that. The Government have put in £35 million for an online fraud helpline. Obviously that has not worked. Will there be additional resources put into this area? I take what you say about the work done by Minister Wallace in the short term. What is the short-term position in addressing this? It is not just simply about low conviction rates; it is about the way these matters are investigated. What is the short-term, medium-term and long-term position relating to this?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** The short term involves some resource building and some money has gone into the ROCU system. There is a national cyber programme of £1.9 billion over five years. There is resource going in but also the system needs to work better. As you will know from your constituency, the organisation Action Fraud has been set up to help effectively manage the flow of actions from the public in reporting incidents. I think there is a recognition that that system is not working in the most optimal way and too many cases are pinging around the system. I know Ben is keen to align the capabilities and responsibilities more clearly and make sure that whatever gets passed down to the local force to pick up stays there and is sent to the local force for the right reasons. An alignment of capability and making sure that the flow of the cases is managed in a smarter way would be some of his priorities.

Q538 **Rehman Chishti:** I am grateful for that. Moving to one of the announcements that was made recently, which is the Government's

allocation of £1.3 million to a social media hub in relation to serious and violent crime strategy to help address the gang culture, looking at online material available, how will that work in practice?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We have just approved a pilot at a concept stage. The context is that among the many factors that are at play in driving, encouraging and inciting this serious violence that we have to get on top of is what is available online in videos. Having seen some of them, this is an entirely valid point. What the police has asked for is support of a pilot—it will be London-focused to start with, I believe—to target some of the gangs that appear to be most prevalent in using this material to incite violence and to run an operation to target and disrupt those as a pilot exercise. Scott, do you want to add anything about how it will work?

***Scott McPherson:*** Yes. As the Minister said, the pilot is going to be hosted by the Metropolitan Police with a squad of 20 police staff and officers, focusing very much on disrupting and removing overt and covert gang-related material online. For example, material that glamorises murder or lures young people into violent organised crime will be taken and identified by that team and proactively working with the police to get it removed.

Q539 **Rehman Chishti:** How would you be working with other forces? If this pilot is successful, is there resource available for that to be expanded throughout the country?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We will see the evidence of it first but it is conceived as a pilot. If the outcomes of it are good, we will look to build on it in the context of a serious violence strategy. It is just one element of a broad strategy.

***Scott McPherson:*** Deputy Assistant Commissioner Duncan Ball, who is the lead in the Metropolitan Police Service is also the national police chiefs lead for gangs, so he is working very closely with his colleagues in the other forces on the wider issue.

Q540 **Rehman Chishti:** Just as a clarification on the timeline, when does the pilot finish so you will be in a position to come up with your conclusions on whether or not this is something that should be rolled out elsewhere?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I am afraid I don't know the precise details. It has only just been approved.

Q541 **Rehman Chishti:** On the anti-knife crime community fund, I have a local vicar in St Margaret's church who has applied for some of this funding to work with the local community, supported by the family trust, to ensure that areas that may not historically have gang crime or knife crime issues can be ahead of the game on the issues coming their way. From the point of application to the point of a decision being made, how quickly and speedily can these decisions on projects be allocated?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I think there are rounds of it and it can be done quickly. I have not heard any complaint about unnecessary bureaucracy on this. The driving force behind this is a clear understanding that we can't, to use a cliché, arrest our way out of this problem. In our strategy, we have to make sure that both pillars—robust law enforcement and effective prevention and early intervention—are properly balanced. That requires funding support for some of the excellent civil society organisations out there that are close to communities and to people in the communities and can help us in this collective challenge of trying to steer young people away from violence and decisions that will have devastating consequences for their lives and their families. That is at the heart of the strategy and that does require some funding support.

Q542 **Rehman Chishti:** I am grateful for that. Will you come down to Gillingham and meet with the community? We have just had a fatal incident where a young teenager, Karl Yule, was stabbed to death and those responsible have now been convicted at Maidstone Crown Court.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes, of course I will. I think it is very much part of our responsibility. There is always a risk in national Government that you sit in Whitehall and conference rooms and feel disconnected from the communities that you are trying to support. I feel very much part of my responsibility is to engage with the community, so that is a long answer to a shorter answer, which is yes.

**Rehman Chishti:** I am grateful.

Q543 **Chair:** I will quickly follow up on those two points. On the online fraud, we were told by Greater Manchester Police that they managed to investigate only about 4% of the cases they get from Action Fraud, and I think that is similar for other forces as well. Of the 276,000 cases received by Action Fraud, the figures they gave us suggest that only 8,000 led to some kind of charge or summons—so that is less than 3% of the cases reported to Action Fraud—and nearly half of all businesses suffer a cyber attack but only 57 cyber crimes have been prosecuted. Aren't these shocking figures?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Chair, I think I was pretty frank at the start in saying that victims of this type of crime are not getting—

Q544 **Chair:** What is the Home Office doing about it?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We provide funding support to build the national, regional and local capability. The police themselves are coming to us with a strategy for building local capability.

Q545 **Chair:** But it is not local capability that is really the problem, is it? The evidence that we were given suggested that the problem forces have is that they may have a victim in their area but the perpetrator may be in the next-door force, at the other end of the country or the other side of the world. What they very clearly told us was that the current structure is just not working. You simply saying there has to be more capacity in local

forces is not going to address the concerns they were raising with us.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** No, that is not what I said, Chair, to be fair. I said there is an issue about building local capability. The chiefs have produced their own evidence of assessments of local capability, that only a third of forces have the local capability that we might expect. That is a problem we have to manage together, but I was at pains to point out in answer to your question that Ben Wallace who leads on this is very clear that we have to do a better job of aligning the national and regional capabilities to make the system work more effectively together. Is this complicated crime to investigate and get results on? Yes, but we are also very clear that the system we have is not quite yet fit for purpose in alignment and specifically local capability, and we have been quite frank about that.

Q546 **Chair:** On serious violent crime, you have announced a £6 million a year, £11 million in total over two years, early intervention youth fund; is that right?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** It is £11 million, yes.

Q547 **Chair:** £11 million over two years, is that right, so we are talking about £5 million or £6 million a year?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes.

Q548 **Chair:** How many areas in the country is that going to cover?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We are just working through finalising how that is going to work and taking advice from PCCs and others about the smartest way of structuring this fund. We are very keen to get as much for the taxpayer money as possible and be as smart as possible in making sure that this fund is intelligently aligned with other funding streams that are out there, both statutory and in the voluntary sector, so that this collective effort to support good early intervention work is structured in the most intelligent way. The short answer is that we are still working through how the fund is likely to be structured.

Q549 **Chair:** How does it compare to the scale of cuts to the youth justice grant?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I am not sure I would make that comparison, Chair.

Q550 **Chair:** But doesn't that fund similar kinds of projects?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** That reinforces the point that we need to take a bit of time to make sure that this bit of additional funding, which has been welcomed, works as smartly as possible with other bits of funding in the system that exist so that we are not cutting across other funding initiatives such as the Mayor of London's initiative in London. We have to be smart and take a bit of time to structure it in an intelligent way.

Q551 **Chair:** The figures that I have suggest that the cuts that there have been in the youth justice grant since 2010 are six times larger each year than the early intervention youth fund that you have announced for the next

two years. Do you think that your project is extremely small relative to the scale of the problem?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** It is what we are starting with. I think we have to make it work and then I am sure the new Home Secretary will want to review what he wants to do with the strategy.

Q552 **Chair:** How much of £11 million will be taken up by the Red Thread project?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I can't say, Chair, because I don't know. As I said, we are still structuring the fund.

Q553 **Chair:** What it looks like is that you have a very small project that is going to affect only a very small number of areas. Looking through, we had an unprovoked stabbing of someone outside Tescos in Huddersfield yesterday. Can you name anything in your serious violence strategy that is going to help West Yorkshire?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** It is more than likely quite possible, Chair, that this fund and other initiatives will benefit West Yorkshire. We just have not finalised the fund, but the fund is one piece of a broader strategy and a process whereby central government and the Home Office are convening partners, across agencies, forces and parties, to have a sustained conversation and action plan in this area. We know from the past, because we have had this problem in the past, that this is long-term work that requires agencies to work together. You are focused on the fund, and I understand that, but it is part of a broader process to try to bring agencies together and parts of the country together to bear down on this problem. This is not just a London problem, which is the point you are making.

Q554 **Chair:** Name one substantial thing that is going to happen in any area in the country that is not currently happening as a result of this serious violence strategy.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We have already announced that we are setting a co-ordination centre to make sure that the county lines work that police do, which everyone will know from their constituencies and I know John Woodcock has talked about in previous sessions, is a growing, highly emotive and difficult policing problem. One of the concrete actions out of the serious violence strategy is more resources to help the police co-ordinate their police work more effectively. That would be one concrete example, the fund would be another, but just as important as that is the conversations that we had last week with the heads of the social media companies, challenging them about what they are doing. Would they be at that table if the Home Office had not convened that meeting? No. This is part of a multi-faceted strategy to bear on a hideous problem that is not limited to London.

Q555 **John Woodcock:** As you just mentioned county lines, let me press you a little further. The National Crime Agency was clear that there should be

fundamental or very significant restructuring to enable county lines to be properly tackled. Do you accept its argument?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I have not heard it in full. What I absolutely accept from the conversations I have had is that this is a hideous problem, not least in how very vulnerable young people are being hideously exploited in this context, that it is a driver of violence in places that are not used to violence, and that it is complicated for a police system that is fragmented, which we may get on to discuss. That puts an additional emphasis on the need for the police effort to be better co-ordinated. My sense from reading the transcript of the conversation with the police chiefs is that there is a recognition of the need for that and a welcome for the support that we have given to the police in co-ordinating their police effort more effectively.

Q556 **John Woodcock:** Do you understand the level of fear and frustration in communities like Barrow where crime rates have been traditionally low that suddenly find this real upsurge in exposure to drugs and violent crime?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes, I do.

Q557 **John Woodcock:** Do you understand that communities like that are feeling that police forces, and indeed the Government, simply do not have a grip on this problem yet? Do you think that is an understandable reaction?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I understand the thought but not having spoken to your constituents directly, I don't know how they feel about it. What I do know is that the Home Office and the police recognise that changes in the drugs market are taking place and the county lines movement is part of that. I am personally satisfied from what I have heard and read that the police understand the priority that needs to be attached to that and that we have collectively recognised the need for that work to be better co-ordinated and that we have stepped up as part of the serious violence strategy to put some taxpayers' money on the table to support that. That is not a one-off. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of that policing effort and would expect Parliament to hold us and the police to account on that, and I am sure you will, John.

Q558 **John Woodcock:** Can I ask about another route in which drugs are increasingly find their way into communities? Do the Government have an estimate of the total value of illegal drugs that are arriving in communities to households via postal services?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Again, I don't lead on this. Victoria Atkins does, so if we do have an estimate of that I will offer to share it with the Committee in writing. I know that she is concerned about this issue because I have heard her talk about it but since she leads on it, I think I will leave it to her to reply in writing to you, John.

Q559 **John Woodcock:** That is okay but there is, surely, a crossover into your

responsibility on the policing of postal services. Are you satisfied that the technology, the levels of financing, the levels of deterrence are in place sufficiently to prevent postal companies from effectively turning a blind eye to this?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** What I know is that Victoria is concerned about this issue and is looking at it actively. Once she has concluded her review, if she believes that there are things that the police need to do differently, we will have that conversation.

Q560 **John Woodcock:** Understood. I understand that this may not be your primary area but you are the representative of the Home Office today. Why do you think Lord Hague got it so wrong in what he was writing in the *Telegraph* yesterday?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I simply think he has a personal opinion that is not shared by the Government. The Government are not going to change their position on that and my personal view does not matter.

Q561 **John Woodcock:** We heard quite clearly that there were no plans to change the criminal classification of cannabis. I am just trying to understand if in your view the arguments expressed very lucidly by Lord Hague yesterday do have some merit but the time is wrong or whether he was simply wrong and misguided for having made those arguments?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** William has expressed an argument that others share and has been part of—

**John Woodcock:** Including you personally?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** No. It has been part of a wider debate but—

Q562 **John Woodcock:** Do you think he is wrong or do you think it is just not the right time to be airing it?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** What is more important is that the Government do not share his opinion and the Home Secretary made that very clear at the despatch box this afternoon.

Q563 **John Woodcock:** The Government do not but not necessarily the Policing Minister?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** No, that is the Government's position, which I support.

**John Woodcock:** Of course, because you remain a Minister.

Q564 **Alex Norris:** Minister, I am new to this parish but the Committee has previously heard from the Police Foundation that the numbers in neighbourhood policing in recent years has probably stayed broadly flat but that the definition has become broader and in some areas now might contain responsive investigative work. We have heard a lot about change in crime types and in place crime. Is neighbourhood policing still important?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes, very. That is not just my view; that is the view of the NCA, and our counterterrorism specialists. It has been described as the cornerstone of policing and I completely understand and share that view. I also share the concern expressed by Sir Thomas Winsor and his inspectorates about the degree to which neighbourhood policing has, I think their expression is, degraded—if I have the wrong word you can correct me on it—in recent years and we are left with, across a fragmented system, different models of neighbourhood policing in different forces. Some forces believe passionately and have maintained it despite the budgetary pressures that they have been under and other forces have taken a different view and within that there are lots of different models.

That is why I welcome the work that is encouraged by the inspectorates that the chiefs are doing to work towards, as I understand it, a pooling of intelligence in the autumn about what local plans are for neighbourhood policing and an attempt to pull together some guidance on what works and best practice. What I am interested in hearing about is plans to try to develop or work towards a more consistent level of neighbourhood policing across the country that builds on those guidelines for what works and best practice. I welcome those initiatives and will be interested to see what comes forward in the autumn from the police themselves.

Q565 **Alex Norris:** Thank you. That is really helpful. How would you define neighbourhood policing?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Neighbourhood policing is community-based policing that is fundamental to something very important, which is connection with the public. This takes in a very big issue about the relationship that the police have with the public and back into the principles that are well rehearsed about public confidence in the police. There is a risk that others have articulated, which I understand, that given the landscape we are looking at now where more and more crime is hidden, complex, happening online, happening in dark places, taking the police further into lengthy, complex investigations, the contact with the public on whose support they rely, not just for information but confidence and trust—we can't take risks with that. I think neighbourhood policing, apart from all its value in intelligence gathering, problem solving, crime prevention, is also fundamental to that human link between the public and the police who serve them and exist to keep them safe.

In the future model of neighbourhood policing, it is absolutely right that the chiefs give priority to trying to establish a more consistent set of standards, principles and application across the system and I salute the work of the inspectorates in being very persistent in pointing to the need to do so.

Q566 **Alex Norris:** If they do that work, if they were to take a health check of neighbourhood policing today and look at the trend pattern over the last eight years, how do you think neighbourhood policing would have got on healthwise?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Are you looking back, Alex, or looking forward?

**Alex Norris:** Yes, over the last eight years.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I think you only have to look at the reports of the independent inspectorates and the consistent way they have pointed to some risk in this area to see that the model has changed and is different in different areas. There are some strengths in that because through that in some areas you will work your way to finding out what works and finding really good models. Then you have the challenge, which is the fundamental challenge in the police system, of how you drive change across a fragmented system, how you develop more consistent standards and public experience across this fragmented system, which is one of the fundamental challenges that we face when we contemplate the future of policing in this country. That is why I think this initiative is a welcome one that I am taking a strong personal interest in because it is quite fundamental to the future of policing.

Q567 **Alex Norris:** It sounds like we are not looking for 43 different flowers to bloom, but also you mentioned the need for a level of flexibility about local conditions. Where do you think that balance lies?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** It is a difficult balance and it is the balance we strike with this model. There are advantages in the 43-force model for local accountability, closeness to the public, accountability to the public. In theory it is a system where people can try different things. Local operating autonomy obviously allows that and that is good as long as you have a good system for extracting what works, identifying what works and a commitment to build on that effort to try to develop a more consistent system that is based on recognition of what works and a process to continually try to improve the standard of service that the public receives. In my view, that is how it should work. I salute the police on the initiatives they have taken and the encouragement that the inspectorates have given them to do so.

Q568 **Douglas Ross:** My questions follow on from Alex Norris's. Do you believe that the current 43-force model should continue?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I think it has strengths that we should not ignore and I tried to articulate them before, Douglas. Obviously you are looking at this through the lens of Police Scotland.

**Douglas Ross:** I wanted to come on to that.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I will come on to that. There are strengths but there are real challenges with this model going forward as we look at the demand picture on the police. The challenge for us—and I put the Home Office firmly on the pitch on this—is how we work together more effectively as one system in a place that increasingly does not recognise boundaries either because it is threat from abroad, threat across a border, threat that does not recognise the borders because it is online. Lynne Owens and others in their evidence to you were very articulate in saying that

there is a frustration in the system about how difficult it is to drive change through the system at pace, how difficult it is sometimes to align capabilities, the degree to which police and crime commissioners, who have strong local accountability to their electors, are conditioned to respond to national threats.

There are very big challenges within the system, but it is how do we make this system work effectively as one system in the context of modern, changing, increasingly complex demand. Ironically, when you read the history of police reform in this country—and I am sad enough to have done that—what is striking is that people over the centuries have been asking themselves the same questions. One of the questions they have asked themselves over the centuries is: why do we have so many police forces?

Q569 **Douglas Ross:** The Police Superintendents' Association says there should be a review of the 43-force model. You mentioned the evidence we had from Lynne Owens and also Cressida Dick and Chief Constable Thornton who were all saying that you would not start at this point. That was the message they were trying to get across, therefore it is not perfect. Have you looked at how we have tried to change it in Scotland, many of the pitfalls we have come up against with a centralised force going from eight forces to one? While there may be challenges with the 43-force model, having fewer larger forces, particularly as we have seen in Scotland, in many cases does not work.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I think we need to be properly informed by Scotland and I know that there are very different views about some positives but also some negatives. I should say that the official Government position is not to be seeking to drive a major reorganisation of policing. Our focus is on trying to make the system work more smartly as one system. There are some initiatives in the system and I am thinking of Devon and Cornwall and Dorset where we have had two PCCs and two chiefs come together and say, "We think the right thing for us to do is to merge". In that situation we said, "If that is your local view, you should develop a business case" and they asked for some support in that, which we gave because we are interested in seeing what the evidence shows about the benefits of that.

Our view at the moment is to encourage the maximum possible collaboration, and there is a lot of collaboration going on out there. Where there are locally-driven proposals to put forces together we will be open to that, but also there is a bigger conversation about how we make the system work more smartly going forward. The drugs markets and the county lines initiative is one small example of where the system is thinking, "Come on, how do we work together more effectively in the face of this threat?" That is where we are at the moment. I don't think anyone is claiming that the structure is optimal but it does have some strengths that we would be foolish to ignore. We would have to look very carefully at the Scottish model, but that is not where we are at the moment.

Q570 **Douglas Ross:** We have had a single force in Scotland for over four years. Have you looked at that? Have you had discussions with Ministers in Scotland who have their own view, because it was a political decision in the end by the Scottish National Party to centralise policing into one force? Have you done any analysis of what has happened in Scotland? While SNP may have seen benefits, there have been major failures as well, particularly in local policing that seems to be lost when you go to bigger forces.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** There has been Home Office analysis of Police Scotland and I think there is a recognition that there have been alleged positives and alleged negatives in that process. But it goes to the point I made that the official policy of the Home Office is not to be pushing for a major top-down reorganisation of the 43-force model but a recognition that we—and the Home Office has to play its part in this—have to do a lot more to make this system work smarter as one system in the face of the threats that we see.

Q571 **Douglas Ross:** Do you believe improved technology for our police forces will play a big role in that?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes. That takes me on to one of my personal bugbears or passion points. Policing is a human business, the most important assets are human, but I think the biggest opportunity in British policing lies in technology. It has changed almost every industry we know. It is changing what criminals are able to do. The police with the best will in the world, and they are the first to admit it, are not where they need to be in taking advantage of the digital opportunity. Whether you look at the opportunity to transform the productivity of frontline officers and how their time is spent through mobile working to the modern ways in which data can be transferred and shared, the way that evidence can now be distributed in different ways, the ways in which fingerprints can be taken mobilely through modern technology, you can see wherever you look—go down to Avon and Somerset and see what they are doing to manage data and put it together in different ways to give their officers really superb intelligence on the frontline and use that to allocate resources in a smarter way, manage demand more effectively; one of the big challenges facing the police system—that technology has so much potential for the police.

We are having a very active discussion now as we work towards the next CSR about what the police technology story is, because it has to be different from the past. It is too simplistic to say there are 43 forces doing their own thing. That can't be part of the future as to how the police in this country embrace the technology opportunity to transform the service that they offer.

Q572 **Douglas Ross:** Would you not agree that progress has been too slow and what have been the barriers to progressing?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Are we talking about technology?

**Douglas Ross:** Definitely technology but also police forces speaking to each other. We heard from Lynne Owens about how there are some very good examples now. The example she gave was if two different forces were looking at the same telephone number, the NCA can now tell those forces, "You are both looking at the same person" but that is fairly new. There are still many areas where there seems to be duplication because the technology does not speak to two different forces.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes. There is a number of central challenges. There is a central challenge around an historic approach to procurement with insufficient understanding of what they were buying and insufficient collaboration and best practice in how it is bought, basically 43 forces doing their own thing. I think that is possibly an exaggeration and there has been a huge amount of improvement since then but you get the picture. There is now a much smarter conversation about technology needs in the future—in fact, I convened a second roundtable on that today at the Home Office—and how that should be best delivered going forward.

I think it is one example of how the police system understands the need for change and is challenging itself to take collective action with our support, but we are still dealing with a system that has terrible amounts of duplication in it, is still sending evidence to the court on CDs and still has systems that don't talk to each other properly. Collectively, we are trying to drag police technology from a place that feels terribly out of date into the modern age, but there is a will to do that. There needs to be a plan around it and evidence that the police system buys into the plan and will implement it, and then there will be a resource requirement attached to that, which we intend to take to the CSR.

Q573 **Chair:** Couldn't a Minister have just said exactly the same words as that 10 years ago?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Probably.

Q574 **Chair:** So what has changed?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Sorry, I am being too glib. On diagnosis of the problem, when I talk about 43 forces doing their own thing I am probably talking about a situation 10 years ago. My sense is that since then—and I am happy to be corrected on this—there has been a growing recognition of the problem and a much more intelligent response to the problem. This morning I was in the Home Office with 20 people—chiefs, PCCs—who are leaders in this field and that is a seriously proper conversation about police technology and the future and what is needed to get to the kind of vision that we are working towards about what a digitally-enabled police force should be doing by 2025. This should have been done a long time ago, yes.

Q575 **Chair:** Minister, it still sounds exactly like what people were saying 10 years ago. It feels like you are just going round and round the same houses as 10 years ago.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I have been in office for a year, Chairman, to be fair.

Q576 **Chair:** Corporately it feels like the Home Office has been going round the same issues for very many years. We heard about the national enabling programme from the police chiefs. How many forces have signed up to that?

***Scott McPherson:*** If I give a little bit context on what the national enabling programme is doing?

**Chair:** No, we don't have time, unfortunately. All I need to know is just the number of police forces that are signed up to the national enabling programme.

***Scott McPherson:*** I don't know the exact number. This is something we have been discussing very closely with the police lead, Commissioner Ian Dyson who is leading the national enabling programme, about wanting to make sure there is a critical mass of forces that have signed up to make sure it is worthwhile. We are happy and reassured by them that that has been achieved and more forces are signing up to it as the months progress. I don't want to give you an exact number because I will get it wrong.

Q577 **Chair:** If you could write to us that would be helpful. Why don't you just tell all forces to sign up to it?

***Scott McPherson:*** I think that comes back to the question about local democratic accountability. It is not for the Home Office to dictate to forces exactly what they do on these things.

Q578 **Chair:** But it is something that is about communication between forces, co-ordination, how they talk to each other about the crimes that are not just in their own area, where there is a wider accountability issue, either a national one or one that crosses several areas. Why doesn't the Home Office just tell police forces to sign up to it?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** That has not been our model, but we are moving into a different phase now where the Home Office is considering our role in relation to the system. As many in the police system, my view is that the Home Office needs to take a stronger view on a number of things.

**Chair:** The fact that it has not been your model may explain why you have been going round the same houses for the last 10 years.

Q579 **Stephen Doughty:** Minister, you will be aware that today Michel Barnier has made a very clear statement where he said that the UK will not be part of the European arrest warrant, decision-making in Europol or have access to EU databases; trust does not fall from the sky; we will be a third country and facts have consequences. That is obviously substantially different from what the Prime Minister has told us, which is that we could stay in Europol and the arrest warrant. How are the negotiations going?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Stephen, I didn't catch that announcement because, as you will probably understand, I have been preoccupied with other things today. I need to look at it in context, but you know we are in a negotiation and it is a complicated negotiation and the security piece is part of a wider piece, so I am not in any sense perhaps surprised by Mr Barnier's position. That does not change our position, which is that we are continuing to press for the kind of security agreement that we discussed at length in my last session with you. My colleagues at DExEU are leading on that. I have no indication that our position has changed.

Q580 **Stephen Doughty:** Why hasn't there been a response to Michel Barnier? As far as I can tell, there has been no Government response so far. This is quite a substantial statement and you are saying you were not aware of his comments.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** It is only because I have been very preoccupied with the statement on medicinal cannabis this morning.

Q581 **Stephen Doughty:** Do you expect there will be a response from the Government? It is a pretty big deal. We were warned, as you know, about the risks.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes, I would. Stephen, I think you got a sense from our last session on this point and everything that the Prime Minister has said, that the comprehensive security treaty matters a great deal, not just to us but it matters also to Ministers in other countries because there is a very high level of mutual interest in reaching an agreement on this. But we are in a negotiation process and in negotiation processes—

Q582 **Stephen Doughty:** Do you know when that is going to come to some sort of conclusion on some pretty important matters, because obviously we are nine months away?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** No, I don't today, Stephen, but at our last session there was a strong mutual understanding that this Committee was going to continue to hold the Government to account on this.

Q583 **Stephen Doughty:** It would be great to have your response to it when you have had a chance to look.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Okay.

Q584 **Stephen Doughty:** The Home Office has had the biggest allocation from the Treasury last year and this year for Brexit preparations—£455 million in total. That is the equivalent to 9,000 police officers' salaries for one year. Have you asked for additional funds, in addition to the police grant, of that sort of magnitude?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I haven't in the context of the Brexit contingency. What I am doing on the police funding side is working towards the settlement for 2019-20. As you know, for 2018-19 we took some steps that have allowed another £460 million to go into the police system. What I indicated then, as you may remember from that statement, was that we

were intending to do a similar settlement for 2019-20 subject to the police satisfying us with the progress they have made on efficiency and productivity. In that process, I review the evidence and look at the situation with fresh eyes each time. I am very focused on that work and beyond that lies the CSR, which as you well know is the major budgetary event.

Q585 **Stephen Doughty:** There is obviously an opportunity cost here. Money can be found, for example, for registering the 3.5 million EU citizens and not for additional police officers.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Don't get me wrong, I have made it very clear that I am persuaded of the need for more resources to go into policing. I have proved that with action that I have taken and arguments I have made. I have set a direction of travel for 2019-20. The Home Secretary has made it very clear that he is going to attach priority to policing in the CSR. There has been a significant change in that direction in response to very clear evidence of demand on the police.

Q586 **Stephen Doughty:** If there are opportunities to get funding from anywhere we will take it but no money yet.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I don't think £460 million is negligible.

Q587 **Stephen Doughty:** Can I ask you specifically about police officer training in Wales? You will be aware that currently there is a dispute, an impasse, and that needs to be resolved fairly rapidly because otherwise it is going to threaten the introduction of the graduate apprenticeships and future capacity. Do you expect to come to a resolution of that impasse soon? I am really afraid that if it does not get resolved before the summer there will be a serious problem.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Yes, there is an impasse and we can't let it drift, not least because we want Welsh police officers to be able to access the kind of development opportunities that are there. I am in active conversations with the Secretary of State for Wales and colleagues to see if we can find a—

Q588 **Stephen Doughty:** When do you think we might get an answer?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** As I said, we are not going to let this drift.

Q589 **Stephen Doughty:** Okay. You will be aware that I have repeatedly raised the issue about capital city funding for Cardiff versus Edinburgh, Belfast and London. It is a serious and growing concern, given the number of major events. You will be aware in recent weeks that we had the Volvo Ocean yacht race, two Anthony Joshua fights, Beyoncé, The Rolling Stones and so on. These are all putting huge strain on an already stretched force that is doing its very best to allocate resources. We also have significant threats from terrorism and others that have necessarily been fully—I have discussed these with some of your other colleagues as well. Do you have any plans to revisit this and would you be willing to

meet me and the chief constable and the police commissioner to discuss further the various serious concerns?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Of course. We do recognise that forces across the country sometimes face special surges on police demand and police resources. That is why we have a contingency grant mechanism in place, which we increased as a result of the 2018-19 settlement. It is there to try to soften the impact on forces for major policing events or events that they could not foresee. I am more than happy to have that conversation with you and your police chief.

Q590 **Stephen Doughty:** I want to understand, Minister, that you understand that it is not only one-off funding for these issues, it is the longer-term funding and structural funding of the police more generally. Even though you get special funding for one-off events, it is the knock-on impact on shift patterns, holidays, time off in lieu and so on, often for up to six months after some of these major incidents or events. If you get a bad coincidence of a number of things together or an unexpected event, that can have a huge impact on our community policing, as my colleague was raising.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** Stephen, I have made it my business to try to make sure that the police feel better listened to. I made it my business last year, in the build-up to the funding settlement, to visit or speak to every force so that we, sitting in the centre, have the most up-to-date understanding of the demand pressures on the system. As a result of that tour, we took some decisions that put some more money into the system. Part of our responsibility at the Home Office is to understand what is going on out there, so I value those meetings highly.

Q591 **Chair:** A final few follow-up questions on some of the earlier points that you made. You said at the beginning, Minister, that it is essential for any crime type that there is a very clear sense that people are likely to get caught and that the consequences will be severe, and if those are not in place, then crime is likely to be encouraged. Is it not true that criminals are more likely to get away with it now than they were a couple of years ago?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** When one looks at the statistics on crime solved and some of the indicators about it, no one—certainly no one in the police system—is going to be happy with that. If I look at something like the situation we have in serious violence and knife crime, we have to be sure in that context—and there are many others—that young people inclined to go down this path feel that they are likely to get caught if they use a knife and that the consequences of that will be severe. It is that basic point as part of the work we have to do to prevent crime.

Q592 **Chair:** The figures show, for last year alone, a 17% increase in recorded violent crime, a 6% drop in arrests and a 5.6% drop in charges and summons in one year alone. That means more criminals are getting away with it.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** If I look at the data from London, where knife crime is not concentrated—

**Chair:** There are also a lot of concerns outside London as well.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** That is exactly the point I am making. If I look at the London data as one example, since April 2018 the Met has conducted 6,000 weapon sweeps and recovered over 100 firearms, 800 knives and 300 other weapons. All of this has resulted in over 650 arrests for weapon-related offences, together with hundreds of arrests for other offences. In this time there have been over 25,000 stop and searches conducted by Met officers. That is the reality of what the Met is doing on the ground. Within that you will see 650 arrests is a significant number, which I am sure will be noted on the street.

Q593 **Chair:** The Met Commissioner told us how she was having to shift resources into dealing with knife crime because of the serious number of cases that they have. Would you confirm that the overall figures are a 17% increase in recorded violent crime, at the same time as a 6% drop in arrests and a 5.6% drop in charges and summons? That is in one year.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I do not dispute that data and I certainly recognise the increase in recorded violent crime and underlying real increase in criminal activity. That is why we have responded in the way we have done, working with local partners to put the serious violence strategy together, not just as a piece of paper but as a process that the Home Secretary leads to convene partners to bear down on this terrible problem. When I see that data around what that means for police activity, to your point, I have to hope and believe that that is challenging any sense there may be on the street that they are going to get away with it.

Q594 **Chair:** Do you recognise this is also happening in other areas? We have a 16% increase in robbery recorded, a 5% drop in arrests, a 6% drop in charges and summons, a 14% increase in recorded sexual offences, a 9% drop in arrests and a 10% drop in charges and summons. *The Sunday Times* aggregations of some of those figures show, over the last four years, a drop in the proportion of offences resulting in charge or court summons, down from 19% to 9%. That is detection rates halving. That is not one area; that is across the board in crimes we are seeing more criminals getting away with it.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** What I would say about *The Sunday Times* statistics is I think there are some issues around the data and the ability to read across two sets of data. Having said that, Chair, I would not want to use that to blow any smoke about some quite central issues. Recorded crime is going up, but that is recorded crime, that is not necessarily people's experience of crime. It does mean there is more demand on the police system. That demand is increasingly complex. The police are investigating crimes that are more complex and are taking more time. The amount of time, for example, to investigate and bring to charge a

rape case is obviously incomparable to the theft of a bicycle, to use ridiculous extremes, or to use extremes.

I am trying to press that the statistics may reflect a changing dynamic of demand on the police system and the amount of time it takes to pursue a crime to justice. If the underlying issue here is also an assertion on your part that the police system is stretched and requires more support, I have acknowledged that and taken action as a first step in the 2018-19 settlement to try to address that by getting some more taxpayers' money into the system.

I do not think it is all about resource. The fact, as pointed out in *The Sunday Times* article, that some police forces such as Durham continue to provide good outcomes despite budget cuts means there is also a challenge for police leadership and how demand gets managed. We must not lose sight of that.

Q595 **Chair:** Do you accept that part of the reason behind the drop or the reduction in the proportion of arrests, the reduction in proportion of charges, is simply because they do not have enough police officers?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I have recognised, by my actions, that the police system needs more resource, which is exactly what it has. You smile but you will know that as a country, as taxpayers, our constituents, we are investing over £1 billion more in our police system than we were three years ago. We are in a different place in terms of resources available to policing.

Is it as much as the police system would like? I think they were frank. It is more than they expected. It is not what they asked for but this Committee is well aware that we are still in a position where, as a country, we are spending £45 billion or £46 billion a year on interest alone. Although we have made progress on the economy, which gives us a bit more space to invest in our public services, we are not out of the woods in relation to the constraints on our public finances. That is just the reality that we are having to manage.

Q596 **Chair:** If you accept that the police are overstretched, do you believe that the cuts in the number of police officers in the PCSOs went too far?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I have accepted that, through my actions, and I have said it on the floor of the House of Commons. I have said at the Police Federation that I do recognise that the police are very stretched, which is why I have taken the actions that I have taken to get more resources into the system, not only in 2018-19 but I have also signalled I intend to do the same in 1920. The Home Secretary has made it very clear that he is already persuaded by the need to prioritise police funding in the CSR. I think most people in the police system recognise there has been a significant change over the last year in response to the evidence that demand on the police system has risen and become more complex and, therefore, requires more resource.

Q597 **Chair:** Your words earlier were, "If those things are not in place, the

likelihood of getting caught, the consequences being severe, if those are not in place then crime is likely to be encouraged". Do you think that part of the increase in, particularly, violent crime that we are seeing reflects the fact that criminals are less likely to be caught?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I cannot be sure of that; I am not sure if anyone can be sure about it. I would take advice from people who are closer to the young people and what is happening in the neighbourhoods. What I am stating, which is basic common sense—and I am sure we all share a desire cross-party to bear on this problem—is that there are two pillars of response to this. One is a robust law enforcement response—and you have a sense from the Met about what that means in practical terms in London—so that we make sure, as far as we can, that young people recognise that they are likely to get caught and there will be consequences for that.

As important longer term is the message to young people, "If you want to move off that path towards a path of more positive choices away from this life, we will support you on that journey". All the lessons, from Boston, Cincinnati, Glasgow, London in the past, are you need both messages out there.

Q598 **Chair:** if you are taking advice on this, your own Home Office documents are reported as saying, "Since 2012-13 we have had weighted crime demand on the police has risen. Officer numbers have fallen since 2014. Resources dedicated to serious violence have come under pressure and charge rates have dropped". It was clear about the link between resources being under pressure and the scale of the cuts we have seen and charge rates dropping. Then it says, "This may have encouraged offenders. It unlikely to be the factor that triggered the shift in serious violence but may be an underlying driver that has allowed the rise to continue". Did you see the document that had that in it?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** No, I saw a draft of the document.

**Chair:** Did you not see the draft that had in it that—

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** To be honest, Chair, I think it is irrelevant. The central point is we are talking about a serious issue. If we are going to reduce it down to whether a Minister has seen a paragraph of analysis in a very early report—

Q599 **Chair:** No, I am trying to understand what the advice is from the Home Office on this.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I think, with respect, we are trivialising an extremely important issue here. As the Home Secretary has made very clear and I have made very clear, not just in words but in action, we accept the need, in the face of evidence about rising and more complex demand on the police and we need to get more resources into policing, which is what we have done.

I do not think that people do argue seriously about any rise in violent crime in London with all the tragic consequences, but people wanting to make political points about relating that to cuts have to explain why we had a similar spike in hideous violent crime in London 10 years ago, pre-austerity, when we had similar numbers of police officers on the beats and of course budgets significantly higher. Let's not reduce this to very simplistic analysis that no one is doing this.

It is very complicated and we know from the past there are many factors at play. We also know from the past that we can beat it and we can bear down on it. It requires long-term work, strong political leadership, really good multiagency working and a combination of robust law enforcement and effective prevention and early intervention. That is the stall that we have set out.

Within that—again it is not words, it is action—we are putting more public resource into our police system, over £1 billion more this year than three years ago. That is real money; it is taxpayers' money. That is real money. We can drag over the past and make political points about the past. I am much more interested in the policing reality of today.

Q600 **Chair:** The question is what the Home Office's understanding is of the scale of the challenge facing policing and the scale of resources needed and whether or not the Home Office accepts that the drop in the charging rate and the drop in the number of crimes being solved is related to resources or not.

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** I do not think it is as simple as that because, as I said, there are issues in relation to the profile of demand now, the complexity of demand, the length of investigations that it takes, investigations in a digital age with digital evidence. The context has changed. I do not think I could have been clearer about my personal recognition and the recognition of the system that the police system has been very stretched in recent years. In the light of the evidence in front of us, we have taken steps to put more resource into the system—£460 million more this year, £1 billion more than three years ago. We intend to do something similar for the 2019-20 settlement. We have made it very clear that the new Home Secretary is going to prioritise police resources in the CSR. I do not think we could have been clearer in setting out our stall and sending a signal of change in response to clear evidence of change in the demand that the police are now having to manage.

Q601 **Chair:** Minister, is it your objective to increase the number of police officers or police officers and staff?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** That is not an explicit objective of the Home Office because ultimately these are decisions driven by PCCs and chiefs working together. Am I pleased to see the leadership of forces like Essex, who are using the additional money to recruit another 200 officers and Kent 150? I was speaking to the Commissioner of London today and she has started a recruitment process to recruit 500 more officers. Am I pleased to see

that? Yes, because I think the public would be pleased to see that. It also reflects my underlying conviction, which I have acted on, which is that we need to increase the capacity of the police.

Q602 **Chair:** Is it an explicit objective to increase the proportion of crimes being solved, the proportion of cases reaching justice?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** We will always monitor police outcomes and work with the police to try to improve the evidence base around police outcomes. Of course we are very fortunate to have the independent inspectorate and the work it does to scrutinise the performance of the police. We have a decent system of scrutiny and accountability but it is, frankly, not my job to tell the police and crime commissioners in Hampshire or Yorkshire how many police officers they should have in their area. That is not my job.

Q603 **Chair:** Do you accept that there is a real concern across the country that the Home Office stepping back from all these crimes, whether it be in resources or policies, and saying, "This is just a matter for the local area", at a time when overall we have seen serious crime starting to go back up and the number of crimes brought to justice dropping, looks like the Home Office is not exercising its fundamental responsibility to keep people safe?

***Mr Nick Hurd:*** On my watch the Home Office is stepping forward because the environment that we are policing together is a highly complex one. We are part of the police ecosystem that has not worked together as effectively as it should have in the past. I can see leadership around the system now that is absolutely determined to do a better job of working together and I firmly want to establish the Home Office on the pitch as a player in that process.

I will give you one example. I am very concerned and keen that we reassert the need to prioritise crime prevention. We are in danger of having a police system that is reactive rather than proactive and the Home Office has a very important role in that. A very specific recent example—I know it is a London example—is that we have been blighted in London by moped-enabled crime. The Home Office convened all the partners, including the industry, the insurance industry, motorcycle users, everyone, to form an action plan of what needed to be done. Everyone came, everyone has worked together, and in large part in the short term, due to some effective policing, those numbers are now falling very sharply in London, which I hope everyone will welcome—40% quarter on quarter.

I know the power that we have in our ability to provide resources and powers to the police but also our convening power and our need to have more assertive positions on certain things and our ability and need to give a stronger steer to the system about our priorities.

**Chair:** Minister and Mr McPherson, we are very grateful for your time. Thank you very much.

# Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Mike Cunningham QPM and Sir Thomas Winsor.

Q604 **Chair:** I welcome the second panel before us, and thank you very much for your patience. I realise we are beginning this panel slightly late. Could I ask you each to introduce yourselves? Sir Thomas, we welcome you before us. We have not had you before us recently. Thank you for coming.

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** I am Tom Winsor and I am the Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

***Mike Cunningham:*** I am Mike Cunningham and I am the Chief Executive of the College of Policing.

Q605 **Chair:** Can I start by asking you both what you see as being the biggest challenge for policing over the next five years?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** The complexity and volume of demand, the increasing sophistication of criminals to use modern methods of communication and other instruments of modern technology to do harm, sometimes from far away, to facilitate crime in all sorts of respects. Demand for volume crime is in many respects going down but demand for more complex crime, including domestic abuse, serious sexual offences and of course fraud, is going up. These offences are more difficult to investigate and they are more difficult to prosecute so the stretch on police forces is getting greater.

***Mike Cunningham:*** I agree with what Tom has said. I would add that while demand is getting more complex, the nature of that demand is changing quickly, not only crime demand but the other elements of demand that this Committee has heard about recently regarding antisocial behaviour, mental health issues that police services are dealing with across the country.

In the face of that, there are two other elements that I would mention. First is that a lot of the changing nature of crime is digitally enabled or technology enabled. I think the whole world of technology presents huge challenges and also opportunities to policing, not only from a technological perspective but building a workforce capable of dealing with those challenges. The workforce capability element is also a significant challenge going forward.

Q606 **Chair:** If you had to highlight one thing as the top of your list among many—and we will try to go through as many of the issues as we can—what would be the top of your list of the things that either the police forces or the Home Office need to do as the biggest priority over the next five years in order to meet those challenges?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** I think the police need a much more sophisticated method, and we are providing them with it, to measure future demand

and to assess the condition, capacity, capability, serviceability, performance and security of supply of their assets—the most complex assets of all, because they are people—and to match that with resources.

Every well managed enterprise needs three things: what future demand do we face; what is the state of our assets to meet those demands and how can we make them more effective and efficient, scales and so on; and what money do we have coming in. The police are relatively good at measuring today's demand but there are too many shortcomings in measuring the demand of tomorrow. It is all demand; it is not just crime. It is crime and non-crime. The latest figure I saw from the College is that the amount of non-crime demand on the police is about 80%.

It is latent demand as well as patent demand. Latent demand: modern slavery, human trafficking, female genital mutilation, enforced marriage, domestic abuse. It is demand from communities who are afraid to call the police or from police who do not know how to call the police or who do not trust the police. Future demand is something that the police need to do much better.

In terms of their assets, as I have said, they are the most complex assets of all. People have cars and computers that work sometimes and police stations and things of that kind but the principal cost of the police, about 85% of the cost, is the pay bill. Therefore, the welfare of the officers, their skills, how well they are led, how well they are supervised, how well they are deployed and developed is of enormous importance. You need to understand the condition of their assets and what mental and physical condition they are in. Are they under too much strain; are they having too many cancelled rest days; are they doing excessive amounts of overtime; matters of that kind? What is their capacity; what can they do, how much work can they do; are you driving them too hard; are they getting exhausted? What are their capabilities, what are their skills and what skills do we need for the future to be able to deal with future demand? As we have heard from the Minister, and it is undoubtedly right, crime is changing; it is becoming more sophisticated and complex.

In terms of their performance and their serviceability, what does it take to look after them? What does it take to ensure that their mental and physical wellbeing is sound, and their efficiency, of course? Force management statements have just been introduced by the inspectorate for all 43 police forces in England and Wales. They are modelled on network management statements that are used in the other asset-intensive monopoly central public services, such as transport, gas, water, electricity and telecommunications. The principles are exactly the same.

It is quite easy to measure demand in these other activities I have mentioned and it is relatively easy to measure the condition, capacity, capability and so on of their assets because they are largely physical assets not people. If it is necessary, and it is, to do those things in those

other essential public services, then surely it must be necessary to do it in the most essential public service of all.

Force management statements, as I said, are modelled on network management statements. They are sensitive to local conditions. We have published a template for all forces to produce their force management statements. The deadline for them to come in was 15 June 2018. We have received about 38 of them. A few are late and we gave a little more time in some cases. They will enable us to look at and make assessments about risk in terms of how well does the force understand future demand, how well is it preparing for it and will it have enough money.

Q607 **Chair:** Mr Cunningham, what is your top thing that forces need to do?

***Mike Cunningham:*** I think the top issue in relation to forces and the Home Office is how the local relates to the national. My thinking there is that over the past decade or so the mantra has been localism. There has been a heavy emphasis on looking at local governance, local accountability, local delivery. I understand why and I think that has had some very useful consequences. However, a less useful consequence has been how the national policing landscape relates to local. I think that has been a theme of some of the discussions that this Committee has had, when I look at the evidence that has been given.

Having been a local chief constable and also worked in the national policing environment for a few years now, it seems to me that when we consider some of the issues that are facing the service and communities—digital crime, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, fraud—some enabling things like ICT, knowledge sharing, the work that I am currently engaged in, we need to have a clearer, better understood, better agreed principle for how national recommendations, national requirements, are implemented locally. That is not something that police and crime commissioners and chief constables can either voluntarily sign up to or not. Those ad hoc arrangements, in some cases, are not helpful to community safety.

Q608 **John Woodcock:** Sir Tom, could you help the Committee understand a little more about the inspection process itself? You conduct annually the PEEL assessments across a wide range of criteria, dealing with 20-odd, it seems, forces over the last year in which you recently reported. You send in a team for how long and what level of detail are you able to get?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** We do principally three kinds of inspections. There is the PEEL programme, Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy, and it inspects every one of the 43 forces in England and Wales on core policing every year. We are changing that and I will come back to that. Then there are thematic inspections that sometimes cover 43 forces but sometimes they cover as few as 10 but we choose them well so they are a representative sample. They go into things such as so-called honour-based violence, firearms licensing, terrorism, domestic abuse, sexual offences, child protection and so on. Then we have individual

commissions from either the Home Secretary or a police and crime commissioner where they want a particular theme looked at, a particular activity in either a single force, in the case of a PCC, or several forces. We also receive information through the monitoring process.

We are changing it into a risk-based regime because if a force is performing very well in a number of respects, consistently year after year, we think we should focus our inspection forces on those that are presenting greater risk. Therefore, we are changing it this year in order to be a more risk-based inspection. The force management statements that I mentioned earlier will enable us to make those risk assessments with greater reliability.

Q609 **John Woodcock:** On these risk assessments, if a force were performing well, how long might you expect it would go without an inspection?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** They will always be inspections on certain things every year, for example vulnerability. Nobody is getting a complete inspection holiday. If a force is performing well in particular respects, then it may not be inspected for—it may be every second year, it may be once every three years. We will still require them to give us the essential information every year, but that information—if it is reliable and we will check that it is—will enable us to back off.

Q610 **John Woodcock:** What I am trying to drill down into is you have a plethora of forces and you inspect them every year on a range of criteria. Realistically, what level of detail can you go into? An issue that is close to my heart is you graded Cumbria Police as good on carrying out investigations. How much detail was that based on? Are you talking about a team of 10 people for a week, are you talking about one person for an hour? What is the level of intensity of that scrutiny?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** We do a lot of preliminary work before we go in there. The first thing we get off the shelf is the local police and crime plan from the police and crime commissioner.

Q611 **John Woodcock:** When you say "we", what size of workforce are you talking about in your inspectorate?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** The inspectorate has about 230 people and an associates register of people on standby, who do not work for us full-time, of about 130. We have an annual budget of £24.5 million and we have to cover all the police forces and the fire and rescue services as well.

Q612 **John Woodcock:** Are you talking one person who will go into one force?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** No.

Q613 **John Woodcock:** Are you talking five people?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** No, there may be 10 or 15 people who may go in for a week or two weeks. It depends on the size of the force, the

demographics, the police and crime commissioner's priorities, the risk assessment that we have made of it. Of course, we are very sensitive to local conditions as well as the national picture, so it is a case-by-case basis. A perfectly fair assumption would be 10 or 12 people for a week or 10 days. It depends on the local circumstances.

Q614 **John Woodcock:** Presumably you view that this relatively blanket approach is not satisfactory, hence you are moving towards the more risk-based approach?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** No, I think it was very satisfactory for the three years in which we have run it, but now that we have a lot more information and a lot more rhythm to it, I think we can, with a reasonable amount of certainty, back off a little in relation to the well performing forces and concentrate our resources on others.

Q615 **John Woodcock:** A final question on this relates specifically to an interest on Cumbria, which is whether the force has learnt from the catastrophic mistakes it made over the Poppi Worthington case, which I imagine will be known to you. Obviously there was the review of the specific failings in the specific case. In your view, is a good rating, a tick "good" from PEEL, sufficient to say with confidence that that force has learnt the lessons from the Poppi Worthington case or is there a case potentially, on a situation like that, to drill down further into specific failings and improvements needed?

**Chair:** Can I suspend you before you answer? It is an occupational hazard, unfortunately, voting in the middle of sessions. We will give Sir Tom time to prepare the perfect answer by the time we return. I am suspending this Committee until we are quorate and as many people as possible return.

*Sitting suspended for a Division in the House.*

*On resuming—*

**Chair:** Can we continue where we left off?

Q616 **John Woodcock:** I will spare you repeating that very long question I asked you unless you need me to.

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** I remember the question, thank you. The question, as I recall, is did Cumbria learn the lessons of the Poppi Worthington case.

**John Woodcock:** And is a tick in the good box on a PEEL assessment sufficient for you to reach that judgment or is more needed?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** We were given a special commission by the police and crime commissioner to go and look at what had happened in the Worthington case. It was a special inspection in that respect. The overall conclusion was that although the principal failures in question were very stark—procedures were not followed, leads were not pursued and children's safety was put at risk—the remedial action that the force took

was sufficient and they stepped up to it. What I might mention is that at the time Mr Cunningham was one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and he did that inspection, so perhaps he could give you some more information.

***Mike Cunningham:*** The police and crime commissioner of the time, who is not the current police and crime commissioner, initially requested us to go and inspect child protection arrangements in Cumbria. What we agreed was that we would bring Cumbria forward in the cycle of inspections. In other words, Cumbria was inspected first in relation to the others.

Q617 **John Woodcock:** That is helpful and I am aware of that. To be clear, child protection is a different issue to the failings. When you say special permission, I was aware that was given but you inspected a different area, did you not?

***Mike Cunningham:*** It was part of the effectiveness inspection. We inspected vulnerability, the arrangements in relation to child protection and the investigation arrangements into child abuse.

Q618 **John Woodcock:** Quite, but this was a more straightforward case of totally screwing up how to investigate a potential murder inquiry, was it not, which has not been investigated in the same area?

***Mike Cunningham:*** You are correct in the sense that HMICFRS did not do an inspection of the investigation into the murder or the death of Poppi.

Q619 **John Woodcock:** No, but the capacity to carry out similar inspections. You got a tick in the "good" box on the PEEL assessment. My question remains: is that sufficient, given the plethora that the HMIC has to inspect? Is that sufficient to say with real confidence that that force has learnt their lessons? This is not a criticism of the inspection process; it is leading towards my instinct that the amount you have to cover means it does not take it to that level of granularity.

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** You are right. The tick in the "good" box means that we are satisfied that they have learned those lessons. The inspectorate considers systemic problems in policing rather than individual cases, of course. Therefore, if a force is rated good or even outstanding, it is not an assurance that nothing ever went wrong in that force in any individual case. It never could be.

Q620 **Alex Norris:** Returning to neighbourhood policing, HMICFRS said that the College of Policing would be publishing guidelines on neighbourhood policing by the end of March. Are they due shortly and what do you think we can expect?

***Mike Cunningham:*** They are. The guidelines have been prepared and they are going out for public consultation within the next month. A lot of work has been undertaken in relation to that. We have had leads from operational people out on the ground leading neighbourhood policing as

well as people who are engaged in doing the neighbourhood policing. It is a very comprehensive piece of work and we are very pleased with what we have come up with. Hopefully we will be able to refine it on the back of the public consultation and they will be of great assistance for all forces.

Q621 **Alex Norris:** In preparing them, do you have get sense that there is a coherent understanding across forces of what we mean by neighbourhood policing?

***Mike Cunningham:*** Yes. We have a number of defining features of neighbourhood policing, which all chief constables have agreed at the Chief Constables' Council. The local officers and staff will be accountable to local communities. Community engagement is a priority, building trust. It is about collaborative problem solving, integrated working and early intervention and that there is a direct connection between what happens in local policing and what happens in the bigger more national issues. The priority of local policing, the bedrock of the British policing model, is underscored by the guidelines that have been prepared.

Q622 **Alex Norris:** Do you perceive that across the 43 forces there will be unanimity that those will be the core principles?

***Mike Cunningham:*** Yes.

**Alex Norris:** Then obviously modified and worked around local circumstances as to what they might look like on a daily basis.

***Mike Cunningham:*** Exactly. What it might look like on a daily basis might not just differ between forces but differ within a force. What local policing looks like in an inner-city urban area is likely to look very different from what it feels like in a rural area for resourcing, visibility, engagement with local partners and how all of that works. The local applicability is really important for local commanders. I think the principles are sufficiently precise yet scalable to be able to be appropriate for different environments.

Q623 **Alex Norris:** Within that local variation, the Minister touched on the themes of how to extract best practice so that it could be replicated elsewhere. What are your reflections on that?

***Mike Cunningham:*** I have two thoughts on that. The first is that the guidelines that we have prepared are the product of good practice. We have been out there and asked people and pulled that together. This is an aspiration rather than where we currently are as the College of Policing. What I would see is that we effectively become the hub for the knowledge in policing and that we receive any good practice, good ideas, as well as the more rigorously tested academic ideas that come through universities, refine guidance that is out there but also we are able to push that information out to practitioners and to leaders out in policing in order to assist them.

Q624 **Alex Norris:** What is the journey for this? You say that is going to come out in a month and we are then going to have a public consultation. How long will that last?

***Mike Cunningham:*** I will be able to get you all the exact timescales and supply them to the Committee. Within the next few months we will have the response back from the public consultation for final signoff of the guidelines.

Q625 **Rehman Chishti:** Sir Tom, by way of clarification, you were here for the evidence session earlier where the Minister was asked questions on online crime and fraud. The Minister accepted that there is a real lack of competence in this area by police forces, and disparity across the board, that both the Home Office needs to do more and police forces need to do more. Looking at that in the context of the HMIC inspection reports in 2015, they said very few police officers know their role or the role of what the police forces need to do in relation to fraud investigation. That was a statement in 2015. We saw the response from the Minister earlier today. What exactly needs to be done? Has there been improvement since 2015 and where does one go now?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** As you say, we did our report in 2015 and we are about to do another one. The inspection programme for the current year, which I am expecting the Home Secretary to approve any day, provides for a thematic inspection on fraud, which will be taking place. It will involve 11 forces and the National Crime Agency, the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police and, specifically of course, Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau. Those will be the subject but we will collect data from all 43 forces. We are about to do the fieldwork and we will be looking at the competence of the police in order to understand this.

Fraud is ever growing. It is an enormous problem because basically it is altering somebody's position on the basis of a lie, to their material disadvantage. One of the things we are particularly concerned about is have the forces improved the extent to which they regard fraud as a priority. Fraud is almost like an invisible crime. People do not get injured as a result of a fraud, at least not directly. However, they can be driven, in some cases, to destroying themselves because of the consequences of the fraud. They can lose their life savings, they are ashamed and they believe they have let their families down and so on. It is a very serious problem and it is a growing problem because of the cyber-enabled fraud that is so prevalent. I cannot answer your question about have they got much better yet, but when we have done the inspection I will be able to do so.

Q626 **Rehman Chishti:** I totally understand and it would be completely unfair to ask you to comment on something when the report has not been done and that is being looked at at the moment.

On a general, wider point, from what you saw in 2015, is there are a

point now where rather than having warranted police officers looking at technical issues of fraud and cyber fraud, you have centralised experts looking at cyber fraud and addressing it? Would you say that is the way to go, considering we have had a statement by the Minister now to say the problem is worse than it was and he is looking at addressing it. If I am being unfair to the Minister, others have heard what he had to say, but realistically we have a massive problem. We have identified an issue in 2015 but are you now saying that rather than having those warranted officers, we need specialists to help address this and maybe a centralised form of system?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** In the main you do not need to be a police officer to investigate fraud. The things you absolutely must be a police officer to be able to do is to arrest somebody or to subject them to a compulsory search, but police officers, particularly experienced detectives, have very considerable professional skills that are necessary and indeed of enormous value in investigating fraud. In the investigation of fraud, you need to have people with the very best skills. They may be, and indeed in many respects they will be, people who have very high technical skills who do not happen to be police officers but are members of police staff. That is perfectly right.

The model, as you know, is that fraud is referred to Action Fraud so that they can determine patterns of behaviour and can work out whether or not there are sufficient leads or sufficient data in order to be able to warrant an investigation. In very many cases, there are not. That is where artificial intelligence can come in. Last week I published, and it is laid before Parliament, the annual "National State of Policing" report—we sent it to all members of the Committee—and there is a lot in there about artificial intelligence, about how AI could be developed by the police, with a very great deal of assistance and involvement from the experts in the field, to be able to process and understand vast amounts of data to make connections, which people could not make, and to work out what is happening, perhaps thinking in ways that no person ever could and to be able to do that with a degree of reliability and, of course, a degree of speed, that is just unattainable by ordinary people, because that is what is necessary.

Q627 **Chair:** Who is doing that work at the moment?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** Who is developing the AI?

**Chair:** That developing AI work, yes.

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** There are pieces of that in the National Crime Agency and in the Metropolitan Police. Of course, we will be doing the inspection later but from what we have seen so far, it is pretty patchy.

**Chair:** There is no systematic—

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** No, as far as I know, there is not a systematic process for the large-scale development of AI in the investigation of crime.

Q628 **Chair:** In the current system, who should be doing that? Is it work the College should be doing? Is it work that police forces should be doing together? Is it work that the Home Office should be doing? Where should that lie in the current landscape?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** It is something for policing to do collectively. The national institutions, especially the College, have a very material role in doing that, but this is improving the operational capability of police forces to act collectively. There is no point in a small force having its own dedicated team to deal with things like this, which must be dealt with on a national basis and, sometimes, an international basis.

Q629 **Rehman Chishti:** A clarification on that: the Home Office has said it has the taskforce across the board that looks at this. Is there something that that taskforce should be doing, a lot of this collaboration, or is it something that, as I think the Chair was saying, individual police forces should look at separately?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** I don't think it is an individual matter. The Home Office has a very material role in police policy generally, but in facilitating co-operation between police forces and national institutions, including the National Crime Agency and the College, of course, having a material role as well. This is not something for any individual force, even one as large as the Metropolitan Police, to do alone.

Q630 **Rehman Chishti:** One final point, separately from that: I represent a constituency in Kent that has been rated outstanding three years in a row.

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** For legitimacy.

**Rehman Chishti:** Yes, for legitimacy. To get an outstanding three years in a row, which other forces have not done, what would you put that down to? Excellent leadership? Hard work and commitment of staff? Great partnership between the chief constable and the police commissioner? What would you put it down to?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** All of the above, but really the quality of leadership, because the whole culture of the organisation—the way in which it treats its people, the way in which it looks after its own staff, and the way in which it deals with the public—comes from the top and the leadership of Kent Police has shown an exemplary practice in this respect.

Q631 **Rehman Chishti:** Police Commissioner Matthew Scott and Chief Constable Alan Pughsley working together?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** I don't want to take anything away from the PCC but this is a matter for the leadership of the force. Mr Scott, Police Crime

Commissioner for Kent, has been very supportive of that approach and, of course, both he and the chief constable are very proud of their rating.

Q632 **Stephen Doughty:** Mr Cunningham, quite a few officers have expressed concerns to me, in private, about the 20% of protected time for the new recruits, because that amounts, effectively, to a day a week and they are very much feeling the strain and pressure of the wider policing situation, which we were discussing with the previous panel. How do you think this is going to work in practice? How do you envisage it working in practice?

***Mike Cunningham:*** There are couple of things to say on this. The first thing is that we are working with forces on how this will be implemented. The figure of 20% is out there. We need to work with forces to see if that is realistic and achievable. Those conversations are ongoing. There is nothing caved in stone.

I will say something else, however, and this is a cultural issue for policing. The training and development of staff is more often seen as a cost than an investment. I think one of the roles of the College of Policing will be to assist the service to look at what development of staff really means, the importance of training staff. When I talk to colleagues in other sectors—for example, the military, where training has an importance that it does not have in policing—I think there are lessons for the service to learn.

Two answers to the question: one is that I do recognise that there might be implementation issues around new entry routes and how they will be developed. May I say something else, though, on this? That is that I think there has been—we take shared responsibility for this—some miscommunication around the issue of degrees and entries into policing. The issue of degree entry is about recognising the complexity and high level within which constables currently work. They work in increasingly complex environments—all the evidence that I have heard today, listening to this Committee, has been about the complexity of policing—and they work to a very high level. If we are going to properly accredit the level at which constables work, the proper level of accreditation is level 6, which equals a degree, and that is for people who are already in policing. If we are to bring people in, accredited to the correct level, it is respectful and accurate to accredit them properly, which is at degree level. We need to find a way of making that work, to make it implementable, which is what is behind your question.

I am very frustrated, sometimes, that it is seen as we are being disrespectful, from a College of Policing perspective, to fine, hard-working, diligent, brilliant officers who are in policing without degrees now. This is about recognising how brilliant they are and the fantastic work they do, and wanting to give it the proper recognition.

Q633 **Stephen Doughty:** I understand. Obviously training is valuable, absolutely crucial; it cannot be an add-on extra. The difference, though, between policing and the army, with the greatest respect—I have spent a

lot of time with the armed forces—is that they spend a significant portion of a three-year cycle, or whatever, on training and development solely, without being operationally deployed. You also have a three-to-one ratio. If there is not an uplift in police funding and operational resource, can that 20% be delivered without a reduction in operational performance?

***Mike Cunningham:*** That is what we need to look at but again, and this was well before we had lots of the terrible wars that we have had in recent years, there was a maxim that the military train and train and train and train and never fight and the police fight and fight and fight, and never train, and I think that is something that we do need to address. I have been speaking to military leaders about this, trying to get an insight into how they look at this. What they will say is that even in warfare, when they are abroad with staff, when training is due, they come back and get trained. This is how seriously that is taken. I am not saying that it is absolutely applicable to the policing environment, but I do think there are lessons that can be learned.

Q634 **Stephen Doughty:** Okay. That is very helpful. Sir Thomas, some questions about recruitment at the moment; there are some big worries. I think five chief constables announced in April and May that they were retiring, and also the Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner. We also have huge gaps in recruitment for detectives in particular up and down the country. What do you think is driving those vacancy rates, or churn, at both that chief officer level and at the detective level in particular?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** Our last assessment was that there is a 20% shortfall in detectives or people occupying positions without adequate training and that is a matter of very serious concern. In one or two places, there are fast-track detective-recruitment schemes but, as I recall, that is only going to fill 1,000 positions so that will still leave 4,000 unfilled.

Why don't people want to become detectives? There are complex reasons but I suggest that one of them is that the professional risk they carry is particularly acute. Detectives are now expected to carry very considerable caseloads and there is a fear among many, it seems to me, that if they get something wrong, if they have missed anything, it could lead to catastrophic consequences. That is not in any way to downplay the risks that are faced by frontline police officers who are doing neighbourhood policing and response, but those risks are different; they are more acute in terms of the danger of physical harm and psychological harm from some of the most gruesome things that officers will face. So that is that.

There is no extra pay for detectives; there used to be. There used to be a thing called "detective pay". That was abolished. Seven years ago I did a review of the pay and conditions of the police service and published my second report in March 2012, just before I took over this job. I recommended a number of additional allowances for officers who were either working in the most arduous physical conditions or in the most

taxing professional jobs, including detectives. It was called the Expertise and Professional Accreditation Allowance. I am sorry to say that it was ferociously opposed by the Police Federation at the time—I think its leadership now is quite different—and while a number of allowances that police officers did get were abolished according to my recommendations, the additional allowances that I recommended were not introduced because they were condemned as being elitist. These officers were actually worse off as a result of the opposition. That is on detectives. You want to ask about—

Q635 **Stephen Doughty:** I will come back to specifics on detectives in a minute. What do think is the balance between push and pull factors? Salaries on one side are clearly an important factor but I have certainly had concerns expressed to me about the shift from traditional detective work, looking at burglaries or traditional violence, murders and so on, compared to now a substantial amount of time requiring heavy technical expertise, cyber-related crime or dealing with sexual violence and sex-related crimes, which is certainly putting a lot of strain on the detectives I have spoken to. To what extent is it push and to what extent is it pull, or is it both?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** It is impossible to measure, of course, but as I mentioned at the beginning of our session, the complexity of crime now means that crimes, in the main, are much harder to investigate and harder to prosecute and that may be a deterrent factor. It may also be an attractive factor because the professional challenge that officers and others face in tackling these things is, of course, immense and therefore the professional satisfaction of achieving the right result must be all the greater. You mentioned chief constables: why is there a greater churn?

Q636 **Stephen Doughty:** Yes, chief constables, what is going on there?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** There has always been a churn but it does appear—I do not have the statistics right here—that there is a higher turnover, that chief constables are holding that rank for a shorter period than used to be the case and also that when chief constable positions are open for appointment, fewer and fewer applicants are coming forward. For example, Sir Peter Fahy was the last chief constable of Greater Manchester and I think I am right in saying that when he was appointed in 2002, 2004, or thereabouts, the early 2000s, there were either six or eight applicants for that job, all of them holders of the rank of chief constable, and he got it. When the present chief constable of Greater Manchester was appointed, under the new regime of police and crime commissioners, there were two applicants for the job, one of whom held the rank of chief constable, and he did not get it. When the vacancy arose in West Midlands police—the second largest force in England and Wales—there was one applicant for the job and that was the existing deputy. I happen to think that Dave Thompson, the chief constable, would perhaps have beaten all comers, but nevertheless, there was no competition at all.

We have not done an inspection or an investigation into why this is because that is beyond our remit, I think, but nevertheless police and crime commissioners are a new factor, because there used to be police authorities—there has always been democratic accountability of the police but they are the new emanation of it—and it is conceptually possible that people are being deterred because in some places they see police and crime commissioners placing undue pressure on chief constables and therefore the operational freedom and the general professional freedom of a chief constable is rather less than it used to be. It is impossible to—we have not measured that.

Q637 **Stephen Doughty:** Can I press a little bit further? In South Wales Police we have an excellent relationship between our PCC and our new chief constable, Matt Jukes, a very positive relationship but obviously we previously had some interesting goings on in Gwent Police force next door, prior to the current occupants of the job. There have also been some reports of sexism concerns. There was a report in *The Times* last year regarding some female chief constables who had left after working with male PCCs and I understand their PCC was conducting exit interviews with those who had left to try to get to the bottom of that. Have you picked up any particular concerns around female applicants or female post holders?

On the other side of it, I understand that in Leicestershire, the regulations meant that the police and crime commissioner could not offer another five-year contract to the incumbent because that person had been there for eight years; he had to offer five single-year consecutive contracts to keep the chief constable in the job. Are there bureaucratic impediments, and also potentially some related to sexism within the workforce?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** I do not have any information about concerns about women being treated more unfavourably than men. My view, for what it is worth, is that advancement in policing should be exactly the same as advancement in the judiciary, which is that merit is the only criterion and I have absolutely no doubt at all that women of real ability will rise to the top on that criterion alone.

As far as bureaucratic impediments are concerned, the police service is awash with bureaucratic impediments. There are bureaucratic impediments everywhere you turn. So, yes, bureaucratic impediments in terms of keeping a chief constable who is very good and wants to stay—what sense does it make? It does not make any sense.

Q638 **Stephen Doughty:** It does not make any sense, no. It is worth pointing out just for the record, we had an excellent panel the other day, the new Metropolitan Police Commissioner, of course, the head of the NCA, and Sara Thornton, as well. There is obviously a very positive record.

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** They all got there because they were good.

Q639 **Stephen Doughty:** Absolutely, but clearly there are some concerns

elsewhere, perhaps with regard to some of the interpersonal relationships elsewhere. I don't know, Mr Cunningham, if you have anything to add.

***Mike Cunningham:*** I think you are hitting on something that is a really important, urgent challenge for the service and that is the throughput of chief constables and the lack of applicants who are applying for those vacancies. It is of considerable concern. The College has just been allocated some money, subject to final sign-off from the Home Secretary, from the Police Transformation Fund, to develop a leadership hub. Part of the remit of the leadership hub will be to look at these issues and to look at how we can support the creation of more interest in these roles, how we can create better applicants for these roles, how we can understand why people are not applying for them. There are a number of reasons that people will articulate. People will give their own individual reasons for all the recent retirements. Does it look like there is a pattern? There is work to be done, but I think you are on to something that is of urgent importance for the service and we in the College will be picking it up.

**Stephen Doughty:** Thank you.

Q640 **Chair:** Can I take you back to the issues about technology, co-ordination, and communication? Things that you have both said, that your organisations have said, that the Home Office, the Minister, have said, are the things that could have been said 10 years ago and it does not feel as if a huge amount of progress has been made in having the proper technology in place to co-ordinate and communicate effectively between forces. Do you think that is fair?

***Mike Cunningham:*** In the past 10 years, of course, there have been developments but those developments have been nowhere near as coherent or as swift as they have needed to be. There is no doubt that the challenges of communication in criminality have not been matched by the opportunities available to policing. That goes back to the point I was making at the beginning that the ability for policing to coalesce around a national issue and to put a coherent, single plan in place, to which people can all sign up, is too difficult. That is why there does need to be some urgent clarity around how the national policing architecture can best work. That includes responsibility for the two agencies sitting in front of you today, and others that you have heard from, and how we work together but, crucially, how we then connect and relate to chief constables and police and crime commissioners to enable progress. You are right, the service should have moved more quickly, should have moved in a much more planned way, and has not done so.

Q641 **Chair:** If you take something like the national enabling programme or other kinds of IT co-ordination, do you think it should be possible to require police forces to sign up to that kind of thing?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** Yes, and indeed those powers do exist. We at the inspectorate have devised an instrument, which has not yet been published but will be soon—it is almost ready to go—called the Network Code. The Network Code is a multilateral section 22 of the Police Act

1996 collaboration agreement. It is based on the network codes for—guess what—the other essential public services. As you know, my background is as an economic regulator so I have brought force management statements from another world and the Network Code also. When other industries—policing is not an industry—were being restructured, before privatisation—nobody is suggesting we privatise the police; I have to enter these caveats every time I mention this—they were single systems that operated as single systems but when they were broken up into a number of pieces, it was necessary, before that happened, to establish common operating procedures and practices, which were mandatory, so that the system could still operate as a single system—take the example of a train going from Aberdeen to Penzance; it has to operate as single system—and that is what was done. It was done in energy, in water, in telecommunications, and transport, of course.

The police service has a different history. There were, at one point, 600 police forces in England and Wales and we still have 43, which many people think is too high a number, but they have never operated as a single system, not ever. It is not a question of taking an existing system and preserving it; it is a question of taking a fragmented landscape and building it into a single system. That is what the Network Code does. What it does not do in any way, nor could it, is require the creation of a single police force, but what it requires the 43 police forces and the 43 police and crime commissioners, because they hold the budget, to collaborate and to create a system of perfect, affordable, interoperability of all ICT systems. When a force upgrades its existing ICT system or buys a new one, it must adhere to certain minimum operating standards that achieve interoperability so that information and intelligence can flow instantaneously, and without any impediment at all, across all force boundaries, so as to dissolve to nothing those force boundaries when it comes to the flow of information and intelligence.

Q642 **Chair:** Are you intending, or able, to mandate them to do that?

***Sir Thomas Winsor:*** No. We will encourage it. I have drafted it, because I have drafted it twice before for other industries. We will put it out to the police service. Unlike with force management statements, where we can require it, the inspectorate has no power at all to require it. However, I am reasonably confident that when the police forces see the elegance and beauty of the system that we present to them, they will be eager to sign up to it. There are lots of issues that need to be worked out, because effectively it is a qualified majority voting system, where some people could get that voted. There will be minority protections, there will be phasing-in processes, all the necessary checks and balances, but at the end of the day, people are going to have to sign up to it. It is going to be essential that the Metropolitan Police cannot use enormous voting power and make everybody do it the Met way; ditto, it should not be possible for all the other forces to bully the Met into something that is unaffordable, so you get the idea.

However, while it is a purely voluntary instrument, there are backstop powers in the hands of the Home Secretary, who can give directions to a chief constable or to a police and crime commissioner to sign a collaboration agreement, and that is what this is, if the Home Secretary is satisfied that it is in the interests of the promotion of efficiency and effectiveness in policing and I think that test is very likely to be passed.

Q643 **Chair:** This is a question for either of you. Do you think that the Home Office ought to use those backstop powers more frequently in order to require co-operation between forces on different issues?

***Mike Cunningham:*** I would say no or, if they were, then not much more regularly. Those powers ought to be used as a principle of last resort. I would much prefer to see an arrangement that was much firmer than we have now, which is amorphous. This has to be something that is much clearer, crystallised in a protocol, in an agreement of some form, that forces and central policing agencies can sign up to, to agree, when something comes into place that is of public benefit; then they will agree. At the moment, things are done on far too much of an ad hoc basis.

**Chair:** Do you have a sense of frustration, either of you, at the moment, that you produce some great, whizzy report, that could transform policing in one area or another but then just does not get picked up or gets picked up by five forces but not the rest?

***Mike Cunningham:*** Yes. That is the reason why I would focus on the national and the local working much more effectively together. When you work in policing nationally, it is a source of frustration. Some chief constables find this because they, although they are chief of a geographical area, will lead on national initiatives across the country. I think that everybody who has led on a national initiative will feel the frustration that we are dealing with a very fragmented system.

**Chair:** Thank you both very much for the evidence that you have given. If there is any further evidence that you think we should look at, particularly in response to those crimes that have been the most fast changing, or those areas, whether it be around online fraud or child sexual exploitation or whether are particular areas that you think that it would be helpful for us to have any more detailed information on, we would very much welcome any further written evidence. I thank you both for the time that you have given, and your patience, including through the votes, this afternoon.