

Public Accounts Committee

Oral evidence: Financial Sustainability of Police Forces in England & Wales, HC 1513

Wednesday 10 October 2018

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Members present: Meg Hillier (Chair); Chris Evans; Caroline Flint; Shabana Mahmood; Layla Moran; Anne Marie Morris; Bridget Phillipson; Lee Rowley; Gareth Snell.

Sir Amyas Morse, Comptroller and Auditor General, Adrian Jenner, Director of Parliamentary Relations, National Audit Office, Tom McDonald, Director, NAO, and Marius Gallaher, Alternate Treasury Officer of Accounts, HM Treasury, were in attendance.

Questions 1–215

Witnesses

[I](#): Alison Hernandez, Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall; Jane Kennedy, Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside; Chief Constable Michael Barton, Chief Constable Durham; and Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths, Vice President, Police Superintendents Association.

[II](#): Sir Philip Rutnam, Permanent Secretary, Home Office, Scott McPherson, Director General, Crime and Policing Group, Home Office, and Sir Tom Winsor WS, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General
Financial Stability of police forces in England and Wales
(HC 1501)

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Alison Hernandez, Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall; Jane Kennedy, Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside; Chief Constable Michael Barton, Chief Constable Durham; and Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths, Vice President, Police Superintendents Association.

Chair: It is bang on 2.30, so welcome to the Public Accounts Committee on Wednesday 10 October 2018. We are here today to look at the National Audit Office's report on the financial sustainability of police forces. I have to say, it feels a bit like "Groundhog Day": one of the first sessions we did when I became Chair of this Committee three years ago was to look at this very issue, and it feels like things have not moved on, except for perhaps becoming more complicated along the way.

The report has been looking at whether £12.3 billion is enough money for forces to serve their communities effectively, and how it should be shared out. That is obviously a vital task for Government. Despite having police and crime commissioners—I will introduce our witnesses in a moment—the Home Office still retains many formal responsibilities for deciding how much money individual forces need and ensuring that policing as a whole is accountable to Parliament. We will be keen to challenge our Home Office witnesses after this on the basis of the evidence we have received, the report from the National Audit Office and our pre-panel.

That brings me to our pre-panel, and I am delighted to welcome four people who are closer to the frontline, I dare say, than the Permanent Secretary. I think he would agree with that. Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths is the Vice President of the Police Superintendents Association; welcome to you, Chief Superintendent. I also welcome Chief Constable Michael Barton, from Durham Constabulary, who has been vocal on police funding in recent months; Alison Hernandez, who is the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner, and has equally been in the news recently about your merger, which we will be touching on; and Jane Kennedy, the Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner. I am going to ask Caroline Flint to kick off.

Q1 Caroline Flint: Perhaps I could start with our police and crime commissioners, Jane Kennedy and Alison Hernandez. Could you give us an idea of what impact funding restrictions since 2011 have had on your police force area, and maybe an indication of what trade-offs you have had to make when managing your budgets?



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Jane Kennedy: I will talk from the point of view of urban forces more generally, and I will probably use Merseyside for examples, because I know it the best. The impact of austerity has been immense, but I need to give you a flavour of what that actually means. You will have seen from the NAO's report that the hardest-hit areas, from the point of view of the financial impact of Government policy, are largely urban forces. I am not saying that rural forces have not also been affected negatively.

Merseyside Police has been required to change from a fairly standard basic command unit structure to a single force-wide structure, so whereas you might be used to a police force that has a basic command unit based upon a local authority area, Merseyside has rubbed those boundaries away. We have gone from six basic command units with a chief superintendent in charge of what was effectively an all-singing, all-dancing constabulary in that local authority area to one whole force across the whole of Merseyside. That has meant that the force-wide resources we would have had 10 years ago, such as burglary squads, robbery squads and street crime squads—not so much murder squads; we still have those, sadly—are no longer available, because they have been subsumed into the other structures of the force.

I want to particularly touch upon the shared vision that police commissioners and chief constables have, Policing Vision 2025, which is part of our bid to you. The NAO are right to say that there is not a vision. The Home Office support this vision, but they do not share the ownership of it. If they shared the ownership with us, we might be able to agree a sensible road through to 2025, whereby funding would become fairer and easier to explain to the public, and everyone would feel as if we had a plan through which we can deliver this vision.

May I give you a quick set of examples about what the impact has been on ordinary people? In the vision, one of the five keys is local policing. Neighbourhood policing in Merseyside is now called local policing. Ten to fifteen years ago, there would have been one inspector covering perhaps two wards in our most challenging areas, with a team of police underneath that inspector of sergeants, constables and PCSOs. Now we have one inspector for a whole local authority area, running a slightly bigger team but really restricted in terms of how they can impact locally with local people.

What that means is that as well as not being as present on the ground as they used to be—you've got all the facts; I won't repeat the facts or the numbers to you—we have so many fewer officers and PCSOs that that local visibility has become really low. Public confidence, to some degree, is beginning to be affected. I use examples from across Merseyside and I know that this happens elsewhere; this is an urban policing experience.

Where an urban street gang begins to develop in a local neighbourhood, developing drug dealing and so on, and what we call antisocial behaviour that goes along with it, which we now classify as criminal damage or abuse or whatever, that urban gang has an impact on ordinary, local, vulnerable people.



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I will give you an example. Two ladies said to me, "We have to go home before 2 o'clock, Jane. If we're not inside our front door before 2 o'clock, the urban street gang give us"—they used the phrase—"dog's abuse, as we make our way home." These were elderly ladies who were obviously quite spry, and who had quite a lot to say for themselves in lobbying me for changes, but they wanted to be home before that threshold.

Unless we understand that that is the real impact on ordinary people of having fewer police and fewer PCSOs in our local policing service, all we are dealing with is figures, and the real impact on human beings is lost. It means a real lifestyle change that some people have to make, in order to cope with the crime pressures in their particular area.

Now I'm not saying that, once we find out about that, it isn't dealt with. It is addressed; the force will send in teams. The local policing team in that area will be asked to focus upon it. But there is little preventive work being done, and the old partnerships that we used to have with youth officers, youth workers, social workers and other community wardens have evaporated, because those people are no longer there.

So, the impact of austerity sustained over this period, and the lack of vision about where we would take policing, means that ordinary, vulnerable people in our communities face a much less comfortable and pleasant lifestyle.

Q2 Caroline Flint: That is something I recognise from my own area in Doncaster—that you can give something a label of "neighbourhood policing" but it's not as we used to know it.

Jane Kennedy: Yes.

Alison Hernandez: In Devon and Cornwall, we are an urban, rural and coastal area, on a peninsula, and the only way that we can go to help is one way, because we are surrounded by sea on our edges.

In terms of the impact since 2010-11, there have been a range of things. There has been the fact that local people in their council tax pay more for policing than ever before. It used to be that 31% of our budget locally was paid for by precept council tax payers; it is now 44%.

There is also the issue around the number of people employed by the organisation; there were 6,117 and now there are 5,139. I will give you the breakdown, just to give you a feel of the change. We had 3,500 police officers and we are down to 2,990 now. We are on an investment path at the moment to go back above 3,000. We had 363 police community support officers; we are now at 229. And we had a police staff of 2,254, going down to 1,920.

So the overall capacity of the organisation has reduced, and because of that the bits that have suffered the most have been neighbourhood policing, including the PCSOs, which are part of neighbourhood policing. The neighbourhood beat managers have been pulled into response to deal with emergencies because there is more and more demand on policing.



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That means that they are not planning their workload, which means that they are not doing all the proactive neighbourhood work that they used to do, so the challenge has really been stretched.

One of the bits that has been really impactful is that, since then, Spice has become a really big drug in our towns and cities. Even down in Devon and Cornwall, we have got people who are zombies or twitchers. A number of police and crime commissioners up and down the country are trying to get Spice reclassified as a class A drug. It is becoming a real pain on our streets—it is harmful to our communities. We don't have the policing we used to have in towns and cities to help those individuals and signpost them to a better future. Violence is increasing, street crime is increasing, and the people who are available to be on the streets is decreasing.

Q3 Caroline Flint: Can I ask both of you what you think the Home Office's responsibility is for assessing need and deploying the right sort of funding from the centre?

Jane Kennedy: The figures in the NAO's Report clearly demonstrate how the policy of freezing grants and building reliance on council tax income has affected different forces, and the unfairness of those decisions. I believe that the Home Office are developing a better understanding of the pressure that police officers and staff are under. That better understanding ought to show a more nuanced approach to the way the police are financed. The NAO have previously commented on the lack of progress on a fair formula, which also reads across into the lack of buy-in to the vision. We need serious Home Office commitment to help deliver the vision that the police and PCCs have developed between us.

Q4 Caroline Flint: Alison, before you answer, I just want to follow on from Jane Kennedy's point. I am sure you agree with her, although I don't want to put words into your mouth. Why do you think the Home Office is not doing that?

Alison Hernandez: I think there is an issue to do with the size of the cake and how it is distributed. One of the things I wanted to raise is that I sit before you as the poor relation between Durham and Merseyside. If you were to divvy the budget up per head of population, our force gets 46p per person, Durham gets 51p per person and Merseyside gets 64p per person. In terms of how the cake—the totality of the budget—is shared and distributed, if I had Durham's 51p per person, I would have an extra £31 million for policing in Devon and Cornwall. In a budget of £300 million, that goes a long way. If I was Merseyside, I would have £112 million more. That is big money.

This is about the way the money is distributed. Although they may have higher crime than Devon and Cornwall, we know that about 80% of the work that policing does is about safeguarding and non-crime-related matters. In Devon and Cornwall, which is a very isolated area, we have our fair share of mental ill health, suicide and a range of other factors, and that doesn't get taken into account. I think they are trying. I think they



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want to know about it—they are doing the frontline policing review at the moment to better understand what is happening with frontline officers.

Jane Kennedy: Can I just say, however, that that is precisely why the funding is not determined by a purely per capita calculation? If Alison would like to carry the risk and the threat of harm that Merseyside has to carry, she would get a budget similar to the budget that Merseyside has. It is similar for Durham.

Q5 **Caroline Flint:** Let us move across to our operational side—no offence to the PCCs here—and to Michael Barton, Chief Constable of Durham. Paul, I think your force area is Gwent. Is that correct?

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: It is, but my role is to represent nationally.

Caroline Flint: I understand your role, but it would be nice to get a flavour from the area you know best. What impacts and trade-offs are you seeing—either in Durham, Chief Constable Barton, or across the piece, Chief Superintendent Griffiths?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Where I work, we lost 30% of Government funding. When you take into account council tax rises since then, we have lost 22%, which is the seventh or eighth biggest loss in the country. The only people who have lost more are the big cities in the north and the Metropolitan police. We have lost 400 PCs, which is 25% of all the PCs we used to have. We have lost 180 police staff, which is 18% of our police staff. More importantly, our local government partners, especially Durham and Darlington, are knocking on 40% to 50% funding cuts, and there is more to come. For our top priorities of vulnerability and high harm, we need multi-agency working, and most of that is statutory and mandatory. Those key partners do not have that viability.

By the way, I actually think—I know I am not popular on this—that the public sector needed an incentive to change and improve. The budget cuts that we faced in 2010-11 were helpful to the organisation—certainly in mine—because we have become much more private-sector motivated with a public sector heart. The problem has been the length of time of austerity. When it kicked in, we were told that we could cut hard and deep and cut once, and that austerity would end in 2015. That has not been the case, and that has been so traumatic.

Q6 **Caroline Flint:** Do you feel let down by that, Chief Constable?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: The public I serve feel let down, but I just have to be savvy about how I spend that money. I will not start sounding the death knell of policing, because that is not true and it is not helpful to the public. What are the trade-offs? We have lost more cops than we are comfortable with, and that is less visibility. There is less traditional crime investigation. ICT development investment has been delayed, and that is absolutely crucial in the new world of cyber-crime. We have not been able to invest in citizen self-service, which would assist us all. That is a shame, because it allows you to be more efficient. Our



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proactivity has fallen; we have 43 organised crime groups and I am only deploying high-end tactics on a couple of those. The rest are being disrupted by our partners. Disruption is a good thing, but I would like there to be more high-end targeting of organised crime.

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: On behalf of superintendents and chief superintendents across England and Wales, they have seen the biggest reduction in their ranks across the whole of British policing. They have been cut by 27%, which has a significant impact. We have taken on bigger commands, higher risk in terms of some of the vulnerabilities that have started to come out in our society; technologically enabled crime has started to consume us and we are really struggling to try to cope with the impact of societal and technological changes.

Of our members, 93% get a buzz from and enjoy what they do. They try to hold the line with the resources they have and what they have to do to serve the public. But there is a personal impact. When we did the personal resilience survey of our members, which is done anonymously, we found 50% showed signs of anxiety and 27% showed signs of depression. There is a real impact among our membership. They are trying to forge a line to assist and support chief officers with collaboration exercises and programmes, dealing with major serious and organised crime, and there is a real impact where officers from my rank are working longer hours, harder, and are trying to bridge that gap because there are insufficient numbers.

Q7 **Caroline Flint:** Many of the force areas that have submitted comments to us have made the point about the shortages in investigative officers, which presumably goes into your area, too. Are you finding that across the piece? Do you have the right skill set to do the work, even with the pressures that are there?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: The reason I am intervening is that I am crime operations lead and this is my area of expertise. Matt Dukes, the Chief Constable of South Wales, is leading on looking at that on our committee. It is a mixed picture; there is no doubt that it is not a healthy picture nationally, but a third of forces are not showing any shortages in this area. But some of the big metropolitan forces—the Metropolitan police, certainly—are facing that.

When Matt did his trawl of police forces, we found that there was a remarkable and rich tapestry of innovation and reform. This is another of those incentives to policing. We are now looking at wider workforce development; we are training people who do not have warranted powers to do investigation into historical cases. There are good things happening, but if you were to speak to two thirds of chief constables in the country, they would paint a very gloomy picture of the number of investigators. That is certainly what Paul would say about his members.

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: Yes. Obviously there is pressure there, particularly around vulnerability, with the rise of modern slavery. I don't think we have really got a grip on female genital mutilation and



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some other really serious vulnerability crimes that are going on in our society. It puts an awful lot of pressure on our public protection needs to ensure that we have a workforce mix to deal with these horrendous crimes. It puts personal pressure on people, too, because they want to deliver the best possible service, but there is a significant resourcing issue. There is an imbalance at the moment around this uniform-detective role. There is significant effort in the service to redress that balance, but there is always a lag in trying to respond to this, while continuously serving the public as best we can on these serious crimes.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Technically, the Winsor reforms mean that people on 24-hour shifts get paid extra, which is fair, but hard-working response drivers who work around the clock and aspire to go on to the CID will find themselves with a pay cut of £1,200 a year when they get to CID.

Caroline Flint: They lose the money—

Chief Constable Michael Barton: That is a disincentive when you have to pay your mortgage. You desperately want to advance your career, but you want to pay your mortgage.

Q8 **Caroline Flint:** That is a really interesting point. Basically, you end up with people potentially plateauing, not because they haven't the capability, but because the sums don't add up for them and their families.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: There is an argument that I get the best of both worlds, because I get detectives on 24/7, but frankly this isn't helpful.

Q9 **Caroline Flint:** Again, Chief Constable and Chief Superintendent, what do you think the Home Office is missing in all this? What does it need to do? What is clear from the NAO Report is a sense that the Home Office isn't really stepping up and taking on its responsibility for the overarching look at police funding, and, dare I say it, takes a rather spasmodic approach to doing the assessments needed to create some sort of stability going forward. I don't want to put words into your mouth, but what is it that you want the Home Office to do?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: You can put words in my mouth. The biggest challenge for me is the 11% top-slice, which we have no say over. To put real flesh on the bones here—and, first of all, to give you reassurance—for the national programmes in the inspection and oversight regimes, inspection is really important, but it needs to be proportionate. In my own force, for example, I keep being offered an inspection window, but it seems to me that pretty regularly, every year, I get 14 full weeks of inspection. We have just finished another really deep dive into my force. If I didn't have that, I could go out to help other forces, or maybe work with HMIC, if that's what is needed.

To put further flesh on the bones—this comes straight from the NAO Report—it refers specifically to the NLED, or national law enforcement data, programme. I was there at the start of this in 2014, and it was to

merge PNC, PND and ANPR. This sounds like a good idea, and I think it is a good idea—certainly linking ANPR—

Q10 **Chair:** We should be clear about those initials. Most of us know the police national computer and so on, but do you want to explain?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I am sorry. PNC is the police national computer, which you can check to see if people have a conviction; the police national database was set up after the Bichard inquiry and allows you to share intelligence; and ANPR is automatic number plate recognition, which allows you to see criminal cars moving around the roads. It is a good idea for those to be linked together, and that is actually what the Bichard inquiry found. Certainly linking ANPR into the two main systems is important.

The NLED has been led all the way through by Home Office technologists, civil servants, contractors and consultants. We heard in October 2016 that it would cost £99 million; by February 2017, that cost had risen by £31 million, and by May 2018 by a further £98 million. That is a total of £240 million. My research suggests that 5% is through finding a replacement for PNC, and 40% through finding a replacement for the PND. They have also quietly dropped ANPR out of the programme, even though I asked them not to. The programme has been rated red across the board in the Home Office gateway review.

How did NLED react? They reduced their scope, but at the same time they have told us that the benefits are going to improve significantly. They have asked for a cool extra £91 million through to 2023. They said all this would be done by 2018. They are not listening to me as a chief constable, nor are they listening to me as crime operations lead for policing. Why take probably over £300 million off policing when ultimately—if delivered—it will diminish our capability?

Chair: We will be asking the Home Office some questions about that.

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: Early on, in our bilateral meetings with both the Home Secretary and the Policing Minister, it was clear that most things were starting to become “sector-led”—that is the phrase that was regularly used. That is all well and good until you really need a national oversight vision for the future. While the vision was created by NPCC and APCC for 2025, there are a few areas that we suggest would really benefit in terms of a greater impact from the Home Office.

We feel that you can look further ahead than that. There are visions around 2050, technology changes are rapidly occurring, and we really need to stretch our thinking around what will happen in the future with an ageing population and so on.

We also really need support around the whole-systems approach. We have been really impacted by the austerity that has hit other public services, and while today we are focused on policing, when you look at the mental health situation in society and the real need for health services to assist in that area, that has an impact on us. We really need that cross-



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governmental drive to try to push and assist in a whole-systems approach. The College of Policing identified that we probably deal with about 12 million incidents a year, and they estimate that 4 million are mental-health-linked. That is really significant for an organisation that does not specialise in it.

- Q11 **Anne Marie Morris:** I am going to follow up Chief Superintendent Griffiths's points about how much police time is spent on doing things not specifically about crime. Ms Hernandez, given that that is the case, is it right that the police should take on jobs that are actually NHS or local authority jobs and get no compensatory funding from those bodies? I guess you could look at ambulance and fire. Are there some governance issues here that are not being properly addressed, with you being asked to do something not in your remit, and not getting any contribution from others whose remit it is?

Alison Hernandez: There are a few things, really. One is that if a police officer were on the street and saw an incident happening, they would want to help. Actually, trying to tell a police officer not to help is very tricky, because they have ethics and standards. They would never walk away from anybody in need—that is the absolute pride of our police force—but some of the challenge is that they need help to be able to step into that space as frequently as they do. It has meant that police and crime commissioners have used police funding to commission mental health services, or aspects of things, but we do it jointly with our partners locally.

As a force, we could not work without working with our local NHS partners and our local authority. We do specific services; we are doing one at the moment to support the neighbourhood team with access to NHS staff when they come across people who need help, so that they can better access information from the NHS to help that individual, and even get people from the NHS to help them.

There is a challenge around trying to stop a police officer helping someone in need, and I do not think we would ever be able to do that. This bit is: how do we work better collaboratively, locally, with our partners to help deliver a better service to our community? It is World Mental Health Day, so it is very appropriate to be talking about this. There is definitely something around helping officers to understand it. They have been known as social workers for many years—everyone used to joke, "Our police officers have become social workers," because they spend lots of their time negotiating with our community. Whether another service would be better at negotiating sometimes is definitely something we need to explore further.

At the moment, the police service lead on suicide negotiation on our patch, and I am not sure if the police are best placed to do that. The fire service or the NHS—why the police service? We have missing people all the time, and the police are the ones dealing with it. Of course, if we think that something has happened to somebody, the police would search, but there are opportunities to do—



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- Q12 **Anne Marie Morris:** You are right, but do you feel that the Government does not recognise that contribution in the way it sets the funding formula? Is that one of the things—never mind what has already been said about the funding formula—that needs to be reflected? You are doing somebody else's job, and you are not getting the support for it. How does that make it efficient and effective?

Chair: Very quick responses from Ms Hernandez and Ms Kennedy.

Alison Hernandez: Just to be clear, a lot of the work that police officers do on the frontline is about prevention. It is prevention from coming into aspects of crime, and safeguarding. It is about protecting the most vulnerable people in our community. There is a shift away from focusing just on offenders to focusing on actually dealing with people who need support. This is about whether or not there is a Government shift on that view. That is what has happened over time: there has been a shift to that prevention and safeguarding role, rather than crime-fighting full-on, 100%.

Jane Kennedy: In terms of measuring crime and reflecting the police response to crime in the formula, bear in mind when considering this that Merseyside police get 23,480 emergency calls a month. That is 5,500 more per month than we used to get even two or three years ago. For some reason, emergency calls have gone right up. Only 20%—one in five—of those calls are crime-related. The vast majority of the emergency calls to the police are for other issues. The force really rigorously triage those calls to see whether an ambulance response or a mental health response is required, but primarily, they are the first responders. Consequently, I don't believe it would be possible for us to start teeming and lading budgets locally around this.

What we do—police forces all make the effort—is close partnership working. Our mental health trust now provide triage staff in cars. They jointly staff mental health response cars, so that where we know there is a mental health issue, a nurse is in the car with the police officer when that car responds to the incident. That is a terrific way of working together.

- Q13 **Chair:** Who pays for that?

Jane Kennedy: Both services. Both services stand up to that issue and say, "There is a problem here for both of us to face."

- Q14 **Chair:** In that case, it is just a payment for each member of staff.

Jane Kennedy: It is about staffing.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: In dealing with the budget issue, which you asked about, it is the same picture where we are. We were going to 856 mental health incidents every month in 2016. This year, it was 1,400. On average, they last between six and eight hours, often for two colleagues, because you can't look after a mental health patient, and we wait for the NHS to take those patients away from us. That's our picture.



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The last time the funding formula was looked at, I called it a dangerous experiment. The Home Office wanted it to be simple, so they wanted only four measures. What they did, from my perspective, was trawl around for some figures that might indicate something. There were four baskets. One of them was all about deprivation and societal issues. They looked for hard-pressed families at one point, and then they looked at deprivation, I think it was, which was pretty much how many high-rise flats you had. On one of those indicators, Durham, which is really deprived—one of the poorest counties in the country—was getting an extra £10 million. When they swapped the indicator to high-rise flats, we lost £2 million, because we don't have any.

It was exactly the same with alcohol. Alcohol is a great multiplier for policing, so that was another basket. They said, "Let's look at the density of pubs." I've got quite a few grouse moors, and Grouse might be a famous whisky, but there aren't many pubs. We scored negatively on drink, and we have the worst health outcomes for alcohol in the entire country. We have the worst suicide rates in the entire country. We have the worst child liver damage in the entire country.

Q15 Anne Marie Morris: So what you are really saying is that even the proposals for changing the funding formula didn't get it.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Please don't make it simple!

Chair: We are going to be touching on this later. I am just going to bring in Layla Moran on mental health issues, and then I will go back to Ms Morris.

Layla Moran: Let me turn to the mental health of our forces themselves—I thank Chief Superintendent Griffiths for bringing it up in the context of chief superintendents. My question is more about the frontline, and there are some pretty awful figures. I have made some freedom of information requests—I am sure it is the same for your forces, too, but only Merseyside came back—about the number of people with long-term mental health issues, and the proportion of them on long-term sickness. Merseyside was better than most. In 2015, 2016 and 2017, it was 8%, 9% or 10%.

Chair: I am sorry, 8%, 9% or 10% of the people on long-term sick leave had mental health problems.

Layla Moran: Indeed. But in 2017, Hertfordshire was on 38%, Humberside was on 35%, Essex was on 37%. That is an increasing trend.

Chair: Just to be clear, these are all percentages of police officers on long-term sick leave.

Q16 Layla Moran: Can I ask you, in turn, do you recognise this as being something that is an issue with the forces as they stand now? Do you recognise that it is increasing over time? What can the Home Office and other partners do better to support our forces?



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Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: I have already given the figures. They were quite shocking for us when we got them from an anonymous poll. That survey was answered by 75% of our members, so there is some consistency and strength in what is coming out. But it is not just our members; it is the federated members. Police staff are showing signs of depression and anxiety. I think this shows an overall strain that officers and staff are taking upon themselves to try to resolve some of the policing problems that they are trying to deal with.

An openness has resulted, which is a good thing. People feel more comfortable coming forward with some of their problems. I think there has probably been some degradation of occupational support over the years. There is some effort by the service now to redress that balance, but these things take time. Once we start creating an environment where people can talk about their own mental health, and some of the issues and problems that they have, we need to deal with them as well.

Q17 **Chair:** Are any of you losing officers because of this? These are long-term sick leave figures.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: It used to be the case that when you looked at sick figures—people being off—musculoskeletal was always the biggest threat. Now stress, depression and anxiety have overtaken musculoskeletal.

Q18 **Chair:** Are you losing officers permanently due to mental health?

Jane Kennedy: I don't have figures, but it might be worth finding figures for you. Instead of policing being a career, where you start as a police constable and stay for 30 years—a career that was rewarding, and that you were absolutely committed to—people are starting to leave and move on to other jobs after three, five or seven years. I am told by long-standing police officers that that never used to happen.

Chair: Such as Chief Constable Barton.

Jane Kennedy: I am told that that is a new phenomenon. I take that as an indication of the pressure that the frontline is facing. They are reaching a point where they say, "This is not what I signed up for."

Q19 **Chair:** Have you done an analysis of the cost to you—please answer quickly, because we have other areas to cover—of training these highly expensively-trained officers and then losing them? We would be keen to get figures from you about mental health.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Yes, we have—all forces have—and we will provide that to you.

Chair: Brilliant. If you could provide that, that would be very helpful.

Q20 **Layla Moran:** Can I just ask you to answer the last question: what do you need to better address the mental health issues?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: We are now the lead for suicide. We are now in partnership with "If U Care Share", which is in the third sector.



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That was designed by one of our members of staff, who faced suicide in his own family. This is a societal issue and our people live in society, so we should not be surprised. But there have been additional burdens, which I hinted at. If we had had austerity for three or four years, I think our staff would have been able to rebound—they are incredibly resilient people—but this has now gone on for a generation. The society out there is facing austerity and everybody is in it together. Sometimes life gets too hard.

Q21 **Chair:** So what do you need?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: We are investing significantly in this. I cannot be optimistic about this.

Alison Hernandez: May I just add, we have had police officers who have committed suicide and it has been a real challenge. One of the issues is an environment where you are stretched as a resource on the frontline. You cannot take your meal break, you cannot get annual leave, and because we have a summer period that is extended from May to September, you do not ever stop for about nine months of the year. This means that trying to create a culture where you can have the time to have quality conversations with your colleagues about things that are happening outside work, let alone in work, is a challenge. What the Government can do is help us ensure that we have enough police officers and people on the frontline, so that they are not as stretched as they are. The Police Federation did a survey on this last year, and it's why I supported my chief constable to recruit police officers over PCSOs.

Jane Kennedy: Andy Cooke, Chief Constable of Merseyside, takes wellbeing really seriously and has really promoted wellbeing services within the force, but you are restricted because, overall, resources are restricted. When they first made the change from a BCU structure to a force-wide—

Chair: BCU being basic command unit.

Jane Kennedy: I beg your pardon. When they made the change from a basic command unit structure to a different, force-wide structure, initially there was quite a shock to the morale and wellbeing of many staff, who found themselves being asked to move from jobs that they had been doing perhaps for 15 years, in a relatively sheltered policing environment, and suddenly go back into a more frontline role, public-facing. The force had to reflect on that, adjust shift patterns and allow time for supervisors to have time with their teams, which had initially been broken. So they did listen to that.

Chair: It would be very helpful if you could provide any written evidence on the numbers and the issues, if you haven't already.

Anne Marie Morris: We are challenged; we have about 10 minutes, and I want to look at collaboration with police forces, police transformation funding and value for money. So without upsetting any of you, can I just ask—

Chair: You can always agree with each other, if someone has said something you agree with.

- Q22 **Anne Marie Morris:** Yes, rather than getting full replies to all that—because I am not going to do that in 10 minutes—may I pick on one from each group? If we can have quick answers, that will be really helpful. Ms Hernandez, you will not be surprised if, given your comments on what has happened with the proposed merger between Dorset and Devon and Cornwall, I ask you this question. Can collaboration ever work, and can it ever work at a totally merged level?

Alison Hernandez: I think mergers of police forces can work. We need to make sure there are flexibilities to enable that to work. There have been some barriers to my community being able to support it.

- Q23 **Anne Marie Morris:** For instance?

Alison Hernandez: For instance, as you would have with local government reorganisation, you have council tax harmonisation that you have to resolve if you merge as two organisations, which means that you have to end up paying the same amount of council tax on a band D property, averaged out. You have to sort that out. Dorset was £18 more than we pay in Devon and Cornwall. I was willing to pay and encourage my community to want to pay up to the Dorset level, so that I could create a space for—it would have come to a value of around 330 extra police officers. It was frowned upon to consider that as an option. The Home Office were looking at harmonisation to not make excess money through the council tax. So we have an issue about not being able to make money through the council tax process of a police merger.

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: There is no doubt that if certain factors are lined up, collaborations could be very effective, but we started to get, over the last year, a sense from our members, who actually operate in that collaborative zone and dominate the landscape in trying to bring forces together, from an operational perspective, of some concern that was rising across the country. We ended up surveying 110 members who are, or have been, in collaborative roles. Then you find out some of the results around the pressures on them in terms of negotiating and influencing with different partners and the pressures on them around their own time management, leadership, wellbeing and so on; and you start to get quite a negative picture from those who are actually leading these collaborative arrangements.

You then look at it from an organisational perspective, and they are really split over whether this is efficient and effective, but, despite their being loyal to their own forces, when you say, "Is this the way forward?" 82% of them say mergers are the way forward. So there is something going on at that level, and you can see publicly, with Nottinghamshire pulling out of certain arrangements and West Mercia and Warwickshire recently announcing a split, that there are so many critical factors that make collaboration work that if some of those factors start failing, it starts being—



Q24 **Chair:** Which brings us to what the role of the Home Office is.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: As a superintendent and as a deputy chief constable, I have tried to merge two sets of forces. I was involved in Lancashire-Cumbria 10 years ago. That failed on council tax precept harmonisation, exactly as Alison has described. I looked at the Northumbria-Durham forces when I first arrived there as an assistant chief constable. It failed on council tax precept harmonisation. Look, you can do this. The problem is that you have a brownfield site. Everybody has different IT and different systems. As soon as you do this, you have got to start funding this with upfront costs. That cannot come from the forces themselves because, as you have just heard, we cannot make any money out of council tax. I think this is a dead duck for a generation because you are looking at something that is a brownfield site, and I don't think you can fix it unless you pump-prime it.

Jane Kennedy: Don't get hung up on police force collaborations as being the only way forward. We do really well in some key collaborations—organised crime units being one shining example of how forces work together really well collaboratively. There are many others.

Q25 **Anne Marie Morris:** So it is projects as opposed to the whole shebang.

Jane Kennedy: Where there is organised growth of two forces coming together, there ought to be more help from the Home Office to allow that to happen, but they are not getting it.

Q26 **Anne Marie Morris:** Okay. Can the Committee have a copy of the report that sets out the barriers that you have identified that central Government could fix?

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: It has been sent in.

Q27 **Chair:** We touched on this when we looked at this three years ago, as I said at the beginning. It's a bit like "Groundhog Day".

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Since then there have been huge steps in terms of collaboration. The regional crime structure now is completely baked in.

Q28 **Chair:** But the barriers—

Anne Marie Morris: The barriers is what we want to hear about, but we have not got time.

Chair: The council tax barrier was there before and it is still there now, so it is interesting that, three years on, it is still there.

Q29 **Anne Marie Morris:** The next question is about transformation funding. Again, apologies, Ms Hernandez, but I know that you have the Exmouth slavery unit. What do you think has been the success of the transformation fund? Have you got what you needed? Are you worried about the need for more money to make the job effective?

Alison Hernandez: With the modern slavery programme that we are running through Devon and Cornwall, I think the national scheme has changed the way that we police on modern slavery nationally. It was a



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small pot of funding that has generated quite a lot of change. It is about £3.5 million per year for a two-year scheme that we have had through PTF funding. These are all officers that have come from the frontline of forces, seconded into a national project, so our forces are left with less while they are seconded. It does not matter if we are given money in return. You cannot recruit an officer quickly. You cannot get an agency worker in to replace a police officer. You cannot backfill in the same way. So PTF funding is a challenge around trying to set things up where you are basically bringing people in from different forces to try something new. Also, there is a cliff-edge of funding. We have done a two-year project that we think is really successful. We also think £3.5 million a year is a pittance to actually deliver. For £2 million a year ongoing we could keep this going and do really well. So we would like the Government to help with the cliff-edge that is about to come.

Jane Kennedy: There are good examples of the police transformation fund going to help with the modernisation of IT and some of the other big changes that the police needed, and we did not have the resources and the resilience within police budgets to fund locally.

Anne Marie Morris: Okay. Good idea, but long term rather than short term.

Q30 **Chair:** We have had a lot of evidence from other forces about it being short term and not very good for long-term change.

Alison Hernandez: At one point you would hear forces say, "Just give us the money back. Even if you just divvied it up equally, we get a couple of million."

Chair: To our frontline colleagues.

Alison Hernandez: Yes, seriously.

Q31 **Chair:** Would you prefer to have the money in your budget, Chief Constable?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I would always prefer to have the budget.

Q32 **Chair:** But would you be able to do the transformation?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: That is exactly what is happening. There is a quiet revolution on the frontline. If you listen to some commentators in Whitehall, we are the last unreformed service. That is absolute rubbish. Anybody who left policing in 2008 and came back now would not recognise it. You have just heard about the startling changes that we have got in society and in the way that we employ youth workers. For example, I am using the apprenticeship levy. I am the only trainer, the only employer, who is training youth workers in the entire country. And PCSOs are now integral to the way that we manage sex offenders. None of this was envisaged by legislation. None of it has been driven by the Home Office. It has not been driven by me. It has been driven by frontline people who are utterly creative and recognised something in front of them. You give them the freedom and they do it. What I would like people to do is read HMIC reports because, if you read



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them, you will see innumerable examples of where policing is reforming itself without having to have a parent or guardian or wagging a finger.

- Q33 **Anne Marie Morris:** Miss Kennedy, you mentioned value for money and whose value it is. Is it the community's and what say they have in what happens? Is it the Home Office's? Is it the experts' in the policing area? If we are talking about value for money, do you think that those three constituents are all fairly represented? If not, how can it be changed?

Jane Kennedy: No, I don't think that they are fairly represented. I also believe that it is too easy for the Home Office to hold back funds. For example, many PCCs made representations that the serious violence fund money should just be sent out to them. Despite the fact that it would end up being a relatively small amount of money, we could have done a lot with that with our forces. Instead, we have to pitch bids. Even worse, in some cases, is that we are merely a conduit for bids going to the Home Office. I understand that some forces have sent forward 30 bids for some of the serious violence money.

- Q34 **Anne Marie Morris:** Okay, but my question was less about the bid process and more about the extent to which you have asked your constituents—your voters, because you are both elected—what they actually want, and to what extent that goes into your determining how to spend your money.

Jane Kennedy: We consult on the police and crime plan and its priorities with the public. My consultations involve me standing in supermarkets all over Merseyside and asking the public to tell me what they think and holding public meetings and so on. It is really hands on, and the public in Merseyside are very quick to tell me what they think.

- Q35 **Anne Marie Morris:** But does that feed in to what you then ask for?

Jane Kennedy: Yes, except that police and crime commissioners are limited to some extent in a bidding process, in terms of what we can send in to support a bid. We cannot triage them in every case; sometimes we can, sometimes we can't. That comes back to the bidding process being a problem for us. It would be better, quicker and simpler if we simply received the funds in our police budget and then collectively agreed locally, based on what we know the public want, what happens with that money.

- Q36 **Anne Marie Morris:** My last question should probably go to Chief Superintendent Griffiths. This whole value for money issue is topical and highly relevant to ensuring that the consumer is actually involved in this. We have had one HMIC report, and as far as I can see, it is about what the police think the need is and has nothing to do with what the consumer thinks the need is. Do you think that consumers or citizens are being properly consulted, and is what they think being reflected in what you then go and do, given that only 5% of them are affected by crime?

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: I don't think that we can do enough to find out exactly what citizens want from their police service, and I am not sure that we know exactly what the police service needs to



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deliver. We have so many challenges. We have certainly moved from the public space into the private space.

I would just like to come to something around funding. Adverse childhood experiences cuts across all the questions that have been asked today. It is about generational, forward thinking, in terms of public finances. It is about working together and making an impact that goes far beyond contracts or chief constables' tenures. It is about moving forward, and it is where I feel the Home Office needs to take a step forward.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: When we ask them, the public want these things. They don't want speeding vehicles through their town, they don't want dog fouling and they don't want antisocial behaviour. That is common. They are not being stupid here—far from it; they are being wise—because they recognise that a community free from those antisocial behaviours is actually a cohesive community. Cohesive communities don't need external policing, because they police themselves. That is the Peelian principle. That is why we listen to people. The problem with listening to people is that they want neighbourhood policing, which we can't give them because we can't afford it.

Q37 Lee Rowley: You have all made a very loud case that there is a problem here, and some of you have used somewhat politicised terms such as "austerity". Help me reconcile a few points. Recorded crime fell by 36% between 2011 and 2018, and your budgets reduced by 19%. Those figures are produced by the NAO. How does that impact on what you have done? Surely that suggests that, on a per-crime basis or a per-activity basis, you had more money than you perhaps had a number of years ago.

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: We stated very early on that crime is probably about 20% of what we deal with, and there has been an exponential rise in everything else that we have to deal with, because of the gaps that are appearing in other public services. We are doing a lot of work nationally on a demand analysis. Demand analysis of police services is tricky and challenging, but there is a real attempt to try to work out exactly where the demand lies, where the impact lies, and where best we can deal with—

Q38 Lee Rowley: Seven or eight years in, I would have assumed that you knew what your demand was.

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: There is a change in how clear we are about our demand. There is certainly pressure coming from the HMIC through force management statements to have a real look at what the pressures are and how we can foresee—how best to put our resources in the future. As I have also pointed out, demand has spiralled through vulnerability, technological changes and so on, and it is an ever moving feast.

Q39 Lee Rowley: Have you quantified any of that?



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Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: I think there has been some quantifying of it.

Q40 **Lee Rowley:** Do you have the numbers?

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: I have not got the numbers with me, no.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Yes, it has been quantified, and HMIC actually inspect on this.

Lee Rowley: Do you have them?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I can provide you with them—I have only got a notepad here. HMIC inspect on this, so if you go to every single police force, you will see that there are value for money profiles on every force, there are CIPFA stats, and we are inspected on it. So it is there for the public to see.

In terms of demand, you are absolutely right that recorded crime went down, but everybody agrees that police-recorded crime statistics do not reveal the full picture. Even the crime survey of England and Wales does not reveal the full picture, because when they included cyber-crime in the crime survey of England and Wales two years ago, all our statistics doubled. In terms of what you see in front of you, in terms of your crime figures, you can pretty much double that and that is the actual demand.

Fraud is one of those areas that does not always get the focus that it should, because it is not seen as a high vulnerability, but we have a huge problem with cyber-enabled fraud. When you look at the non-crime figures—by the way, 20% of our calls are for crime, but over 50% of our time is crime, because they are more complex—

Q41 **Lee Rowley:** If you cannot measure it, you cannot do anything about it. Your assertion, therefore, is that we have to have a different discussion on how to measure this. Our data is flawed, and until we implement some new data, we cannot have a meaningful discussion about any of this.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I am not accepting that point.

Lee Rowley: That is the natural extension of your argument.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I am also challenging the fact that when I used the word “austerity”, it was a politically loaded statement. I did not invent austerity—other people did.

Q42 **Lee Rowley:** Let us just go back to the statement about the data. What is it about the data that is problematic, and what do we need to do to change it so that we do not have these kinds of questions in this discussion in the future?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Well, the data is all there—

Lee Rowley: It cannot be. If you cannot measure it, the data cannot be all there. You just said that recorded crime does not give us a true picture.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: No, because we have not been recording cyber-crime—because a lot of people do not record their own cyber-crime.

- Q43 **Lee Rowley:** So what additional things do you need to put in to record the crime and to make it a true and accurate figure, in your view?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Many people do not even know that they are the victim of cyber-crime—this is a new phenomenon for society. We must measure things that everybody has agreed on. What we are all working with here is that fog of the new—that fog of what we cannot expect. Just as we do not know what the lottery numbers are tomorrow, we do not know where some of this crime is tomorrow. Now—

- Q44 **Lee Rowley:** I am slightly confused about how I can do anything with that statement. If you are saying that you do not know what it is, and you are saying that it is immeasurable, but you are saying it is still a problem, how can I, as a legislator, help you to deal with that? You have got to be able to quantify that for me and for this Committee in order for us to understand.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: One answer to that is that the big problem you have as a legislator is that the internet is international and you are a national legislative body. You cannot help it. That is one of our worries.

- Q45 **Lee Rowley:** That does not explain the data point. Commissioners, I will give you the opportunity to speak. I accept that there is a problem in all our areas, by the way, but I really want to get to the bottom of some of these discussions. I do not want to be having these discussions where we talk past each other. How do we move the conversation on?

Jane Kennedy: First, crime data integrity has not been a problem. Most forces have been collecting crime data based on the accepted practice at the time. That practice changes depending on nuances in organisations such as Her Majesty's inspectorate and others, which require changes to take place. Given that, I accept that, over a sustained period, crime came down. It did not come down by magic; it came down because of a sustained effort on the ground, with partners working together to impact upon crime and to develop crime prevention measures. As the ability and resilience of all those partners to continue to do that has reduced, crime has started to come up again. For the last five years in Merseyside, we have seen a gradual increase in almost every crime type, and now it is all crime types, including antisocial behaviour. That is a national phenomenon. It happens because of things that the Government, local authorities and police forces do.

It is not true that we are not measuring these things. Forces are recognised by HMIC as having a good understanding, by and large, of demand and of the way demand is measured, the kind of crime risk and the threat they face. That is generally accepted as being good. That being the case, the funding of policing should be taking that into account. Instead, we are seeing a crude method of holding back spending on police



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budgets by an overall, across-the-board cut in police money, which is not reflective at all of the new emerging crime types or the overall increase in crime, added to the increase in other demands that we are seeing because of the failures of mental health services elsewhere and so on.

Alison Hernandez: Can I help a little bit with where there is a gap? This is the biggest frustration I have as a commissioner. We get 1 million calls for service a year, but I cannot tell you how many customers, or clients or individuals those were from, because the data, like for crime, is collected on incident level. It is not collected by person. That is one of the fundamental challenges that policing faces: understanding how many victims we have, how many are repeat victims—they can pull that out sometimes—how many offenders we know on patch and how we are managing them.

We run a crime data system called UNIFI, which you cannot seem to pull simple data reports out of—it is really challenging. Other forces have Niche. We have different ways of recording crime using a system that does not pull out data in a helpful way to actually inform the way you might want to manage the service to those individuals.

- Q46 **Chair:** Paragraph 17 on page 9 of the NAO Report is what Mr Rowley is really picking up on. This came through strongly when we looked at this three years ago. It says: "There are no common standards for measuring all demands for police services and their costs, and therefore no national picture of what forces need." One of our focuses today is challenging the Home Office about how they understand demand, but this paragraph lays out clearly some of the challenges about how you do it differently. Alison Hernandez, you have just explained about the different IT systems, but that is not the only answer. Are forces falling short in assessing the demand on their own services? What could you do better, and what could the Home Office do better, to address the issues laid out in this paragraph?

Jane Kennedy: I hold a quarterly performance inspection of Merseyside police. It is held in public. We scrutinise every available area of data. Everything we ask for—we ask for it on a weekly basis—

- Q47 **Chair:** That's what you do. Do you think you do it as well as you could? Do you think that other forces could learn from you, or that you could learn from other forces?

Jane Kennedy: Truthfully, I don't know what other commissioners do, but I cannot think how I could improve on it, because it is really in-depth, plus we ask for it on a live basis, so as we are going through the quarter we can say, "What's happening on this day?" It requires me to employ people who can analyse it and ask the questions.

Alison Hernandez: I am not saying the ICT system is the problem. This all starts with the crime recording standards and how you actually record something based on an incident as opposed to a person. That is the priority. There is a real challenge about how we understand our



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community and how we are helping them, and it is not just about the system.

Q48 **Caroline Flint:** Don't you need both, though? You might have an incident that was witnessed by five people independently and they all ring in.

Alison Hernandez: Yes, you do, but we do not really have enough data on the people.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Two things. First, what you count does not always count. The second thing is we now have to get much better on capability. That is a challenge to policing, and we are facing that with the Home Office. It is legitimate for people like you, Mr Rowley, to challenge us about whether we describe ourselves in a way that is coherent for you and the Treasury. I think it is a legitimate challenge that we do not, and we are improving on that. We are now working jointly with the Home Office, and I am leading on one of those with civil servants. So the way that we are describing our capability allows us to have a much more coherent conversation with the Treasury, and I think that is a good thing.

Q49 **Anne Marie Morris:** Ms Hernandez, we have been talking very much about measuring crime, and you said that prevention is now a large part of what the police do. What could or should we measure to understand and value what you doing on prevention?

Alison Hernandez: This is one of the real challenges that I talk to my community about a lot when they are looking at crime-recording information and what it means to them. The police will spend a lot of time safeguarding individuals—vulnerable people—who are likely to be exploited and abused as a crime, but that would never, ever normally get reported. So it would never be in the crime statistics.

Q50 **Anne Marie Morris:** How can it be? There are some proactive—

Alison Hernandez: I don't know if you can. It is that real public service dilemma of how much you invest in prevention and how much you invest in crisis areas.

Q51 **Anne Marie Morris:** But if you do not measure the prevention, you will never get a tick in a box to invest in it.

Alison Hernandez: We are measuring the prevention—

Q52 **Anne Marie Morris:** But how?

Alison Hernandez: Well, through things like the number of missing people that we have, which is an activity that—

Q53 **Chair:** A number of years ago the Met were looking at doing this investigation about what impact antisocial behaviour had on people's lives and what behavioural changes they had to make, and they were trying to measure that. I do not know if you are doing anything similar.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: You can measure reducing reoffending. There is now a real push in terms of evidence-based policing,



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where we are doing randomised control trials to see whether or not this has more of an impact than that. For example, the Checkpoint programme is now rolled out to many forces, and we can now say that the prevention work we have done with our offenders in Checkpoint has reduced their reoffending by between 10% and 20%. That is replicable. So we can say that we have reduced offending by between 10% and 20% with that programme.

- Q54 **Anne Marie Morris:** Okay, but there is other work going on. In Newton Abbot, there is a specific focus on identifying the victims of drug trafficking and modern slavery. How can you measure the value of what those police are doing to make sure those victims have the resource to withstand the threat? So we reduce crime—

Chair: That is a very Newton Abbot question.

Alison Hernandez: It goes back to what Chief Constable Barton just said: you cannot measure everything. It is not that everything that you can count counts. So we need to make sure we are measuring the things that are important to be measured and understand why we are measuring what we are measuring. None of us wants more bureaucracy in the police service, and I certainly do not want to do a time and motion study on a police officer and ask him to log what they are doing every five minutes of their time.

- Q55 **Anne Marie Morris:** I agree with you, but the problem is: how will you persuade the Government to give you money?

Alison Hernandez: I think it is down to whether the public feel safe and, at the moment, in my community, I know that our communities do not feel safe. We have got public confidence reducing, and actually public confidence in whether we are doing a good job is reducing.

Chair: I will briefly bring in Caroline Flint and Layla Moran. Really quick questions, please.

- Q56 **Caroline Flint:** This really speaks to the transformation fund and ideas to get ahead of the curve. If you want to reduce the amount of time police spend on mental health problems, and you, for example, bring in nurses to work alongside them, you would then hopefully see that that reduces the amount of time. Would you agree with that? Also, do you think the transformation fund is really worthy of its title?

Jane Kennedy: Yes.

Chair: One yes from Jane Kennedy. Alison Hernandez?

Alison Hernandez: I am on the fence with it, really. Transformation is about doing something completely differently, and I do not see a lot of the projects doing something differently.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I am leading on some projects, and I am proud to be leading on them. I just do not think that the process itself has been thought through. For example, when it was first started,



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evaluation of the impact was not even there. I think that cliff-edge funding, where you cannot roll across, is just really difficult.

Chief Superintendent Paul Griffiths: It is absolutely right that we invest in long-term financial programmes that have a real big impact, but they are difficult to measure, and it is difficult to see the impact of some of the prevention stuff that we do. But there are some examples, such as the violence in Cardiff, where they have demonstrated that, working with health data and so on, they can identify where the hotspots and challenges are and seek to reduce violent crime. Those are the things where we need to use an evidence base to move forward.

Q57 **Layla Moran:** Ms Hernandez, you mentioned dipping public confidence. I do not know whether you saw the “Dispatches” programme the other day, which ended by basically saying they were worried that people will stop reporting crimes to the police because of that dip in confidence. Are your residents telling you that? I would also direct that to Ms Kennedy.

Alison Hernandez: Yes, and the people who complain to me the most are small businesses. One challenge for policing is that it is not funded by business rates, as the fire service is; it is funded only by local council tax precept and Government. I feel that businesses have actually got a disservice.

Jane Kennedy: People do tell me that; local councillors tell me that they hear about things that are not getting reported to the police, yet the calls to us for help are going up exponentially. There clearly are people who are calling the police more often, but other people are saying, “It’s pointless doing that. This is too low-level. We’ll just live with it locally.” That is where you come back to the people living in a community where an urban street gang takes control.

Because something can’t be measured—I can give you an example. A gentleman who had no mental capacity became violent in the care environment in which he was being looked after. He had to be taken into custody because of the violent way in which his condition was playing out. He was brought into custody, which was completely the wrong environment for him, and the custody staff had to wait and hold him until a new care package could be put in place by the local authority to take him back into a care environment.

Those are the kinds of unforeseen demands on a police force that it is really difficult to budget for, but if the Home Office understands that that is what we mean when we are talking about this vast increase in demand—it is cases like that, which in the end was not “crimed”, because the man did not have capacity, but none the less it happened and occupied hours of police time and resource. Understanding that ought to bring forward a reflection of it in the funding formula.

Q58 **Chair:** My final question is about something that affects the geographical areas. We on this Committee have been following very closely the emergency services network plan for replacement of Airwave, and we



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learned from the Home Office only this Monday—well, we learned on 21 September in very skeletal terms—that there is now basically a pick-and-mix approach for you out there on the ground. You can pick and choose which individual communication tools you want and need—this was from Sir Philip Rutnam in a letter to me—and decide when you want them, rather than having to wait until every element of the new network is built. So can each of you individually tell me, are you availing yourself of this offer to pick and choose the communication tools you need? If so, which ones are you getting, and do you have confidence that the programme will be delivered, as is now proposed, by 2022?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: My sense from the Chief Constables' Council last week is that this is probably one of the most pressing concerns facing chief constables. It is not to be toyed with. The way police officers communicate back to colleagues—

Chair: I hate to interrupt you, but we have looked at this six times; this is our sixth time looking at it—

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I'm certainly not taking the pick-and-mix—

Q59 **Chair:** Are you going to be taking any bits of the system and experimenting with those, rather than waiting and going later?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I don't even know what the pick-and-mix is. The problem is that you are asking me a question, but none of us know what we are talking about, because it has not actually been designed. If you show me a couple of handsets and whether some officers have to carry one or two, I'll tell you what officers will say: "We're not carrying two handsets." And if the British Transport police run through my force area, I want the British Transport police to be on the same system as I am, and I want all my neighbours to be on the same system, because that is the only safe way to run policing, because the most challenging bits of policing that we do are where pursuits cross county boundaries and force boundaries. This is not to be toyed with.

Alison Hernandez: I agree with Chief Constable Barton. This has been a real challenge. We have been leading regionally; we have collaborated as a region to inform and be part of the development of the ESN. We are last in the queue, so—

Chair: Yes, it's getting further and further behind.

Jane Kennedy: The north-west is the forerunner region; we are supposed to be the first to go on to the new system. There is deep anxiety, at chief constable and PCC level, across the region about what the implications might be. There are some forces—Merseyside, for example—that might benefit quite quickly, because we are a relatively geographically small area, with no big mountains.

Chair: And no underground.



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Jane Kennedy: We can probably manage quite well, but North Wales and Cumbria have other real anxieties. Although that might be overcome, in terms of whether we are ready to make that step forward, as a region, we are holding together, because we want to share the risk between all six forces, rather than forces getting peeled off and starting to experiment.

Q60 **Chair:** Have you been buying new Airwave equipment or are you planning to do that? And what shelf life have you got for the old equipment that you are replacing? How long do you expect the shelf life of that to be?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: Again, we don't know. We were holding off because we thought—

Chair: That the new one would come.

Chief Constable Michael Barton: This is the problem. This is now investment in a system that is going to be end-of-life. We have now got to invest in that.

Q61 **Chair:** How long do you expect that those new handsets will last?

Chief Constable Michael Barton: I am not confident that we will get anything to replace them.

Q62 **Chair:** Okay, so you are hoping they will last. Alison Hernandez?

Alison Hernandez: I have nothing to add on that.

Jane Kennedy: The same.

Chair: Thank you very much. That was a useful hour. Thank you very much for your time. You are very welcome to stay for the next session, which is when we have our Home Office and inspectorate witnesses.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Sir Philip Rutnam, Permanent Secretary, Home Office; Scott McPherson, Director General, Crime and Policing Group, Home Office; and Sir Tom Winsor WS, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

Q63 **Chair:** Welcome back to the Public Accounts Committee on Wednesday 10 October 2018. I am pleased to welcome our second panel of witnesses—our Home Office and inspectorate witnesses. From my left to right, we have Scott McPherson, who is the director general of the crime, policing and fire group at the Home Office; Sir Philip Rutnam, the permanent secretary at the Home Office, who is a regular visitor to this Committee; and Sir Tom Winsor, Her Majesty's chief inspector of constabulary. A very warm welcome to you all.

Before we go into the main session, I want to pick up on the issue I raised at the end with the previous panel—I don't know whether you were in the room, Sir Philip—about what I note is now called the emergency services mobile communications programme. The cynic in me



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suggests that that is a way of avoiding a Google search, if anyone wants to look up the issue of ESN, given its chequered history.

We were dismayed, as a Committee, that on 21 September you put out a written ministerial statement, which is a rather grand term for the few lines that came out, talking about the future of ESN. You suggested that there was going to be a slightly different approach to it. I was looking for the actual document behind the statement, and none existed. On Monday evening, I received the letter you wrote to me, Sir Philip—thank you for that—about the future of the emergency services network and the review whose results we have been waiting for since January. It is good to know that some work has happened, but this letter was, frankly, unbelievable. There isn't a figure in here about the cost. You talk about signing new heads of terms with Motorola and EE, but there is not any confidence about whether Airwave really will be able to continue. What do the heads of terms cover?

Let me run through some of the questions I have as a result of this. First, we heard from our previous witnesses that they are very sceptical about this pick-and-mix approach—picking a communications tool from the ESN and implementing it in isolation. What have you got to say, first of all, about that point?

Sir Philip Rutnam: First, I am sorry you were dismayed. I thought the announcement that was made by Ministers on 21 September—and, indeed, the letter I sent to follow—contained some very important and positive news about the programme. It confirmed that the programme remains. After the review that we have undertaken, the Government is clear that it remains the right strategic direction. We have identified a way forward with introducing what we described as the incremental approach—introducing new services over time—and I can say more in detail about that. We have also concluded heads of terms with two of our key suppliers. There are some very important and positive steps forward in the programme.

Q64 **Chair:** Given that Airwave is on its last legs and has been extended, there wasn't really much of an option to continue with the programme—we all know it is world-leading, which is always a bit of a worry with IT projects of this nature. You mentioned the positive step of signing heads of terms with Motorola and EE. What do those heads of terms cover? You are going to finalise those contracts by the end of this year—is that right?

Sir Philip Rutnam: They cover what you would expect in terms of the technical delivery of the solution by Motorola.

Chair: Technical delivery. They run, of course, Airwave and the new—

Sir Philip Rutnam: They cover technical delivery of the new solution by Motorola, with a complete set of milestones, and commercial terms that are associated with those milestones. They cover the extension of Airwave and appropriate incentivisation around the extension of Airwave, and they do broadly similar things in relation to EE.



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This is part of a wider package of changes associated with the programme that we have undertaken over the last 18 months, including greatly strengthening the programme team that is working on this within the Department, and strengthening our ability to integrate the multiple different inputs to produce the service.

- Q65 **Chair:** You talk about the incentivisation for Motorola's solutions to deliver Airwave. What is that incentivisation? Presumably it is money at certain points to deliver on the extension of Airwave? How much will it cost to extend Airwave?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I am not going to go into great detail here around the incentive arrangements with Motorola in relation to—

- Q66 **Chair:** Is there a fee that they get at certain milestones for Airwave?

Sir Philip Rutnam: In relation to the new solution that is being delivered, I won't go into great detail around that.

Chair: We are talking about Airwave here.

Sir Philip Rutnam: In relation to Airwave, yes of course there is a cost associated with extending Airwave. I would put that cost at about £1.1 billion associated with the three years, going to the end of 2022. There is a cost associated with that. The programme as a whole, running Airwave for longer, will cost more, but we have to be really clear. What is the alternative to the programme introducing an alternative to Airwave? It is to seek to rely on Airwave essentially forever. That would be much more costly.

- Q67 **Chair:** Okay. Just to be clear, because this is now three years, that is £1.1 billion. That is a number, which is good, because this letter is very light on numbers. One of the other projects you talk about is the network coverage testing product, which is the first ESN project due to appear around the turn of the year. What is a network coverage testing product?

Sir Philip Rutnam: That essentially will be a device that provides automated information on network coverage. We have identified, I think, about 250 participants, initially from across the emergency services, who will be using this device and carrying it around with them. That will provide automated information to us on network coverage, which will go to provide assurance about the actual level of network coverage and also therefore help us to identify if there are particular gaps where the network needs to be strengthened. That is just the first product, which is already in a very advanced state of development.

- Q68 **Chair:** Was that originally planned in the original ESN?

Sir Philip Rutnam: No, not to my knowledge. To go to my point about the wider reset, we changed the way in which the programme is working so we will be starting to introduce practical products that provide real benefits and real information much more quickly.

- Q69 **Chair:** Given what you heard from our previous witnesses, there needed



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to be something to prove to people out there using it—which is, I think, more than 300 organisations, including 105 emergency services—that you had something that was going to work. How much is the network coverage testing product costing that was not originally scheduled into the cost of the ESN?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I am afraid I do not know that. I do not think the cost is very large.

Q70 **Chair:** Could you write to us with that, please?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I certainly can. Now the network has essentially been built, testing its availability is not hugely costly.

Q71 **Chair:** We are all delighted that it is being tested. You talk about progress proceeding with the work to build coverage on the London underground and in remote areas. What progress has there been on coverage on the London underground? How far off are we from getting coverage on the tube?

Sir Philip Rutnam: From memory, we now have leaky feeders—the technical term for the device that provides coverage in the tunnels—covering some 256 km of London underground tunnels.

Q72 **Chair:** What does that mean? Is that most of the London underground? I don't know how many kilometres the underground goes to.

Sir Philip Rutnam: It is most of it, yes. A high proportion.

Q73 **Chair:** Right, so that is now working. You are confident about that?

Sir Philip Rutnam: That is well advanced as an element of the programme, yes. It is not the only element, of course.

Q74 **Chair:** If it is working that well, it is rather underplayed in your letter, I have to say.

You are looking to sign revised contracts at the end of the year following the heads of terms. Is there a risk that those contracts will not get signed at the end of the year, given that we have seen so many delays, or are you confident in the end-of-the-year prediction in this letter?

Sir Philip Rutnam: To use a phrase I used at the last hearing on this in June, I am reasonably confident, yes. I think we have a good alignment. We put an enormous amount of work, together with our commercial suppliers, EE and Motorola, into the resolution of the heads of terms. The heads of terms would probably be more detailed and extensive than is common at this stage in the reset of a programme. Most of the big issues will have been resolved through the heads of terms, but you always need to go through the detailed process of turning this into a commercial contract. We have set a realistic timetable for that. I met very senior colleagues from Motorola just the other week to talk about that. We were both clear about our intent to achieve that timetable. We have a very good level of strategic alignment behind the programme, so I am reasonably confident, yes.



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- Q75 **Chair:** You talk in the next paragraph about the cost of the core system provided by Motorola and EE having not materially changed, and then you say, “the programme continues to refine the plans and costs for other parts of the solution,” which includes, for example, London underground air-to-ground coverage. You are refining the plans and costs, so do you have any figures that you can give us now about the extra costs of dealing with those issues?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I do not have figures I can give you now.

- Q76 **Chair:** When will you have figures?

Sir Philip Rutnam: As I also mention in the letter, we are in the process of revising the final business case for this programme, which is intended to be completed in the new year. I would expect to be able to supply figures in connection with the finalisation of the FBC. I know that the NAO is also planning, in any event, to do a review of the programme to roughly that timescale.

- Q77 **Chair:** You heard on the ground that a lot of local emergency services and other users have already been buying Airwave handsets because they were concerned about whether this was ever coming and they needed to replace kit. Has the Home Office looked again at what it will do to compensate for the extra cost that had not originally been budgeted in? They are twice the price of the new handsets.

Sir Philip Rutnam: We are in discussion with police forces, fire and rescue services and the other emergency services about that and many other issues. It is a matter for the emergency services. We recognise that this programme has to be very closely co-ordinated with them. Yes, there are costs associated with the acquisition of handsets, whether for Airwave or for the new solution. There will also be costs in control centres that need to be adapted. We are working closely with them.

We are not paying for the cost of the handsets. There are costs of this programme that will fall to local emergency services, but, as we all know, and as we have discussed many times before, the implementation of this programme will enable us to get off the Airwave solution, to save in the order of £200 million a year each and every year, and to have a much better solution that is lower cost and higher capability.

- Q78 **Chair:** We are capable of doing the maths. If you are spending £1.1 billion to extend Airwave by three years, five years of that £200 million saving is already eaten up. From your business case, can you give us a time when this will hit the sweet spot when you will actually have forces or emergency services out there saving money year on year?

Sir Philip Rutnam: The total cost of supporting policing in this country across central Government and local taxpayers—the same is true for other emergency services—means that as soon as we are able to switch off Airwave, we will be saving very significant amounts of money.

- Q79 **Chair:** But you still have extra money going in to Airwave that you had not originally budgeted for when you started this process.



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Sir Philip Rutnam: I do not anticipate any extra costs beyond those we had already planned in 2019-20. After April 2020, of course, we do not actually have budgets at the moment. It will be a matter for the spending review next year. The state of this programme will need to be taken into account in the spending review, alongside a number of other things that we will no doubt discuss later in the hearing.

Chair: I think we will. It is interesting: if I were the Treasurer, I might be asking questions about how this was managed and whether you, as the Home Office, deserve the extra money or whether it will have to come out of other parts of your budget.

Q80 **Lee Rowley:** You have just told us that there is about £1.1 billion of cost to the extension of Airwave. In your letter, which I found similarly astounding, as the Chair did, you say that the programme is still good value for money. At what point does the programme cease to be good value for money? How many billions of pounds do we have to lose on it before it stops being?

Sir Philip Rutnam: It ceases to be good value for money at the point at which when we compare it with the alternative, it is not as good as that alternative. The alternative—

Q81 **Lee Rowley:** What is the cost of the alternative?

Sir Philip Rutnam: The only alternative that we can see at the moment is to rely on Airwave for the indefinite future. For Airwave, we pay £1 million-plus a day. One of the purposes behind this programme is to enable us to get off Airwave. There are other purposes that are also very important.

The programme remains good value for money. It will take longer to implement the programme—I think we have seen that coming, as we have discussed a number of times. It will take longer than originally planned, but the programme, once implemented, will still—

Q82 **Lee Rowley:** When will it cease to be good value for money?

Sir Philip Rutnam: When it ceases to be less costly and less beneficial than the alternative.

Lee Rowley: The logical extension is never. So we could drop an inordinate amount of money into this—we could drop a trillion pounds into it—and on the line of your logic, it would still remain good value for money. It would explode the national debt.

Sir Philip Rutnam: No, I don't think the arithmetic would take you that far. Suppose there were another solution that came along—an alternative to this, which was available in the market, would allow us to get off Airwave and was cheaper than this—then of course we would go for that. But having done an exhaustive search on what is happening globally in relation to public service communications—emergency service communications—there is not a better alternative for us.



Q83 Lee Rowley: So the Home Office's approach is that, if it is unable to find an alternative, it is happy to shovel money into any programme indefinitely for a total amount of money that is completely uncoded, because it still represents good value for money? That is the logical conclusion that I can draw from your statement.

Sir Philip Rutnam: From a practical perspective, we face the choice between not investing in this programme and expecting for the indefinite future—until something better comes along, which it may, but we do not know when—to rely on Airwave. We know about the contractual terms we have faced with Airwave, which was a PFI programme from the 1990s. That is the practical option we have, versus investing in this programme.

Chair: We know what the practical option is, but I think you are being very evasive about actually acknowledging that there is a big cost to continuing Airwave—it is as simple as that. Mr Rowley was asking a very simple question. It is not free, cheap or good value to continue Airwave, and it is now extending for three years longer, at great cost to the taxpayer, because the system that was supposed to be replacing it is not up and running. That is the opportunity cost.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I hope I am not being evasive. In fact, I identified earlier in this hearing that we estimate the cost of extending Airwave to be about £1.1 billion.

Chair: Call a spade a spade. You are saying Airwave is going to cost £1.1 billion—that is a cost that extends further. At £1 million a day, we are adding quite a lot of money on to taxpayers' shoulders.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I would much rather avoid that, but in my judgment it is still better to proceed with this programme, which has a good chance of success and a good of chance of bringing both financial and service benefits, than not to do it.

Q84 Lee Rowley: At what point should I expect a permanent secretary to take responsibility for a £1.1 billion-plus overrun and not brush it off as still representing good value for money?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I think I am taking responsibility for the programme and all its elements here.

Q85 Lee Rowley: And the £1.1 billion cost that could be being spent on police—

Sir Philip Rutnam: The reason why the programme is extending to the end of 2022 is because that is the realistic timeframe, given the complexity and scale of the programme, and given the criticality of emergency services that talked about earlier—

Q86 Lee Rowley: As a member of the Public Accounts Committee for the last six months, and having listened to dozens of these discussions—including a number with yourself on this particular issue—I simply do not understand when I should expect permanent secretaries, as representatives of those who deliver these projects, to take responsibility



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for dramatic and vast cost overruns on projects that have clearly run into the wall, and why I am supposed to believe, on the basis of a two-page letter that explains nothing, that everything is fine. As a legislator, please explain to me how you and the rest of the Department can possibly expect me to accept that kind of position. It's ludicrous.

Sir Philip Rutnam: First, the project has not run into the wall. In fact, the project continues to move forward better than it has done at any time in the last several years. It is making good practical progress in a whole range of areas—we touched on some of them earlier. The project has not run into the wall.

Secondly, since I became permanent secretary in the Department, I have taken responsibility for this programme. I have spent a significant amount of my personal time trying to ensure that the programme is put into a state where—whether it is in terms of organisational capability, timeframe, resources, the quality of discussion around it or the quality of the relationships around it, including with our commercial partners—it properly matches the scale and complexity of the programme. I do not accept that I have not taken responsibility for the programme.

Q87 Lee Rowley: Yet we still have representatives from police forces who will have to use this kit at the end, and who have attended the same committees as you are presenting to, saying they have no idea what is coming and no confidence that it will work.

Sir Philip Rutnam: We actually haven't had the opportunity to talk to Chief Constable Barton about this. We have, of course, talked to the National Police Chiefs Council. We have talked to the lead for the NPCC, who is Chief Constable Francis Habgood of Thames Valley. We have talked extensively to Sara Thornton of the NPCC and to Cressida Dick of the Metropolitan Police. There is strong support for the programme in policing. There is a recognition of the need to get off Airwave, and a recognition of the strategic driver around technology and technology capability.

Q88 Chair: I do not think we are arguing about whether we do it. It is about how we do it, and the fact that it is delayed, and that we have had you and your predecessor here telling us repeatedly—six times—that it is going to be fine, and here we are again.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I am not sure I have been here saying it will be fine. I think I have been talking about the scale of the challenge, but I would take from the previous exchanges with our partners that we have a significant task to do—that is recognised in the programme—in order to bring all members of the emergency services community into ultimately being supporters of the programme. I understand their reservations, because this is an absolutely critical resource. I would just point out, though, that among the products we will be deploying next year will be a new data product, ESN Connect, for which we have support from the fire service. That will enable the fire service to have data capability in a way that they do not at the moment. We have a product that will—

Q89 Lee Rowley: How does this programme conclusively remain the right



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strategic approach to take if you have not completed the full business case?

Sir Philip Rutnam: We have not completed the full business case. The revision of the full business case will be a very significant document.

Lee Rowley: You have been doing the review for a long, long time.

Sir Philip Rutnam: Yes, and as we discussed back in July, we had to get to the conclusion of our commercial discussions with our partners to be confident we could get through that gate. We have done that to the point of heads of terms. I do not have all the detail of the revised FBC. What I do have, though, is enough of the detail—the insight—around the key parameters to be confident that we will get to a satisfactory FBC.

Q90 **Lee Rowley:** That says nothing. Strategically, it is the right thing—strategically, I might want to fly to my constituency, but it might cost me £1.1 billion a time, for example. It is not actually likely to happen, is it, so why would I pursue a strategic imperative of trying to fly to my constituency every Thursday if doing so is not going to be value for money? The division of these two is ludicrous.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I do not accept that. Of course, if I had had the luxury of waiting until the full revised FBC was complete before sharing any information, I might have enjoyed that luxury, but that is not a realistic option that is open to me. I have to be able to communicate—we have to communicate—about the progress of the programme. What we did on 21 September was to communicate that we had concluded commercial negotiations for the heads of terms, and concluded the phase of the review that confirms it is the right strategic intent. We do not have all the detail. There are still details, of course, that need to be filled in for the FBC, but I have 80% or 90% of what I need.

Q91 **Chair:** You are picking up such a mess that I can see that the business plan issue is almost a side issue, given where it started. I am going to bring in Tom McDonald from the National Audit Office on a key point.

Tom McDonald: Just to help to answer Mr Rowley's question, the original full business case from August 2015 projected quantified benefits of £3.64 billion, so clearly, the more those benefits are eroded, the more the risk to value for money emerges.

Q92 **Chair:** I will bring in the Comptroller and Auditor General in a moment. I just wanted to highlight to you, Sir Philip, if you have not seen it, a survey of 48 forces run by Policing Insight, with input from the Police Federation of England and Wales. It paints a pretty damning picture of the confidence of frontline officers about ICT services generally.

I will read out some choice quotes: "Getting a signal is an issue." Just 2% were completely satisfied with their ICT services, and only 30% felt their force invested wisely in technology. We are coming from a very low base at the frontline, and here we are, layering on this new system. Are you going to be mandating police forces—not just police, but other emergency services—to take this on? This confidence level, and the confidence level



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we heard from our previous witnesses, suggests that there is not a great willingness to embrace it.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I have not seen that survey, but the survey data you are quoting is unlikely to be about Home Office-supplied services, because we supply relatively few IT services to police forces.

Q93 **Chair:** Sorry, but that is not my point. It does not really matter whether they are Home Office-supplied. The point is that if you have officers out there who are already finding out that they do not have a good IT system, their experience of this is not going to be a positive approach to something new. They will see it as another bit of kit on their belt that sits there not being very effective.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I completely agree. I was trying to make this clear earlier: the confidence of customers in this solution is going to be critical to its success—as important as anything else. That is one reason why I am positive about the more incremental approach, which will allow staff and officers in the emergency services to have practical experience of the products. Ultimately, in order to realise the benefits, we will have to switch off Airwave, which means that there will have to be enough confidence within the emergency services that the new product can be relied on. It is mission-critical that we get that confidence.

I would point out that we faced a similar issue with Airwave when it was introduced in the 1990s. We may be critical about the contractual structure of the packet—it is a PFI—but exactly the same issue was faced about the confidence that this new generation of technology would provide the necessary service to police forces and other emergency services. That was achieved through a great deal of hard work.

Q94 **Chair:** I think hard work is an understatement in this case. I will ask the Comptroller and Auditor General to make a comment, because the National Audit Office has been very helpful to us in keeping its beady eye on the numbers.

Amyas Morse: Let us accept that this is the right thing to do, which I think it probably is, and that with your personal involvement and leadership it is being run well now. It does not follow that the way it was run until you took charge has provided value for money—I just do not think that the logic follows through. If it was run with delay and unnecessary expense in the period until you took charge, unfortunately that is not value for money. I think you probably understand that that may be the case, and it is perfectly reasonable to say so.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I cannot make any comment on the period before I became permanent secretary—

Q95 **Chair:** Well, you can—it is your Department. Continuity in the civil service!

Caroline Flint: You have collective memory, I hope.



Sir Philip Rutnam: What I will say is that I found a highly motivated team, many members of which remain in place, including the senior responsible owner. Of course, as with other programmes that you have no doubt seen from time to time, there are always things to be learned about the importance of the conditions when you set the programme up in the first place, of considering—in more depth than perhaps might once have been the case—what could go wrong, of building in a culture of challenge, and of realism. Of course, those are points that the Home Office and other Departments have all sought to take on board in relation to major projects and programmes at large.

Q96 **Chair:** I think you can sense from the atmosphere in the room that the Committee is not impressed with the way this has played out. We heard from our previous witness panel about how the police national database, the police national computer and the automatic number plate recognition systems work, and about how they have spiralled in cost and are causing problems. That raises concern in our minds about the Home Office's ability to take on, set up, manage and deliver major technological solutions that are essential to our emergency services. Given what you have just said, I wonder what lessons you are now playing through the Home Office in terms of commercial procurement, dealing with partners and making sure that you are scoping these projects so that this does not happen again.

Sir Philip Rutnam: One of my central messages to my colleagues in the Home Office is about the importance of realism in planning—that is the way I tend to put it. In relation to major projects, that will involve thinking about the reference classes and using the best available techniques for things like quantified cost and schedule risk assessment. Recognising the softer, human dimension, it will also involve building a culture that values realism and can hold realism as a value against the optimism that you need in order to believe that you can achieve things.

I want to reassure you that in the Home Office this is a very active conversation. It is something that we talk about at our senior management events and senior staff events. I keep coming back to this theme alongside a number of others. I have to say that I think we are actually making good progress, which is not to say that there are no challenges.

Of course we tend to focus here on things that do not go so well, but I would give the example of another IT programme: the child abuse image database, which has transformed the ability of police officers to identify victims of child abuse from imagery. It has drastically cut down the time it takes and it reduces the psychological stress and harm that police are exposed to, because it is so much more automated. The project has a relatively small cost, but a huge impact.

Chair: There is no doubt, and the Committee recognises, that there are good projects happening. But our job is to ask you questions about this, among other things that we will move on to in a moment. However, there remains the point, which Mr Rowley was pushing as well, about the cost—



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this extra £1.1 billion—let alone the other opportunity costs to forces which are now having to invest in older and more expensive kit.

- Q97 **Caroline Flint:** Sir Philip, do you agree that the Home Office is responsible for assessing how much funding police forces need, deciding how much the policing system receives as a whole, and allocating grants to police and crime commissioners?

Sir Philip Rutnam: Yes, those are our responsibilities, among others.

- Q98 **Caroline Flint:** Do you agree that for far too long the way the Department chooses to distribute funding has been ineffective and detached from the changing nature of policing?

Sir Philip Rutnam: At the moment, part of the mechanism for distributing funding to our police and crime commissioners involves a funding formula which was developed back in 2006-07. That funding formula has essentially been frozen for a number of years now. We accept that it is out of date and that it needs to be updated, but we do not think that now is the time to do that.

- Q99 **Caroline Flint:** Why?

Sir Philip Rutnam: To go back a step, we were undertaking a very significant amount of work, including in partnership with police, in the run-up to the 2017 general election—of course, we did not know that there was going to be another general election following the one in 2015. Ministers decided—I think they were right to; it was a wise decision—that the timescale for their implementation of a new formula was too ambitious, and that given the emerging pressures on policing, the more important things to do were twofold.

First, doing high-quality work on the demands on policing, and seeking essentially to make and win as strong an argument as possible for a funding settlement for policing, which I can talk about for 2018-19. Those were higher priorities than changes to the funding formula. Secondly, although we recognise the points about the funding formula, what police and crime commissioners and police forces also needed, in order to stand the best chance of responding to those pressures across the whole system, was clarity and certainty in order to plan. So we were prioritising work on demand, work on funding in aggregate, and clarity and certainty for police forces over the very complex task of making any changes to the funding formula.

- Q100 **Caroline Flint:** I think you acknowledged there that not enough work has been done on demand. In November 2017, the Department examined available information on demand, but at the moment we do not know whether that examination process is going to be kept up. Is that correct?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I can assure you that it will be kept up. In fact, it is being kept up. We have been very clear that we always intended to maintain that particular piece of work, which was done in 2017. We are maintaining it, and, indeed, we have widened it into a bigger piece of work in the run-up to the next spending review.



Q101 Caroline Flint: On page 12 of our last Report from 2015, paragraph 2.18 says that, "A full understanding of the nature of demand for police services, and police productivity, is important because this has an impact on the resources and skills required by forces. However, HMIC found that forces' understanding of demand varied considerably." What are you doing to ensure that there is some consistency across the piece when it comes to assessing demand and how is that going to influence a new funding formula down the road?

Sir Philip Rutnam: Going back to 2017, we set up a very sizeable programme of work with partners in police to improve the understanding of demand. Perhaps Mr McPherson might speak to the detail on that, and we can also pick up the role of HMIC.

Scott McPherson: As the permanent secretary said, last autumn we did a comprehensive piece of work to look at demand in police forces, which led to the settlement. We now have a group, which I chair, that has a range of police and crime commissioners, chief constables, the National Crime Agency, HMIC and the College of Policing on it. It is co-ordinating work across the different forces to understand in more detail the demands on different forces, in preparation for putting forward the best possible case to the Treasury for the spending review. As the permanent secretary said, the intention is that that work will continue, so rather than it being a one-off we will do it year on year.

Q102 Caroline Flint: When will the next one happen?

Scott McPherson: The work we are doing now is leading up to the settlement for the next financial year and the spending review, which is due to take place next year, but we will continue that work in collaboration with police forces so we are maintaining a really good view of demand and pressures on forces in the way that we have talked about.

Sir Philip Rutnam: From a practical perspective, we will make a financial settlement for police forces in 2019-20, which will be done before the end of this calendar year. The work we are doing now will be a key foundation for that funding settlement, and for our discussions in Government about that funding settlement. We are also looking ahead to the spending review—the Chancellor has said there will be a spending review in 2019—so we are looking to use the work not just for 2019-20 but for further ahead.

Q103 Caroline Flint: Can I just stop you? Our report in 2015 highlighted all the gaps in understanding of demand. You are saying that more work needs to be done. What has been going on since 2015? It does not sound to me like there is a grip either on demand or on the changing nature of demand, some of which we heard from the witnesses in the pre-panel.

Scott McPherson: Let me take you through what the permanent secretary said about the work we did last autumn on understanding demand. We looked at three key areas: demand, financial pressures on police forces and performance measures. On demand, the key thing we looked at was a weighted demand in relation to crime—not just individual



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statistics on the number of offences, but the cost to the police of investigating those crimes. For example, serious sexual offences create a much higher burden on the police's time and resources, so they show a higher weighted cost. That was the key measure there. We also looked at a wide range of other factors such as crimes per 100,000 of the population, crimes per officer and numbers of 999 calls, as the PCCs talked about earlier.

Q104 Caroline Flint: I do not want to pre-empt my colleague, but a lot of the discussion in the previous session was about demands on the police that do not necessarily fit into a nice basket labelled "crime". Are you looking into that?

Scott McPherson: Absolutely. We have looked at non-crime measures, including things such as missing persons and road traffic collisions, which also place burdens on the police. It is important to understand that although approximately 80% of incidents that the police respond to are non-crime, around 80% of the cost relates to crime. As I said, the crime incidents require significantly more resources.

Q105 Caroline Flint: Back to you, Sir Philip. What impact has the 19% funding cut had on police services?

Sir Philip Rutnam: There is a lot of evidence on that in the Report. You can see that police forces have reacted to the cut in a number of ways, but overall there have been significant reductions in the workforce. There have also been some significant positive changes—Chief Constable Barton talked about some of those—to the way in which police forces use technology, drive innovation, and challenge and improve efficiency. It is by no means a complete journey, but there have been some very positive changes to the way in which police forces operate.

Q106 Caroline Flint: Chief Constable Barton made the point that for the first three years from 2010 when the public services had to deal with the financial crash, austerity—a word the Prime Minister uses, too—was understood, but that it has gone on far too long. Do you acknowledge that?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I would draw a distinction. Your 19% figure goes back to 2010; we are all familiar with the 2010 spending review, the fiscal environment faced by the Government and the response to that in terms of the challenge for public services. I point out that, in the 2015 spending review, the Government protected funding for police services in the round, constant in real terms, and also assured police and crime commissioners that their funding—a combination of police grant and precept—would be at least constant in cash terms. This is more of a macro political and fiscal question, but the way in which the Government have funded the police service has changed in that period since 2010, and the 2015 spending review was very important.

I also point to last autumn's financial settlement for 2018-19—the year we are now in—in which the Government provided an additional £460 million of funding for police services this year, compared with the previous year.



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Q107 **Caroline Flint:** That includes the take from local taxation, doesn't it?

Sir Philip Rutnam: It does indeed.

Caroline Flint: It is not all new money.

Sir Philip Rutnam: Absolutely. That is quite right. Thank you for the correction. It is up to £460 million, of which up to £280 million is available from additional precept, provided that police and crime commissioners use the full flexibility available under the precept.

Q108 **Caroline Flint:** In line with that, some of the forces that have most relied on central Government grant funding have experienced the greatest cuts. Do you acknowledge that?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I acknowledge what is in the NAO Report. This goes to the point about the distribution of funding between different forces. Some forces are more reliant on central Government funding than precept. Others, particularly in the shire counties, are less so.

Q109 **Caroline Flint:** Do you acknowledge that their offsetting the cuts in central Government funding with whatever local taxation they can increase is affected by the overall economic indicators of an area? The likelihood of an area that is relatively deprived across the piece raising more is not as good as for some wealthier areas. Is that fair?

Sir Philip Rutnam: There is a range of complicated factors at work. The local council tax base changes to different degrees in different places. The value of the local tax base, and the number of band D properties and so on, varies. I plainly accept that the position is uneven across the country.

However, the way in which the Government have sought to respond to this, particularly with the 2018-19 financial settlement last autumn, was to seek to give more flexibility to all police and crime commissioners to increase the funding they take from precept. The way in which we did that should have helped to reduce the variance associated with the local tax base. That it was a maximum £12 increase, as opposed to a percentage, will have helped to offset some of the variance due to local tax bases.

Q110 **Caroline Flint:** You mentioned the cuts made in 2010 and some of the changes since then. How can you be certain that the changes to protect funding—to be clear, when you protect funding, that does not take away from the cuts that have already happened—and the disturbance to, for example, neighbourhood policing, which was built up over time and has had to retract because of cuts, will in any way be able to meet the demands?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I understand the concern. I want to reassure you that the Home Office very closely monitors and attends to the level of demand on policing. If you go back to some of the points made in the earlier session about the very long-term trend, you can see a reduction, going back into the 1990s, in what you could describe as certain traditional types of crime—acquisitive crime. There is a long-term trend of reduction, with



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some large reductions in volumes of crime over that time period and further since 2010.

However, we have also seen in recent years a significant increase in reports of lower-volume but high-harm crimes, such as child sexual abuse and other sexual offences, which may be lower in volume but are costly, in terms of investigative resource. That puts a material extra demand strain on the police. Serious violence is another important trend. There has been a rise in the number of homicides, firearms offences and—

Q111 Caroline Flint: While it is absolutely the case that the design of technology has helped to reduce certain crimes, such as car theft, violent crime has been going up steadily for quite a period. However, in addressing those areas of crime, what is your understanding of the impact that that is having, in taking policing away from the things that the public are concerned about, like neighbourhood policing?

Sir Philip Rutnam: Just one detail: we see that the real rise in violent crime is particularly in serious violence, of the more serious offences—

Caroline Flint: How do you define that?

Sir Philip Rutnam: That would be things like homicide, or firearms offences, or knife offences—

Caroline Flint: Okay. I thought sexual offences were going up.

Sir Philip Rutnam: And sexual offences, yes. Sorry—I was talking about violent crime.

Caroline Flint: Okay.

Sir Philip Rutnam: So the impact—I think Mr McPherson should add to this—is that we do see a real impact on policing associated with the extra demand, which we see evidenced, for extra burdens on policing, associated particularly with the investigation of complex offences. And this is a pattern that, by the way, we see as pretty widespread across the country.

Q112 Caroline Flint: Let's just pick out from the NAO Report paragraph 1.28, which is on page 28. Outlined there are some bullet points that the NAO has put together. Paragraph 1.28 says there are "indications that the sector as a whole is finding it increasingly difficult to deliver an effective service."

So, just to paraphrase a few of the bullet points: "The time it took to charge an offence increased from 14 days...to 18 days for the year ending March 2008"—

Chair: 2018.

Q113 Caroline Flint: Sorry—2018. Thank you. Also, "fewer arrests as a proportion of the population in 2016-17 than in 2014-15. The arrest rate fell to 14 arrests per 1,000 population in 2016-17"; "The police have carried out less proactive work. Since 2010, there have been fewer



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breathalyser tests, motoring fixed penalty notices and convictions for drugs trafficking and possession”—there is a direct correlation between drugs, possession and acquisitive crime, I would suggest; “Crime survey data show that the proportion of victims who were not satisfied with the police response rose from 29% in the year ending March 2016, to...33% in the year ending March 2018”; and “HMICFRS”—that is, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services—“has raised concerns that victims do not always receive a timely response from the police because of the volume of calls police staff are managing”.

So you are focusing, Sir Philip, on what you are calling violent crime, and on personal and sexual offences, but you don't seem to be addressing some of those other issues that are having an impact on the service. Given those bullet points I have read out, how confident are you that the police forces can do their jobs with the number of officers they have now?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I would say that we recognise this picture, but I will ask Scott to add—

Scott McPherson: I was going to answer your previous question about what measures we look at. The measures that you have highlighted, which are in the NAO Report, are exactly the measures that we look at; the NAO obviously got this data from looking at the data we use for ourselves. And the bullet points in paragraph 1.28 are indications of the fact that the police are under significant strain and, with the resources they have, some of the performance measures that we would like to be improving are getting worse. The Department absolutely recognises that.

Q114 **Caroline Flint:** Are these performance measures new?

Scott McPherson: No.

Q115 **Caroline Flint:** So, when former decisions were made on the funding formula, they were based on these performance measures, presumably, which took into account the demand.

Scott McPherson: Yes, and at the point that the previous—

Q116 **Caroline Flint:** And they are going in the wrong direction, aren't they?

Scott McPherson: At the point at which the previous funding formula was put in place, and at the previous spending reviews, of course the picture was of crime significantly reducing, year on year, as part of the long-term trend that has seen a two-thirds reduction in the crime survey of England and Wales since 1995—

Q117 **Caroline Flint:** Yes, but do you acknowledge, Mr McPherson, and in listening to the witnesses from the previous session, that while we can have the figures of the overall levels of crime going down, and maybe just technology—such as automatic number plate recognition, and the design of cars and of mobile phones, which has moved on a lot—has actually made more of a difference, meanwhile policing is still under pressure? You do acknowledge that and you acknowledge also, particularly on the mental health issues that were raised in the last



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session, that those sorts of incidents don't necessarily appear on your indicators for what's affecting the service.

Scott McPherson: I absolutely acknowledge that policing is under pressure. The point about mental health that was made by a number of witnesses earlier today is something that we regularly hear. I regularly go out on visits and talk to police forces, and both from chief officer level and from other officers I speak to, they would absolutely raise with us the issue of mental health. It's something we take very seriously. We have been working on—

Q118 **Caroline Flint:** So how do you measure it, in terms of its impact, in terms of the number of police officers currently spending hours and hours having to respond to incidents where fundamentally—as we have heard—other professionals could be better placed to do that work? How are you going to bat for the police force when it comes to this with other Government Departments?

Scott McPherson: I would make two points on that. One is that, in terms of the measurement, I think that is one of the things that was picked up through the force management statements that HMIC is putting in place.

In relation to battling for police forces, one of the things we are really keen to do is to work with other parts of Government, particularly the Department for Health and Social Care, to make sure that it is putting in place the services that people with acute mental health problems need, so that the burden is not falling on the police. We have also been supporting through police transformation—

Q119 **Chair:** That is good talk. We often hear talk about that collaboration. I visited Devon and Cornwall three years ago now. I know Anne Marie Morris is there more often than I am, but at one point they had two mental health beds available in the whole of Devon and Cornwall. The distance to travel to take somebody there tied up two officers. We had evidence ahead of this session from a number of police forces. One said that of 10 officers on duty one night, two had to spend some time dealing with one potential suicide and that took up a lot of the resource. We have heard the talk. What has changed since 2015, when I was hearing the same things on the ground, which we have all heard in our own constituencies? What practical, specific steps has the Home Office taken to implement what you have just said?

Scott McPherson: Clearly, in the Home Office we cannot influence the overall health budget and the way that is spent in health trusts. That is a question for the Department of Health and Social Care. We can work with forces to support them collaborating locally. You heard some good examples from your witnesses earlier of how police and crime commissioners are able to pull together local services, so that health professionals are working closely with the police. There are a number of examples where mental health nurses have been deployed with police forces. That is driving benefits in terms of patient treatment and reducing the demand on the police. That is the sort of positive local collaboration that we would like to see more of.

Sir Philip Rutnam: We can and do raise this issue at the national level with police, and with the Department of Health and Social Care.

Q120 **Chair:** Are you having any traction, Sir Philip?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I think they recognise the issue. I think that there is some traction. Would I like more? Of course I would. I would also like to be clear—this is partly, to be honest, where we depend on policing—what the top priorities would be, our key asks of the NHS and the Department of Health and Social Care at a national level. I would like to see that further developed. There are lots of examples of really good things happening in local areas. I was in Northumbria a few weeks ago and saw some really good collaboration between the mental health trusts and policing, but I would like to develop a fuller national agenda. This is something that our Policing Minister is also very focused on.

Q121 **Caroline Flint:** Who is at high risk in terms of future resilience, Sir Philip?

Sir Philip Rutnam: In terms of?

Caroline Flint: In terms of the police forces. Which police forces are high-risk? Paragraph 1.29 on page 28 of the NAO Report says, “While the Department assessed that pressure is currently at a manageable level, it identified a number of forces that were high-risk in terms of future resilience.” Who are they?

Scott McPherson: If I may answer that, this is the work that we did last autumn, where I was talking through the measures in relation to demand, financial resilience and performance measures. That looked at a wide range of different criteria. It did identify that there was some variation between the forces and therefore some forces were at a relatively higher risk than others.

Q122 **Caroline Flint:** Who is at a high risk according to your assessment and analysis?

Scott McPherson: I don’t have the data in front of me.

Caroline Flint: Could you write to us with who you think is high-risk?

Scott McPherson: I am happy to write to you about that. It was clear, as the Permanent Secretary was saying earlier, that there is demand across the board, nationally, on all the forces. That is one of the main reasons why we then focused in the research and financial resettlement on targeting money across the board, for all forces, rather than—

Sir Philip Rutnam: We will write to you with more information on this. However, I draw particular attention to the fact that we rely—in this area, as in a number of others—on the work of HMICFRS, which is a very important input. One of the things Sir Tom and his team specifically look at is the effectiveness, the efficiency and legitimacy of forces through their PEEL programme, and that is an important indicator.

Q123 **Caroline Flint:** I appreciate the work Sir Tom does, but just while you are on that, Sir Philip, do you think HMIC should be mandated to identify



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risks to forces' financial sustainability?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I think that is a good question—I don't know.

Caroline Flint: Do you know the answer?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I would like to think about that. I don't know whether we could mandate it to look at that. I think it is a good question.

Q124 **Chair:** Perhaps we should then turn to Sir Tom. Would you want to be mandated?

Sir Tom Winsor: You could. If I may add a little more to this debate about risk, we have moved to a risk-based inspection regime. We make our assessments as to which forces are at risk from a whole variety of data. We continuously monitor forces' efficiency and effectiveness, etc. We have introduced—as the NAO Report mentions, and as we talked about three years ago, when I was here last—force management statements, which are modelled on network management statements for the economically-regulated industry. This is a four-year look forward, and it requires the forces to measure all the demand that they face. They need to know what the demand looks like today and how that is going to change over the next four years. It won't change just in a straight line going upwards, although some of the force management statements imply that, because some demand will fall and some demand will rise more steeply, but it is a requirement for each force to measure all demand—crime and non-crime demand, latent as well as patent demand, hidden demand such as forced marriage, FGM, modern slavery, child sexual exploitation and abuse, and so on, and demand generated by the failures or shortcomings of other services.

For example, with mental health, which we have talked about a lot as well, police officers are often used as ambulances, because the ambulance service just doesn't do it. Also, in terms of missing persons and children's services, the time of day when there is the greatest demand on people at risk is 4 pm, which is when the other services—local authority services principally—are beginning to shut down for the night. They just call the police to say, "Here's our list. Let us know how things are in the morning." I think that is an illegitimate use of the police, but that is a question for you.

The force management statements also require the forces to assess how much money they have coming in. That is a relatively easy measure to do—they know where it comes from and how much it is likely to be. Then in the middle there are the assets, and the assets are predominantly people—there are ICT systems and police cars, but mainly they are people, the most complex assets of all. What is their condition, capacity, capability, serviceability, productivity, efficiency and security of supply? So, what about the productivity? What effort goes in and what outcomes do you get as a result of that effort? That is a four-year projection of those things. When we have that, it will be possible—in fact, we will not need to be mandated, because we will have the information.



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We already have 44 force management statements. We designed them, although that took longer than we wanted it to, but we did it—there was a certain amount of institutional resistance, I may say, but we also put a lot of work into designing them properly. One of the measures of the force management statements' success is that some of the greatest critics of and sceptics about them are now—well, to listen to them, you would think that they were their idea. That's just fine.

We have 44 of them now, and we are in the process of analysing them. They gave a fair degree of flexibility to the forces in year one: tell us how you measure demand? We didn't tell them how they must measure demand. We said, give us 44 different ways—and there are 44 different ways of doing the same thing—of measuring demand, then we will analyse them to see which is the best to measure demand on vulnerability, serious organised crime, CSE or whatever it might be. In year two, which we are in now, we will tighten that so that we require them with a greater degree of prescription to measure demand, productivity and so on in a particular way, and then in year three.

What is all this going to tell us when it is finished? It is already telling us an enormous amount. We have already been able to go for risk-based inspections on the basis of this information. We also have many other sources of information, which I could tell you about, but at the end of the day, when the force management statements are fully up and running in the year after next, what we will have is 44, which can be aggregated. We will know what the total demand—as far as we can ever tell it—on the police in England and Wales is, what the state of the assets is, their productivity and efficiency, how much money they have coming in to meet that demand, and whether it adds up. But it won't add up.

This is a conversation that I had 15 years ago with the Secretary of State for Transport, when we were talking about the railways: "You can't meet 100% of existing demand with 80% of its efficient cost. You either increase the money or you reduce the way in which you deal with demand." You may deal with less demand, you may deal with it according to a lower standard, you may screen out more calls and deal with them in different ways—all sorts of things—or you may do a balance of the two. But until you have that quality information, you cannot really make those judgments, and those are judgments for politicians to make.

Caroline Flint: My colleague Anne Marie Morris will probably pick up on this on the future strategy as well; that work you are doing is important to understand what police forces are doing about how they measure, but presumably we want to get to something—although there cannot be a complete one-size-fits-all, given the different areas—that provides consistency. Are you confident, Sir Tom, that the work you are doing on this is ongoing? It seems to me that it should be taken up by Mr McPherson, Sir Philip and the Home Office, to allow them to come forward with something that takes into account what you are doing, giving a better idea about what is in demand and what funding formulas should be like in the future. Do you feel that that is understood, or is that not



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something that is understood?

Sir Tom Winsor: Yes, it is. On the first point, we will attain a high degree of consistency but they will be sensitive to local conditions because local conditions do vary. In terms of the Home Office—and others—using this information, frankly the Home Office has always supported this project and it has been a consistent, enthusiastic and constructive contributor to the way in which we have designed it. So have many police forces and a fair proportion of police and crime commissioners. Some of them were a bit grumpy about it but most of them have come on board. Actually, the force management statements are eagerly sought not only by all the police forces, so they can see how other people do things, and by the police and crime commissioners, including their national bodies, but by the Treasury, the Home Office and even the Ministry of Justice. The statements enable them, as far as they go, to predict demand on the criminal justice system.

Q125 **Caroline Flint:** But important as this work is—and I think it is very important—there has been a 19% cut in funding. The cuts in funding have not necessarily been distributed equally. There has been a loss of the total police workforce, as well as I think a 15% reduction in police officers. Whenever Governments come round—and I mean Governments across different parties—and announce new funding and say, “This is better than what we had a few years ago.” how do we make sure it takes into account the impact the cuts have already had? Police forces do not say, “Tomorrow we are going to do all this.” You have to build up the capacity to do these things and be up and running again. What do you think the impact of the cuts has been, and how will that affect any new funding, even if funding in the future is bigger and better? How do we account for what has been lost already?

Sir Tom Winsor: Well, there are 50,000 fewer people in policing in 2018 than there were in 2010. Of course that has a consequence. As Chief Constable Barton said, in the earliest years forces have been able to find considerable efficiencies without diminution in the productivity, quality and volume of the output. It is a political question, which I am not qualified to answer, as to whether or not the cuts have gone too far. You are right in your approach, of course, that the central Government cuts have had different effects in different places. Northumbria have lost 26% of their police workforce: 1,800 people—900 officers and 900 police staff. With the same cuts, but because the local government taxation model is different, in Surrey they have lost 525 people, which is a 12% cut, but their police officer numbers are actually up by 96. Surrey and Northumbria have very different local conditions, but one of the big differences is the local tax base.

Q126 **Layla Moran:** May ask you, Sir Tom, on that exact point, about the number of people leaving the profession? Have you got a grip on exactly why they, as individuals, are leaving?

Sir Tom Winsor: Why they are leaving?

Layla Moran: Why are they leaving? In the teaching profession, for



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example, it has taken a number of years to tease out the exact reason why people are leaving. Do you know exactly why people are leaving across the profession?

Sir Tom Winsor: No, we don't know exactly why.

Layla Moran: Do you know any of it?

Chair: Can you give us a flavour of what you think?

Sir Tom Winsor: I think the mobility of the labour market is different now. Back in the day, people would join the police at maybe 18 and a half and stay for 30 years. It was a career for life. Many do stay, because even if they think they are only coming for two years, they might stay for 20 or 30 because it is such a rewarding line of work. People do come in for shorter periods because they just want more variety in more careers.

Q127 **Layla Moran:** Is that a fact that you know or a suggestion from your experience? Are you measuring that with surveys?

Sir Tom Winsor: We haven't measured it scientifically, but through our inspection work this is something that comes up again and again. Another one is the pressure that officers are under. The reality is that there is at least as much demand as there was, if not more, but it is different in nature and, as Sir Philip says, some of the demand is far more complex, both to detect—to find the offenders—and to investigate and prepare for prosecution. It is much more complex—made far more complex not only because of the nature of the demand on sexual offences against children, to take a single example, but because of digital devices that have to be interrogated. There are disclosure requirements and disclosure failures with the criminal justice system and much else besides, so the strain is much higher. Some people will leave because they believe that there is better pay. There is a national crisis in the recruitment and retention of detectives. There is a national shortfall of 5,000 detectives. That did not happen in one year. It has grown up over time, but it is still a crisis in detectives. Why are the detectives not staying?

In other parts of policing, the retention problem is not as severe. Chief Constable Barton said it was because of the Winsor reforms. Well, that was generous of him. The reality is that, because of pay structures, police officers on the frontline—in uniform, for example—can make more in overtime or in shift patterns than they do as detectives. That is regrettable. All I would say in defence of that review, which is now six or seven years old, is that there were also recommendations that specialists such as detectives—public order specialists, neighbourhood policing and so on—should get pay supplements, because these were particularly valuable or demanding roles. Very unfortunately, principally because of the opposition of the Police Federation, which regarded that as elitist, some of the allowances that police officers were getting were abolished, but the new allowances, which were much more focused, were not implemented. So police officers became worse off as a result of that opposition, which is regrettable, but that could very easily be fixed with a restructuring of pay. So I think those are the three reasons.



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Q128 **Layla Moran:** Are parts of the country managing to retain detectives better than others?

Sir Tom Winsor: I don't have that information right now.

Q129 **Layla Moran:** Do you measure such information?

Sir Tom Winsor: We will be measuring that through the force management statements and the other inspection work that we do.

Q130 **Layla Moran:** Okay. Sir Philip, how much money do you think has been wasted in people being trained up and coming in for five years, and then people not getting a grip on retention and losing those people so that you have to replace them? Are you measuring how much money is being wasted by the retention crisis?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I don't have a figure for that, I'm afraid.

Q131 **Layla Moran:** Are you measuring it?

Sir Philip Rutnam: We certainly look at trends in the workforce, including retention and attrition. My understanding is that turnover in policing resignations remains relatively low and there is a very good retention rate. But perhaps there is more information we can supply. There are definite shortages in some professions within policing, and there is an urgent need to grow some capabilities—for example, in relation to digital forensics—but overall we think the workforce retention is good.

Layla Moran: That's at odds with what we heard from the witnesses in the pre-panel.

Q132 **Chair:** And other evidence that we have had. One force said that half of their frontline staff have only been in place for two years or less. It's about what is in the pipeline as well. The cuts can have an impact.

Sir Philip Rutnam: That's surprising. My understanding was that, across the country, retention was good, but I will go away and—

Q133 **Chair:** But it is about money. Because of funding decisions, they freeze recruitment to reduce staffing costs. That is a way of avoiding redundancy costs, of course. If you then end up with a gap, you end up having to train, and you get very inexperienced feet on the ground, which can have an impact on the whole resource available to the force. Do you acknowledge that?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I acknowledge that freezes on recruitment, which there have been, have created bulges in the workforce profile and particular challenges, for example, in relation to the skills profile that I have talked about. Those freezes—not all, but most of them—have been eased off of late, and there is active recruitment going on. I talked to the Metropolitan police just the other day about very active recruitment and identified some very positive things happening in relation to workforce development—degree-level policing and police apprenticeships.

Q134 **Layla Moran:** Is that widespread or is it at pilot level?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I was talking about the Metropolitan police, but it is



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part of a wider programme linked to the work of the College of Policing, which we have not thus far mentioned, in relation to workforce development and the workforce of the future, which is a big part of Policing Vision 2025.

Q135 Chair: Can I just ask you: you talk about that easing off now, but did you at any point in the Home Office identify that there is a problem? When you have got recruitment freezes, you are going to have these bulge problems. You are going to have whole cohorts effectively missing in the system. Didn't you consider that when you were looking at the impact—your job is to champion policing across Whitehall—of funding cuts on policing? That is a pretty significant impact that it is difficult to measure. You can measure it in numbers but, actually, in terms of the wider impact, which is one of the things that we have talked about, and the value for the public—they are very much impacted by young, inexperienced officers, as opposed to a mix of officers of different experience.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I would definitely hope that we would have identified that and monitored what was happening to the police workforce throughout this period. It is part of our job.

Q136 Chair: Do you act upon it?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I cannot answer specifically on that, I am afraid. I do not know whether Mr McPherson can say anything.

Scott McPherson: I am sure we do have some data on that.

Q137 Chair: But do you act upon it? Having data is one thing.

Layla Moran: Indeed. What are you doing about it is really, I guess, what we want to—

Scott McPherson: We have been working very closely with the national police chiefs' lead on workforce reform to look at, as the permanent secretary was saying, bringing in apprentices, and look at career development for officers, including working with the College of Policing, who are the leads on that activity. We have also been very focused on frontline officers' morale. You heard from earlier witnesses—particularly the Police Superintendents Association—about officers feeling under stress. That is certainly something the Home Office has been aware of.

Q138 Layla Moran: How effective are those interventions, though, because what I am hearing from officers I know is that it is a little bit of a tick-box exercise, and you have someone you are meant to go and talk to but no one really knows them, no one really trusts them. Actually, it is a deeper issue that you are dealing with there. My question is, how effective are these interventions that you are bringing in? How do you measure it?

Scott McPherson: The key point there is that the primary responsibility for managing officers' welfare and for doing workforce planning is with local chiefs and police and crime commissioners, rather than with the Home Office.

Q139 Layla Moran: So what is the Home Office's role in this, then?

Scott McPherson: As the Committee has been discussing, the key role for us is understanding the totality of that impact and, in particular, thinking about how we set a national funding framework that enables police and crime commissioners and chief constables to allocate that money locally to meet those needs.

Sir Philip Rutnam: To which I would add, we have taken some particular initiatives; so in response to a police transformation fund bid, we have provided funding for a national police welfare service, which is an initiative I think is intended to make sure best practice is identified and shared right across the 43 forces, around welfare and mental health. Also, the Policing Minister has launched a frontline policing review, which is intended in part to help strengthen our evidence base ahead, running into the next spending review, around the actual experience of officers on the frontline. So it is, as Scott has said, the principal responsibility of chief constables and their PCCs, but it is very important that we, for our part, are as in touch with what is happening on the frontline, the experience of officers, as we can be.

Q140 Bridget Phillipson: Sir Philip, can I ask you just to respond to the point that Sir Tom Winsor raises around the differential impact of funding cuts, particularly where it comes to the ability of local areas to raise revenue—the example that Sir Tom gave around Surrey versus Northumbria? Can I just hear about the justification for that?

Sir Philip Rutnam: There will have been—the NAO Report shows it clearly—a differential effect because different forces have different funding mixes and rely to a different extent on central Government funding versus local precept. So there has been a differential effect. We recognise that. We monitor it very closely. We have sought, through the additional funding that we have provided—in particular in 2017, for this financial year—to increase the flexibility of all police and crime commissioners as much as possible, rather than have flexibility which is skewed one way rather than the other. I would not claim that is a comprehensive response. Of course it is part of the picture, and we have said, and we recognise, that the funding formula does need to change. It will need to change; but I would say that is a very complex thing to do, and it has to be planned properly rather than rushed.

Q141 Bridget Phillipson: It is just that my constituents don't really understand—and they tell me this frequently—why they are paying more now on their council tax only to see a reduced level of service. In the last year alone, 100 police officers have left. So it is hard to justify when other areas that do not face the same level of demand are not seeing that strain on their budget.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I understand that. I appreciate there are some very complicated things in here about, essentially, local taxation and central Government funding. It is complex.

Q142 Bridget Phillipson: But it is understood. It is not a revelation to the



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Home Office, is it, that some areas have the ability to raise more locally than others?

Sir Philip Rutnam: We understand that. I want to reassure you that, within the constraints that we have, we are seeking to understand as closely as possible the impact on local areas. There will be a funding settlement for 2019-20—that is very much in our minds—and there will be a spending review. The funding formula needs to be reviewed, and it will be changed. It won't in itself be a silver bullet for all things. I have worked in local government finance before, and I know it is very complicated. There will be trade-offs.

Q143 **Bridget Phillipson:** But the impacts are understood. It is well understood that Northumbria has a reduced ability to raise revenue locally.

Sir Philip Rutnam: Yes. As I mentioned earlier, I visited Northumbria myself a few months ago, and the Policing Minister has visited. We understand the position. Northumbria is right at one end of the spectrum.

Q144 **Caroline Flint:** Obviously, lots of police forces have been selling land and buildings. In fact, the Met says it has run out of things to sell, after selling £1 billion-worth of property, amid cuts. There have been 600 police stations closed in eight years. Have we reached the bottom of the barrel, when it comes to selling off assets?

Sir Philip Rutnam: As you say, a lot has happened, and the Metropolitan police, in particular, has had an ambitious transformation programme. There is still quite a lot more that it can deliver in that—I'm not sure it is specifically in relation to assets. Different forces have taken different approaches to presence in the community. That goes back to the accountability of PCCs and chief constables, and their operational priorities. Different forces have got a different asset footprint. That is a matter for them to decide. You said "the bottom of the barrel". I wouldn't use that analogy, but I think there is significant further potential through well-founded collaboration programmes, perhaps in relation to asset utilisation—there are some very good things happening there in some parts of the country—and in relation to services such as IT, HR and support services. There is definitely a lot of further potential for that.

Q145 **Caroline Flint:** Let me give you an example of what I think you are talking about. The police headquarters in Winchester has been sold, and the capital has been reinvested. The constabulary now pays a service charge to Hampshire fire and rescue to share an HQ building. That has had real partnership benefits, but it has removed a significant asset from the balance sheet, and has created an ongoing need to pay for accommodation. How are we going to assess the value for money, and morale in some circumstances, when a police station is lost? How are we going to measure what was there and how it was used against the future, in terms of cost and the sense of the reassurance the public want from seeing the police in their local community and in buildings in their local villages and towns?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I will ask Mr McPherson to pick that up.



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Scott McPherson: You gave one example, and there are a number of others where PCCs have led work to bring forces together. For example, in Staffordshire, the PCC there has created a tri-service centre in a fire station.

Q146 **Caroline Flint:** No, I don't want to go through a whole load of examples. What I am interested in is how the Home Office is going to measure the value for money of the selling of assets or shared services, where the police end up paying rent to the fire service, for example.

Scott McPherson: The key responsibility for getting value for money from that is with the local police force and the police and crime commissioner. The chief finance officer in the PCC's office has statutory responsibilities to ensure value for money for the activity—

Q147 **Caroline Flint:** You don't think there is any role at the centre of the Home Office for being the guardian of value for money?

Scott McPherson: We do take an interest in it.

Caroline Flint: That's good to hear.

Scott McPherson: And of course the accounts are audited, and we will receive that report from the auditors.

Q148 **Chair:** It is also about the structural things, isn't it? In the case that Ms Flint highlighted, Hampshire constabulary doesn't have a physical capital asset on its books; it is just paying out money. In the future, if the fire station were to close, it hasn't got anything to fall back on. There is then a material impact on policing and on their budget. Does the Home Office look at the risk exposure as this asset-stripping happens? We might have some forces without any physical capital assets, because they have done a big fire sale, and others that have maintained their assets in order to rent them out and earn an income. You can see the imbalance. Do you look at that across the piece and assess the risk?

Scott McPherson: I can see the imbalance. I wouldn't personally use the phrase "asset-stripping". Lots of these decisions are taken for a very good reason—to enable forces to provide better services to the public at lower cost, and to enable various emergency services to collaborate better.

Q149 **Caroline Flint:** But what if they are being made to just make up for cuts? This is the issue. It is one thing to look at your estate overall, whatever the organisation—in the private or public sector, for that matter—and say, "Do you know what? Actually, we could really do better moving things around. Building a building here, or doing something like that." Effectively it is about how you then invest. If it is selling off assets just to patch up cuts in services, that is not really a vision, is it? That is a patch.

Layla Moran: If I can give a good example in Bath, they sold their police station in the centre of town. They have now realised that that ideally should not have happened, and they are looking for a new venue and cannot find one. That is an example of where the decision was perhaps taken too hastily.



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Scott McPherson: I would be nervous if we were inviting the Home Office to take responsibility for overseeing every local decision about selling off assets.

Q150 **Chair:** But it isn't that, is it? It is a bit like with local authorities all buying shopping centres. Is anybody in the Home Office watching that risk base? I have seen a police station closed in my constituency that I did not oppose, because it was a grotty old building that really no one ever went into, but if all buildings suddenly went, we would all be a bit worried about what the resilience is.

Take the bus garages in London. They were all sold off, and suddenly you have buses running in for two hours or an hour with dead running because there are no passengers. That has materially affected the long-term service. It is not like there isn't precedent in other areas. Have you got sight at the centre of the Home Office of the risk exposure of these police authorities and these forces if they get rid of a certain number of buildings? Do you look at which ones are very lean and mean now, but might actually have problems later on?

Sir Philip Rutnam: Shall I comment briefly? It is, as Scott has said, the responsibility under the law of the PCCs, their chief finance officer, and chief constable—

Q151 **Chair:** We know that, but do you have sight of it?

Sir Philip Rutnam: To make sure that the force is financially balanced, and to make sure that the decisions they are making are value for money. *[Interruption.]* Hang on. Of course we have a deep interest in the financial resilience and robustness of forces, and we can talk about how we try to make sure we keep a close eye on that.

On this particular issue of asset-stripping, as you put it, and the particular issue of the balance sheet, yes, I would expect us to keep an eye on the balance sheet of these entities, in the same sort of way as I would expect MHCLG to keep an eye on the balance sheet of local authorities, but without getting into the detail of any number of individual cases. Balance sheet strength is part of financial resilience. There are key instruments. There is a financial management code of practice that we promulgate, which deals with tests of resilience that chief finance officers and others have to have regard to.

Sir Tom Winsor: We are just the inspectorate, of course. We have produced for the last nine years, on a force-by-force basis, value for money profiles for forces. This is the one for the Metropolitan police, which is the fattest—it is about 100 pages. It contains detailed analysis of the costs, according to policing functions, according to crime types and according to a whole range of metrics, in terms of the cost of the police per thousand of the local population, so that you can compare the efficiency of the spend of individual police forces on individual things against every other police force.



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The most valid comparison is against the police forces in what we call their MSGs—their most similar groups. The most similar group for the Metropolitan police is West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and West Midlands, whereas for Bedfordshire it is a whole load of others.

Those value for money profiles are on our website. They are used very extensively by chief constables, police and crime commissioners, and by many other people to assess the relative efficiencies, what forces are spending on, whether it is too much, or where the balances are. It is just another source of information. Overall, the inspectorate has a vast amount of very high-quality information, which is, of course, available to the Home Office, and they do use it, and to police and crime commissioners and many others. This data is something that we can, with expertise, analyse and produce to a very high standard, and make available to everyone.

Q152 Caroline Flint: Sir Philip, how are you ensuring that you have a better understanding of the level of reserves that forces need to ensure their financial sustainability?

Sir Philip Rutnam: We closely monitor the level of reserves that forces have. Each year we receive an audit report across all the police and crime commissioners' accounts, so we get regular reporting on the state of reserves. It is not actually our job to specify what we think the level of reserves should be.

That same issue arises in local government, and essentially the same guidance applies from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy: it is the job of the chief finance officer, in partnership with the PCC and the chief constable, to take a judgment on the right level of reserve for that force, given that they have to maintain financial resilience and are not allowed to go into deficit. There are very good reasons why it is not right to set a single figure. There could be a whole range of particular factors affecting the police force in that year, such as receipts or disbursements.

Q153 Caroline Flint: You have said that this is something that you need to look into to better understand it, but to what end do you need to better understand it if you are also saying that it is down to the police forces to sort this out?

Sir Philip Rutnam: We have a responsibility to be satisfied that the forces are financially resilient and will be able to continue performing their duties over time. We have a keen interest in that, and reserves are one indicator of it. There are a number of other indicators, as the NAO—

Q154 Caroline Flint: How do you match the reserves indicator against their expenditure and what assets they have to sell? How do you pull those things together in order to be able to assess whether a force is financially sustainable?

Sir Philip Rutnam: If reserves are particularly low, I would want to understand why. Is there a reason why reserves have changed significantly? If they are on a downward trend year after year, or if there



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is volatility, why is that? There are a range of questions that one can ask without taking responsibility for setting a figure.

Q155 Caroline Flint: A point raised by police and crime commissioner Alan Billings, from South Yorkshire police, is that the special grant system is at the moment done on an annual basis and requires that forces show that they have spent 1% of their net revenue before the special grant applies. His point is that they are done on an annual basis, but that some special events do not last for only one year but can go over several—I think South Yorkshire has several that fit into that category—which can end up eating into their reserves.

Are you aware of that particular convoluted problem, and will you look to see if there is a better way to apply special grants and maybe to reform them, so that they don't eat into reserves, particularly for those forces that have to deal with particular issues over a number of years?

Sir Philip Rutnam: We have a very active dialogue with forces, including South Yorkshire, about the special grant.

Scott McPherson: Although the budget for the special grant is managed by us on an annual basis, forces can apply for it during the course of the year. We have issued grants to several forces already this year. South Yorkshire, in particular, has had some—

Caroline Flint: No—do you understand my point? I understand all of that.

Chair: It is not the process.

Q156 Caroline Flint: I understand the process. The problem at the moment is that they have to find the first 1% from their net revenue budget before the special grant applies, and that it is done on an annual basis. It doesn't account for when a particular activity overlaps a number of years, which can then start to eat into their budgets each year if the 1% rule applies.

Scott McPherson: I understand the point. We have provided funding to South Yorkshire over a number of years, particularly in relation to Operation Stovewood, which has been a very big drain on the force, in terms of the investigation.

Q157 Caroline Flint: But they have to apply each year, and the rule applies. Do you understand what I am saying? Am I making myself clear?

Scott McPherson: You are right that they have to apply each year. That is the way that the special grant—

Q158 Caroline Flint: Should that be reformed? If an event goes on over a number of years, instead of taking 1% of the net revenue budget each year, you could actually look across the piece at what they are trying to deal with.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I suppose my comment would be that if the event goes over a number of years and the force knows about it, I expect the force to be able to budget for that and—I recognise that this may be



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challenging—to think about the priority to attach to that type of spending versus other types of spending. It is not quite in the same category of an unexpected event or a one-off event, which is really what special grant tends to be for.

That said, if I may say so, although there will always be some tension in this, I am proud that we have a constructive dialogue with forces across the country about the special grant. Indeed, recognising a number of particular events that were happening in this financial year, we were able to budget more for the special grant in 2018-19.

Chair: Would you put that in writing? I think we would like a bit more detail on that.

Q159 **Anne Marie Morris:** Sir Tom, your inspections are clearly very valuable and are a great source of information. You have given us an outline of some of the things that you look at. Would you explain to me how those inspections, and the criteria and the things you measure, have changed—because you have been doing them for some years now—to reflect the fact that, as I understand it from our last Committee, more police time is now spent on prevention, rather than dealing reactively with crime?

Sir Tom Winsor: We are always assessing our methodology and our criteria for inspections to improve them. Principally, they have changed since I took this job six years ago. We have established the PEEL programme—police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy—which looks at the core policing force every year. To begin with, we looked at everything in every force in the same way. Now, we have moved to a more risk-based inspection regime.

Q160 **Anne Marie Morris:** What do you mean by risk-based assessment?

Sir Tom Winsor: If a force is a well-performing force in a particular area—serious organised crime, acquisitive crime or whatever it may be—it may warrant less inspection activity, or indeed no inspection activity, so that we can devote our resources to the forces that need more, in the same way that Ofsted do with schools.

Q161 **Anne Marie Morris:** Okay. That still sounds to me as if you are very much focused on the crime and not the victim. Clearly, what you want to do is ensure there is less crime by focusing on the victim and trying to put in place more prevention methods. I cannot see anything in your system that looks at and values that prevention time, because it is part of the value for money piece. It has a cost.

Sir Tom Winsor: Yes. PEEL's first principle, as we know, is prevention. That is the primary purpose of the police; the absence of crime is the best measure of the effectiveness of police action, and therefore prevention is their No. 1 purpose. Not all police officers adhere to that, but prevention is far better.

Q162 **Anne Marie Morris:** How do you measure it?



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Sir Tom Winsor: It is hard to measure, because you are measuring stuff that does not happen, but—

Q163 **Anne Marie Morris:** Are you sure that is true? If I have a prevention programme, I might decide I am going to identify who all the most vulnerable people are, those most likely to become part of the drug trafficking scene or county lines. I know who all the people involved in this are, and I might work with them, both to make sure that the victims have resilience and to identify the criminals. You can measure it, because realistically, you can identify who the victims are going to be and therefore measure the amount of police time. You can measure the effect by, if you like, the reduction in the anticipated crime rate.

Sir Tom Winsor: That is the answer I was about to give you. Reduced demand is certainly one of the principal things.

Q164 **Anne Marie Morris:** Does that have a value? It is no good saying, "Well done, chaps, you have reduced the level of crime," without saying, "And there is a cost to that," because ultimately, this has to feed into the funding formula.

Sir Tom Winsor: It is harder to measure what the value is, but it takes the form of reduced demand, reduced reoffending—as Chief Constable Barton said—and higher public confidence. Neighbourhood policing will have an effect on public confidence and also, in my view, reduce demand, because they are in the community much more. But the principal point is that you need to know where that demand is likely to be.

We have developed with the London School of Economics a very sophisticated predictive analysis tool that divides the country into well over 100,000 individual communities of about 150 households each, which you can see on a heat map. It is a bit like Google Earth; you can just zoom in and find out where the areas are where crime, and particular kinds of crime, keep on taking place. You might want to use it to determine where you want to buy your house, but that is not what it is for; it is for predicting where crime is likely to arise in the future, because it arises there now. When you can see less crime taking place, particularly in those areas, and not being displaced to other areas, you can then measure the fact of prevention.

Q165 **Anne Marie Morris:** But do you give it a value?

Sir Tom Winsor: The economic value of prevention is harder to measure, but there are some measures. For example, we have talked a bit about mental health. Officers recently briefed me that when someone is standing on a motorway bridge on the M6, threatening to throw himself or herself off, it costs £1 million an hour to close the M6. That is an economic cost.

Q166 **Anne Marie Morris:** Indeed, so might I suggest, if prevention is so key, as you have said, and as the previous panel has said, that we need to look more closely and spend more time looking at how we measure that value? I accept it is difficult, but I think we agree that it is not impossible.

One other thing that I want to go on to look at is whose value this is. Is it



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value for money in the eyes of the Home Office? Is it value for money in the eyes of the police constable or the policing fraternity, if you like? Or is it value for money in terms of the citizen? When you have put forward this measurement system, which of those three is informing your decision?

Sir Tom Winsor: We are not making decisions, because we are not regulators. We are an inspectorate. We just provide information to others—

Q167 **Anne Marie Morris:** Is it the Home Office, then, that decides what the measures will be?

Sir Tom Winsor: No; we decide on the measures. We consult everybody to devise—

Q168 **Anne Marie Morris:** When you consult, who do you consult?

Sir Tom Winsor: Everybody who has an interest.

Q169 **Anne Marie Morris:** Do you consult the man in the street? Do you consult victims?

Sir Tom Winsor: We do carry out public confidence and public satisfaction surveys, and also public opinion surveys on a whole range of things.

Q170 **Anne Marie Morris:** But do you actually ask individual victims? Is there a process where individual victims are asked?

Sir Tom Winsor: Yes. We talk to the Victims Commissioner.

Q171 **Anne Marie Morris:** Is that measured? You talk to them, but is it measured?

Sir Tom Winsor: Is what measured?

Anne Marie Morris: The number of people and the level of satisfaction they have as victims—

Sir Tom Winsor: Yes, we hire public opinion survey companies which will do large surveys, so you get statistically significant feedback as to what people think their experiences are of policing and of—

Q172 **Anne Marie Morris:** With respect, Sir Tom, only about 5% of the general public ever experience any crime, so what the general public say and what those who are experiencing crime say is a little different. Are you measuring what those individuals who actually have experienced—

Sir Tom Winsor: Yes, we talk to victims and victims' representatives all the time.

Q173 **Anne Marie Morris:** What you are doing is providing, force by force, area by area, a map: "This is how good they are. These are the things that they measure." I am asking you to look at measuring not just the stuff that is reactive, but the stuff that the forces are doing proactively, and the extent to which those are things that the great British public want to



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see done.

Sir Tom Winsor: Yes. We measure proactive activity by forces—relations with communities and victim confidence, of course, but also, in the ways that we have just described, prevention and public confidence.

Sir Philip Rutnam: Could I come in on this, because this is an issue of deep interest to the Home Office, of course—system-wide, end-to-end responsibility in relation to prevention? We put a significant amount of effort into trying to make sure that we can cost crime. You talked about from whose perspective we are trying to look at that. In fact, it is all those perspectives, because ultimately, it is the cost of crime to society, and therefore the value to society, whether that is a police constable's time or the impact on the individual who suffers the crime—the psychological impact, the economic impact and all of those. It is all of those, and we try to produce and keep up to date a reasonably consistent set of measures of the cost to society of different types of crimes, and therefore the value if we can prevent them.

Q174 **Anne Marie Morris:** Okay. I put it to you that in most local meetings that I go to, people are worried about dog shit on the streets—things that are actually the responsibility of the local authority, not the police. It seems that the great British public do not fully understand what you do and why it matters. If you said to them, "We need to spend more money on cyber-crime," they would say, "Why?". If they are saying that to me, and I do not think my experience is unusual, it seems that you have not really engaged with the public. You are not going to get a meaningful answer unless they understand what the problem is.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I would say—a personal observation—that it tends to depend a lot on whether they or a member of their family have recently experienced some type of crime, and on where they live and their feeling of the risk of crime in that area. But I am sure you are right that there is more we could do—a lot more we could do—to communicate with the public on this topic and the value of prevention.

I would offer just one other observation: when you look at those figures, what comes out is the enormous costs when people are affected early in their lives: the lifetime costs of childhood sexual abuse or of domestic abuse in a relationship. It helps to get one to think about which are the points where it is most important to intervene.

Q175 **Anne Marie Morris:** Right. Given that we are short of time, Sir Tom, will you send the Committee some information that shows exactly how we deal with these two problems—one is about prevention—so I can see what measures you have in place that would enable the great British public, reading those very valuable reports, to see how you value that and measure the achievement of it? Sir Philip, will you give us some information and examples about how you engage with the public, how you understand what they consider to be value and how you meet that demand? That, if you like, deals with the question of dog shit versus cyber-crime. Could you do that?

Sir Philip Rutnam: Okay, yes. We will not use those words, but yes.

Anne Marie Morris: No, that is absolutely right.

Chair: Ms Morris calls a spade a spade.

Q176 **Anne Marie Morris:** I do. Earlier we talked about the integration of activity across the NHS, local government, the police, fire and so on, and we all agree that is a good thing. Sir Tom, how do you measure the value of the work the police do that is not actually police work?

Sir Tom Winsor: The police are called to do many, many things—as we have discussed many times. Taking people to hospital because there are no ambulances is not the police’s job, so that is clearly the police doing something they should not, but there is a great controversy over the extent to which the people should be dealing with people with mental ill health. These people are, depending on the severity of their condition, not committing crimes, because they do not have the necessary criminal intent, but nevertheless they are in danger of becoming victims of crime because of their vulnerability, they are in danger of causing injury to other people, and they are in danger of causing alarm and therefore disorder.

Q177 **Anne Marie Morris:** Yes, Sir Tom, I agree. Nobody is suggesting that the police would not do this work. My point is about finance, budgeting and governance. If the police are spending most of their time doing things that have nothing to do with policing, don’t you think that when the great British public look at how much is allocated to the police force and local government, they should understand the overlap and recognise that actually this money is not just for policing or for a local authority? It seems to me that, without that, Sir Philip cannot make any decisions about how budgetary interactions between Departments might look and how we might negotiate with these fellows. Sir Tom, how much of that are you looking at? Sir Philip, what sort of conversations are you having between Departments to look at the overlap?

Sir Tom Winsor: I mentioned the controversy just to put it in context, and I know you are aware of that. Force management statements will flush out just how much of the demand that the police are presently meeting, or being asked to meet, is truly something that the police should not be expected to do, whether it is mixed or wholly nothing to do with the police. We will ask them to value those activities as far as possible, so that decision makers—the Home Office and police and crime commissioners—can have the discussions with their—

Q178 **Anne Marie Morris:** How will you ask them to value them?

Sir Tom Winsor: We will ask them to tell us how they value them at the moment.

Q179 **Anne Marie Morris:** Will you give some guidance on how to do that evaluation exercise?

Sir Tom Winsor: We will give them as much guidance as we think we can, and no doubt we will get 44 different answers.



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Q180 Chair: Sir Philip, you have mentioned that your Policing Minister and previous Policing Ministers have argued this point. Are you developing metrics to press through Whitehall that say, for example, “This is what your failure to invest in mental health services is costing”?

Sir Philip Rutnam: Yes, that is exactly the kind of conversation. Just to give an answer to Ms Morris’s question, an example is that there is a strong perception in policing—and, I think, evidence to support it—that effectively costs are being shunted, to use a phrase, out of the health system and into policing because it is so often the first line of response. This is a matter for the Department of Health and Social Care, but as the strategy for the NHS and the plans for using the additional funding are developed—after all, today is World Mental Health Day—how will those plans be taken forward in a way that avoids and reduces that risk? What is the best way, from the Department’s perspective, to ensure that it is able to deal with mental health demand—prevention, yes, but also demand—that is realised?

Q181 Anne Marie Morris: Will you make that information transparent, so that the public can see the conclusions you have reached?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I hope so, yes.

Scott McPherson: It is really important that we not just talk about cost shunting as if cost is the only issue. One of the key things we discussed with police and with colleagues in the Department of Health and Social Care is how we can provide the best service to people in acute mental health difficulties. Quite often, that is not a response from the police. It is a question not just of cost, but of looking after people in very difficult situations.

Sir Philip Rutnam: It is a much better way of putting it.

Q182 Anne Marie Morris: Agreed. Therefore, the Committee would welcome any update on how the conversations and communications are going. Clearly, that is very important.

Crime changes very quickly. I must admit that I am a little alarmed, Sir Philip, by your view that there should not be some oversight by the Home Office on what goes on in the different areas. Ms Flint asked at the start whether you think you have general oversight of the police commissioners and the police at the Home Office, and said that you should have some oversight. To now say that you do not have oversight—at a high level you do, but at a low level you will not tell them what to do—makes me a bit worried. Nationally, how will you control the budget if you are not to some extent controlling in the Home Office the moving parts underneath, whether crime commissioners, police forces or spending pots?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I think this takes us to some of the fundamental principles of the way in which policing operates, and the way in which those principles have developed in the last eight years. To take a step back, we have a model over generations in this country that seeks to do two things. One central pillar is to maintain local accountability and local



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policing, which goes with policing by consent. That model has been further developed since 2010 with the role of police and crime commissioners enhancing local accountability.

The other pillar is to ensure that at national or regional level we are able to do the things that are best done at national or regional level; for example, specialist capabilities, of which counter-terrorism is a prominent example; serious and organised crime is another. The great strength of policing in this country comes from being able to combine those two models in a really smart way.

Q183 Anne Marie Morris: I would agree, but how are you ensuring that that happens? It seems to me that inevitably there is potential conflict among those three pieces. You have the politically elected commissioners and the technically proficient policemen on the ground. The two will not always agree on everything. At some point, someone will have to sort that out.

Sir Philip Rutnam: You are right that there is potential for conflict. I would rather, though, see it as potential for some creative tension. How does one best manage that relationship? It goes back to the importance of things like Policing Vision 2025. There was a discussion in the earlier session where Ms Kennedy said that the Home Office supports it but it does not own it. We are avid and keen supporters of Policing Vision 2025. We think it is important that it is a policed-led strategy, by police and crime commissioners and chief constables, but we are active partners and play a critical role in a number of key elements.

Q184 Anne Marie Morris: If you are simply interested, rather than providing some overarching leadership yourselves, there will be conflict and that will go against some of the things that the Government want to achieve. For example, I understand that the Government want more integration across different police services. The decision is ultimately made by the politically appointed individual, but I have seen a number of situations where the politically appointed commissioner's view about whether a merger is a good idea was completely opposite to the view of the operational officer. How will you cope with that, given that that would usually mean that you do not get a merger, which is contrary to Government policy?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I will talk at the more general level, and perhaps Mr McPherson will talk about mergers. I hope I was not giving the impression that we are just interested. We are, first of all in relation to the delivery of that strategy, very deeply and actively involved in a number of ways. At a higher level, we have a number of very important responsibilities, including, obviously, for the aggregate level of funding, distribution of funding, governance and legal arrangements and also for setting the strategic policing requirements—that is, setting out a set of national priorities that we require all police and crime commissioners and chief



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constables to have close regard to. They include counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime, but also cyber-security, public disorder—

Q185 **Anne Marie Morris:** You are making my point for me. You are effectively saying that there has to be some national oversight; otherwise, you can't work out what should be done nationally and what individually.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I don't think we are disagreeing, but the point I would make is about the value—

Q186 **Chair:** But you did increase the money taken off locally and put into the central, national priorities from 2018-19.

Sir Philip Rutnam: That is another responsibility we have. There are some programmes, including special grant, for example, which we run nationally, technology programmes, which we talked about at the beginning—

Q187 **Chair:** You have just made a great paean to decentralisation, which is fantastic, but in reality, the Department reallocated money from the frontline to national priorities in the centre.

Sir Philip Rutnam: We reallocated some, but it's a small proportion of the total.

Q188 **Anne Marie Morris:** How do you make those decisions? How do you decide what should be done centrally and what should be done locally?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I think that is something that deserves further reflection. In truth, there are some elements of history in the disposition of things that are done centrally and things that are done locally. We also have a model, which is very important, of police-force-led change. Take something like the National Police Air Service. That is a very important national asset. It is led by West Yorkshire police service, on behalf of all police services.

Q189 **Anne Marie Morris:** I'm aware of the different examples. My question is much more strategic, because I am very concerned that I am not hearing much about strategy, yet you are the ones who decide national priorities; you are the ones who decide where the money gets spent. And, if I can take the general mood music from the last panel, they are deeply frustrated that there is, in their eyes, no real sense of ownership by the Home Office of the overall strategy for everything that gets done with regard to policing. They feel that you are hands-off and that you are devolving not only the job, but the responsibility and the accountability, to them, which they do not feel very comfortable with.

Sir Philip Rutnam: That may be the feeling, but I would not agree that it is a fair assessment of the position. We are deeply engaged and recognise our responsibilities for the future of policing in this country. We do think there is great power and value from the partnership of police and crime commissioners and chief constables, and we heard about some of that in the earlier session from Chief Constable Barton.

Anne Marie Morris: Indeed, so why is there not a Home Office plan? I



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understand you support, and rightly so, the vision produced by the policing authorities, but why is there not an overarching Home Office plan? As I understand it, this was raised when this was discussed last time in this Committee, and we still haven't got a plan. Is it that there is not going to be one, you don't feel you need one, you just feel that the strategy—

Q190 **Chair:** Just to go back to what we talked about in 2015, there was a vague idea that it might be a good thing, but it was down to people locally to decide. As you heard earlier, the same barriers are there—things like council tax harmonisation. This is a technical thing they can't resolve on the ground. That really requires a decision by Government as to whether they want to back that, and help you go down that route, or not. It's like the Home Office sits back and says, "Off you go; do it on your own," which is absolutely devolution, but there are technical barriers that only you can drive through centrally.

Sir Philip Rutnam: Ultimately, this is a political question. The view that Ministers have taken has been that, in this phase, the devolution role of police and crime commissioners and the role of chief constables point towards a police-led strategy.

Q191 **Chair:** Yes, but the point is that there are technical barriers that only you can resolve. They can't resolve the council tax harmonisation.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I understand the point. This is something that I would expect us to keep under review, but it is, in any way we go about it, going to be a complicated landscape, which I accept is frustrating. I think Mr McPherson should comment on mergers, briefly.

Scott McPherson: If I may, I will make two points. One is that we are very, very supportive of forces collaborating with each other, and there are lots of good examples. In relation to mergers, the position that Ministers have set out is very clearly that we are not going to force mergers on any local forces; it has to be locally led. That clearly requires local leadership and local support from the wider community.

Q192 **Chair:** Sorry, but we have gone through that bit. What about the barriers that you can deal with at the centre?

Scott McPherson: I recognise that in the evidence you heard earlier the precept was highlighted as a particular barrier. Clearly, as part of the overall system for anybody who raises council tax—whether it is a local authority or a police force—there has to be a mechanism for equalising that precept in a reasonable period of time. We were disappointed in the particular case we were hearing about earlier that we didn't receive a business case, because a lot of work had been done locally to take forward the potential merger between Devon and Cornwall and Dorset. We were looking forward to receiving a business case—I think it was probably due two days from now.

Q193 **Anne Marie Morris:** Indeed, but it is because they can't get over the council tax problem that you are not getting the business case. You said that you are not going to take any responsibility for sorting it out.



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Scott McPherson: I understand that there is concern locally about how precepts might get in the way. If we had received the business case, we would have been able to consider the proposals for council tax equalisation.

Anne Marie Morris: But that's putting process in the way of getting the right results.

Caroline Flint: You can't ask people to do a business case on the basis of a possibility that the Home Office will sort it out, can you? Why would they bother putting all the energy and resources into putting together a bid, when they haven't got clarity about where the goalposts are?

Q194 **Chair:** Did anyone come and speak to you and say, "We've got this 18% gap. How can we harmonise it? Help!" Did you have those discussions?

Scott McPherson: Yes. We had very regular discussions with both police forces about the merger and about the business case that would be required.

Q195 **Chair:** The council tax harmonisation seems to have been a big barrier. Did you have specific discussions—

Scott McPherson: We had specific discussions alongside colleagues from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government about precept equalisation. With the two forces we are talking about here, there is a very, very small gap. The £18 gap is relatively small. It would be possible to equalise that.

Chair: It is quite a lot for individuals who are going to have to pay the £18.

Scott McPherson: It would be possible to equalise that over a couple of years.

Q196 **Anne Marie Morris:** We are getting into the detail. The point is that there is no disconnect between the Home Office having a strategy and a plan, and the Government believing in devolving the operational piece and some of the decisions, within the guidelines that are set in your plan, to the local areas. I cannot accept that there is no role and no need for a plan or a strategy. I don't mind what you call it, but it seems to me that that is necessary. I do not believe that the Government has completely removed its responsibility. I am slightly surprised that you are telling me that that's what it has done.

Can we move on, unless you want to send something to me in writing about that, to the issue of top slicing—the 11% that you take off? We heard from the earlier panel that they were unhappy with the way that was done. The transformation funding didn't arrive in time, it was not for a long enough period and, frankly, it didn't work. They would rather have had the money allocated to each of those different areas—and, frankly, they certainly need it. What is your response to managing this top slicing better? What is your response to ensuring these transformation projects actually work? That probably means looking at a longer-term scale.



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Sir Philip Rutnam: I will ask Mr McPherson to talk about delivering the police transformation fund and those projects. Top slicing—how to split the total funding settlement, and what grant to make to police and crime commissioners, who are accountable for that through the police grant report, which they need to lay before Parliament—is a decision for our Ministers. In making that decision, they weigh a number of factors, as you would expect. They weigh the need for a special grant in the year ahead. For the year we are in now, we increased the special grant, not least because of the CHOGM conference, which was going to put a particular burden on police forces, including the Met. They weigh a range of factors, but ultimately it is a decision for Ministers.

Q197 **Anne Marie Morris:** I am sure they do, but the people who give them the evidence are Sir Tom, based upon all the information that you are gathering, Sir Philip and Mr McPherson. It's lovely to say it is a decision for Ministers, and of course it is their decision, but you know what the facts are. You are the ones making recommendations. I don't want to know what the recommendations are, because you wouldn't tell me, but it seems to me that there has to be some basic understanding of how that cut should be made. What I am asking you is, will you be going back to Government and taking forward these concerns and complaints about how the top slicing is put forward and how the transformation funding is working? At the moment, we are getting negative feedback.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I will make two comments, because I am short of time. First, it is a difficult prioritisation decision. There will always be more demand than there is money. I assure you that Ministers—certainly our present Policing Minister and the Home Secretary—want to maximise the amount of money that is made available for police and crime commissioners. It is a difficult prioritisation decision.

Secondly, I will take away the request for more transparency around this. I think you have heard today from a number of sources that there is a strong spirit of collaboration between the Home Office and police forces. We want to work very closely and we need to work very closely. I will take away the request for more transparency.

Q198 **Anne Marie Morris:** Great. Will you also take back to the Minister a request for longer-term funding—two years is too short—for particular reform programmes, such as the programme to deal with modern-day slavery, which is based in my part of the world?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I am aware of the particular issue around the modern slavery programme. Shall we cover PTF?

Anne Marie Morris: Yes please.

Scott McPherson: A couple of quick points on the police transformation fund. It is £175 million this year, which is a relatively small proportion of the total funding going into policing. We work very closely with police chiefs and police and crime commissioners on the way it is allocated. The Police Reform and Transformation Board is the main point at which recommendations are pulled together.

Q199 **Anne Marie Morris:** But it doesn't work. That is what is being fed back.

Chair: We have had a lot of evidence on this—not just what we heard in the session.

Scott McPherson: Specifically on the points about it not working, we recognise that it has not worked as well as it should have done in the past.

Q200 **Anne Marie Morris:** What are you going to do about it?

Scott McPherson: We have put in place much stronger project management arrangements. We have provided support through the PTF to forces taking forward individual projects to strengthen their business cases and provide better evidence on the benefits that are being delivered, which has not always been done as well as we would like. We have also put in place a better way of managing the overall pot of money so we make sure it is allocated and spent in-year. We recognise from police forces that there have been some complaints about the time it takes to approve business cases. We have sped that up. We have got rid of some of the approvals processes.

Q201 **Chair:** How fast is it? Some were getting approvals in September to start a project and deliver it by the end of the financial year. How quickly are people now—

Scott McPherson: There are two constraints on that. One is the approvals process. We have streamlined that, so instead of proposals going through the PRTB and then the Home Office processes, we are doing it in one go.

Q202 **Chair:** So if people put in an application, when will they get their money?

Scott McPherson: Some of the funding for this financial year has already left.

Chair: I would hope so, because we are in October.

Q203 **Caroline Flint:** I still do not understand why transformation fund money cannot be shared more equitably across the forces. You could then benchmark how they were running their services against the police priorities. We all know modern-day slavery can happen anywhere in the country. It is not just a city issue; it can happen anywhere. What is the value of a transformation fund that you hold centrally? You keep telling us that it is all down to the police forces, but you are sitting on this pot of money, with all the admin around it. Why don't you just send the money out and have a self-improvement model, based on the work HMRC is doing, to better hold forces to account for what they do?

Chair: It might be cheaper, given the admin costs of what you are doing. It sounds like an incredibly clunky process.

Scott McPherson: It clearly would be cheaper just to put it into the grant. I would say there are two—

Q204 **Chair:** And then monitor it.

Scott McPherson: There are two benefits of keeping it in a central pot. One is that a lot of PTF projects involve multiple forces coming together. The money we can provide would not otherwise—

Q205 **Caroline Flint:** If multiple forces come together, they can share the pot.

Scott McPherson: It does enable forces to do things that they would not otherwise do. Also, some of the projects, including the one the Permanent Secretary mentioned earlier—

Q206 **Caroline Flint:** How do you know that?

Chair: Can we just have one questioner? Ms Morris is asking questions at the moment.

Scott McPherson: A number of the projects are done at national level. The Permanent Secretary mentioned the child abuse image database. We have also funded a national cyber capability so all forces have the ability to identify and respond to cyber threats.

Sir Philip Rutnam: If you take a step back and look at what has happened with technology, the best answers to many of the problems that policing faces lie in solutions that need to be developed consistently or available nationally. Let me give you an example. One project that has been supported through the police transformation fund is to provide a high-quality online contact route. That project was initially taken forward by three forces, of which Thames Valley was one. That has now been developed, and it is about to be deployed to 29 forces.

Q207 **Chair:** But there is a difference between something like ESN, which you need to do centrally because it is a huge tech project, and forces bidding to do something locally, either in collaboration or independently. It is a very expensive process to get that money spread out—and for only two years. If you want to do a long-term project, the transformation fund does not deliver, as we have heard in a lot of the evidence we have had. Do you not agree that there is an issue about long-term transformation because of the short-term funding?

Scott McPherson: One of the difficulties with the two years is that we are currently operating within the current spending review period, and what might exist in the next spending review is, as yet, uncertain. One of the choices that we will be deciding in collaboration with police colleagues is the nature of the funding that we would want to have in the future spending review, including the balance between national and local, the future size of a police transformation fund—

Q208 **Chair:** You are looking at the cliff edge drop-off.

Scott McPherson: I have certainly had a number of conversations with people where the complaint is about a cliff edge. One of the intentions behind the police transformation fund is to have an injection of money to drive a transformation. It is not intended to provide long-term funding, and the expectation is that once a project is delivered the ongoing cost is met within their overall budget.



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Q209 **Anne Marie Morris:** Last question, and this is to Sir Philip. Are you telling me that the Government are not about to produce, anytime soon, a plan or strategy for policing that will overarch what the Home Office, the police and crime commissioners and the chief of police do, and you are simply going to rely on the plan—Policing Vision 2025—that the police have drawn up?

Sir Philip Rutnam: What I am saying is that the present policy is that we fully support the police-led vision for change—Policing Vision 2025. We are deeply engaged with it. We fully support it. We are not—

Q210 **Anne Marie Morris:** So the answer is yes, there isn't going to be a plan.

Sir Philip Rutnam: May I just finish? I would expect us to keep under review the case for something that is at the Home Office level on that question of strategy.

Q211 **Anne Marie Morris:** So there is no current plan.

Sir Philip Rutnam: I am not going to make a commitment here to do that. That is a matter for Ministers, but I have heard—

Anne Marie Morris: Sure, but you are not aware of one, and you would be if there were one.

Sir Philip Rutnam: We have heard what you have said, and what is in the Report.

Sir Tom Winsor: Just to support what the Permanent Secretary said, the policy and the purposes of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which is the Act of Parliament, is that policing, and the accountability and governance of policing, should be very largely at local level. There is no provision in the statute for some overarching plan on the part of the Home Office.

The Home Office does have the power, and indeed the obligation, to allocate the police grant, and it has set the strategic policing requirement, but the policy and purposes of the statute passed by Parliament are that policing should be very largely local. There is power in the hands of the Home Office to direct collaborations where efficiency and effectiveness are promoted by that. The Home Office also have reserve powers if a police and crime commissioner or a police force is failing, but that is not what you are talking about.

Q212 **Anne Marie Morris:** You are telling me that it has to be in statute, otherwise there ain't going to be a plan.

Sir Tom Winsor: I would say that all the indicators in the statute are that, very largely, policing should be determined locally.

Q213 **Anne Marie Morris:** That is not the same thing as saying, "No plan," but you are saying that unless there is specifically an obligation in the Act to create a plan, you do not think one is needed.

Sir Tom Winsor: I didn't say that I do not think one is needed.



Q214 Chair: The statute says it has to be local. That brings me to my final question. Chief Superintendent Griffiths talked about the need for a 30 to 50-year vision. I think we have picked that up through a lot of other evidence. I do not think you would disagree that you cannot just do short-term initiatives.

Short-term challenges are obviously a current pressure, but if we are trying to do a transformation, that is a long-term project. What is needed over the next 30 to 50 years, and what is the role of the Home Office in setting that vision and supporting the frontline—the devolved PCCs and forces—in delivering that? The spending review timetable is very short term, but what is your role in that long-term vision?

Sir Philip Rutnam: I will give you a personal answer, if I may. First of all, I think it is a very good question. I am used to sectors where looking at a longer timeframe is the norm, and I have been struck, in coming into this world, by the fact that in policing it is a relatively short-term time horizon that we are working on.

If you take two steps back and look, you see fundamental trends around globalisation, technology and changes in society in terms of increased diversity and, arguably, individualism. We need to make sure that in the police service, which is an enormously important and valuable asset for the country, we combine the historical strengths of local accountability, local ownership, and that local sense of identity with the ability to respond to those trends.

Now the harm may be felt in any part of England, or Britain, but it may be originating anywhere else in the country or the world. It is about being able to think ahead to those fundamental trends of globalisation, technology and social expectations, and to how we can have a model that continues to keep that strength of local ownership with that response to, and anticipation of, the threats and harms that globalisation and technology bring.

Q215 Caroline Flint: What about the strength of local presence?

Sir Philip Rutnam: To my mind that goes with the point about local accountability and local ownership. Of course, ultimately all harm is felt locally. It is felt by—

Chair: All politics is local.

Sir Philip Rutnam: That is your business, but at the strategic level it is about reconciling that sort of challenge. What is the role of the Home Office in that? It is to help to provide—we cannot do it alone—the kind of leadership, and thought leadership, needed to address that.

Chair: And ESN is a very good example of where there has to be strategic leadership but absolute local delivery.

Sir Philip Rutnam: It is a good microcosm.

Chair: We will bring you back to that, and I will be responding formally to



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the letter, but you have obviously heard our concerns about that. Thank you very much for your time, gentlemen.