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Policing in the 21st Century

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The Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies.

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The following Member was also a Member of the Committee during the inquiry:

Mr Jeremy Browne MP (*Liberal Democrat, Taunton*)

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Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom. A list of Reports of the Committee since Session 2005–06 is at the back of this volume.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Elizabeth Flood (Clerk), Jenny McCullough (Second Clerk), Elisabeth Bates (Committee Specialist), Sarah Harrison (Committee Specialist), Mr Tony Catinella (Senior Committee Assistant), Mr Ameet Chudasama (Committee Assistant), Sheryl Dinsdale (Committee Assistant) and Ms Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Select Committee Media Officer).

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Key facts

- According to the British Crime Survey, crime levels have fallen by 48% since 1995.
- 53% of people thought that the police in their area did an excellent or good job last year; 43% of people thought the police could be relied on to deal with minor crimes; and 48% believed they would be there when needed.
- The average police officer spends around 14% of their time on patrol; the average police community support officer spends 75%.
- It is estimated that officers spend around 20–30% of their time completing paperwork.
- Alcohol-related crime is estimated to cost the economy £7.3bn a year. 45% of victims of violence describe their assailant as being under the influence of alcohol. 70% of police officers believe that attending alcohol-related incidents diverts them away from tackling other kinds of crime.
- Overall police spending was estimated at £12.6 billion in 2007/08.
- The police service spends around £1 billion a year on technology, yet up to 70% of data has to be entered into systems more than once.
- Only 12 out of the 43 English and Welsh forces employ a workforce of over 6,000, considered to be the minimum size for successfully tackling serious and organised crime.
- The police service employs around 145,000 police officers, 77,000 police staff, 16,000 police community support officers and 14,500 special constables.
- There are 6 applicants per vacant officer place and 6% of officers leave the service or transfer to another force each year. However, forces surrounding London have lost 1,038 officers to the Metropolitan Police in the last five years.

Summary

The police service is facing the challenge of a gradual yet significant expansion of its responsibilities. Greater clarity is needed as to its core role in the 21st century. Pressure to meet quantitative Home Office targets has often caused officers to prioritise trivial offences. We welcome the Government's undertaking to replace top-down targets with locally-set priorities, and encourage greater use of officer discretion, backed by more effective supervision.

Public expectations of the police are not being met. The public want the police to be more active in dealing with minor crime and anti-social behaviour. The police should be more visible and more responsive to the public, and should give greater consideration to the needs of the victim in investigating crimes.

A number of functions are putting particular pressure on police resources. Foreign nationals take longer and cost more for police forces to process than British citizens. Rapid immigration has led to funding shortfalls in some force areas. The Government needs to give greater assistance to forces in areas experiencing rapid population change.

We are concerned at the amount of police time spent dealing with alcohol-related crime, with forces now deploying officers for longer periods owing to changes in the licensing laws. We remain unconvinced that Alcohol Disorder Zones will have the desired effect but support the principle of mandatory contributions to policing from alcohol retailers. The practice of loss-leading should be ended and compulsory, enforceable standards for the industry should be introduced.

We are concerned at the large number of murder suspects released on bail. We support amendments to the bail laws to take into account the capacity of police forces to monitor offenders, and a presumption against bail in murder cases. We have seen examples of effective police approaches to reducing gang-related knife and gun crime, which combine diversionary activities with targeted, intelligence-led campaigns against known offenders. However, such approaches can prove very resource intensive.

Faced with tight funding, the police need to identify ways to free up resources. We are disappointed at the lack of progress made in reducing police bureaucracy but welcome plans for shorter crime-recording forms and new processes for stop and account. All frontline officers should have access to a personal digital assistant. Centralisation of the development and purchase of technology through the National Policing Improvement Agency would reduce costs, ensure systems are integrated and prevent duplication.

Regional collaboration works well in some parts of England and Wales, but progress elsewhere is too slow. The Home Secretary should use her powers to mandate collaboration. We support greater use of non-warranted police staff where this is cost-effective, but not to the extent that the number of police officers required for maintaining public order is significantly reduced. We are glad that the Government has abandoned plans to allow police staff to fulfil the role of custody sergeant.

After examining the structures through which policing is organised and governed, we

conclude that the tripartite governance structure should be rebalanced to return more control to local forces. There should be greater accountability of policing at a local level, however, the proposals put forward by the Home Office to restructure police authorities do not meet this need and may undermine partnership working between the police and local authorities. Neighbourhood teams can improve public confidence in the police, but need to gain a higher profile so that their priorities genuinely reflect the concerns of local residents.

There remains a gap in provision for tackling serious and organised crime. We do not support force mergers at this stage as a solution but reiterate our concerns about the lack of progress on collaboration. We found it difficult to assess whether the service has the capacity to respond to a major terrorist attack or manage large-scale events such as the Olympics.

There is no evidence of a drop in the number or quality of police officer applicants, but some forces have expressed concern over retention. In particular, the high number of transfers to the Metropolitan Police causes problems for surrounding areas. The recent lack of candidates for chief officer posts should be addressed through improving incentives, rather than by direct entry to posts from outside the service. There should be greater standardisation in the deployment of police community support officers. The Home Secretary should consider whether they could be granted powers of arrest in exceptional circumstances. We do not advocate affirmative action, but the lack of progress on Government diversity targets necessitates greater efforts to ensure that the police are representative of the communities they serve.

1 Introduction

Outline of the Committee's inquiry

1. In January 2008 the Home Affairs Committee announced its intention to conduct a wide-ranging inquiry to consider how expectations of the police service in England and Wales in the 21st century have changed and the resources the police have to meet these expectations, taking into account in particular:

- What the public expects of the police, how Chief Constables determine priorities and the role of the Home Office in setting priorities;
- The effect of heightened concerns about terrorism, immigration, gun and knife crime, identity fraud, the growth in cyber-crime and the Olympics;
- Public involvement in local policing;
- Roles of and relationships between Police Constables (PCs) and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the different ways in which police forces deploy staff;
- Use of technology to enable police officers to return to the beat;
- Definition of 'front-line policing';
- Police funding and the efficiency with which the various police forces deploy the financial resources available; and
- Difficulties in recruitment and retention, including quality of applicants and staff retained.

2. During our inquiry we held nine oral evidence sessions with 42 witnesses in total and considered 40 written submissions. A list of those who gave evidence is annexed. We wanted to hear a wide range of views and experiences from those working at all levels of the police service across England and Wales. To this end we took formal evidence in Reading, held seminars in Newark and Monmouth, and visited Colchester, Burton, Stockport and Manchester.

Background to the Committee's inquiry

3. In a white paper published in 2001, *Policing a new century: a blueprint for reform*, the Government set out its intentions to address high crime levels and low detection rates, increase public confidence in the police and make the service more responsive to local needs through a programme of police reform.¹ This work has resulted in changes to the membership and powers of police authorities; the introduction of neighbourhood policing,

¹ Home Office, *Policing a new century: a blueprint for reform*, December 2001

accompanied by the appointment of new police community support officers; the establishment of the Independent Police Complaints Commission to improve handling of complaints against the police, and a National Policing Improvement Agency to drive good practice throughout the service; and a greater role for the Home Secretary to intervene over poor performance. The merging of local forces into larger regional structures has also been considered, and abandoned.

4. However, these measures have not addressed the concerns of the public or police forces themselves, and many of the original questions posed in the 2001 white paper remain unresolved. Despite British Crime Survey statistics showing a steady fall in crime levels, which are down 45% since 1995, 65% of people interviewed for the 2007/08 survey thought crime in the country had increased in the last two years. Public dissatisfaction with the police is high: only 53% of people thought that the police in their area did an excellent or good job in 2007/08.²

5. Police representatives have argued against the current system of Government targets as ineffective in driving police performance, and what they view as excessive interference from the centre to the detriment of local autonomy. The Police Federation and the Association of Chief Police Officers have called for a Royal Commission to ensure a more fundamental review of how policing is organised and delivered. The last Royal Commission on Policing sat in the early 1960s, and the context of policing has changed dramatically in the intervening years.

6. We concurred on the need for a broader examination of policing in the 21st century. In the course of the last two Parliaments, the Home Affairs Committee has held inquiries into the police reform agenda and police funding, as well as considering relevant police activity during inquiries into anti-social behaviour, counter-terrorism and domestic violence. However, none of our predecessor Committees has ever held a wide-ranging inquiry into the state of policing in England and Wales. Our Report, while it does not deal with every aspect of policing, is an attempt to draw together the evidence on what were put to us as the main challenges of policing in the 21st century.

7. Our inquiry coincided with the publication of two major policy documents on policing: Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* and a Government Green Paper, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*. We respond to their conclusions in our Report, in the context of the evidence we received during our inquiry. We hope that this evidence will inform the continuing debate on policing in the 21st century and expect the Government to take full account of our recommendations as part of its programme of police reform.

2 Expectations of the police

8. We begin by considering the role of the police in the 21st century, the appropriateness of Home Office targets in setting police priorities and driving performance, and whether or not the service is meeting public expectations for crime prevention and investigation.

The role of the police in the 21st century

9. The Statement of Common Purpose and Values for the Police Service sets out that:

The purpose of the police service is to uphold the law fairly and firmly; to prevent crime; to pursue and bring to justice those who break the law; and to keep the Queen's Peace; to protect, help and reassure the community; and to be seen to do all this with integrity, common sense and sound judgement.³

This statement, adopted by the service in 1990, essentially reflects Peel's Principles of Policing devised in the 1820s. However, while the purpose of the police remains unchanged, a number of factors resulted in dramatic changes in police activity and the context in which it takes place during the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st..

10. Changes in society led to a steady rise in recorded crime levels between the 1950s and the 1990s, with recorded crime per officer increasing dramatically in the 1980s from an average of 26 crimes per officer in 1982, to 42 per officer in 1992. This figure has since remained fairly constant.⁴

11. Increased mobility and new technologies have facilitated new kinds of crime. Police witnesses cited internet-based child pornography, counter-terrorism, financial investigation of organised crime and gang-related crime as some of their new responsibilities.⁵ Traditionally, the police were responsible for investigating crime occurring in the relatively static communities for which they were responsible. Although the police service in England and Wales remains structured into 43 local forces, crime now often crosses force and national borders.

12. Moreover, an increased emphasis on multi-agency approaches to public protection has involved the police in a range of activities that were formerly the preserve of other organisations, including victim support and family liaison, managing offenders in society after release from prison, sex offender monitoring, and participation in Safer Schools and Youth Offending Teams.⁶ Increased partnership working enhances public protection procedures. However, the 2005 national review of crime and disorder reduction partnerships, which are statutory partnerships between agencies at unitary authority level

3 T. Newburn, "Policing since 1945", in T. Newburn (ed.), *Handbook of Policing*, Cullompton: Willan, 2003, p 87

4 Police Foundation/Policy Studies Institute, *The Role and Responsibilities of the Police*, 1996, p xiii; HC Deb, 9 June 2008, cols 83W–86W [Commons written answer]

5 Q 172 [Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison]; Ev 142 [Leicestershire Constabulary]; Ev 192–3 [Nottinghamshire Police]

6 Q 2 [Sir Ronnie Flanagan]; Q 782 [Chief Superintendent Dann]

to promote community safety, discovered that there was often a “hierarchy of participation”, owing to a situation in which:

Whilst many agencies and non statutory bodies including the business and voluntary and community sectors have a role to play in community safety locally, a handful of key agencies are ultimately accountable for delivery.⁷

Without clearly defined roles, the police are often persuaded to take a lead in such partnerships regardless of whether or not this is appropriate, as the agency primarily held responsible for crime.

13. A rise in the number of criminal offences has increased the scope of behaviour the police are required to record and investigate, adding to their workload. 3,605 new criminal offences have been created since 1997.⁸ The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) argues that as the number of categories of incidents the police are tasked to tackle has grown, “dealing with incidents has become the predominant focus” at the expense of “resolving the underlying problem of which the incident is a symptom”.⁹ The Deputy Chief Constable of Staffordshire Police, Douglas Paxton, agreed that more and more calls for service are now recorded as formal crimes. He told us that, since 1998, 29 new Home Office crime classifications have been introduced resulting in the recording of 750,000 new offences in 2005/06 alone.¹⁰

14. The result of these developments, according to ACPO, is that:

The service is grappling with an expanding, yet imprecise, mission ... In 2008 the police service in England and Wales can be characterised as having a mission that is wider than ever before and having a lack of shared clarity amongst stakeholders about what is expected of it in relation to the breadth of the challenge.¹¹

The Borough Commander of Hackney Police, Chief Superintendent Steve Dann, elaborated on this uncertainty:

What are we there for? I think we need some clarity around that ... Why do we take lost property? Why do we take lost dogs? Is that what we should be doing? My belief is I think we need to fundamentally review what policing is about ... You have some people saying: “Enforcement. Let’s enforce. That is your job”; other people are saying we should be in prevention, education. It is such a complex business now, policing, so I think we need to take a bit of a time out and say: “Okay, what are we here for?”¹²

The Police Federation argued that “a more holistic review of policing has been required for some time”, as the narrow focus of reviews undertaken since the 1960s has led only to

7 Home Office, *Review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: report of findings*, January 2006, para 2.20

8 “More than 3,600 offences created under Labour”, *The Independent*, 4 September 2008, www.independent.co.uk

9 Ev 231

10 Ev 291

11 Ev 230, 232

12 Q 782

“piecemeal change”.¹³ The Federation has advocated that the Government establishes a Royal Commission. A Royal Commission is independent of party politics, which is crucial when investigating a subject that has become very politicised, such as policing. However, Commissions usually take at least two years to report.

15. These changes have included the development of new structures to separate out and clarify the different roles of the police. Neighbourhood policing, which introduced teams comprising police officers and police community support officers to ‘neighbourhoods’ corresponding to local government wards between 2003 and 2008, was conceived partly as a means of returning to a more traditional, local service to deal with less serious forms of crime and disorder. More serious crime should be dealt with through the recently-established Serious and Organised Crime Agency and regional collaboration between forces. We explore these structures in chapter five.

16. The Police Federation argue for greater clarity is as to “who is responsible for which aspect of policing.”¹⁴ ACPO suggested to us that greater efforts to hold partnerships to account for the mutual provision of services could motivate all those involved in delivery to take responsibility. A new police performance framework, the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS), was introduced in April 2008, partly to recognise that so much police work is undertaken in partnership. ACPO, however, expressed concern that local authorities and other partner agencies are still not bound by APACS performance indicators to the same extent that the police are.¹⁵ Gwent Police and Police Authority representatives repeated this concern with regards to Welsh local authorities during our visit to Monmouth.¹⁶

17. The role of the police in the 21st century is broader than it has ever been, owing to a sharp rise in crime levels during the second half of the 20th century, the classification of increasing numbers of incidents as criminal offences, the impact of changes in society and technological advances on patterns of criminality, and growing police involvement in multi-agency approaches to public protection. To ensure the police can fulfil their core roles effectively, there is a need for greater clarity as to their mission and the extent of their responsibilities. Recent reviews of different aspects of policing have not gone far enough. We recommend that an independent review, such as a Royal Commission, or similarly independent review, is established to review what the police do and how they are organised to do it. This review should be focussed and time-limited, in order to provide the police with the clarity about their role that they urgently need. The Government should exercise caution in future when classifying undesirable behaviour as criminal offences.

18. It is vital that the police are involved in partnership activity at a local level as an effective means of preventing and protecting the public against crime. However, the police should not be expected to fill gaps left by a lack of capacity on the part of other statutory or community organisations. All agencies involved in partnership work

13 Ev 203

14 *Ibid.*

15 Ev 234; Q 196

16 Committee visit to Monmouth, 16 June 2008

should be held accountable for delivery. In replying to this report, the Home Office should provide us with assurance that all local authorities in England and Wales will be held to account for Assessment of Policing and Community Safety indicators.

Home Office expectations of the police

“Hitting the target but missing the point”

19. The Home Office sets out its expectations for police activity through a series of targets in the form of statutory performance indicators. Performance against these targets was measured by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary through the Police Performance Assessment Framework between 2004 and 2008, and will henceforth be measured through the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety. Since 1998, the Government has also increasingly used Public Service Agreements published as part of Comprehensive Spending Reviews as a means of setting performance targets for particular areas of activity.

20. We heard evidence that many police officers, irrespective of rank, consider some Home Office targets to be unhelpful, particularly those for ‘offences brought to justice’ and ‘sanction detections’, in that they prevent the police from focusing activity where it is most needed. ‘Offences brought to justice’ are crimes reported to the police that have been resolved by means of a conviction, caution, penalty notice for disorder, offences taken into consideration at court or a formal warning for cannabis possession. In 2005, the police were set a target of contributing towards bringing 1.25 million offences to justice each year by 2007/08.

21. 1,447 million offences were in fact brought to justice in the twelve months to March 2008,¹⁷ but it is argued that the target was met by increasing the number of lower-level offences that were taken through to prosecution, where offenders might previously have been let off. Brian Paddick, a former Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police who gave evidence in his capacity as Liberal Democrat London mayoral candidate, told us:

The problem with the Home Office was nationally imposed targets, some of which were having perverse outcomes. For example, in terms of offences brought to justice, I am sure the Committee will realise that it is one point on the score board for a complex case of murder which might take 18 months to investigate and six months to try in court, provided there is a conviction that counts as one offence brought to justice, and a cannabis warning that takes 20 minutes to deal with on the street which counts as exactly the same under current Home Office targets.¹⁸

7.1% of the 1.447 million ‘offences brought to justice’ were cannabis warnings.

22. To contribute towards the ‘offences brought to justice’ target, the Home Office ordered the police to increase their rate of ‘sanction detections’—offences that are detected or cleared by charging someone, issuing a penalty notice or giving a caution:

¹⁷ Quarterly performance figures for Local Criminal Justice Boards, published 31 July 2008, http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/the_cjs/whats_new/news-3686.html

¹⁸ Q 117

The Government is clear that to ensure more offenders are brought to justice, the rate and quality of sanction detection must improve. Sanction detection rates in many forces are too low ... to provide a level of sanction detections sufficient to meet the offenders brought to justice target, it is estimated that forces will be required to improve their sanction detection rate from its current level of 18.7% to at least 25% nationally by 2008.¹⁹

23. Again, in order to meet this kind of quantitative target, it is easier for officers to pursue minor offences than the more complex crimes, and to abandon their professional discretion in how they might best deal with these incidents. Chief Superintendent Dave Hudson of Essex Police told us that his Colchester division had a daily target of 20.5 'sanction detections', with the same weighting accorded to every detection, regardless of the seriousness of the offence.²⁰ Seven out of ten of the Basic Command Unit Commanders surveyed by the Policy Exchange think tank in 2007 believed that "central targets have degraded their ability to provide high quality policing", while just under a fifth thought these targets "have had no impact on the quality of policing at all".²¹

24. The situation is made worse by the discrepancy between the police target to increase the number of detections and the CPS target to reduce the number of failed prosecutions. According to the Police Federation, this results in "a police service more likely to pursue charges and cautions and a CPS who have become more risk averse, requiring at least a 51% chance of success before they will even consider proceeding with a prosecution".²² Harriet Sergeant comments in a recent pamphlet, *The Public and the Police*:

The police find their targets in conflict with those of the CPS, to the detriment of the public. CPS lawyers are judged, amongst other things, by the proportion and volume of successful convictions. This supposedly sensible target has two unintended consequences ... CPS lawyers only bring to court those cases they are fairly sure of winning. In order to do so, they will 'test every drunk to the level of a terrorist', complained one sergeant, and collect 'every single, tiny scrap of evidence' ... Investigating each case at such length ... has 'massive resource implications' for the police ... The CPS target also brings them into conflict with the interests of the victim. Many police officers felt bitter about the number of cases being dropped.²³

25. Several witnesses expressed concern that individuals are being criminalised for trivial misdemeanours. The Chairman of the Police Federation, Paul McKeever, argued:

If you take it down to the basic level, if you have a motorist who is stopped and is given a lecture about their driving, often, in my experience, they have been more willing to take that and perhaps amend their ways than if you take them through the hard process of reporting them and putting penalty points on their licence. That is

19 Home Office, *National Policing Plan 2005–2008*, November 2004, p 3

20 Committee visit to Colchester, 3 March 2008

21 Ev 159

22 Ev 204

23 Harriet Sergeant, *The Public and the Police*, London: Civitas, 2008, pp 28–30

not going to show up in targets. So we are losing that because, clearly, it is going to be better for the officer to report that person because there is a tick in the box.²⁴

The Youth Justice Board expressed concern that minor offences committed by young people in particular are leading to disproportionate processing by the police.²⁵

26. The current system of performance management also causes forces to concentrate on areas of work that are included in performance indicators to the exclusion of unmeasured areas, in particular what might be important locally, and on short-term issues to the exclusion of longer term considerations.²⁶ Chief Superintendent Ian Johnston, President of the Police Superintendent's Association, told us when we visited Monmouth that the police are "hitting the target but missing the point".²⁷

The new focus on serious crime

27. The Minister of State for Counter-Terrorism, Security, Crime and Policing, Rt Hon Tony McNulty MP, told us that the Government has taken note of the criticism over targets:

Last summer when we launched our new crime strategy we reflected those concerns, and have said from the centre now, in terms of targets and performance, that serious crime is and should be the focal point. That is not to say that all the gains made on the lower end, high volume crime, somehow do not matter any more, but we think the CDRP [Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership]/LLA [Local Area Agreement] type process, where all partners come together locally, will deal with that sufficiently. Also, within that, the new "offences brought to justice" target, which is an appropriate measure of performance, I think, is effectively tiered; so it is not the case that one "crime" is equal to the others.²⁸

28. The table below sets out statutory performance indicators (SPIs) for 2008/09:²⁹

SPI number	Short title
1.1	Satisfaction with service delivery (Police)
1.2	Comparative satisfaction with service delivery (Police)
1.3	Satisfaction with service delivery (racist incidents)
1.4	Satisfaction with service delivery (CJS)
2.1	Understanding local concerns (agencies)
2.2	Dealing with local concerns (agencies)

24 Q 638

25 Ev 175

26 Ev 160 [Policy Exchange]

27 Committee visit to Monmouth, 16 June 2008

28 Q 794

29 Home Office, *Guidance on statutory performance indicators for policing and community safety 2008/09*, March 2008

SPI number	Short title
2.3	Residents' perception of police performance
2.4	Effectiveness of the CJS
2.5	Fairness of the CJS
3.1	Minority ethnic police officer recruitment
3.2	Female police officer representation
4.1	Perception of anti-social behaviour
4.2	Perception of drunk or rowdy behaviour
4.3	Perception of drug use/drug dealing
5.1	Serious violent crime rate
5.2	Serious acquisitive crime rate
5.3	Assaults with less serious injury rate
5.4	Domestic homicide rate
5.5	Gun crime rate
5.6	Knife crime rate
6.1	Serious violent offences brought to justice
6.2	Serious acquisitive offences brought to justice
6.3	Sanction detection rate for racially and religiously aggravated crimes
6.4	Serious sexual offences brought to justice
7.1	Deliberate fires
8.1	Asset recovery
9.1	Road traffic casualties
10.1	Prolific and other Priority Offender re-offending rate
11.1	Adult re-offending rate
11.2	Youth re-offending rate
11.3	First time youth offending
12.1	Police service efficiency
13.1	Police officer sickness absence rate
13.2	Police staff sickness absence rate

29. Generic targets for offences brought to justice and sanction detection are no longer part of the performance indicators. 'Offences brought to justice' and 'sanction detection' rates that are required to be measured are for serious crimes, including 'most serious' offences, serious acquisitive offences, racially and religiously aggravated crimes, and serious sexual offences. The new Public Service Agreements announced as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review also emphasise serious crime and are intended to give local police and partner agencies more discretion in what they prioritise.

30. ACPO has welcomed the Government's change of focus from volume crime (crime categories of a statistically high incidence) towards serious crimes. However, the Association still has some misgivings about the way in which the Government measures performance:

The qualitative aspects of the service are often overlooked or underwritten. The narrow focus on quantitative targets extends to some of the current proposals around APACS targets for serious and organised crime and even counter-terrorism. These types of offending just simply do not lend themselves to quantitative metrics.³⁰

Paul McKeever also advocated a move towards more qualitative assessment:

Clearly, it [performance] has to be evaluated, but at the moment it is done really just on a statistical basis. You have to have it evaluated by good quality supervisors, at sergeant level and inspector level, as well. The public, surely, want to have those supervisors out on the street making sure that critical incidents are dealt with, and the public are being dealt with, in a fashion that is of a high quality rather than just looking at the amount of work that is produced. I think that hands-on supervision is a very important aspect of how things should go in the future as well, rather than just looking at the statistical data.³¹

31. The Government is currently consulting on further proposals that the Home Office will no longer set or maintain top-down numerical targets for individual police forces; that the Home Office will no longer make graded assessments under APACS (although the framework will remain); and that HMIC, rather than the Home Office, will take the lead in making qualitative assessment of performance.³²

Towards greater discretion

32. If officers were under less pressure to meet quantitative targets, they would be able to use a greater degree of discretion in dealing with incidents. This would allow them to consider the needs of the victim in how an investigation should be taken forward, and also the right course of action for an offender, judged on the seriousness of the offence. This approach was supported by a number of witnesses, including Nottinghamshire Police

30 Q 197; Ev 235

31 Q 641

32 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, pp 81–2

Authority and the Youth Justice Board. However, we note Liberty's argument that "broadly defined discretionary powers ... place a massive burden on individual officers".³³

33. An increase in discretion would require effective supervision on the part of sergeants and inspectors who oversee the work of police constables, to ensure consistency in standards. A thematic inspection published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) earlier in 2008, *Leading from the frontline*, found widespread variation in standards of leadership and supervision, owing to both a lack of clarity as to what was expected of frontline sergeants, and skills gaps. 63% of the 4,200 sergeants who responded to a questionnaire undertaken for the review had not received role-specific training. Only 59% felt that they were prepared for the rank of sergeant when they were promoted. Only 30% were satisfied with the way their forces prepared them for the rank. The report also found that in many cases sergeants were no longer challenging their team on poor behaviour. HMIC made a series of recommendations to be taken forward by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), including development of national standards for the role of sergeant, more role-specific training for frontline sergeants and a review of promotion processes to ensure only suitable candidates undertake the role.³⁴

The absence of fraud from performance targets

34. Several organisations wrote to us to express their concern about the absence of fraud, including identity fraud, from performance targets. CIFAS, a membership organisation which describes itself as the UK's non-profit fraud prevention data sharing scheme, stated:

It is extraordinary that the agency with primary responsibility for policing crime in this country does not have fraud as a priority. Indeed, in recent years, despite knowledge of the extent of the problem having grown ... some Chief Constables have been systematically reducing fraud squad numbers until in a number of forces a fraud squad no longer exists ... Having studied the Performance Indicators that police performance will be assessed against, however, it is clear that the current approach to policing fraud, identity fraud and cyber-crime will prevail and that these crimes will continue to be largely ignored by both the Home Office and the police.³⁵

The City of London Police added "It is important to note that the National Community Safety Plan does not mention fraud and, accordingly, fraud is not seen as a priority for most forces".³⁶

35. It is estimated that fraud costs the UK £13.9 billion annually.³⁷ A survey carried out in 2007 by life assurance firm CPP established identity fraud as the number one worry for the public.³⁸ Precise figures on identify fraud are hard to come by, but in *Realising Britain's Potential: Future Strategic Challenges for Britain*, the Cabinet Office stated that during the

33 Ev 175 [Youth Justice Board]; Ev 177 [Nottinghamshire Police Authority]; Ev 257 [Liberty]

34 HMIC, *Leading from the frontline*, July 2008

35 Ev 166–7

36 Ev 183

37 Association of Chief Police Officers, *The Nature, Extent and Economic Impact of Fraud in the UK*, February 2007, <http://www.acpo.police.uk/asp/policies/Data/Fraud%20in%20the%20UK.pdf>

38 "Modern life 'causes major stress'", *BBC News Online*, 11 April 2007, www.bbc.co.uk/news

first half of 2007, “nearly 32m illegal attempts to acquire personal information electronically were detected worldwide, an increase of more than 150% over the previous six months”.³⁹

36. To emphasise the extent of criminal activity in this area, Navigant Consulting provided us with information on Internet Relay Chat (IRC) channels, one means of online communication in which personal data are exchanged. Their recent study of activity in this area found that 16,000 card numbers were collected over a week. They argued that:

Awareness remains low. This was illustrated recently by Sir Ronnie Flanagan’s *Review of Policing*, which made no reference to the Internet, or the challenges to policing posed by online activity. We acknowledge that the online space is only one area of focus for 21st Century policing; however, we believe it is a key growth area for criminals in future and should be addressed as a priority.⁴⁰

37. Fraud investigation requires high levels of training and expertise. With the exception of the City of London Police, which has been designated as the lead force for delivering the Government’s fraud strategy, forces find it difficult to dedicate resources to an area which is not designated by the Home Office as a priority.

38. The current system of measuring police performance has distorted operational priorities, criminalised many individuals for trivial misdemeanours, and prevented forces from focusing on what is important locally. There is much to be welcomed in initial attempts to reform the performance framework. We are pleased that the generic targets for offences brought to justice and sanction detections, which encouraged forces to focus on the easiest crimes to resolve rather than those which have the most significant impact on public safety, have been removed from the 2008/09 statutory performance indicators. These changes should be reflected in local practice and must be reinforced by an alignment in performance measures between the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. We support the Government’s proposal to end top-down numerical targets, as set out in the Green Paper. The shift towards greater performance monitoring at a local level will require that police authorities are properly resourced to undertake this role.

39. We are disappointed that fraud is not a police priority, given that it is estimated to cost the UK nearly £14 billion per year and identity fraud is a cause of major public concern. We recommend that forces are required to give greater priority to tackling fraud and are allocated sufficient resources to carry out this function.

40. There should be a greater focus on the qualitative aspects of police performance. We accept that it is inappropriate to measure performance on counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime through quantitative targets and the Home Office should devise a different means of measuring performance in this area.

41. Officers should be given greater discretion so that they can deal with incidents in the most appropriate way, particularly from the perspective of the victim, but also for

39 Cabinet Office, *Realising Britain’s Potential: Future Strategic Challenges for Britain*, February 2008, p 111

40 Ev 202

the perpetrator and the criminal justice system as a whole. But the success of this measure relies on effective supervision from frontline sergeants. To this end, we urge the Government to facilitate speedy implementation of HMIC recommendations for national standards for the role of sergeant, training for frontline sergeants and review of promotion processes. We also seek assurances that training for all new officers will help to ensure that they are confident to use their discretion, and the public can have confidence in them to do so.

Public expectations of the police

Low public confidence

42. At our Monmouth seminar, the Deputy Chief Constable of Gwent Police, Mick Giannasi, told us that whilst crime in Gwent had fallen consistently, more crimes had been detected and more offenders brought to justice, local people still believed that crime was increasing, they felt less safe and were generally less satisfied with the police.⁴¹ This is representative of the national picture. Since peaking in 1995, crime measured by the British Crime Survey has fallen by 48%.⁴² However, according to the most recent national survey, 65% of people thought crime in the country had increased over the past two years, though only 39% thought it had risen in their local area. Only 53% of people thought that the police in their area did an excellent or good job in 2007/08.⁴³

43. Louise Casey, who was commissioned by the Government to investigate public attitudes towards to the criminal justice system in 2008, concluded that:

Most of the public do not believe the official statistics on crime—they think the statistics miss some important crimes and that many minor crimes go unreported. They have lost trust in how figures are relayed to the public—with ‘cherry-picking’ of figures by the media, politicians of all parties, professionals and single-interest lobby groups.⁴⁴

Whilst she argues that concerns are partly fuelled by media coverage of violent crime, Ms Casey states that:

It would be wrong to dismiss public concern about crime as nothing more than a gap between perception and reality. That is not the case. The crime, anti-social behaviour and disrespect that the public see and experience themselves, and their perceptions and worries about crime more generally, make communities feel unsafe.⁴⁵

The revelation in October 2008 that some police forces had failed to record a number of criminal offences in the correct category, meaning that serious violence was in fact 20% higher than shown in official figures, has only increased this mistrust.⁴⁶

41 Committee visit to Monmouth, 16 June 2008

42 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, p 8

43 Home Office, *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, July 2008, p 117

44 Louise Casey, *Engaging Communities in the Fight against Crime*, Cabinet Office, June 2008, Executive Summary, p 6

45 *Ibid.*, p 7

46 “Police blunder hides true scale of violence”, *The Times*, 24 October 2008, p 3

44. The Mayor of London advocated the publication of maps depicting local crime hotspots as a means of informing the public about crime in a way they can trust:

Crime mapping, if done sensitively with regard to what is happening in the broad locality, can be very useful in informing people of what is really going on in their neighbourhood. Sometimes the news will be good in the sense that they may have an impression of criminality which is completely underserved. When there is bad news, it will give people a vital tool to enable them to go to the police and say, “We have this problem in our street. Nothing is being done about it. You sort it out”.⁴⁷

45. Although some concerns have been raised about the implications of crime-mapping for reinforcing negative impressions of certain neighbourhoods, the accuracy and reliability of crime mapping, and the potential for maps to act as an “encyclopaedia” of vulnerable areas,⁴⁸ there appears to be general support for the measure amongst the public and across political parties. As of September 2008, maps depicting robbery, burglary and vehicle crime on a sub-ward basis were available in London, Hampshire, Lancashire, the West Midlands and West Yorkshire. According to the Green Paper, all police forces in England and Wales will publish crime maps by the end of 2008.⁴⁹

46. Low levels of public confidence in the police and distrust of crime statistics are in part driven by a lack of clear information about local crime and police activity. The public should be provided with better information about crime levels in their neighbourhood. Neighbourhood crime mapping appears to be a useful means to achieve this, but the Home Office should be alert to the potential for criminals to use this information to target certain areas. Local police successes should also be publicised in more detail, to reassure the public in a way in which outline crime reduction statistics do not. The Government should consider how this information can be provided in a way that is genuinely accessible. In addition to improving trust and confidence, this information should prove a useful tool in setting neighbourhood policing priorities that genuinely reflect local problems. As a matter of course, police forces should make available to the media the general details of criminal activities that have been reported to the police.

Public encounters with the police

47. Surveys conducted for Sir Ronnie Flanagan’s *Review of Policing* showed that, in terms of the public’s expectation of the police, their main concern was over “their encounter with the police, that it is a good, effective, professional and courteous encounter and when the police are needed in their view the police are available”.⁵⁰ This desire for better availability was reinforced by Helen Newlove, who has campaigned for a more responsive police service following the murder of her husband, Gary Newlove, in 2007:

47 Q 854

48 “Crime on the map”, *Police Review*, 12 September 2008, p 45

49 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, p 34

50 Q 6

They did not come out because if it is just criminal damage they do not come out. It is not necessary for them to respond to it ... The police came after the event, so there was no policing. We have been told on the phone that we are fifteenth down the line and that they are too busy in Warrington town centre.⁵¹

48. Anecdotal evidence from our own constituencies suggests that people are unhappy that the police do not take action against criminal damage, anti-social behaviour, and harassment; and they are frustrated that they often do not receive a response from the police once they have reported a crime. In one case reported in the national press, a couple who dialled 999 to report a burglary at a neighbour's home in Cambridge received a text message from a police officer an hour later asking them to investigate the matter themselves, as officers were too busy to attend the crime.⁵²

49. This anecdotal evidence was supported by the results of the British Crime Survey for 2007/08. Only 43% of people thought the police could be relied on to deal with minor crimes, 48% believed they would be there when needed and 51% thought the police were dealing with issues that matter to the local community. Only 41% of those who had been both a victim and a witness rated the local police as doing a good or excellent job compared with 57% of those who had not experienced crime.⁵³ While the renewed focus on serious crime detailed above may help the police to prioritise their work in a way in which they consider is more appropriate, it is unlikely to alleviate the concerns of a public who are already concerned the police are not sufficiently active in dealing with minor crime and anti-social behaviour.

50. The number of complaints against the police is rising. The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) told us that 28,998 complaint cases were recorded during the year 2006/07, an increase of 10% on the previous year. 45% of complaints were allegations of neglect/failure of duty and incivility. The IPCC concluded:

The complaints data certainly suggests that the police service must take action to address the rising number of complaints concerning neglect/failure of duty and incivility if public confidence in policing is not to be adversely impacted.⁵⁴

While the number of individuals who complained in 2007/08 remained constant at 28,963, the number of overall allegations rose by 5% to 48,280 (or 1.7 per individual).⁵⁵

51. The Police Federation shared the IPCC's concern about the impact of increasing number of complaints about the police on public consent for policing, from which the police derive their authority. Paul McKeever told us "It [public consent] is weakening, I am pretty sure of that. The regard that the police were held in even a few years ago has changed somewhat and it is on a downward slope at this moment in time".⁵⁶

51 Q 262

52 "We dialled 999 ... and police texted us to investigate the raid", *Daily Express*, 28 August 2008, p 9

53 Home Office, *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, July 2008, pp 119–120

54 Ev 218

55 IPCC, *Police Complaints: Statistics for England and Wales 2007/08*, September 2008

56 Q 639

52. Stockport Police is carrying out trials to improve public satisfaction with their encounters with the police by changing the way in which they respond to callers: appointments are scheduled with low-priority callers so that an officer attends at a time that is convenient for the caller. Fewer complaints have been received since this has been initiated.⁵⁷ The Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, Sara Thornton, told us the force had carried out a pilot project in which callers had been given the option of whether or not they would like an officer to attend, which had resulted in much higher satisfaction rates.⁵⁸

53. The public do not always know how to contact the police in a non-emergency situation, and indeed whether or not it is appropriate to contact them rather than a different agency. Of the 10 million 999 calls made in 2004, 70% were not for genuine emergencies, and less than 30% of people surveyed by the Home Office knew about local council or police non-emergency lines.⁵⁹ The Chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority, Len Duvall, believed that it should be easier for people to help the police with their inquiries:

We know people want to help. They do not want to spend hours on the phone if they go through the main switchboard; they do not want to walk into a police station where there may be other people doing other things and have to report issues, so if we can separate off people giving non-emergency information that can be important to solving other crimes at certain times that is the key.⁶⁰

The new Mayor of London noted that this kind of step had been taken in New York:

There is one thing that the Mayor of New York told me about that I think is a very good idea, and that is the use of a hot line number, not to go to the police, which would enable you, if you have a difficulty with a pothole or whatever it happens to be, or you want to know why some graffiti has not been cleaned up. You can go to a central number and then we will get on to the relevant borough and sort it out.⁶¹

54. The Home Office funded pilots for a single non-emergency number, 101, in 2006 in five sites covering 10% of the population of England and Wales. Despite evidence to show the scheme was proving successful, the Home Office decided to withdraw funding, although three of the five pilot areas—Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Cardiff and Sheffield—have chosen to continue funding the service themselves.⁶² We consider this would have been a useful initiative to improve accessibility and customer service, as well as facilitating better partnership working between the police and the local authority to deal with low-level crime and anti-social behaviour.

55. A 2003 ICM poll found that few people knew the name of a local police officer.⁶³ The Prime Minister announced in February 2008 that all members of the public would have access to the mobile telephone numbers of their local neighbourhood officers. ACPO's

57 Committee visit to Stockport, 7 July 2008

58 Committee visit to Reading, 24 April 2008

59 The 101 website, www.101.gov.uk

60 Q 157

61 Q 854

62 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 71

63 Cited in Harriet Sergeant, *The Public and the Police*, London: Civitas, 2008, p 4

view is that an individual telephone number can be provided across the service, although not necessarily a mobile telephone number.⁶⁴ Chief Superintendent Steve Kirk, of Reading Police, said:

It is deliverable ... I am not sure whether it will be in exactly that format. There are mechanisms that we can use to make sure that people are contactable ... We have to bear in mind that officers are not on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is about making sure that when people do contact us they contact us in the right manner to deal with the problem they face ... I have found that, because of the added visibility [brought about by neighbourhood policing] ... people find it very easy to contact us on a face-to-face basis rather than having to phone us to speak to their local officer.⁶⁵

56. The majority of the public do not have confidence in the police's ability to deal with minor crime and to be there when they are needed. While, on the one hand, we support the renewed focus on serious crime as a way for the police to focus their attentions on this important area of work, on the other, we are concerned that minor crime and anti-social behaviour, which are of great concern to the public, will continue to lack sufficient police attention.

57. We were impressed with trials undertaken in some forces to give members of the public who contact the police in a non-emergency situation more choice of whether and when they would like an officer to attend. Forces should take note of this approach as a way of increasing public satisfaction.

58. Members of the public are often unsure of how to contact the police in a non-emergency situation, which results in misuse of the 999 emergency number and delays in reporting and resolving low-level crime and anti-social behaviour. We are disappointed that the Home Office withdrew funding from the single 101 non-emergency number, which would have helped to resolve this situation. We recommend that central funding for the single 101 non-emergency number be reinstated and that the scheme be implemented across England and Wales.

59. We support the principle behind providing local people with mobile numbers for their neighbourhood officers, but in this form the proposal is impracticable, given that neighbourhood officers are not always on duty. It may be more appropriate for forces to reconfigure call-handling procedures to ensure that members of the public can access local information and be directed to the relevant local officer.

Police visibility

60. One of the public's key requirements of the police is that they should be visible. The East Midlands collaboration, representing the five police forces and authorities of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire, suggested that people tended to be more concerned about what was happening, or what they perceived to be happening, in their immediate neighbourhood, adding: "They want to

64 Q 198

65 Qq 348–51

be reassured by more visible policing”.⁶⁶ The ICM poll cited above asked members of the public to prioritise activities they wished the police to spend most time on: they chose preventing crime, community policing and foot patrol, which are “all about the deterring effect of a visible, uniformed officer walking around the neighbourhood”.⁶⁷

61. Early evaluations of neighbourhood policing demonstrate that increased foot patrol can be effective in improving public confidence and reducing fear of crime, although it is more difficult to prove links with crime reduction. The former Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, believed foot patrol did have a deterrent effect:

We introduced 21 teams of 18 PCSOs in the outer London boroughs around transport modes, particularly targeting the buses, and crime by under-16s has fallen 19% in the 12 months following. So, all those academics, Home Office and Treasury people who told us for decades that putting police on the streets was a waste of money, I think, have been demonstrated to be wildly wrong.⁶⁸

62. A 2001 study by the Home Office, based on diaries kept by individual police officers, found that the average officer spent 57% of his or her time outside the police station. 30% of this time was spent on patrol and 41% on responding to incidents.⁶⁹ In 2007/08, 13.8% of officers’ time was spent on patrol and 64% of their time on ‘front-line duties’.⁷⁰ Our predecessor Committee raised concerns about the Government’s definition of ‘front-line policing’:

We are ... worried by the Minister's definition of ‘front-line policing’ as including work in the police station on case files and report preparation. These tasks may be essential but they are not what most people would consider to be ‘street policing’. Their inclusion therefore skews the statistics and gives an exaggerated impression of the Government's success in returning police officers to street duties. We recommend that the definition of ‘front-line policing’ should be changed to exclude time spent dealing with paperwork indoors.⁷¹

The East Midlands collaboration agreed:

The public almost certainly do not understand the breadth of activity covered by the measure. They see it as a measure of visible policing. This begs the question what purpose does this measure serve? Additionally, gathering data for the measure adds to the bureaucracy facing police officers. The current definition of frontline policing has been around for many years so it is perhaps timely to re-visit it in light of the changing face of policing.⁷²

66 Ev 222

67 Harriet Sergeant, *The Public and the Police*, London: Civitas, 2008, p 4

68 Q 56

69 Home Office, *Diary of a Police Officer*, 2001, p 9

70 “Pcs on beat for just 8 minutes an hour”, *Sunday Telegraph*, 5 October 2008, p 8

71 Home Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2004–05, *Police Reform*, HC370-I, para 127

72 Ev 226

The Frontline Policing Measure has been removed from the 2008/09 indicators.⁷³

63. The public want a more visible police service. We support greater use of visible patrols as a key component of neighbourhood policing and a means of increasing public confidence in the police and, potentially, deterring crime. We welcome the Government's removal of the front-line policing measure from the statutory performance indicators, because the range of activities included within it had the potential to mislead the public as to its meaning. Rather, the Home Office should keep the public informed of the amount of time officers spend on visible patrol.

73 Home Office, *Guidance on Statutory Performance Indicators for Policing and Community Safety 2008/09*, March 2008

3 Pressures on resources

64. In this chapter we examine issues surrounding the resources available to the police, focusing in particular on four key areas in which there is a popular perception that the burden on the police has increased in recent years:

- The effects of immigration;
- Alcohol-related violence and disorder;
- The award of bail to those charged with serious offences; and
- Gun and knife crime.

Policing funding arrangements

65. Police funding is derived from a combination of locally levied police precepts and central grants from the Home Office. Overall police spending was estimated at £12.6 billion in 2007/08.⁷⁴ Total government grants to the police increased by 19% in real terms between 1997/98 and 2008/09.⁷⁵ However, following Government indications that these levels of increases would not be sustained, the Association of Police Authorities (APA) submitted a provisional estimate to our *Police Funding* inquiry in 2007 which anticipated that the service would suffer the following shortfalls in required funding:⁷⁶

Year	Projected shortfall (£m)
2007/08	391
2008/09	656
2009/10	831
2010/11	966

66. The most recent Comprehensive Spending Review, announced in December 2007, increased central grants made to police forces by only 2.9% in 2008/09, 2.9% in 2009/10 and 2.7% in 2010/11.⁷⁷ The APA told us that this settlement would result in shortfalls that were roughly in line with their predictions.⁷⁸

74 CIPFA, *Police Statistics 2007/08 Estimates*, <http://www.cipfastats.net/>

75 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, p 8

76 Home Affairs Committee, *Fourth Report of Session 2006–07, Police Funding*, HC 553, para 36

77 HC Deb, 6 December 2007, col 88WS [Commons written ministerial statement]

78 Q 716

67. Nevertheless, police funding in the UK is the highest amongst the OECD countries. For example, in 2004 the UK spent 2.5% of GDP on public order and safety, ahead of the US at 2.2%, Spain at 1.8%, Germany at 1.6% and France at 1.4%.⁷⁹ Our previous inquiry expressed doubt about a correlation between additional resources made available to the police and police performance.⁸⁰ However, police representatives point to the growth in their responsibilities, as set out in the previous chapter, to explain the continuing need for increased funding. Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison argued that a “39% increase in funding has, I would propose, been matched by a 39% plus increase in demand”.⁸¹

68. The greater part of the amount of central grant paid to each police authority is calculated in accordance with the principal needs-based formula. The main determinant in the formula is the projected resident population but cost adjustments are built in for the socio-economic and other characteristics of police authority areas and for differences in the costs of provision between areas.

69. However, the formula has never been fully applied. Application of the formula has been subjected to a damping mechanism to promote stability and planning by ensuring that each police authority receives a minimum percentage increase over the previous year. At the extreme ends, this meant that the West Midlands force received nearly 11%, or £48 million, less than the funding formula would have allocated in 2007/08 if applied correctly, whereas Northumbria Police received over 12%, or £29 million, more. Sir Ronnie Flanagan recommended that the Home Office move towards a fuller application of the formula in future Spending Reviews so that funding is allocated on objective need.⁸²

70. We have heard conflicting views about this recommendation. Clearly, areas that currently receive less than their allocation would benefit, but those who currently receive more would lose out. The Police Federation stated that “any move of this nature is likely to cause particular hardship and financial challenge to the smaller, rural forces”.⁸³ The former Mayor of London told us the subsequent losses in grant from the removal of damping arrangements would “have a devastating effect on policing in London”.⁸⁴ However, Leicestershire Police argued in favour of receiving their grant in full, otherwise “the economic and social improvement of the city could be jeopardised into the future”.⁸⁵

71. Locally-levied police precepts make up between 18% and 50% of force revenue, depending on the extent to which assets were transferred to police authorities on their creation in 1994 and levels of council tax.⁸⁶ There is currently a 5% cap on council tax increases, which leaves authorities disadvantaged by legacy issues and formula application unable to improve their situations by investment of local resources, particularly those which did not have high levels of council tax when the cap was introduced. A

79 “Boys in blue head into the red”, *The Economist*, 24 January 2008. <http://www.economist.com>

80 Home Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2006–07, *Police Funding*, HC 553

81 Q 172

82 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, pp 26–29

83 Ev 207

84 Ev 251

85 Ev 142

86 B. Loveday & J. McClory, *Footing the bill: Reforming the police service*, Policy Exchange, 2007, p 10

representative of Lincolnshire Police Authority told us during our visit to Newark that it was in a “desperate” position despite being judged as one of the most efficient authorities in England and Wales.⁸⁷ The Association of Chief Police Officers recommended that “council tax capping guidance should allow greater flexibility to police forces and police authorities which have below the average precept levels”.⁸⁸ This approach was supported by the APA.⁸⁹

72. Police representatives believe that the funding increases allocated in the most recent Comprehensive Spending Review are not sufficient to meet requirements. We consider specific aspects of policing for which a case has been made for additional funding later in this Report. However, in general, especially given the fact that the UK spends a higher percentage of GDP on public order than comparable countries, we consider the solution lies in finding ways to release resources through greater efficiency rather than major increases in funding.

73. We support Sir Ronnie Flanagan’s recommendation for full application of the police funding formula at the next Spending Review. The Home Office must work closely with forces that currently benefit from the damping arrangements to help them manage the transition. In the interim, we recommend that the 5% cap on council tax be removed for those authorities which have below-average precept levels, and that this is coupled with measures ensuring greater accountability to local people for policing.

Immigration

74. We wanted to assess claims in the media about the effects of recent high levels of immigration on police resources. To this end, we took evidence from the Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Julie Spence (on whose reported comments much of the coverage had focused) and the then-Chair of the Local Government Association (LGA), Sir Simon Milton, on the extent to which funding settlements take account of rapid population growth; the extent to which disproportionate numbers of immigrants commit crimes and/or are victims of crime; and the specific demands placed on police forces in dealing with immigrants as criminals or victims.

Use of population data in the police funding formula

75. The Minister of State for Borders and Immigration, Liam Byrne MP, told us in November 2007 that the funding formula used to allocate money to the police for 2008, 2009 and 2010 would draw on 2004 sub-national population projections “simply because that is the best available data”.⁹⁰ A recent report from the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee found, in relation to public services in general:

Problems with the current immigration statistics have led to immigrant numbers in their [Councils in the South of England] areas being significantly under-estimated.

87 Committee visit to Newark, 25 February 2008

88 Ev 243

89 Q 716

90 Oral evidence taken on 27 November 2007, HC (2007–08)123-i, Q 39

Since the funding to local councils from central government is directly linked to the size of each district's population, the undercount of immigrants has, local councils argue, led to inadequate funding for public services.⁹¹

76. Sir Simon Milton claimed that “there is somewhere between one and one and a half million people living in Britain for whom there has been no public expenditure provision through the normal formulae because they were not expected”.⁹² According to the Association of Chief Police Officers, Kent, Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire forces have suffered particularly from under-funding caused by the gap between predicted and real population figures.⁹³ Kent Police assess the total additional cost caused by immigration at £34m over the past three years, for example, but corresponding increases in funding from the Home Office have not been forthcoming.⁹⁴

77. Chief Constable Spence agreed that funding did not match the situation in which the force found themselves:

We have had only a 0.3% increase in the way the formula operated this year ... There is nothing within government to be able to respond to the rapid changes that have happened. That was where the problems arose. The funding formulas are not rapid and flexible enough to deal with change.⁹⁵

78. The East Midlands collaboration substantiated these concerns about funding lagging behind rapid growth in population, which in their case is caused by internal migration as well as that from abroad.⁹⁶

79. Sir Ronnie Flanagan told us that in future the funding formula will have to take the effects of immigration into account so the money goes to the right places:

Currently it does not really do that. There is always the possibility for forces to make special bids. I am not saying there are unlimited resources. I am not saying that special bids will always be successful. There is the opportunity when special circumstances befall an individual force for it to make a case for additional funding to meet those exceptional circumstances.⁹⁷

The Minister of State for Security, Counter-Terrorism, Crime and Policing agreed with Sir Ronnie that “the Government collectively is very slow in responding to large growths of population over a particular short period of time”.⁹⁸

91 House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee, First Report of Session 2007–08, HL Paper 82-I, *The Economic Impact of Migration*, para 149

92 Q 378

93 Presentation by Chief Constable Grahame Maxwell to the Home Office Migration Impacts Forum on 16 July 2008, <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk>

94 “Police chief: ‘migrant tide adds to crime’”, *Sunday Times*, 27 January 2008, www.timesonline.co.uk

95 Q 365, 367

96 Ev 224

97 Q 20

98 Q 821

Immigrants as criminals and as victims

80. It is difficult to get complete and accurate statistics about crime committed by and suffered by immigrants because police recording practices do not accurately capture nationality, and language barriers and lack of knowledge of British law amongst migrant communities result in under-reporting. ACPO has stated that “the evidence does not support theories of a large-scale crime wave generated through migration”.⁹⁹ Chief Constable Spence argued in relation to Cambridgeshire Constabulary that:

There has been no crime wave per se. The pattern is similar to that for the rest of the community except for certain pockets. For example, we have identified that particularly where alcohol is concerned there is much more alcohol-fuelled criminality. Forty per cent of our detainees for drink driving, for example, are migrants particularly from Eastern Europe ... In terms of normal criminality it mirrors the resident population but it takes twice or three times as long to deal with it ...

Just because you come into the country as an immigrant does not make you more or less likely to commit crime. The fact that we have a number of new people in the country means that, like the resident population, a proportion of them will commit crime. Some of it is because they have criminal tendencies; some of it is because they do not understand the law and how we operate within the UK, so there is an education process to go through.¹⁰⁰

Sir Simon Milton agreed that “nationally, there has been no crime wave but there are instances of local spikes in certain types of criminal activity, much of it low level”.¹⁰¹

81. Amongst the areas of criminality that have risen with increased migration, Sir Simon cited pick-pocketing by organised gangs—particularly from Romania—begging, driving offences and fraud.¹⁰² Cambridgeshire has experienced increases in knife-carrying amongst Iraqi Kurds, Poles and Lithuanians, a greater ‘international’ dimension to criminality in terms of cannabis factories, credit card skimming and human trafficking, as well as drink and disqualifying driving offences.¹⁰³ Regional responses to the Government’s Migration Impact Forum in 2007 corroborated these accounts and also noted increases in anti-social behaviour.¹⁰⁴

82. A report by the LGA, *Estimating the scale and impacts of immigration*, concluded that migrants are more likely to be the victims of crime than the perpetrators, particularly hate crime and exploitation by gang-masters.¹⁰⁵ Chief Constable Spence noted:

99 “ACPO comment on migration and policing”, ACPO press release 041, 16 April 2008

100 Qq 363, 375

101 Q 364

102 Q 363

103 Q 377; Ev 286–7

104 Presentation by Liam Byrne MP to Migration Impacts Forum, 17 October 2007, <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk>

105 Local Government Association, *Estimating the scale and impacts of immigration at the local level*, November 2007, pp 53–4

One way to get a good identification of the issue is by looking at translation budgets. Half of that goes to dealing with the custody and justice processes and half to other community cohesion issues. Of the half that goes to custody issues, one half goes on offenders and the other half deals with victims. Therefore, from our perspective there is as much victimisation as there is offending.¹⁰⁶

Additional costs in policing immigrant communities

83. The House of Lords Economics Affairs Committee also found that:

Most of the analyses of fiscal impacts that do consider public services simply estimate immigrants' use of public services based on their shares in the population. This assumes that the average cost of providing public services to immigrants is the same as for those born in the UK. However, there are likely to be some additional costs in providing public services to immigrants which Professor Coleman described as "uncosted externalities".¹⁰⁷

84. In terms of specific costs caused by immigration, translation costs appear to be the key factor for policing. In Kent, translation costs have risen by a third in three years.¹⁰⁸ Sergeant Guy Rooney told us that in Ealing alone the interpreters' bill for the last financial year was £1 million.¹⁰⁹ Cambridgeshire's translation costs are also around £1 million per year:

The real resourcing issue is the fact that one has to translate issues, whether they involve on-the-ground problems or those in custody where investigations take two or three times as long. A Police and Criminal Evidence Act review that an inspector could deal with in 10 minutes could take 90 minutes in the case of someone for whom English is not his or her first language.¹¹⁰

A report by KPMG concluded that Cambridgeshire requires an additional 100 police officers to cover the additional workload generated by policing foreign nationals.¹¹¹

85. Foreign nationals can spend significantly longer in custody than British citizens, either where interpreters are unavailable, or where an individual has been detained for immigration purposes but immigration authorities do not have the facilities to hold the detainees prior to deportation. This generates additional costs in providing food, phone calls and supervision, as well as a potential loss of custody facilities. Chief Constable Spence told us that in 2002 there were on average three non-UK nationals in custody per day in Cambridgeshire, rising to an average of 13 per day in 2006, with the figure now standing at ten per day. She provided the following chart to demonstrate this increase in workload:¹¹²

106 Q 370

107 House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee, First Report of Session 2007–08, HL Paper 82-I, *The Economic Impact of Migration*, para 136

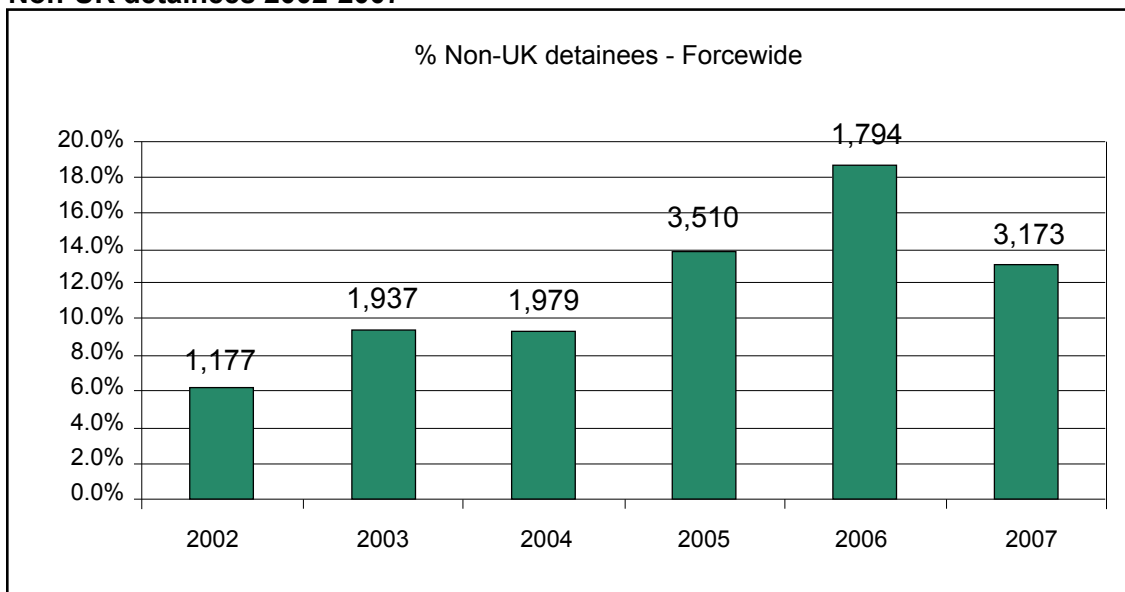
108 "Police chief: 'migrant tide adds to crime'", *Sunday Times*, 27 January 2008, www.timesonline.co.uk

109 Q 228

110 Q 362

111 Cambridge Constabulary, *The changing demography of Cambridgeshire*, September 2007, p 2

112 Ev 281

Non-UK detainees 2002-2007**Solutions**

86. ACPO has highlighted examples of good practice employed by forces to manage the effects of immigration, including encouraging migrant membership of independent advisory groups, recruitment of migrants as police community support officers (PCSOs), special constables and volunteers, publicity campaigns and police training.¹¹³ Chief Constable Spence argued that “diversification of the workforce is absolutely needed”.¹¹⁴ Cambridgeshire has made concerted efforts to recruit applicants with language skills.

87. Led by the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Government published a cross-departmental Migration Impacts Plan on 11 June 2008. It includes a £12 million Migration Statistics Improvement Programme to improve the next three-year local government settlement; setting up a Transitional Impacts Migration Fund from 2009/10; and tougher enforcement against exploitation of vulnerable workers. The plan says very little about policing, other than acknowledging that costs of detecting and prosecuting crimes increase if interpretation services are required, and noting that the Home Office is developing good practice tools to show how Neighbourhood Policing Teams can identify and engage with communities.¹¹⁵

88. There is some confusion as to whether the transitional fund, raised by increased charges on visa fees and other migrant services, is available to the police. Police forces were apparently told by the Home Secretary in April that they would be able to bid for a share:

The Home Secretary announced there would be a transitional fund. That was already in existence but it was unclear whether or not the police could apply for it ... It is that fund which will be redistributed but no doubt we will be at the door of that fund with

113 Presentation by Chief Constable Grahame Maxwell to the Home Office Migration Impacts Forum on 16 July 2008, <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk>

114 Q 383

115 Department for Communities and Local Government, *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*, June 2008

colleagues from other agencies as well. It is not a new fund just for policing as became clear after the announcement was made.¹¹⁶

However, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has since indicated that the fund will be mainly allocated to projects relating to English language training and integrated websites providing information about coming to live in the UK, saying: “I think we can make the most of it by not providing bits and bobs to individual hospitals and local police forces”.¹¹⁷

89. Sir Simon Milton told us that some councils, including Burnley, Fenland, East Cambridgeshire and West Lancashire, provided information packs to migrants which explain aspects of the law and also how to keep themselves safe.¹¹⁸

90. It would appear that foreign nationals are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of crime. However, it would also appear that they are disproportionately represented among numbers of those committing certain—mostly low-level—crimes. We recommend that all forces employ consistent recording practices for offender and victim nationality, in order to improve understanding and allow resources to be allocated to meet demand. In addition, we recommend that some of the monies from the transitional migration fund allocated to integration projects be diverted to support greater education on British laws, particularly those governing driving, on how immigrants can protect themselves from becoming victims of crime, and how to report crime, in the manner of information already provided by some local authorities. The results of the Migration Statistics Improvement Programme should be made available in time for the next Spending Review. The Home Secretary should give consideration to how population growth can be captured more quickly in funding settlements.

91. It is clear, however, that dealing with foreign nationals is more expensive for police forces because of the need to employ interpreters and because offenders often spend longer in custody. In replying to this report, the Home Office should clarify whether or not individual police forces will be allowed to bid from the transitional migration fund. If they will not, the Home Secretary must set out proposals to assist those forces whose funding has not kept pace with changes in population.

92. A more diverse workforce can ease some of the burden on forces by reducing interpretation costs and facilitating information-sharing between new communities and the police.

116 Q 365

117 “We’re struggling to cope with scale of migration says Blears”, *Daily Mail*, 12 June 2008, p 18

118 Q 383

Alcohol-related crime

Scale of alcohol-related crime and disorder and impact on resources

93. The relationship between alcohol and crime is multi-faceted; the trading and consumption of alcohol are tightly controlled by law, and the loss of inhibition created by excessive consumption of alcohol can increase the risk of offending. Offences specific to alcohol include sale to underage or intoxicated customers, bootlegging and selling unlicensed alcohol, simple and aggravated drunkenness, and driving whilst under the influence. In addition, alcohol may play a role in other offences, particularly violence and public order offences. In the most recent British Crime Survey, 45% of all victims of violence described their assailant as being under the influence of alcohol at the time.¹¹⁹ The Home Secretary has stated that alcohol is a factor in over 30% of city centre arrests.¹²⁰

94. Alcohol-related crime imposes a significant burden on the criminal justice system. The headline costs were broken down in a study undertaken by the Cabinet Office in 2003, as follows:¹²¹

Costs incurred in anticipation of crime	
	£1.5bn
Costs incurred as a consequence of crime	
Property / health and victim services costs	£2.5bn
Crime costs of lost productive output	£1bn
Costs incurred in response to crime	
Alcohol-specific offences	£30m
Alcohol-related offences	£1.7bn
Costs of drink-driving	
	£0.5bn
TOTAL CRIME COSTS	
	£7.3bn

95. Alcohol-related crime and disorder necessitates a high level of police presence in town centres. Chief Constable Stephen Green wrote to us in relation to Nottinghamshire:

It is no exaggeration to state that the whole focus of officer shift patterns is to deploy sufficient resources at weekends to cope with alcohol-fuelled disorder, and football violence ... The net effect is there are fewer officers on duty during the rest of the

119 Home Office, *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, July 2008, p 76

120 Cabinet Office, *Alcohol Harm Reduction Project: Interim Analytical Report*, September 2003, p 64

121 *Ibid.*, p 68

week to deal with other types of crime and fewer opportunities to be seen in their communities. This has a major impact on local policing because the neighbourhood bobbies are re-deployed to weekend and late night work to help their colleagues cope with the un-relenting demand ... [The drinks industry] has stretched policing to the absolute limits.¹²²

Alcohol Concern cited polling evidence to our predecessors that 70% of police officers believed that attending alcohol-related incidents frequently diverted them away from tackling other kinds of crime.¹²³

96. In Devon and Cornwall, according to Chief Constable Stephen Otter, there has been “a fairly significant increase in the proportion of violent crime where we can be absolutely sure there is an alcohol-related aspect” since 2004/05. In addition to disorder taking place on the streets, he advised that “when we start to look at the nature of that violent crime 42% is in the street but what concerns us is that 30% is in the home and it is related directly to domestic abuse”.¹²⁴

97. Moreover, intoxicated detainees are more time-consuming and expensive for the police to process. The risk of death in custody requires intoxicated arrestees to be carefully monitored. Detainees under the influence of alcohol also cause problems in terms of noise, hygiene and disruptive behaviour. The Cabinet Office estimates that it costs, on average, £59 more to process an alcohol-related arrestee than a similar non-alcohol related arrestee.¹²⁵

98. The Licensing Act 2003, which came into effect in 2005, allowed licence-holders to apply to local authorities for longer trading hours. Part of the rationale behind the changes was for pubs, clubs and bars to close at different times of night. Previously, the majority shut at 11pm, meaning that large numbers of drunk people were out on the streets simultaneously, increasing the likelihood of assaults and anti-social behaviour. We were keen to assess the effects of the Act on police workload. Evaluation of the Act by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport showed that average closing time across all on-licensed premises increased by 21 minutes and that there was little change in the number of premises open after midnight. 4% of all premises have 24-hour licences, comprising 3320 hotel bars, 920 supermarkets and stores, and 470 pubs, bars and nightclubs.¹²⁶ In terms of the effects on crime and disorder, the Home Office compared data from 30 forces between December 2004–November 2005 and December 2005–November 2006 to assess the effects of the Act on crime and disorder, which showed:

- A 1% rise in the overall number of violent crimes, disorder and criminal damage incidents occurring between 6pm and 6am;
- A 22% rise between 3am and 6am in the 3 month period after the law changed;

122 Ev 200

123 Home Affairs Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2004–05, *Anti-Social Behaviour*, HC 80, p 27

124 Q 474

125 Cabinet Office, *Alcohol Harm Reduction Project: Interim Analytical Report*, September 2003, p 65

126 Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Evaluation of the Impact of the Licensing Act 2003*, March 2008

- A 25% increase in serious violent crimes committed between 3am and 6am.¹²⁷

Sergeant Rooney, a custody sergeant at Acton Police Station, told us:

I could not tell you if the number of offences has increased. The workload has increased. We now deal with many more people who are drunk during the day, who are coming into custody during the afternoon drunk. That has a knock-on effect. In relation to licensing hours, instead of having minor public order problems at tradition pub leaving time, those problems are now spread from 11 o'clock in the evening all the way through to 4 o'clock in the morning.¹²⁸

99. While overall alcohol consumption has not changed since the introduction of the Act, the Chief Executive of the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), Rob Hayward, described the change in drinking patterns and its implications for policing:

In many cases there has been a movement away from consumption in high streets and city centres into the outer areas, because if you can drink for an extra half-hour or so in a pub or bar why pay for a cab to go into a town, the entry fee and all the rest of it? There are a number of cities where the whole lifestyle has changed which throws up different problems in terms of the policing of bigger areas.¹²⁹

100. Alcohol-related crime places a heavy burden on police resources and diverts officers away from dealing with other types of crime. There is limited evidence of the effect of the Licensing Act 2003 on the total number of alcohol-related offences, but there is certainly a strong perception amongst police forces that alcohol-related violence is on the increase. What is clear is that forces now deploy resources to deal with alcohol-related crime and disorder for longer periods of time, as a result of longer opening hours, and in larger areas, as late-night drinking is no longer confined to city centres.

Police powers to tackle alcohol-related crime and disorder

101. The Licensing Act 2003 was intended to make it easier for responsible authorities and local residents to call for the local authority to review a licence. Between April 2006 and March 2007, there were 675 such reviews, resulting in 92 licences being revoked and 91 being suspended.¹³⁰ Industry representatives asserted that the Act has resulted in more action being taken against licensees who break the law or fail to act responsibly to prevent crime and disorder. The Chief Executive of the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS), James Lowman, told us: "It challenges our members in terms of standards and gives local authorities and stakeholders including the police immediate and effective powers in respect of licensed premises".¹³¹

127 Home Office, *Violent crime, disorder and criminal damage since the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003*, 2007

128 Q 226

129 Q 400

130 Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Evaluation of the Impact of the Licensing Act 2003*, March 2008, pp 12–13

131 Q 395

102. This was endorsed by Chief Constable Otter: “I think that one of the real powers of the legislation is that the review process works very well. We have carried out 40 reviews.” However, he also stated:

I do not believe that the licensing laws have responded to the change in culture ... There is a view that one ought to be able to stop a strip of high-volume drinking establishments in a town centre ... There ought to be a way to regulate the way people drink within premises. We cannot do that at the moment.¹³²

103. A range of other legislation to assist in policing the night time economy has been introduced since the introduction of the Licensing Act, including penalty notices for disorder (PNDs), drinking banning orders, directions to leave, licensed premises closure orders, designated public places orders and dispersal orders. However, according to Chief Superintendent Neil Wain, resources rather than legal measures are key to reducing alcohol-fuelled crime:

Policing the night time economy is resource intensive and often draws officers away from other areas. This is fine while national campaigns are running, when extra funding is pumped in by the Government. This often results in short term success but when Government money dries up I believe there is an expectation from the Government that the same success can be achieved without the resources.¹³³

There is some evidence from the Government’s campaign on tackling violent crime that proactive use of PNDs early on can contribute to a reduction in more serious offences later in the evening, and this in our view warrants further research. This is notwithstanding the practical difficulties associated with awarding PNDs for drink-related offences, taking into account guidance that they should not be issued when the suspect is too drunk. This often necessitates their issue at the station, which takes officers off the streets.¹³⁴

104. Chief Constable Otter summarised his view as: “I believe that the legislation is good for policing but that the volume and demands are increasing at such a rate that there must be a more fundamental change”.¹³⁵

105. Alcohol referral pilots are another Home Office initiative, in which an offender taken into custody can be referred by police to a resident alcohol specialist for advice. Those with more complex alcohol misuse problems, and who are given a conditional caution, can be referred to more in-depth advice sessions. Where similar schemes have previously operated in Gloucestershire and Dudley, police have reported reductions in re-offending: in the former, re-offending among offenders who had attended two advice sessions approximately halved after twelve months.¹³⁶ Sergeant Rooney was, however, sceptical about the benefits, noting that the take-up by detainees is not very high in Ealing “because

132 Qq 481–482,

133 Chief Superintendent Neil Wain, “Night life”, *Police Review*, 30 May 2008, p 31

134 *Ibid.*, pp 30–31

135 Q 490

136 “Action on alcohol-related criminal behaviour”, Home Office press release, 16 October 2007

these people do not want help with drinking because they do not think they have a drink problem”.¹³⁷

106. Licence-holders who sell to under-age drinkers or who do not take reasonable steps to prevent alcohol-related crime and disorder increase pressure on the police. We are not convinced that full use is being made of powers under the Licensing Act 2003 to review licences where the holder is found to be irresponsible. The Government should also investigate the ability of local authorities to refuse licences or impose appropriate conditions on licences to promote the licensing objective of preventing crime and disorder, and their capacity to monitor compliance with licence conditions.

107. Increased police powers to deal with drunk offenders do not appear to have had a significant impact on their ability to reduce alcohol-related crime. We recommend that the Government commission further research into proactive use of penalty notices for disorder. Alcohol referral schemes may prove effective in reducing the numbers of repeat alcohol-related offenders but, having heard sceptical views from frontline officers, we recommend that thorough evaluation of the pilots should be completed before they are implemented nationwide.

Responsible trading

108. Representatives of Tesco, Asda, the ACS and the British Beer and Pub Association agreed that the alcohol industry have a part to play in preventing alcohol-related crime and disorder through responsible trading; Mr Lowman, Chief Executive of the Association of Convenience Stores, noted “the prevention of alcohol-related disorders is one of the four principles of the Licensing Act”.¹³⁸

109. We were assured that most retailers act responsibly. Chief Constable Otter told us:

A lot of stores work with us. We mark products with information about the postcode of the seller and so on that can be seen under ultraviolet light. That has enabled us to identify stores that sell these drinks and go back to find out precisely what happened.¹³⁹

Asda wrote to inform us of measures they are introducing, including stopping retailing alcohol between midnight and 6am in most town centre stores; removing from sale products that are particularly attractive to young people; doubling the number of inspections designed to test effectiveness of anti-under age drinking measures; extending Challenge 25, whereby staff ask those who appear to be 25 years old or younger for identification prior to selling them alcohol, to more stores; and donating to youth projects aimed at reducing underage consumption. Tesco’s Director for Group Loss, Prevention and Security, Alan Brown told us that where there have been concerns about the consumption of very strong alcohol, Tesco has withdrawn the product from its stores.¹⁴⁰

137 Q 227

138 Q 447

139 Q 491

140 Q 423

110. There are limited ways in which local authorities and police forces can obtain contributions from premises towards dealing with the effects of alcohol-related crime and disorder, over and above business improvement districts, which are voluntary on the part of local businesses. Pubwatch schemes, which are also voluntary, provide a means for licensees to work in partnership with the police to prevent crime and disorder and claim some success in crime reduction.

111. Many would like to see financial contributions made mandatory. Chief Constable Green, for example, argued:

I would submit that we broaden the base of those with a statutory responsibility to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly those industries whose core business contributes to the problem. Those, for example, who market alcohol at irresponsible, underage drinkers should carry some of the responsibility for managing the inevitable public disorder that blights our towns and cities ... It [the drinks industry] has already proved itself unworthy of self-regulation.¹⁴¹

Chief Constable Otter told us: “ACPO takes the strong view that essentially in this case the polluter pays.” He drew an analogy with football charging:

I regard it as being very similar to that. The police, local authority and the football club all look at the nature of the game, the history, intelligence and everything else and then make a charge accordingly; in other words, that it requires a certain level of policing. It must be judged on the basis of need rather than as a penalty.¹⁴²

112. The Government provided for Alcohol Disorder Zones (ADZs) in the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 as a means of securing a financial contribution from the industry where there is a particular problem. The intention was to provide an incentive to operators to work collectively and with police and local authority partners to reduce the levels of disorder. Before the zone was designated and compulsory charging began, licensed premises would have the opportunity to implement an action plan to rectify the situation. Where they failed to do so, the premises would be required to pay a compulsory contribution.

113. However, the House of Lords Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee was unconvinced as to the potential effectiveness of the proposed zones:

The Local Government Association ... expressed “serious misgivings about this policy”, questioning in particular how they are to recover set-up costs in the anticipated 80% of cases where the issues are resolved before the charging regime can be initiated, and whether they will be liable for the costs incurred by other agencies if the income from ADZ charges is inadequate ... We are left with the impression that the system will be unduly bureaucratic.¹⁴³

141 Ev 200

142 Qq 494, 497

143 Committee on the Merits of Statutory Instruments, Eighteenth Report of Session 2007–08, *Draft Local Authorities (Alcohol Disorder Zones) Regulations 2008*, HL 100, p 3

ACPO is also concerned about the bureaucracy associated with ADZs, although supportive of the principle.¹⁴⁴ In response, the Minister of State told us:

In keeping with a whole range of other things that we do in terms of policing and alcohol and other methodologies like dispersal orders, like working very, very closely with the industries and taking tough and tougher action against them ... taken as a whole, alcohol disorder zones could be part of a very, very positive picture. What I want to get to is a position, which I think we are at, where the police have a whole suite of powers and other policies at their fingertips along with local authorities and others and it is for them in the local area to determine which mix of the policies and laws are most appropriate for their own context.¹⁴⁵

114. We support the principle behind Alcohol Disorder Zones, which encourage licensees to work with the police and local authorities where there is a particular problem of alcohol-related disorder. However, we share the concerns of the House of Lords Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee that they may be overly-bureaucratic. We recommend an evaluation of their take-up and effectiveness within one year of their commencement. We further recommend that the Government encourage greater participation in voluntary Pubwatch schemes to facilitate partnership between licensees and the police.

115. The price at which alcohol is sold in the off-trade also causes problems. A recent study by the Centre for Public Health at Liverpool John Moores University found that the vast differences in prices of alcohol between off- and on- licence sales are contributing to individuals increasingly consuming alcohol at home before they go out—‘pre-loading’—in order to cut costs. This results in people being drunk in residential areas before going out, alcohol-related problems on transport into town and city centres, and individuals arriving in town and city centres already inebriated and consequently more likely to become involved in alcohol-related violence. More than half of those interviewed usually ‘pre-load’; and those who ‘pre-loaded’ were also two and half times more likely to have been in a fight when going out in the last 12 months compared with those who did not. In fact, ‘pre-loading’ was more strongly associated with being involved in nightlife violence than the total amount of alcohol an individual consumed. This led the authors to the conclusion:

Measures to tackle drunkenness and related violence have focused largely on nightlife environments. In particular, pressures have been placed on bar and nightclub management to improve practice (e.g. train staff, end cheap alcohol promotions) ... However, while such interventions are important, this study suggests that focusing measures upon on-licensed retailers alone will be of limited effectiveness. For example, discouraging cheap alcohol sales in bars while permitting such sales in off-licensed premises may simply encourage more home drinking pre-nightlife.¹⁴⁶

144 Q 494 [Chief Constable Otter]

145 Q 809

146 K. Hughes, Z. Anderson, M. Morleo & M. Bellis, “Alcohol, nightlife and violence: the relative contributions of drinking before and during nights out to negative health and criminal justice outcomes”, *Addiction*, 13 November 2007, <http://www.addictionjournal.org>

116. The easy availability of cheap alcohol fuels alcohol-related crime and disorder and under-age drinking. In 2007, alcohol was 69% more affordable in the United Kingdom than it was in 1980.¹⁴⁷ British supermarkets have been accused of increasingly using alcoholic products as ‘loss leaders’, which are products that are priced low, sometimes below cost, to attract customers who are expected to buy other products that yield a profit. Asda and Tesco admitted that at times they sell alcohol below cost in response to competition. They argued they were happy to engage with the Government on this issue but, said that, because of competition law, the Government must take the lead. However, licensees do not appear to be so constrained when local authorities place conditions on the award of a licence, such as those banning drinks promotions, under the Licensing Act 2003.¹⁴⁸

117. The enforcement of a minimum price regime for alcohol would be one method of combatting the sale of alcohol at below cost price. Most Canadian provinces, for example, operate Social Reference Prices, which are government regulated minimum prices below which retailers and bars may not sell to the public. The legal situation in Britain remains ambiguous. Advice to the Government from the Office of Fair Trading in 2003 stated “the promotion of price fixing or the creation of cartels is unlawful, and there would also be serious risks of breaching competition law”.¹⁴⁹ However, we understand that the interim results of a report into the effects of pricing on demand for drink, commissioned by the Government, may indicate the potential for legal curbs on selling alcohol below cost price.¹⁵⁰

118. We encountered some scepticism about the impact of price on drinking habits. The Head of Licensing for Asda, Rob Chester, told us that the UK has the second highest duty rates on alcohol in Europe but worse drink-related problems than most other European countries. However, industry representatives accepted that price does influence consumption, including Mr Hayward of the BBPA, who said “if you sold it [alcohol] at zero or 1p it is more available; if you push it up there is by definition an influence”.¹⁵¹

119. Drink-related problems are not inflamed solely by policies employed by the off-trade. Alcohol Concern found that 10–15% of pubs and clubs sell alcohol to underage drinkers and that 43% of pubs have no disciplinary policies for staff who sell to children.¹⁵² Chief Constable Otter told us: “There is a change in the drinking culture and people drink more. We think that could be due to price and it is certainly down to the concept of happy hour—buy one, get one free—so that people double their intake in an evening basically because they cannot resist the offer”.¹⁵³

120. The BBPA told us they have operated a promotions policy for a number of years, encouraging members to “move away from all you can drink all night for £5 or £10 and

147 NHS, *Statistics on Alcohol: England 2008*, May 2008, p 11

148 Qq 416, 439 [Mr Brown], 417, 434 [Mr Chester], 428 [Mr Lowman]

149 HC Deb, 15 November 2004, col 965W [Commons written answer]

150 “Pubs may be forced to make it a small one”, *The Times*, 19 July 2008, p 3

151 Qq 425 [Mr Chester, Mr Lowman, Mr Hayward], 432 [Mr Hayward]

152 Cited in “Happy hours in pubs may be outlawed”, *Daily Telegraph*, 21 July 2008, p 12

153 Q 477

letting women in free, which encourages excess consumption, and speed competition so you get beer at a certain price before England score a goal or whatever it happens to be".¹⁵⁴ However, we have since learnt that the policy has been withdrawn on the basis of legal opinions suggesting such guidance is in breach of European competition law.¹⁵⁵

121. In the week before this announcement, the Home Office published an independent review by KMPG of the industry's Social Responsibility Standards, launched in November 2005. The standards were signed by 16 trade associations but are voluntary except those relating to legislation, advertising or the Code of Practice on the Naming, Packaging and Promotion of Alcohol Drinks operated by the Portman Group, which binds approximately 130 signatory producers, importers, wholesalers, retailers and trade associations. While the KPMG review found some examples of good practice, the review noted through its eight observation studies frequent occurrences of: people who appeared to be under-18 being admitted to age restricted venues in which they could purchase alcohol; the promotion of alcohol through low price offers, inducements by DJs to consume greater quantities, and glamorisation through sexual imagery; encouragement to drink more and faster through shots and shooters being "downed in one"; sales to blatantly intoxicated people; health and safety issues inside bars and clubs, such as broken glass, overcrowding and spilled alcohol; poor dispersal practices; and several instances of anti-social behaviour and low-level crime, such as fights and assaults, urinating and vomiting in public places, and criminal damage.

122. The authors concluded that:

Currently the Standards are not being consistently adopted and applied across the whole of the alcohol industry. In the current trading environment the commercial imperative generally overrides adherence ... The Standards are currently having negligible impact on either reducing bad practice or promoting good practice on the ground. They lack focus, they are a confusing mix of regulatory and voluntary provisions, and they are not cross referenced to the Licensing Act. In driving responsible practice they are ineffective because of a lack of consistent monitoring and enforcement.¹⁵⁶

123. The Scottish Executive plans to ban under-21s from buying alcohol in supermarkets and off-licences, despite being defeated on this proposal in the Scottish Parliament. Media reports have suggested the Mayor of London is considering similar proposals.¹⁵⁷

124. The cheap availability of alcohol in the off-trade is fuelling alcohol-related crime and disorder and under-age drinking. A lack of clarity about competition law is impeding effective action in this area. We recommend the Government establish as soon as possible a legal basis for banning the use of loss-leading by supermarkets and setting a minimum price for the sale of alcohol. The Home Office should also work with

154 Q 419

155 "Setback for drive against binge drinking", *Financial Times*, 25 June 2008, www.ft.com

156 Home Office, *Review of the Social Responsibility Standards for the production and sale of Alcohol drinks*, KPMG LLP, April 2008 (published July 2008), Volume 1, pp 8–9

157 "Plan to ban under-21 drink sales goes on despite defeat", *The Times*, 2 October 2008, www.timesonline.co.uk; "Mayor backs ban on alcohol for under-21s", *Evening Standard*, 17 July 2008, www.thisislondon.co.uk

the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to ensure that local authorities are fully informed on how to use their powers under the Licensing Act 2003 to impose licence conditions forbidding drinks promotions.

125. KPMG has issued a damning verdict on the negligible impact of the alcohol trade's Social Responsibility Standards. The standards need to be reissued on a compulsory basis with a more effective inspection regime and penalties for breaches. They should include a ban on drinks promotions and measures to ensure responsible labelling and staff training. We are also disappointed by the decision by the British Beer and Pub Association to withdraw its policy on promotions. Safeguards intended to promote public health and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour are needed. The Government should clarify whether competition law really does prevent such safeguards, if necessary by bringing a test case.

126. We understand that policy makers are considering proposals for under-21s to be banned from buying alcohol from supermarkets and off-licences while continuing to be able to buy it in bars. Such proposals seem to unfairly penalise young people who do drink responsibly. Furthermore, we have seen no evidence to suggest that teenage drinkers cause more problems for the police than those in their early 20s. We do not support an increase in the age at which alcohol can be legally purchased; rather, young people should be encouraged to drink responsibly.

Bail

127. A further issue which we studied in our inquiry was the impact of the granting of bail on police resources and their capacity to monitor those on bail and therefore ensure public safety. A national newspaper published figures disclosed by 34 police forces suggesting that defendants on bail had been charged with 79 out of 462 murders in 2007.¹⁵⁸

128. Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison told us:

Bail is used more than it has been for some time and, therefore, what we confront as operational police officers is the frustration of people being given bail only to commit further offences. Some who are on bail and are expecting a term of imprisonment as their punishment will go on what we call spree offending, which is getting it all out of the way before they are locked away ... People on bail and people who are persistent and prolific offenders are always the people that cause the police the most work. By definition, if they are locked away they cannot be committing offences.¹⁵⁹

Fitness of current legislation

129. The Bail Act 1976 requires that “the courts should remand defendants in custody where there is a real risk of further offending, absconding or interfering with witnesses, which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated by other means and otherwise to grant bail”.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Information disclosed by forces to a freedom of information request, cited in Ministry of Justice, *Bail and Murder Consultation Paper CP11/08*, 17 June 2008, para 28

¹⁵⁹ Qq 165–166

¹⁶⁰ Ministry of Justice, *Bail and Murder Consultation Paper CP11/08*, 17 June 2008, para 2

Murder suspects released on bail often have more stringent conditions attached than other suspects, such as residence and curfew conditions, financial guarantees and the requirement to report to a police station regularly and surrender documents.

130. The Ministry of Justice released figures on 25 February 2008 showing that 60 out of the 455 murder suspects then awaiting trial had been released on bail.¹⁶¹ The bail rate for those charged with murder is generally much lower than that for Crown Court cases; 13% compared with 68%.

131. We took evidence from two individuals who had been directly affected by the issue: Paul Carne, the son of Traute Maxfield, who was murdered by Gary Weddell in January 2008 while on bail charged with the murder of her daughter (his wife); and Helen Newlove, the widow of Gary Newlove, killed in Warrington in August 2007 by three teenagers, one of whom was on bail for assault.

132. Mr Carne told us that bail was opposed by the police and the family were concerned at the time of the decision about the potential for Mr Weddell to cause further harm. Mr Weddell's bail conditions were fairly limited: he had to sleep and reside at his brother's house and he had to 'sign on' twice a week; he was not tagged. Prior to the murder of Mrs Maxfield, Mr Weddell had already been caught breaching his bail conditions twice, and had been able to join a clay-pigeon shooting club from which he stole the weapon used to kill her. Mr Carne raised doubts about the thoroughness of the psychiatric assessment undertaken for the case and the lack of action taken by the court when Mr Weddell broke his bail conditions on the previous two occasions. He also argued for tighter bail conditions to prevent access to firearms. Mr Carne believed the police did attempt to keep track of Mr Weddell but were constrained by lack of resources.¹⁶²

133. Gary Newlove's murderer, Adam Swellings, had been released on bail only ten hours before the murder, and one of his bail conditions was that he was prohibited from entering Warrington. Mrs Newlove agreed with Mr Carne that the police "do not have the resources because, as they say, they are bogged down with paperwork".¹⁶³ She believed that more local police stations and better community intelligence from local officers would help the police to monitor suspects released on bail more effectively.

134. We took evidence from Mr Justice Fulford, a judge of the High Court, who explained the provisions of awarding bail, and assured us that the judiciary take the decision to award bail in a murder trial very seriously:

In terms of a suggestion that there is an increasing trend or some kind of presumption for granting bail in murder cases, that is most certainly not my experience, nor the experience of the senior judiciary.¹⁶⁴

161 "Demand for stricter bail after 60 on murder charges go free", *The Guardian*, 25 February 2008, p 10

162 Qq 240–8, 259; Ev 263

163 Q 268

164 Q 865

However, he accepted that unless bail is withheld from everyone charged with an offence, there will always remain a risk that someone granted bail may go on to commit a further offence.¹⁶⁵

135. Mr Justice Fulford assured us that judges were able to take the views of the police into account in awarding bail “to a very high degree”:

Particularly with cases of this kind where judges are going to be looking at the facts with extra care, you would expect a senior officer in the case to attend on the application. Certainly within my experience very often the officer will be called into the witness box to give evidence about some of the more pertinent issues in relation to whether or not bail should be granted. The views of the police are a pre-eminent consideration in relation to these applications.¹⁶⁶

Judges are also able to take into consideration the ability of the police to monitor a defendant on bail:

If you outline the conditions that you have in mind and the police say, ‘It will be impossible for us to monitor that defendant’, then it may be that either you are going to have to find other conditions or bail will not be appropriate. Resource issues most assuredly can and do come into play.¹⁶⁷

136. In June 2008, the Ministry of Justice launched a consultation on the granting of bail in cases of murder and the enforcement of bail conditions. Respondents have been asked to consider a number of options for change, including several which are of particular relevance to our inquiry, namely:

- Is any change to the law governing bail necessary?
- Should the statutory test be amended along similar lines to Section 25 of the 1994 Act, that is, to provide that bail is to be granted to defendants in murder cases only “if the court is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which justify it”?
- Alternatively, should the courts be obliged to have regard to the fact that the defendant is accused of murder, as an expansion of their current requirement to take the seriousness of the offence into account?
- As the standard of monitoring in particular cases is set by the local police according to their own operational criteria, should courts be made aware of local police practices regarding monitoring of bail conditions, so that these can be taken into account in determining the adequacy of bail conditions?
- Is it appropriate for courts to impose conditions that must be met by the police (or others) before the defendant is released on bail, such as police checks on the suitability of the address at which the defendant is to reside?¹⁶⁸

165 Q 866

166 Q 871

167 Q 873

168 Ministry of Justice, *Bail and Murder Consultation Paper CP11/08*, 17 June 2008

137. One further issue that came to our attention when taking evidence on bail was the experience of Helen Newlove and her family in attending court for the murder trial:

As victims in court, we want more help and respect. If you go into that court, you go through all the motions and you are fighting for a seat. You should not have to do that. The press have a box, and obviously all the legal people have a box, but nobody has any respect for the families. You do not know who you are sitting next to.¹⁶⁹

Louise Casey proposed in her Cabinet Office review that courts should introduce arrangements to ensure separate seating arrangements for victims' families attending court.¹⁷⁰

138. We strongly believe that there should be a presumption against the award of bail in cases of murder, owing to the grave nature of the offence and subsequent risk to the public. We support the option set out in the Ministry of Justice consultation on Bail and Murder proposing that bail be granted in cases of murder only if the court is satisfied that there are really exceptional circumstances to justify it.

139. Police forces do not always have sufficient capacity to monitor offenders released on bail. Therefore, we also support proposals for courts to be made aware of local police practices regarding monitoring of bail conditions, so that these can be taken into account in determining the adequacy of bail conditions; and for courts to be able to impose conditions that must be met by the police before the defendant is released on bail. Given this lack of consistency in police practice, ACPO should consider drawing up guidance on monitoring procedures for offenders released on bail.

140. Although not directly within the remit of our inquiry, we were concerned by evidence we heard of the experiences of victims' families in attending trials, in terms of the distress they suffer in having to fight for a seat and the potential for intimidation by defendants' supporters. Therefore, we welcome the proposal that Her Majesty's Court Service should introduce separate seating arrangements for victims' families in court. This should be done immediately.

Electronic tagging as a condition of bail

141. Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison noted that one means of facilitating monitoring is to request the court to award a tagging order as a condition of bail:

The electronic tagging of people on bail has two benefits. One is that the individual feels constrained by nature of being electronically monitored; the second is that offenders who are not quite so constrained leave their geographical map as a database, and we as a police service can go back and check where they were at a particular time.¹⁷¹

169 Q 269

170 Louise Casey, *Engaging Communities in the Fight Against Crime*, Cabinet Office, June 2008, Executive Summary, p 10

171 Q 165

Mr Justice Fulford agreed that “tagging can be an extremely useful tool” that he had used on a number of occasions when, if it had not been available, he probably would not have granted bail.¹⁷²

142. The technology can be bought in and used by criminal justice agencies themselves or can be outsourced to a provider. We were concerned about reports of security lapses and sought assurances from Mr Paul Moonan, the Managing Director of G4S Justice Services, who represent nearly 70% of the electronic monitoring market in England and Wales. Mr Moonan explained that the tag is fitted to the ankle, with the strap size measured to a precise level so that it cannot be pulled off without detection:

If somebody willingly wants to break their court or prison curfew order, they can cut the tag off, but we would receive an alert in our control centre to that effect, and breach proceedings would be instigated immediately if that was to happen.¹⁷³

G4S employees then verify that defendants are at their home or other place of curfew during curfew times—typically seven in the evening until seven in the morning—and report any instances where they are not to the police.

143. According to Mr Moonan, 95% of those on curfew complete it successfully.¹⁷⁴ We asked for figures on breaches. In relation to community sentences, during the period March 2007 to April 2008 G4S monitored 29,149 subjects on curfew. 76% completed their curfew either without the need for any court enforcement action, or action was taken but subsequently withdrawn, or the subject was found not guilty. A further 6.5% completed with proven breaches where the court decided that the order should continue. Overall, 2,818 (9.6%) were revoked, either before or following completion of the order.¹⁷⁵

144. We welcome the use of tagging orders to enable the police to monitor more effectively defendants released on bail. However, we still have some reservations about the extent to which breaches may occur; the Home Office should keep this under review. In our opinion, breaches should be dealt with by withdrawal of bail.

Gun and knife crime

145. A further area where police workload is perceived to have increased is gun and knife crime, particularly linked to gangs. Chief Superintendent Dann told us: “in Hackney a disproportionate amount of my time and resources are employed in keeping a lid on ... gang problems”.¹⁷⁶

Scale of the problem

146. Weapons were used in 24% of violent crimes as recorded by the 2007/08 British Crime Survey (BCS); knives in 6%. These figures have remained relatively stable over the past few

172 Q 875

173 Q 537

174 *Ibid.*

175 Ev 274

176 Q 779

years. In 2007/08, all police forces started separately recording use of a knife or a sharp instrument in offences of attempted murder, grievous bodily harm and robbery. 19% (22,151 instances) of these offences involved knives or sharp instruments. Comparison with previous years is not possible nationally, but Metropolitan Police data shows there were 10,220 knife-enabled crimes in 2007/08, 16% fewer than in 2006/07, figures for which were down 4% on the previous year.¹⁷⁷

147. According to BCS data, firearms were used in 1% of violent crimes. In 2007/08, a provisional figure of 9,803 firearm offences were recorded in England and Wales, a 2% increase on 2006/07, in which year firearms were used in 0.3% of all recorded crimes.¹⁷⁸

148. It would appear from these statistics that gun and knife crime is not increasing at the rate suggested by media coverage. However, Cherie Booth, who chaired the Channel 4 Street Weapons Commission told us “there is no doubt whatsoever” that the number of people presenting to hospitals with wounds from guns or knives is increasing and that many of these are not reported to the police. According to Liam Black, who also sat on the Street Weapons Commission, Merseyside Ambulance Service estimate that 50% of the stabbing victims they deal with do not report the incidents to the police.¹⁷⁹

149. Moreover, the average age of victims has been going down, and the BCS does not cover under-16s, although we understand that this situation may change in future years. The 2006 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey, which does survey under-16s, showed that 3% of young people aged 10 to 25 had carried a knife with them in the last 12 months.¹⁸⁰ Certainly more people appear to be carrying knives: convictions for ‘having an article with blade or point in a public place’ rose from around 3,500 in 1997 to over 6,000 in 2006.¹⁸¹

150. Liam Black argued for greater efforts to be made to tackle knife crime, as he believed it to be a far bigger threat than guns:

What percentage of crime do you think involves a firearm? Everyone says: “40%? 30%?” It is 0.5%. Of that 0.5% how many of those firearms are replicas or toys? I think it is half. So you are talking about a relatively small impact that has devastating impacts on anyone that is involved in that. My personal view is that the knife problem, and the easy access to knives, is a much bigger issue that we face than young people and guns.¹⁸²

151. Official statistics appear to demonstrate a slight decrease rather than an increase in knife crime but we doubt whether these represent the true picture. Greater use of accident and emergency data would help to build a better understanding of the extent of the problem, as would proposals to extend the British Crime Survey to cover under-16s. Gun crime causes irreparable damage to the communities affected by it. We do not underestimate the importance of police efforts to combat it. However, we believe that

177 Home Office, *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, July 2008, pp 75–76

178 *Ibid.*, pp 73, 75

179 Qq 729–30

180 Home Office, *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, July 2008, pp 15, 76

181 Home Office, *Violent Crime Action Plan 2008–2011*, p 13

182 Q 749

more emphasis and resources should be assigned to tackling knife crime, given its far greater prevalence.

The Government's approach to gun and knife crime

152. The Government has introduced a series of laws which have been designed to tackle gun and knife crime. The Firearms Act 1997 banned the private ownership of all cartridge ammunition handguns; the Criminal Justice Act 2003 established mandatory, five-year minimum sentences for the illegal possession of a prohibited firearm; and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 made it an offence to be in possession of an imitation firearm or air gun in public, banned the sale, manufacture and import of guns that use self contained gas cartridge systems, and raised the minimum age of purchase for air guns to 17. The Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 raised the maximum penalty for possession of a knife in a public place without good reason from two years to four years, introduced tougher sentences for carrying imitation firearms, introduced a new offence of using another person to hide or carry guns, and increased the age limit for buying a knife, air weapon or crossbow to 18.

153. According to the Home Office, those prosecuted for carrying knives are almost three times as likely to go to prison now as they were 10 years ago (6% were given prison sentences in 1996, 17% in 2006), and the average sentence length has increased by almost a third over the same period.¹⁸³ However, the Sentencing Guidelines Council has issued guidance to magistrates' courts that a sentence for possessing a bladed article should begin at a band C fine. The Minister of State agreed with us that this is not an appropriate sentence.¹⁸⁴

154. Anyone caught carrying a knife illegally is now likely to face criminal charges as of June 2008. Previously police tended to charge only over-18s while younger teenagers were given a caution, if their first offence. There have been similar criticisms over gun crime: in 2005, only 40% of people convicted of being in possession of a firearm received the minimum jail term.¹⁸⁵

155. £5 million of additional funding has been pledged by the Home Office for the Metropolitan, West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Lancashire, Essex and Thames Valley police forces to support increased use of searches in intelligence-led operations, fast-tracking the 'knife referral project' in which all young people convicted of a knife offence are taught the consequences of knife crime, and home visits and letters to parents of young people known to carry weapons.¹⁸⁶

156. The police approach has focused on increased use of intelligence-led searches. Operation Blunt 2, a targeted initiative to tackle knife crime through use of stop-and-search within high-risk areas, resulted in over 1,200 people being arrested by the Metropolitan Police on suspicion of possessing weapons and other suspected knife-related

183 "Tough new sanctions to tackle knife crime", Home Office press release,, 5 June 2008

184 Q 815

185 Policy Exchange Research Note 2, *Gun and Knife Crime in Great Britain*, September 2007

186 "Tough new sanctions to tackle knife crime", Home Office press release, 5 June 2008

crimes between 19 May and 29 June 2008, and a total of 528 knives were recovered as a result of 26,777 searches.¹⁸⁷ The Minister of State commended police in London and Liverpool for “setting up in an area with search warrants, knife search arches and really bearing down on an area, based on intelligence—it works and works very, very effectively” and said he would encourage other forces to adopt this approach where there is a problem.¹⁸⁸

157. The Street Weapons Commission were impressed by close working between the police and local authority in Hackney to combine enforcement activity with efforts to provide alternatives for young people. Mr Black told us that: “All the committee were very impressed with Hackney where they sit down and say, ‘It is that person and that person who are causing the trouble in this borough, so we are going to target them and let them know we are all over them’”.¹⁸⁹

158. Chief Superintendent Dann has ten officers dedicated full-time to Operation Curb, targeting around 20 offenders, supported by an intelligence team linking in with youth offending and other teams. However, he emphasised how difficult and resource-intensive it was to identify and monitor those 20 offenders: his officers made 122 visits in six months to home addresses.¹⁹⁰

159. We learnt on our visit to Moss Side that this approach of targeting key offenders, coupled with diversionary activities provided in partnership with the local authority and other agencies, has also been successful in tackling gang-related gun crime. At the time of our visit in July, there had been no gang-related firearms discharges in the division since Operation Cougar began on 14 February 2008, whereas since 2003 there had been at least one every month, with 51 occurring in total in 2007/08.

160. This level of success has been achieved through a combination of approaches, which the division considers to be sustainable. Officers have carried out a high number of stop and searches under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, which gives them the right to search people in a defined area at a specific time when they believe, with good reason, that there is the possibility of serious violence or that a person is carrying a dangerous object or offensive weapon. 909 had been carried out as of 30 June, resulting in 148 arrests.¹⁹¹ They know exactly who the gang members are and where they live, and are ‘in their faces’. Dedicated resources for diversion activities have been provided, in partnership with the Youth Service, and this period of high enforcement has also marked the highest take-up in terms of education and diversionary activities. In addition, the police adopted a more supportive approach to parents: letters were sent to over 30 parents outlining police concerns about their children’s activities, and by and large, parents have been willing to work with the police. Those who are unwilling have been subject to parenting orders.

187 “Youth’s death sparks police vow”, *BBC News Online*, 2 July 2008, www.bbc.co.uk/news

188 Q 791

189 Q 733

190 Q 765

191 Committee visit to Manchester, 7 July 2008

161. We explored a concern that police officers who stop people for non-arrestable minor offences, on discovering that they have recent convictions for knife and gun carrying may, technically, be unable to search them. Chief Superintendent Dann considered there is sufficient room for flexibility within the current legislation and that officers must also take care to avoid damaging relations between the police and local communities.¹⁹²

162. During our inquiry we heard a great deal of evidence on all aspects of knife crime, including prevention and early intervention measures, and sentencing. We were particularly struck by Chief Superintendent Dann's assertion that "by the time we [the police] become involved ... it is too late".¹⁹³ We decided to launch a separate inquiry into knife crime to begin in autumn 2008.

163. The evidence we heard on knife-crime convinced us of the value of undertaking an inquiry devoted to that subject, which will commence in the autumn. We do, however, make a series of initial recommendations here, based on the evidence we have taken in this inquiry.

164. We were impressed by successful approaches in Hackney and Moss Side which combined focused, intelligence-led campaigns against key offenders with diversionary activities to tackle knife and gun crime respectively. We recommend that the additional funding provided by the Government to tackle knife crime is used to replicate this approach.

165. The power to search for weapons, where used appropriately, is a key tool in tackling knife-crime. We recommend that police officers are given clearer guidance as to when they may search those they have stopped for non-arrestable offences for weapons, upon discovery of any recent convictions for carrying a knife or gun.

166. We are concerned at evidence suggesting that many who are convicted of being in possession of a firearm do not receive the minimum jail term, and that very few teenagers found in possession of a knife receive appropriate sentences. Possessing a weapon is a very serious offence. We recommend that the Home Secretary asks the Sentencing Guidelines Council to revisit their guidelines for knife and gun offences to ensure this is properly reflected.

192 Qq 774-6

193 Qq 768-9

4 Releasing resources

167. The assessments by the Audit Commission of police use of resources in 2006/07 found that all police authorities were performing at least adequately in use of resources, 16% were performing strongly and 79% were performing well or strongly.¹⁹⁴ In this section we examine some of the ways in which forces are, or could be, freeing up resources. First, we consider Sir Ronnie Flanagan's recommendations to save the service "not less than 5–7 million hours ... equivalent to 2,500–3,500 officers" by reducing bureaucracy.¹⁹⁵ We then examine the use of technology to allow officers to return to the beat and to operate more efficiently; followed by efficiency savings gained by collaboration between forces at a regional level. Finally, we explore the scope for and appropriateness of using police staff to carry out tasks traditionally undertaken by sworn officers.

Reducing bureaucracy

168. We had previously raised concerns about the amount of time police officers spend completing paperwork at the station at the expense of time spent on patrol or investigating incidents. Statistics supplied by the Home Office to our *Police Funding* inquiry indicated that officers spent 20.1% of their total time on paperwork in 2003–4 (10.3% incident-related, 9.8% other); 18.4% in 2004–05 (9.9% incident-related, 8.5% other); and 19.3% in 2005–06 (10.8% incident-related, 8.5% other).¹⁹⁶

169. We were therefore disappointed to learn that the situation does not appear to have improved. Sir Ronnie Flanagan admitted to us that in conducting his *Review of Policing*, he was "quite staggered at the bureaucratic burden" on officers, compared to 30 years ago. He told us that it was possible a police officer could spend 25–30% of his or her time on paperwork.¹⁹⁷ In Monmouth, Deputy Chief Constable Giannasi said the police had become a "crime-recording" rather than a "crime-fighting" force.¹⁹⁸ In 2005–06 the Metropolitan Police spent £122.2 million on 'non-incident linked paperwork' and £26.5 million on 'checking paper work' out of a total budget of £3.2 billion, compared with £76.6 million on robberies and £48.8 million on house burglaries.¹⁹⁹

Documentation

170. Deputy Chief Constable Paxton of Staffordshire Police told us that nationally the police recorded 5–6 million crimes a year, at an estimated cost of £91 million. Sir Ronnie recommended adopting a two-tiered approach to crime and incident recording, with serious offences, which would account for 20% of recorded crime, recorded fully, and local

194 Audit Commission, *Police use of resources 2006/07*, December 2007

195 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 64

196 Home Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2006–07, *Police Funding*, HC 553, Ev 36

197 Qq 2, 35

198 Committee visit to Monmouth, 16 June 2008

199 Harriet Sergeant, *The Public and the Police*, London: Civitas, 2008, p 17

offences, which would account for 80%, recorded more concisely.²⁰⁰ This approach is being piloted in Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Surrey and the West Midlands.

171. Staffordshire Police's crime-recording form, as demonstrated to us in an informal presentation, has been reduced from 14 pages to one. They estimate it saves officers 20–25 minutes per form in completion time. The Minister of State told us there would be a full assessment of the pilots in October or November 2008, six months after they started.²⁰¹

172. Staffordshire is also one of seven forces piloting the streamlined justice process, which uses a simplified form and proportionate approach to case-file building for cases dealt with primarily in magistrates' courts. Chief Superintendent Mick Harrison emphasised that the investigation process itself was not streamlined, but the shorter form, completed after investigation, saved around an hour in completion per case. 78% of guilty cases in Staffordshire are now dealt with at first hearing, and there has been a 48% reduction in the requirements to take statements and a 15% reduction in officer-tasking.²⁰²

173. One media commentator expressed doubts that in Britain's adversarial system, where the defence can always fall back on demanding to see the paperwork, "canny coppers will feel obliged to spend time doing it properly, whatever ministers do".²⁰³ Sir Ronnie rejected this, however, citing examples in London where many hours have been saved in case preparation without putting the success of the case in jeopardy.²⁰⁴

174. Sir Ronnie also recommended making full use of charging powers in order to reduce time spent waiting for decisions from the CPS, and extending charging powers to include all summary offences and additional offences subject to trial at magistrates or crown courts.²⁰⁵ Sergeant Rooney explained why he believed this was necessary:

If someone is arrested and is brought into custody, they are interviewed and may be decided that we are now going to go to see the CPS lawyer who is in the station during the day to get authority to charge. That is because the Attorney General Guidelines say that for these offences we have to go to the CPS. We cannot do that because I only have one CPS lawyer in Acton and we have 40 charging slots a month instead of 16; we should have two lawyers. As a custody sergeant, I then have to bail that person for nine weeks. We need to sort that out because that is not serving anybody. It is not serving the judicial system. The police officers have to complete all that paperwork. It is certainly not serving the victims of crime.²⁰⁶

175. The Minister of State was confident that the service would be able to meet, and perhaps even exceed, Sir Ronnie Flanagan's projections for bureaucracy reduction:

200 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 55

201 Q 799

202 Ev 292

203 "The plodding pace of change", *Guardian Unlimited*, 8 February 2008, www.guardian.co.uk

204 Q 38

205 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, pp 60–1

206 Q 238

Staffordshire carried out a sort of paperless policing model experiment that Sir Ronnie ... was very taken with, and the Home Secretary said the results from that were very, very encouraging but, with respect to Staffordshire, it was one particular type of force and that we should spread that out a bit. So we got the West Midlands, Leicestershire and Surrey along with Staffordshire to work with the Staffordshire Police on that model of a move to paperless policing. Other forces are getting involved as well but not on a force-wide basis. Again, the results from that are hugely encouraging ... his original estimate of 2,500 to 3,500 man-hours saved, or equivalent number of staff saved, will, hopefully, be a woeful underestimate.²⁰⁷

176. We are disappointed that police officers are still spending 25–30% of their time completing paperwork. However, we were impressed by Staffordshire Police’s efforts to condense their crime-recording procedures and look forward to the results of the crime-recording and streamlined justice process pilots. Should they prove to be as successful as anticipated, we urge national implementation as soon as possible. In addition to the two-tier approach proposed for recording ‘serious’ and ‘local’ crimes, we consider there are a number of minor crimes which could be re-classified as ‘incidents’, with discretion as to whether they need be recorded.

177. Time spent waiting for CPS charging decisions means that officers are often forced to bail offenders before charges can be brought. Earlier this year, Sir Ronnie Flanagan recommended the issuing of guidance to enable forces to make full use of the charging powers that they currently hold, and extension of these powers to include all summary offences and additional offences subject to trial at magistrates or crown courts. In its reply to this Report, the Government should confirm that these recommendations are being implemented.

Stop and account

178. Following changes made in the wake of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, a manually-recorded system of Stop and Account now takes on average seven minutes per individual encounter, not including time spent logging, checking and countersigning. Sir Ronnie concluded that “the process has become bureaucratic rather than focusing on what I believe is most important in the one to one interactions between the police and members of the public—courtesy, respect and accountability”.²⁰⁸ His proposals to reform the Stop and Account procedure, so that officers record the details digitally rather than manually, and give the member of the public a record card denoting officer identity, place and time, have been widely welcomed.

179. Trevor Phillips, Chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, however, warned that “any increased use of stop and search powers without proper accountability is in danger of increasing community tensions and alienating the very people the police should be engaging with to reduce crime”.²⁰⁹ Sir Ronnie was confident this could be avoided:

207 Q 798

208 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 63

209 Equality and Human Rights Commission press release, 7 February 2008

In my experience watching these processes, it took some seven minutes per person to complete but, more importantly for me, or as importantly for me, the person at the receiving end could not understand what was going on, became suspicious that their details were being recorded for some intelligence purposes and, however much the police officer took great pains to explain that this was for their protection and they were being given a copy of that, it actually adversely affected the quality of the one-to-one encounter. That is why it was important for me in conducting this review to have an advisory group which included, for example, Doreen Lawrence.²¹⁰

180. Those with experience of policing or overseeing policing of diverse communities agreed. The former Mayor of London was “attracted” to Sir Ronnie’s proposals:

You have got to retain the essence of what the Macpherson Lawrence Inquiry did in terms of accountability. If we can have a small handheld computer and something is tapped in, or if each officer has got a named identity card that they can give with a phone contact point, that is fine.²¹¹

Sir Paul Stephenson, the Deputy Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police, emphasised “everything in my professional background ... tells me that with Stop and Search the issue is more often how you do it, not what you do”.²¹²

181. On the basis of the evidence we have heard, we conclude that Sir Ronnie Flanagan’s proposals for Stop and Account incorporate the appropriate accountability mechanism and are unlikely to damage community relations. We therefore welcome the change of PACE Code A to allow the approach to be piloted in seven Basic Command Units across four forces over the summer. We await the results of the pilots, which will be presented to the House in due course.

182. On the basis of early evidence from the pilots, we are cautiously optimistic that current attempts to reduce bureaucracy may be more successful than previous efforts. It is essential that the service achieves the level of efficiency savings quantified by Sir Ronnie Flanagan.

Technology

Use of personal digital assistants to increase effectiveness

183. In our Report on *Police Funding*, we were critical of insufficient progress in introducing hand-held personal digital assistants (PDAs), as a means to reduce time spent on paperwork at the station, and recommended that Chief Constables ensured that they were introduced in all forces as a matter of urgency.²¹³ This has not yet been achieved, but more funding has recently been made available by the Home Office.

210 Q 43

211 Q 71

212 Q 150

213 Home Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2006–07, *Police Funding*, HC 553 para 98

184. Police forces can choose between the Airwave platform or a mobile phone platform to support use of PDAs. We took evidence from Research in Motion, the makers of Blackberry PDAs, who have deployed 14,000 devices across 28 forces, representing roughly three-quarter of all devices deployed in the UK.²¹⁴ Charmaine Eggberry explained their use:

This device is used to access police national computers and all the databases ... They can do everything from issuing warrants, looking up pictures of suspects while they are actually out on the street and are able to input the information that they gather directly onto the device ...

You have this device, it is small, unobtrusive, you are able to deal with the issue at hand right in front of you, you are able to look at those warrants, issue them if necessary, access the police networks, et cetera. For example, one of the police forces has told us that they have seen a five-times increase in the number of times that PCN networks are actually being accessed.²¹⁵

185. Chief Constable Johnston of the British Transport Police described the benefits of PDAs for officers:

An officer, under the old system, would write down a stop search in his book, would go back to the police station, type it into the computer—a very slow process—and would have to do the same with the intelligence report. Mobile data does this for him automatically. He taps it out on his mobile data terminal, John Smith gets typed in once, so every time he deals with a name John Smith, it will come up automatically on the key pad, the date of birth will come up automatically, so there are savings there in terms of paper work and also savings in terms of transferring the records from his on-the-street record back to the records of the organisation. That is done automatically, and so there are definite savings there.²¹⁶

186. Bedfordshire Police worked with the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) to quantify the business benefits of using PDAs. Inspector Jim Hitch explained that prior to the introduction of PDAs in Bedfordshire, the amount of time spent by officers in the station had risen to 46%. After implementation, this figure fell very quickly to 36%, where it has remained. In addition, visible patrol time went up from 14% to 19%. The amount of time spent by officers dealing with incidents rose from 19% to 26%.²¹⁷

187. However, 70% of the 349 officers surveyed by the Scottish Police Federation who had trialled PDAs said that they made them less efficient, around 25% said there was no change and less than 10% said they made them more efficient. Software problems meant that many electronic notes were corrupted, forcing officers to spend time re-entering evidence.²¹⁸

214 Q 499

215 Qq 501, 520

216 Q 567

217 Q 582. Figures derived from Activity-Based Costing.

218 "Police get PCs to cut the burden of red tape", *Daily Telegraph*, 27 May 2008, p 11, "High tech trial leaves cops feeling unsafe", *Police Review*, 25 April 2008, p 6

188. When challenged by us, Ms Eggberry queried the technology used to support the devices in these instances and asserted that, on the contrary, Research in Motion receives “phenomenal reports” from police forces about ease of use.²¹⁹ This was supported by evidence from the British Transport Police and Bedfordshire police, including Inspector Hitch, who told us that “the actual devices and the system, the network, are very reliable”.²²⁰

189. 75% of the Scottish officers surveyed also said they felt less safe using PDAs, owing to the concentration required to operate them during potentially confrontational situations. Chief Constable Johnston agreed his officers did have some concerns about entering data into PDAs as opposed to a notebook whilst dealing with suspects, but considered this would be overcome as officers become more comfortable with using the device. Staffordshire Police apply a policy whereby if an officer suspects that an offender may become violent, that officer should resort to communicating by radio rather than through the PDA.²²¹ The Police Federation argued for greater consideration of the practitioner’s views as to what is workable and what is not in system design and implementation, as they are the end users of the technology.²²²

190. The total cost to a force of equipping a police officer with mobile IT is estimated to be between £3000 and £6500 per officer over five years.²²³ Figures from Thames Valley, West Yorkshire and Bedfordshire forces show that the average cost is 80p–£1 per officer per day, which includes training, infrastructure and the device itself. Ms Eggberry estimated that it would cost £50 million to purchase and provide devices for all forces.²²⁴

191. Following publication of the Flanagan report, which promoted the use of PDAs, 19 forces in England (in addition to eight Scottish forces) won bids for 10,000 mobile data devices to be delivered between September 2008 and February 2009. The Government has since announced a further £25 million over the next two years so that by March 2010, 30,000 extra devices will have been delivered.²²⁵

192. Personal digital assistants can significantly increase the amount of time that police officers spend on visible patrol and dealing with incidents outside the station, and reduce the time they spend on paperwork. We welcome the Home Secretary’s recent grant of £50 million to fund PDAs in 19 English forces and her promises of a further £25 million, but recognise that many forces were disappointed not to win funding bids. We recommend that sufficient funding is made available as soon as possible to enable all frontline officers to have access to a PDA.

219 Q 511

220 Q 591

221 Informal presentation from Staffordshire Police to the Committee, 15 July 2008

222 Q 614

223 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 36

224 Qq 506, 508

225 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, p 42

Adopting common solutions

193. Implementation of new technology poses significant challenges for the police. A recent article in *Police Review*, based on interviews with Hampshire Constabulary and the City of London Police, notes that forces are often forced to buy-in or develop their own solutions as they cannot afford to wait for roll-out of national systems.²²⁶ The NPIA's Chief Executive, Chief Constable Peter Neyroud, agreed that the agency's major challenge is how to speed up the process of rolling out new technology, because "the constant tale is that it has taken so long. We are looking at ways in which we can speed things up by re-using what we have, by taking things off the shelf, and also by stopping the re-invention of the wheel".²²⁷

194. Sir Ronnie Flanagan noted in his *Review of Policing* that forces may also be unwilling to adopt common solutions. One of the key barriers to efficient purchase and implementation of new technologies is the historically fragmented approach taken across the service. Favourable conditions need to be in place at the same time in 43 force areas, which of course rarely happens.²²⁸

195. However, this results in unnecessary duplication of effort. One example of duplication that we discovered concerned the use of 999 call playbacks in interviews with those arrested for domestic violence, to assist with bringing charges. Staffordshire Police demonstrated their Webplayer 999 system, developed by a force inspector to circumvent the minimum four-week wait to receive a recording of the call. We wrote to the Home Secretary to request that this practice was implemented across forces, only to discover that Devon and Cornwall Police have developed a similar system.

196. Police systems do not link up across forces, necessitating a large amount of duplication in data entry: up to 70% of information is entered into police systems more than once.²²⁹ Sergeant Rooney argued: "We need to be able to move it through the criminal justice system so that once I have put that information in, nobody else has to input the same information. At the moment, that does not happen".²³⁰ The Police Federation agreed:

Any new technology must come in the form of an integrated system that is fully compatible across all forces and the Criminal Justice System. We simply cannot afford to continue the current trend of multiple forces procuring multiple new technology solutions that are unique and not compatible in either resource or functionality across the force. This is a difficult challenge that will require investment in hardware and training—but it will be worth it in terms of how it could add real value to policing.²³¹

197. In addition to the operational drawbacks, the Royal Academy of Engineering explained the negative financial impacts:

226 "IT's time to change", *Police Review*, 7 March 2008, pp 35–36

227 Q 182

228 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 37

229 *Ibid.*, pp 23–24, 35–38, 51–61

230 Q 221

231 Ev 207

The overheads and cost of transition to new systems can be significant, especially as individual police forces represent relatively small operations. In addition, many police forces operate in an autonomous manner. Implementing solutions on a force by force basis risks fragmentation, which would be a barrier to integration across police forces and wider emergency services. In addition, a fragmented approach may not attract the attention of the global technology companies who would implement new complex programmes.²³²

Mr Moonan described the experience of his company, G4S, when trying to win work from the police:

It is more difficult. We are dealing with 43 customers who have got different specifications. It is harder for us to give economies of scale and to give a solution that will provide the optimum value for money for the police because we have to work with each one in turn and develop a solution just for their needs ... When those people join together or when there is a framework agreement, there is more opportunity to provide a more efficient service, I would suggest.²³³

The Police Federation argued for more central control over the contracting of new systems to make it easier for forces in this regard.²³⁴

198. Some witnesses warned that complete centralisation would create its own problems. Ms Eggberry told us that Research in Motion work very closely with individual police forces, because each force has particular technology requirements based on the environment they are serving.²³⁵ Inspector Hitch said:

I think it is a mistake to centralise it and to have everybody doing exactly the same. There are different requirements in different parts of the country. For example, in parts of Scotland the Airwave coverage is the only coverage; there is hardly any mobile phone coverage in the Highlands. Airwaves is the only thing that can be used, whereas here mobile phone coverage is absolutely superb and there is no problem in using it ... I think there needs to be retained some of the element of if we want to make a change to the system we can do it fairly quickly.²³⁶

199. Chief Constable Johnston argued it did not always make sense for an individual force to invest in new technology at a juncture that is decided centrally: “With the Airwave system, when I was with the Metropolitan Police, we had just bought a new radio system. So although for United Kingdom policing the business case stood up, for the Met, actually, it did not”.²³⁷

200. However, Mr Bobbett, of Airwave Solutions Ltd, considered it was possible to achieve a balance between a centralised and individual force approach:

232 Ev 246

233 Qq 555–556

234 Q 613

235 Q 499

236 Qq 594–5

237 Q 606

Making sure that you have a common platform does not deny localisation, because there are local issues that are needed to be dealt with, but I think starting with a standard and a standard platform enables you then to build the localisation that makes the most efficient use for those individual officers but gives you the comfort of common information and common sharing. I think we have already done it with the Airwave system and, hopefully, we can have many more examples of that right across policing.²³⁸

201. The Airwave radio network is a rare example of a technology that was centrally procured and implemented across all forces. Universal implementation of the platform, which is based on Terrestrial Trunked Radio (TETRA) digital technology and used primarily for secure voice communications, allows for consistent standards, economies of scale and operational efficiency:

If you go back to the old days of the analogue systems that the police forces had, they did not have the ability to communicate across their police force boundaries, they did not have the ability to communicate with other services, so they were very restricted in the things they could do with their previous systems; so Airwave is clearly a major step forward for them.²³⁹

Sir Ronnie Flanagan observed that the Airwave project had met with considerable resistance: “the lack of ability to compel forces to adopt this new technology meant it took almost ten years to implement”.²⁴⁰

202. The National Policing Improvement Agency is intensifying its efforts to establish a practice of purchasing one system and making the framework available to the rest of the forces. For example, forces that have not yet got a mobile data platform will be able to buy into the platform purchased by the NPIA. Chief Constable Neyroud, noting that the service as a whole spends around about £1 billion pounds on technology each year, agreed that “to make best use of the cash you have to start thinking about operating some functions as one rather than 43 [forces], and this is one of them”.²⁴¹

203. Collaboration across forces is one means of ensuring that forces do not have to ‘reinvent the wheel’. For example, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire forces, which have advanced plans for the use of mobile devices, are assisting Derbyshire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire to develop their ideas on the use of this technology.²⁴² Inspector Hitch noted that Bedfordshire works very closely with other forces who deploy Blackberries, specifically Thames Valley Police, West Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire, to share ideas, but:

238 Q 557

239 Q 521

240 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 38

241 Q 182

242 Ev 225-6

I do sometimes wish that people were more willing to do that, and that there was more of a national focus on that, because I think it would be quite beneficial. Some people are rather precious about their ideas and their little inventions, which I think is a shame.²⁴³

204. The fruitfulness of the collaborative approach is perhaps demonstrated by the fact that the forces bidding as part of the East Midlands and Yorkshire collaborations comprised nearly half of those forces in England who were awarded funding for PDAs.

205. Central procurement of new technology allows for economies of scale, consistent standards and integrated systems, and makes the police service a more attractive client for providers. In addition, while we commend individual innovations towards more effective policing on the part of individual forces, we query how much time is wasted in duplicated efforts. In our view, it is possible to achieve a balance with meeting the needs of individual forces by developing a common platform that can then be tailored to suit the local situation.

206. The National Policing Improvement Agency should take the lead in negotiating the purchase of PDAs and their supporting infrastructure on a uniform basis, in order to reduce costs and remove contractual burdens from individual forces. In doing so, they should give careful consideration to the supporting infrastructure to ensure ease of use and flexibility to adapt to future innovations. It is important that officers who will use the technology are involved in system design to ensure it meets their needs.

Difficulties experienced by the British Transport Police in accessing new technology

207. The British Transport Police (BTP) experiences difficulties in securing funding for new technology developed by the NPIA for Home Office forces. As a force that is financed by the rail industry rather than the Home Office, the BTP is not always included in the specification for new technology. Of particular concern is the Home Office's refusal to fund BTP access to the Police National Database. Its Chief Constable warned of the consequences should the force fail to gain access:

We would be out-with the whole intelligence system for the UK, so we would not be able to interrogate the central database, we would not be able to feed the intelligence base, and we would not be able to draw off records that are freely available to other forces up and down the country.²⁴⁴

208. In response to the Home Office contention that access should be paid for by the railway companies, Chief Constable Johnston argued:

243 Q 600

244 Q 604

The BTP's contribution to the national intelligence database is for the benefit of UK, not just for the railway companies, and there is a very clear rationale for the scope of the programme to be widened to include BTP and for it to be fully funded by government.²⁴⁵

He said it was inevitable that BTP access to the database would have to be funded at some point, but any delay would have a “dramatic impact” on the force's ability to operate.²⁴⁶

209. The British Transport Police play a key role in protecting against the threat of terrorism. It is therefore essential that the force is able to access the Police National Database on the same basis as Home Office forces, to enable intelligence to be shared fully across the service. We hope that, in its reply to this report, the Home Office can provide assurances that funding for this will be forthcoming.

Collaboration

210. In addition to the operational benefits of collaborating to provide protective services, which we explore in the next chapter, the Government has encouraged shared support services as a means of achieving economies of scale and therefore saving money. This means forces pooling back-office functions, such as payroll and pensions, and human resources management. The Audit Commission has cited collaboration as a key factor in efficient use of resources by police authorities.²⁴⁷

211. We heard evidence of good practice in such work, particularly in Wales and the East Midlands, with the latter area pursuing the following shared services:²⁴⁸

Efficiency projects
Tape summarising
Authorities bureau
Forensics and Identification
Prisoner Processing and File Prep Workforce Modernisation
Demand Management
Resource Management
Crime Investigation
Force strength and resilience assessments
Regional Police and procedure alignment

245 Q 579

246 Q 604

247 Audit Commission, *Police use of resources 2006/07*, December 2007, pp 3–4

248 Ev 227

212. The Policy Exchange recently concluded, however, that “the process of instilling a culture of co-operation and collaboration between forces is moving at an unacceptably slow pace”.²⁴⁹ Sir Ronnie Flanagan agreed:²⁵⁰

While we can point to good operational collaboration, I think there are savings and efficiencies to be brought about by administrative collaboration in the whole area of procurement, be it of air support, information technology, fleet, issues like that. There is a lot of good, positive work going on but there is a lot more to be done.²⁵¹

213. Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison explained why this might be the case:

It is patchy and there are some obstacles, some barriers, to collaboration, and those barriers are the tight fiscal environment which means that a lot of forces are drawing in their belts which means they are not raising their gaze. Secondly, there is that sort of sense in both chief constables and police authorities of sovereignty and the fear—which I have come across as I did some work around collaboration—of being a net donor ... So there is this very real sense, and it is difficult to break down other than by the Home Secretary using her powers, which she has.²⁵²

214. The Home Office does have the power to mandate shared services, but it has not previously exercised this power out of a desire to maintain positive working relationships with forces. While this is understandable, we recommended last year that the Home Office should keep under review its policy of not mandating police forces to share services should forces continue to be reluctant to initiate such co-operation themselves.²⁵³

215. Collaboration between forces at a regional level to share support services enables forces to operate more efficiently. While there is a range of good practice throughout England and Wales, it appears that many forces are not collaborating to the extent that they could be. We recommended last year in our *Police Funding* report that the Home Office should keep under review its policy of not mandating forces to share services. Given the lack of progress in this area, we recommend the Home Secretary should now use her powers to mandate those forces who are not doing so voluntarily to share support services.

Use of police staff

216. There has been a steady increase in the number of staff support roles within the police service, with the proportion of non-warranted personnel rising from 30% in 1997 to 37% in 2006.²⁵⁴ The Institute for Public Policy Reform (IPPR) noted that around half of this increase was due to the introduction of PCSOs, with the remainder largely due to the transfer of back-office functions from warranted officers to non-warranted staff, mainly at

249 B. Loveday & J. McClory, *Footing the bill: Reforming the police service*, Policy Exchange, 2007, pp 20–21

250 Q 11

251 Q 12

252 Q 180

253 Home Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2006–07, *Police Funding*, HC 553, para 93

254 *Ibid.*, para 5

lower levels of the organisation. There is also an increasing number of experienced professionals moving into senior IT, HR and finance roles from outside the service.²⁵⁵

217. One of Sir Ronnie Flanagan's proposals to release resources was for staff to undertake more police tasks, such as taking statements, and more generally by matching skills and aptitudes to roles and tasks. According to his report, evidence from the workforce modernisation pilots suggests that only a small proportion of the tasks carried out by the police require sworn officer powers and, when staff are trained specifically to carry out such a role, they can do so more effectively than an officer trained in a wider range of more general competencies.²⁵⁶ The Policy Exchange cites findings that non-sworn personnel "are equally capable of [gathering evidence], and at a reduced cost". In Bexley, for example, the use of Civilian Investigators cut the time spent in dealing with cases by an average of 50%.²⁵⁷

218. Brian Paddick, formerly of the Metropolitan Police, agreed that police staff can be an effective means of releasing police officer capacity:

I think we can make police officers far more effective in the job they do: we can raise their moral and motivation, if we get civilian support to do the mundane paper work for them. For example, if we allow police officers to radio in or telephone in their crime reports whilst they are at the scene of a crime to a professional keyboard operator in the police station, rather than making the police officer go back to the police station and use two fingers to make up the crime report.²⁵⁸

219. G4S Justice Services has five contracts in England and Wales to provide custody services, whereby custody suites are managed by civilians. Its Managing Director claimed that they could provide a service that was around 30% cheaper, and an improvement on the standard at which custody suites are currently run:

When G4S provides a custody suite service, we train people in the specific roles for that particular area of police work, and what the police have found is that we provide a better service because our training is consolidated into the key things that are required for that environment and our people are very used to working in that environment.²⁵⁹

220. The benefits then, are in the form of cost and, arguably, effectiveness. The drawbacks can relate to resilience and trust. Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison told us he believed that the scope for using support staff is "almost limitless", yet "the public facing role of policing demands that many of our people in those roles are ... police men and police women".²⁶⁰

255 T. Gash, *The New Bill: Modernising the police workforce*, IPPR, February 2008, p 26

256 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 40

257 B. Loveday & J. McClory, *Footing the bill: Reforming the police service*, Policy Exchange, 2007, p 23, B. Loveday, "Workforce Modernisation in the Police Service", *International Journal of Police Science and Management*, 2008, 10, 2, pp 136–144

258 Q 116

259 Qq 547–8

260 Q 187

221. The Police Federation shared this concern:

There is certainly a role for support staff within the Police Service ... What we do not want to see is for those support staff to be taking police officers away from the softer contact that we have with the public and, thereby, seeing police officers only coming into contact over the hard, confrontational aspects of policing. That cannot be good ... They need to have that contact and reassurance with the police in other areas too for them to trust and to actually want the police to come and deal with their problems.²⁶¹

222. Deputy Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Paul Stephenson urged caution in ensuring that an increase in police staff did not result in any significant reduction in police officers, who are the only police personnel with the authority and training required to make arrests and carry out duties such as public order policing:

We are very positive about that [workforce modernisation] but I think all forces would say, but particularly in London, that we need to be bearing in mind the resilience of police officers, because when something happens we need to put fully trained police officers on the street. So there has to be a balance between modernisation and the retention of visible, skilled police officers who can do the business when the business needs to be done.

223. Sir Ronnie Flanagan was not convinced that the proposal made by the Policy Exchange for transferable temporary powers of arrest, search and seizure to police staff would be an appropriate means of safeguarding against a potential loss in resilience.²⁶² He sought to reassure us about the implications of his proposals for the role of constable:

I am talking about ... support being provided by what some people called non-sworn colleagues to do those routine tasks so as to relieve constables to be able to divert all their energy, their expertise and to give the benefit of their experience where it really matters. I am certainly not threatening the office of constable at all; quite the opposite. I am trying to free up constables so that they can give the public the benefit of their professionalism where it really counts and where they can really make a difference.²⁶³

224. The Committee took evidence specifically on sections 120 and 121 of the Serious and Organised Crime Act 2005, which have not yet been enacted. These allow chief constables to designate a member of police staff as a custody officer at grade A (with the same powers as a sergeant apart from power of arrest) or grade B (with fewer powers but still able to authorise detention).

225. Sergeant Rooney, from his personal experience as Custody Sergeant at Acton Police Station, was sceptical about the ability of a civilian to perform the role:

261 Qq 621, 624

262 B. Loveday & J. McClory, *Footing the bill: Reforming the police service*, Policy Exchange, 2007, p 38; Q 27

263 Q 26

You can train somebody to input the information into a computer system. You ask the person their name, date of birth, address and what they have been arrested for and you input what the officer has told you. However, whilst the person is there in front of me, I am making an assessment of them. That is my risk assessment of how I think they are going to behave during their time in custody. I can benefit from the short time I have been dealing with custody and my 16 plus years of dealing with people on the street ... That is at one end of the scale. At the other end of the scale is somebody who is drunk, antagonistic and wants to fight and still continue to fight. How does a non-sworn officer deal with that person? That is not an easy thing to do because you have to try and reason with the person but you still have to try to get their details out of them. There does come a point when, unfortunately, you end up having to use force to put them in a cell.²⁶⁴

226. This view was echoed by Sir Norman Bettison:

My personal—but professional—view is it is a mistake. The custody sergeant has a distinct role; the distinct role is champion of PACE on behalf of the accused and the detained; but he or she also has another role and that is to ensure that the investigation that is triggered by an arrest gets off to the right sort of start, so the custody sergeant is in an incredibly dynamic and complex working situation. The amount of money that it would cost to recruit somebody that could take on that level of complexity would be probably more expensive than a custody sergeant.²⁶⁵

227. When we put our concerns to the Minister of State, he told us:

I will be looking in the future for a suitable opportunity to repeal that statutory provision because I do think the work done over the last year has taught me that it probably is a step too far and I would effectively confirm that PACE sergeants should remain in custody suites.²⁶⁶

228. We accept that the use of experienced professionals from outside the police service in administrative roles such as finance and human resources, and the transfer of back-office functions to police staff, allows for a more professional service to be delivered in a more cost- effective way and facilitates the deployment of more police officers on the frontline.

229. However, we urge caution when it comes to allowing police staff to undertake investigative tasks. Despite evidence suggesting that staff can undertake tasks such as taking statements in a cheaper and potentially more effective way, we are concerned about the implications for resilience in dealing with emergency situations, should officer numbers fall significantly; and for public consent for policing, should officers only be seen to undertake confrontational roles.

264 Q 230

265 Q 188

266 Q 808

230. In particular, we do not consider the role of custody sergeant suitable for a non-sworn officer, owing to the complexity of the role and the need for a police officer's training and experience. Therefore, we welcomed the assurances we received from the Minister of State that he would seek to repeal Sections 120 and 121 of the Serious and Organised Crime Act.

5 Structures

231. Since the 1960s, the police service in England and Wales has been structured into 43 individual forces, largely independent of each other but subject to common Home Office directives. Each force is sub-divided into basic command units, which have a lesser degree of autonomy over their budgets and areas of activity. Recent years have witnessed a growth both in policing activity undertaken at the regional level, and in activity at a very local level. In this chapter, we examine the success of these developments and the appropriateness of the service structure for the 21st century. We begin by examining how the police are held to account.

Accountability structures

The tripartite structure

232. Responsibility for policing is shared between police authorities, chief constables and the Home Secretary in the tripartite structure, established by the Police Act 1964. In theory, the tripartite arrangement sets out that the Home Secretary is responsible to Parliament for the overarching efficiency and effectiveness of the service in England and Wales, as well as the maintenance of minimum service standards. Chief constables are responsible for the operational effectiveness of police forces. Police authorities are responsible for setting the strategic direction for each force and holding the chief constable to account on behalf of the local community, by holding the budget and deciding how much council tax should be raised for policing; appointing the chief constable and senior officers; consulting with local people to find out what they want from their local police and setting local policing priorities and targets for achievement accordingly; monitoring the force against these targets; ensuring best value; and overseeing complaints.

233. Police authorities usually comprise nine local councillors appointed by the local council, five independent members selected following local advertisements and three magistrates from the local area. The Police and Magistrates Court Act 1995 and the Police Act 1996 reduced the size of the authorities and transferred direct management functions and control over budgets from the police authorities to chief constables. The 1996 Act also enabled the Home Secretary to call on a police authority to require its chief constable to retire; further powers formerly exercised by police authorities were given to the Home Secretary by the Police Act 2002 and Police and Justice Act 2006, including direct powers to take remedial action where there has been a negative inspection.

234. Sir Ronnie Flanagan identified the following concerns with current arrangements:

- The tripartite structure has become unbalanced with the Home Office “having become too directly involved in the delivery of policing at the local level”;
- The tripartite structure does not recognise the role of partners or that forces have some accountability to these and other bodies;
- 57% of the public feel they have no influence over the police and little say in decisions about policing;

- Police authorities could benefit locally from a higher profile;
- There is no direct public participation in police authority selection; and
- Some authorities are identified by stakeholders as not fully having the skills or capacity to do the job.²⁶⁷

235. The Local Government Association (LGA), echoed some of these findings in a recent paper:

The Home Secretary's powers through the setting of priorities and targets via the National Policing plan plus those resulting from the funding and audit and inspection regimes dwarf those of the police authority. The result is that the police authority is now much the weakest pillar in the tripartite structure ... The consequence of the gradual weakening of police authorities over the 40-year period since the passing of the Police Act, is that the connection of the police to their local communities has been severely reduced. As a result the Home Secretary is the only visible politician who can be called to account for the way the police work.²⁶⁸

A recent report from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has also described police authorities as “weak, unaccountable and remote”.²⁶⁹

236. Police representatives tend to agree that the tripartite structure has become unbalanced with more power concentrated in the centre. The Minister of State broadly agreed:

I do sincerely think that it is the Home Office's job to set the broad framework and it is for constabularies and their local politicians to determine the priorities within that framework, with incumbent responsibilities as well as rights, if I can put it in that way. One of the things we are looking at in the Green Paper ... is how you get that balance right between affording much greater autonomy to forces who do the business and are excellent in terms of their performance across all range of measures, and how you intervene with those who are not as successful.²⁷⁰

Options for reform

237. The IPPR report proposes six options:

- *Force-level accountability*
 - Option 1: A directly elected police commissioner.
 - Option 2: A directly elected police authority.

267 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, pp 79–82.

268 Local Government Association, *Answering to you: policing in the 21st century*, June 2008, p 6

269 R. Muir & G. Lodge, *A New Beat: Options for more accountable policing*, IPPR, June 2008, p 3

270 Q 792

- *Sub-force level accountability*
 - Option 3: Giving local authorities control of community policing though performing roles currently carried out by police authorities, including setting budgets and priorities and appointing local police commanders.
 - Option 4: Giving local authorities greater influence over community policing by approving local policing strategies and retaining the police precept element of the council tax enabling them to purchase services from the local police and consulting on appointment of police commanders.
 - Option 5: Introducing directly elected mayors across England and Wales and giving them powers similar to those described in options 3 and 4.
 - Option 6. Introducing directly-elected local police boards, building on existing crime and disorder reduction partnerships.²⁷¹

238. These options are broadly comparable with those set out in the Flanagan report, although the latter report also proposed the strengthening of police authorities through dedicated resources as a further option which avoided the risks of politicisation inherent in the others. Sir Ronnie declined to favour one model, but did give the following view:

I think in the whole area of accountability there are two areas that require attention. For me one is at the level above an individual force, so that, for example, if we are talking, as we earlier did, about collaboration, what mechanisms are there actually to hold people to account? ... I think there should be a mechanism of accountability that looks regionally and then, at the other end of the scale, I think much more has to be done to give people a feel that they can have a say in setting the policing priorities for their area.²⁷²

However, during his review he also found “there was not the appetite I thought there might be” for the opportunity to participate in formal structures to hold the police to account.²⁷³

239. The Police Federation, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and Association of Police Authorities (APA) all told us that a refocused tripartite structure would be the best structure for setting priorities and enabling local people to hold the police to account.²⁷⁴ ACPO supports greater local accountability through local strategic partnerships, while retaining police authority accountability at force level, and urged “rejection of the notion of an elected Commissioner or ‘Sheriff’”: “This resistance arises from the determination that the service should remain apolitical as well as the operational requirement to move significant numbers of resources to police the harm or risk at a force, regional or national level”.²⁷⁵

271 R. Muir & G. Lodge, *A New Beat: Options for more accountable policing*, IPPR, June 2008, p 3

272 Q 47

273 Q 6

274 Ev 204 [Police Federation]; Ev 239-40 [ACPO]; Q 707 [Mr Jones]

275 Ev 235

240. The Chair of the APA, Bob Jones, also argued strongly against a directly-elected accountability model:

The danger with all directly-elected models is that we see that re-injection of the party-political theatre rather than more meaningful engagement because nobody can get a majority; nobody can say that the whip will deliver the vote and we will force it through ... secondly, in terms of our partnership with the local level, obviously one of the major achievements since the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act is that there is much more meaningful partnership at local levels where all partners are responsible for driving down crime, not just the police. That has worked extremely well. Where you have a dual mandate, I am not sure that will help that partnership; I think it will introduce new frictions to that partnership.²⁷⁶

Mr Jones drew an analogy with the chair of the school governors deciding the school's teaching methods and curriculum. APA Vice-Chair, Phil Blundell, added:

This word “accountable” has a lot to answer for I think. Do we really mean “accountable to” or do we mean “giving an account to”? The two processes are quite different. I am all for giving an account to the local people. To hand over ... direct accountability either to the vagaries and micro-management potentials of central government, or indeed the popularism of the local vote, would be dangerous for policing.²⁷⁷

241. Those, such as the Mayor of London and the Policy Exchange think-tank who, on the other hand, support greater accountability through elected officials point to the successful crime reduction rates in US cities such as New York:

The US experience shows that police forces which operate under the control of locally elected officials are more responsive to local demands, more innovative in developing new strategies, and deliver a higher level of uniformed presence on the streets ... Although the fall in crime rates across the US has been assisted by a number of underlying demographic and social trends, changes in policing in response to community pressures and strong mayoral leadership have also made a major contribution.²⁷⁸

242. The Chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority, Len Duvall, argued that police authorities needed to make better use of existing powers and structures “to be closer to local government”.²⁷⁹ The APA agreed with Sir Ronnie that police authorities were weak in terms of resources, but expected the new inspection regime coming into effect to help in this regard.²⁸⁰

243. In its Green Paper, the Government proposes to legislate to reform police authorities so that they retain independent members, appointed under the current system, and at least

276 Q 708

277 Q 711

278 Ev 160

279 Q 152

280 Q 706

one councillor, but to create new Crime and Policing Representatives (CPRs), who will be directly elected and form the majority on each authority. CPRs will also sit on their local crime and disorder reduction partnership, which one of them will chair. Where a local government area already directly elects a mayor, this person will automatically be their local CPR. The intention is that police authorities would be strengthened through better guidance on capacity, improving training and skills development and removing barriers to data exchange with forces. The Government does not, however, propose to change arrangements in London, which currently has greater democratic accountability through the large number of authority appointments made by the democratically elected mayor.²⁸¹

244. The Chairman of the Local Government Association, Councillor Margaret Eaton, expressed concern to us that the replacement of councillors with directly-elected crime and policing representatives will “undermine” partnership working between the police and local authorities:

It is more than likely that directly-elected crime and policing representatives will have differing policy aims than local authorities, and potentially the police, making the agreement of joint objectives more difficult ... The LGA also believes that the proposal to place crime and policing representatives in charge of Community Safety Funds could divert financial and other resources away from complex policing matters towards their own electoral priorities, which may be based on populist messages ... Councillors are already elected locally to represent the community as advocates on crime and community safety issues. The LGA does not believe that setting up parallel structures with a conflicting and competing mandate will aid the police in working with partners to reduce crime, nor will it increase the representation of local residents in decisions on policing.²⁸²

According to Councillor Eaton, more than 1,000 councillors from all political parties have written to the Home Secretary to express their concern.²⁸³

245. As control over performance moves away from the centre to the locality, it is important that local accountability structures are strengthened so that people have the means to judge police performance and express their confidence, or lack of it. Police authorities in their current form are under-resourced and relatively unknown to local people. Therefore, we support reform in this area.

246. It is not clear to us how the Government’s proposals for reforming police authorities as set out in the Green Paper will help to increase the accountability of the police to local people. The relatively low turnouts at local elections are unlikely to rise for independent authority members, meaning that new Crime and Policing Representatives may have as little, if not less, mandate to represent local people than current councillors. In addition, with regard to London authorities, we query why elected authority members appointed by the Mayor to sit on the MPA have any greater democratic mandate than elected councillors who sit on other police authorities. We

281 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, pp 32–33

282 Ev 299

283 Letter to the Editor, *The Times*, 7 October 2008, p 29

are also concerned about the potential for this additional layer of representation to undermine partnership working between the police and local authorities.

247. We do, however, welcome the Government's further proposal to raise the capacity and influence of police authorities by introducing guidance on capacity, improving training and skills development and removing barriers to exchange of data from police force to authority. It is doubtful, however, whether their capacity can be much improved without more resources.

Neighbourhood policing

248. Since 2003, the police service has piloted a new form of policing which takes place below basic command unit level. Neighbourhood policing introduces teams of police officers and police community support officers to 'neighbourhoods' corresponding to local government wards, with a focus on providing a more visible police presence and resolving minor crime and anti-social behaviour. The approach seeks to increase contact between the police and the public to make the work of the police more responsive to the needs of local people. The Government confirmed in March 2008 that the national rollout of neighbourhood policing was complete, so that there is a team operating in every neighbourhood in England and Wales.²⁸⁴

Evaluations

249. The Home Office published research in 2008, which compared evaluations of neighbourhood policing undertaken at the pilot stage between 2003 and 2005, and after the first year of national implementation when neighbourhood policing began to be implemented 'at scale'. The authors found:

When piloted at a local level, neighbourhood policing was found to have a significant positive impact on a wide range of outcome measures, including criminal victimisation, perceptions of anti-social behaviour, and public confidence in the police. Follow-up research found that the vast majority of these improvements were sustained in the longer-term. Importantly, three delivery mechanisms—foot patrol, community engagement, and problem solving—were all found to be critical in improving the public's confidence in the police.

Research carried out during the first year of the three-year implementation programme was less clear-cut... There was evidence from the programme's first year to suggest that BCUs [Basic Command Units] had not yet implemented in full and that effective community engagement and problem-solving were not yet in place.²⁸⁵

250. In addition, Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* identified that a wider neighbourhood management approach with partners to address community safety and quality of life issues, facilitated through joint-tasking, co-location, joint performance measures, pooling of budgets, joint training and the direction of an appropriate

284 "Smith sets out policing pledge", *BBC News Online*, 31 March 2008, www.bbc.co.uk/news

285 Home Office Online Report 01/08, *Neighbourhood policing: the impact of piloting and early national implementation*, 2008, pp iv–vii

neighbourhood manager, was critically important in delivering successful neighbourhood policing.²⁸⁶

Setting neighbourhood priorities

251. A key aim of neighbourhood policing is to involve local residents in setting priorities for police action. Chief Superintendent Steve Kirk told us that neighbourhood teams in Reading use street briefings, surveys, access to websites and public meetings to set priorities but also use the information “to get some quick wins about issues that people feel very strongly about”.²⁸⁷

252. Neighbourhood action groups, involving local residents, meet to set priorities for police action in the neighbourhood. According to Chief Superintendent Kirk, “by far the most current issue is anti-social behaviour. Seventeen of our priorities are in relation to anti-social behaviour.” In response, Reading Police has constructed a multi-agency approach to managing individuals who commit anti-social behaviour. Local people have also requested a focus on criminal damage, particularly graffiti, resulting in a decrease in the last year of 12% on average and a detection rate of 25%, “which is extremely high for that offence”.²⁸⁸ David Betts, who chairs the Purley Neighbourhood Action Group in West Berkshire, told us that neighbourhood policing has had a positive impact in his area: “we are seeing a lot more results from the introduction, particularly, of PCSOs, and from the direct consultation that is going on in communities”.²⁸⁹

253. Difficulties can arise where local priorities conflict with other police priorities set at a higher level. Tony Page, a Reading Councillor, gave us the following example where a neighbourhood action group requested the police give a high priority to tackling cannabis use, which contradicted targets set for the force.²⁹⁰ As we discussed in chapter two, the Government wants to move away from central targets to allow for more flexibility at a local level. However, this does not remove the potential for tension between priorities identified by local people as being important in their neighbourhood, and those identified by chief officers as in the public interest but which may be less visible to or less popular with the public.

254. Where community engagement is less successful, police forces may also find it hard to set priorities that are truly representative of local needs. According to HMIC, the 2007 police performance assessments highlight “the challenges that some police forces face in addressing locally identified issues”.²⁹¹ A recent study cites the results of a Residents Panel Survey undertaken by a London local authority in 2007, when neighbourhood policing was already implemented throughout London, in which only 39% of respondents had heard of

286 Sir Ronnie Flanagan, *The Review of Policing: Final Report*, February 2008, p 67

287 Q 332

288 Q 337

289 Q 332

290 Committee visit to Reading, 24 April 2008

291 Ev 151

the Safer Neighbourhood Policing programme and only 18% of the Safer Neighbourhood Panel.²⁹²

255. Whether or not people are aware of the structures, Hackney Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Dann, was convinced of the value of Safer Neighbourhood Teams:

I have no doubt that the Safer Neighbourhood Teams in Hackney are one of the main drivers of the confidence levels. The public attitude survey of last year—from being the worst out of 32 boroughs with 22% we have now moved to 63% on the borough.²⁹³

256. In order to raise the public profile of neighbourhood policing and therefore increase the involvement of local residents, Louise Casey proposed in her Cabinet Office review that standardised approaches to neighbourhood policing should be adopted by all forces, including agreeing a single name and identity for Neighbourhood Policing Teams; using a single name for local public engagement meetings on crime; and providing monthly common and comparable local information via these meetings.²⁹⁴

257. Early evidence suggests that neighbourhood policing can have a positive impact on public confidence in the police. In order to improve confidence levels, it is important that the public is kept informed of progress against local priorities.

258. We believe community engagement exercises facilitated by neighbourhood police teams can be an effective means of setting local priorities. However, in order for priorities to be truly representative of local concerns, the local community must be made more aware of how they can be involved. Despite the proposed move away from central targets, conflicts may still arise between neighbourhood priorities and priorities set at Basic Command Unit, force or national level. Neighbourhood police officers should be prepared to give an explanation to local people where it is essential that higher priorities take precedence.

Using intelligence gathered through neighbourhood policing

259. Sir Ronnie Flanagan argued that neighbourhood policing “should be a golden thread that runs through every aspect of policing. It is not something to be separated, that in some way is totally detached from our counter-terrorist thrust, for example”.²⁹⁵ Chief Superintendent Dann agreed:

The bid for me around Safer Neighbourhood Teams—and I have to say I think they are an absolutely fantastic asset and we should never go away from what we have put in place—is actually mainstream Safer Neighbourhood Teams (neighbourhood policing) as opposed to it being an add-on to what we do. It is absolutely critical, the relationship they build up, not just in dealing with gangs and local issues but the

292 Harriet Sergeant, *The Public and the Police*, London: Civitas, 2008, pp 56–7

293 Q 780

294 Louise Casey, *Engaging Communities in the Fight Against Crime*, Cabinet Office, June 2008, Executive Summary, p 11

295 Q 51

counter-terrorism aspects as well—gaining that knowledge and those contacts in the community.²⁹⁶

260. Chief Superintendent Kirk made a similar point about the use of intelligence gathered through neighbourhood policing in tackling more serious forms of crime:

On the serious acquisitive crime front, what has been very significant in the last year is the increase in intelligence which has led to us being able to increase our level of enforcement. It will not necessarily be a neighbourhood officer who makes the arrest, but the information they gather will lead to an arrest. That has been quite significant.²⁹⁷

261. Local intelligence gathered through neighbourhood policing is being used to help tackle terrorism and other serious crime. All forces should ensure that they have adequate systems in place so that intelligence can be shared easily between neighbourhood officers and specialist and response teams.

Resources for neighbourhood policing

262. Sir Ronnie Flanagan’s *Review of Policing* outlined the need for further certainty around funding, as part of the process for embedding neighbourhood policing. The East Midlands collaboration expressed concern that “specialist policing provision could compromise the ability to meet local demand and deliver neighbourhood reassurance”, noting the increased focus on protective services and other specialist areas of policing “that compete with neighbourhood policing for resources”.²⁹⁸ The Government, in response, has pledged in the Green Paper that ring-fenced funding will be maintained for at least a further three years.²⁹⁹

263. 20% of police officers in England and Wales are dedicated to neighbourhood policing.³⁰⁰ In many cases, officers act jointly as both response and neighbourhood officers, rather than being based entirely in their neighbourhood. PC Andrew Tideswell, of Hucknall East neighbourhood team in Nottinghamshire, told us on our visit to Newark that he is tasked with a response duty about once every shift, which can take all day to conclude.³⁰¹ Some forces employ an abstraction policy to avoid this, which limits the amount of neighbourhood officers who can be “abstracted” to undertake tasks away from the neighbourhood, such as response duties. Chief Superintendent Steve Kirk of Reading noted:

In terms of access, we have increased the number of officers and PCSOs on the beat, so that now in Reading there are 76 people within neighbourhoods who are red circled within those neighbourhoods. They do not go anywhere else. We have been

296 Q 780

297 Q 340

298 Ev 223

299 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, p 16

300 Her Majesty’s Chief Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Phase 2 inspections of neighbourhood policing and developing citizen focus policing: West Midlands Police inspection report*, September 2008, p 9

301 Committee visit to Newark, 25 February 2008

very strict on our abstraction policy and we have had a zero abstraction rate for the last twelve months.³⁰²

264. Neighbourhood policing is competing with specialist services for funding. We welcome the Government’s three-year commitment to continue to provide ring-fenced resources to neighbourhood policing. We are concerned that a large number of neighbourhood officers also have to undertake with response duties. In our view, all forces should adopt an abstraction policy that ensures that neighbourhood police officers are dedicated to operating in their neighbourhood.

Regional policing

The gap in delivering protective services

265. Organised crime and counter-terrorism tend to cross force boundaries and can require a high level of specialist skills and resources to tackle. As a consequence, *Closing the Gap*, a report published by HMIC in September 2005, found that the majority of individual forces do not have the capability or capacity to deliver protective services in these fields.³⁰³

266. The subsequent Home Office plan to merge the 43 forces to around 17 arose largely from the need to fill this gap. Sir Ronnie Flanagan explained the rationale:

We did not say in our report that the current structure of 43 forces is unfit for purpose. What we said is that a smaller number of more strategically sized forces would probably be more fit for purpose ... In that debate we came up with a size something of the order of 6,000 officers [and police staff] which we said we considered to be a strategically sized force and one that could consume most of its own smoke. There was always still going to be the need for very close collaboration even with forces of that size.³⁰⁴

267. However, the force merger agenda was abandoned the following year, following criticism from a number of chief officers, and was replaced by a move towards greater regional collaboration. HMIC informed us that “the initial thrust for structural solutions” has been replaced by a move towards “more co-operative and collaborative approaches”, including “Demonstrator Projects” ranging from comprehensive shared protective services’ commands to joint major enquiry teams, good practice from which will be shared across the service.³⁰⁵

268. We heard evidence of good practice from the four Welsh forces who, in addition to collaborating on counter-terrorism issues through the Welsh Extremism and Counter-Terrorism Unit, are considering appointing a deputy chief constable to oversee serious crime and counter-terrorism throughout Wales.; and also the East Midlands, who work together to deliver the following protective services:³⁰⁶

302 Q 332

303 Her Majesty’s Chief Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Closing the Gap: HMIC thematic report*, September 2005

304 Q 10,13

305 Ev 153

306 Ev 227

Protective service projects
Witness protection
Hi Tech Crime
Specialist Operational Capacity and Capability Incidents requiring multiple skills (double-hatting)
Capacity and Capability to tackle level 2/3 criminality
Domestic abuse
Live/cold case reviews
Coordinated response to enforcement within Class A Drug Supply
Sex and dangerous offenders
Availability, capability and resilience of trained critical incident commanders

The Serious Organised Crime Agency was also set up in 2006 to work closely with police forces in this area.

269. However, we received evidence suggesting that the gap has not been closed. The Police Federation, for example, was “concerned”: “In recent years most focus has been given to the ends of the crime spectrum leaving the middle (including serious and organised crime) largely overlooked. We do not have confidence that SOCA is filling this gap in an effective way”.³⁰⁷

270. Only 12 out of 43 forces now employ over 6,000 staff—the Metropolitan, Greater Manchester, West Midlands, Hampshire, Kent, Merseyside, Thames Valley, West Yorkshire, Devon and Cornwall, Lancashire, Northumbria, and Avon and Somerset forces.³⁰⁸

271. Operation Overt, an investigation into a British terrorist cell that was plotting to detonate liquid bombs, involved seven different forces: Lancashire Police, as one suspect was born in Blackburn; West Midlands Police, as another originated from Birmingham; South Wales police, which was where another suspect picked up hydrogen peroxide; Thames Valley Police, as the same suspect lived in High Wycombe; Essex Police, where a number of co-conspirators lived and attended sixth-form college; Hampshire Constabulary, where one defendant formerly lived; and the Metropolitan Police, as Heathrow was the start point for alleged airline attacks. Andy Hayman, who led the Operation, has explained the difficulties with regards to a counter-terrorism operation:

307 Ev 204

308 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales*, 31 March 2008, July 2008

Scotland Yard takes the national lead on counter-terrorism, but operations depend on the co-operation of 43 police forces in England and Wales ... and a relatively new set of counter-terrorism units. It means that any anti-terrorism operation is complicated by having to work across many county boundaries, dealing with different chief constables and forces of wildly varying manpower and experience. At its worst, it means that the fight against terror can be hampered by turf wars between the forces and the clash of the egos of chief constables.³⁰⁹

Resources for protective services

272. ACPO noted some positive developments since 2006 in relation to closing the gap in counter-terrorism provision, including the emerging structure of Counter-Terrorism Units. The Association advocated replicating this success for serious and organised crime, in other words using new resources within existing structures.³¹⁰ Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison told us that in relation to resources:

The gap is being addressed by means of collaboration and some additional funding from central Government. But whilst it is being addressed, it is not being closed ... You asked me specifically about Ronnie's ideas around efficiency and cutting bureaucracy. I think that is going to make a difference but it is not going to allow the additionality that would be required to tackle organised criminality. It has been estimated by ACPO that, in order to interdict in the organised criminality we know of, we would require an uplift of about £300 million, and efficiencies are not going to give us that.³¹¹

The East Midlands collaboration agreed that more resources are needed: "Whilst the collaboration programme will generate efficiencies, the likelihood is that these will meet only a proportion of the cost of enhancing protective services across the East Midlands".³¹²

273. The Minister of State, however, was unconvinced:

The gap and the importance of protective services is not new, and this is not an add-on to routine, everyday policing; it is part of what they should be doing anyway. I think there are excellent examples up and down the country of collaborative projects between forces to close that gap at the serious and organised crime end. Equally, and in passing, I would say I have had discussions with both ACPO and SOCA to talk about at the very high end in terms of serious and organised crime (those are almost supra-regional) where SOCA could be focusing with ACPO a little bit more.³¹³

309 "Police politics are stalling our war on terror", *The Times*, 10 September 2008, p 28

310 Ev 237

311 Q 172

312 Ev 227

313 Q 795

The proposal for force mergers

274. The Minister of State also told us that force mergers were no longer being considered by the Home Office:

Are mergers entirely off the agenda? Yes, in a sense of being enforced from above. I do not think the Home Office would be Jesuitical in the sense that if a couple of smaller forces came to us and said, “Having assessed all of the circumstances, we think a merger between us should be an option”, that we would get in the way of that and, indeed, we would probably encourage it. I still start from the premise that I think, without re-opening the entire merger debate, 43 constabularies for the best part of 50-odd million people in England and Wales is too many.³¹⁴

The Home Office has said that it will consider requiring collaboration for protective service areas “where there is an operational and business imperative for decisions and processes to be taken at particular levels and in a consistent manner”, for example to strengthen the current response to serious and organised crime.³¹⁵

275. According to Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison, the professional police view, while not unanimous, favours mergers:

It remains the professional view that a smaller number of strategically sized forces would be the best way of arranging ourselves against 21st century ills. The fear in the public’s mind is that that would be a retreat from localism, that they would be losing their local police ... [But] what we would be able to do with a smaller number of strategically sized forces is the strategic stuff in the hubs leaving the local policing delivered by a local inspector and a local superintendent, and what that would mean is that there could be an integrated relationship with the community leaving the sort of stuff that is a rarity within that community to be handled by people at a more strategic level.³¹⁶

276. We do, however, note the opposition to mergers from forces whose officers feel that it would not be in the best interests of the communities they serve, particularly those who would be merged with areas with higher crime rates; and recognise the potential for a weakening in police accountability as larger forces would be further removed from local communities.

277. We are concerned about the shortfall in police capacity to deal with serious and organised crime. In our view, there is a strong case to be made for more resources to be provided to the police. We remain unconvinced about the effectiveness of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency and its relationship with police forces.

278. While we consider the Government was right to withdraw its proposals to compel forces to merge, we are convinced of the need for closer working at a regional level. Therefore, we are not opposed to voluntary mergers but reiterate we our support for

314 Q 807

315 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, p 72

316 Q 179

the Government to require collaboration in protective services where this proves necessary.

279. We are encouraged at progress made to improve the ability of the police to manage the terrorist threat. However, we were unable to judge during our inquiry whether the police have the capacity and capability to respond to a major terrorist attack.

London 2012

Security planning for the Games

280. ACPO also warned that a lack of ability to co-ordinate the service at a national level will have implications for the Olympics:

Planning for the policing of the Olympic Games will further highlight the difficulties that exist within the current structure and financing of police forces will reveal barriers to an effective national response to large scale events such as these ... The ACPO position is that the serious threats and risks faced by society have had insufficient attention and are unlikely to be met within current resource levels and structure.³¹⁷

281. The London Olympic Games are only four years away. A report on Olympic preparedness commissioned by the Mayor of London advised in June 2008 that “security plans are at a very early stage and significantly behind the rest of the planning”.³¹⁸ The Mayor told us:

I do think that it is vital that we establish very soon what the security architecture is going to be for the Games; that is to say, we have to know if we are going to have police milling around; are we going to have lots of security arches; are we going to rely on intelligence? What is our approach to policing of the Games going to be because it will greatly affect the experience of the punters at the Games; it will already affect the way we lay on the Games. I am afraid that not enough work has been done on this so far.³¹⁹

282. The Chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority, Len Duvall, was concerned about this lack of progress from the perspective of the force’s ability to plan for the Olympics as well of their other responsibilities:

It is the same with Olympic grants. Paul [Stephenson] and his colleagues need to do the job, they give you their best shots, but we need some certainty about the money and issues around that so we can get on and plan, and we are getting there with that money. We have recently had it; it would have been nice if it was a bit earlier, but the interface we have with government needs to be sharpened and more focused if we are going to do a good job.³²⁰

317 Ev 237

318 Mayor of London website, www.london.gov.uk, accessed 8 July 2008

319 Q 858

320 Q 138

283. This uncertainty over funding and commitments also has an impact on forces outside London, which will play a role in policing the Olympics owing to the scale of the event:

At this stage, quantifying the resources that will be required to support the Olympics is difficult. There is already an expectation on the police service that it is starting to build the Olympic factor into forward financial and resource planning. This will be an issue for some Police Authorities as their funding is focused primarily on the needs of their police area and any additional investment to support the Olympics will have to be the subject of discussion with central Government.³²¹

284. The ACPO lead on the Olympic Games, Chief Constable Meredydd Hughes, advised that the Games will require around two-and-a-half million security personnel, made up of officers and private security guards. He has raised some concern that, in the Metropolitan Police alone, 40% of firearms officers will be able to take retirement before 2012, although discussion into retaining some of the officers for the Games was continuing.³²²

Potential problems with the Airwave radio network

285. Despite the benefits that Airwave has brought, as set out in chapter four, the Police Federation expressed concern about the ability of the network to cope with large-scale events such as the forthcoming Olympics:

Serious consideration also needs to be given to the Airwave radio communications problems that already exist and will only be exacerbated by an event of this size and nature. As experienced during last year's [2007] Notting Hill Carnival, the Airwave network cannot cope with a high concentration of officers using the system in one place. There also remains the huge problem of communications for the emergency services working on the Underground system. This was brought to light during the tragedy at King's Cross in 1987 and 20 years later has yet to be satisfactorily solved. Whilst Airwave can now be used on some Underground lines, the roll-out remains piecemeal and has taken too long.³²³

286. 92% of delegates at the Police Federation annual conference in May 2008 voted that the system is "inadequate", the then-Vice Chair, Alan Gordon, saying it "would struggle to cope with a well-attended egg and spoon race, let alone with the 2012 Olympics".³²⁴

287. The Academy of Engineering explained the cause of the problem:

The amount of voice traffic is now reaching the limits of the current system's spectrum resources in some areas (particularly in London). This suggests that the Airwave system will be inadequate for the future needs of the police forces, particularly in densely populated areas where information needs are likely to exceed the TETRA network's capacity.

321 Ev 224

322 "Get into the Games or 'get another job'", *Police Review*, 10 October 2008, p 7

323 Ev 205

324 "Airwave 'not up to' Olympic qualification", *Police Review*, 23 May 2008, p 4

Airwave has limited (narrow) bandwidth and data capability. Existing equipment is capable of carrying more traffic but additional spectrum is required. Rather than use another band it would be easier and less expensive to expand the band assigned to Airwave to the full range. In the UK, military users occupy the part of the band not assigned to Airwave, so this expansion would need to be managed carefully.³²⁵

288. Mr Bobbett, of Airwave Solutions Ltd, told us that although the Airwave system has over 99% geographical coverage, a physical restriction would be expected. The system is now, owing in large part to implementation across the Metropolitan Police, carrying three or four times the amount of communications previously carried.³²⁶

289. Mr Bobbett noted that Airwave Solutions was working with the Olympic Delivery Authority and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, as well as the Metropolitan Police and the Home Office lead for the Olympics, to overcome the problem: “I think every technology has some limits, but we are talking about many thousands of officers. If I take G8 as a real-life example, I think we had 3,000 officers in and around the Gleneagles event itself, and the system worked very well”.³²⁷

290. We also put our concerns to the Minister of State, who replied:

The reality is much closer to what Airwave was suggesting than the Police Federation, but I know, in the City, in the next breath, that there have been teething problems and issues ... There are difficulties, not least around surges of activity, which we do need to try and understand more readily ... I know that people—certainly the Met—are fully on the case in terms of ensuring the durability of the Airwave network for the Olympics.³²⁸

291. On a related point, we raised the possibility of another terrorist attack on the transport network and how Airwave would cope with this. Mr Bobbett responded:

The Airwave system is completely joined up between the surface and the tunnel, and as we sit here today and I refer to the underground stations, obviously the stations that are above ground on the London Underground system have coverage already, but those that are under ground, about 75% actually now have the system deployed into the stations and tunnels.³²⁹

292. Chief Constable Johnston agreed with this analysis, but noted his anxiety that the station programme is dictated according to engineering rather than operational priorities, which means that “some of the more important places are not getting covered as quickly as we might like”.³³⁰

325 Ev 244

326 Qq 526, 528

327 Q 527. The Gleneagles G8 summit took place in 2005 and involved all 51 forces across England, Wales and Scotland.

328 Q 802

329 Q 523

330 Q 588

293. Insufficient progress has been made in bringing forward a plan to secure the London Olympic Games, which are now only four years away. We are concerned at the potential implications both for security during the event and for planning by individual forces who will be involved in delivery. The Home Office should take urgent steps to ensure that planning security for the Games is properly co-ordinated across police forces and other authorities.

294. The Airwave radio network can struggle to cope where a very large number of users are concentrated in the same area. We are concerned about the potential for the network to fail during the Olympic 2012 games, given the numbers of officers who will be deployed. The Home Office should address this as a matter of urgency, including consideration of expanding the radio band assigned to Airwave. We expect the Home Office to keep us informed as to practical steps they are taking in partnership with Airwave Solutions.

295. We welcome assurances that radio communication between tunnel and surface is now possible through most of the London Underground network. This is of particular importance should the system once again be subject to terrorist attack. The priority for remaining installation work should be those stations with greatest operational need.

6 Workforce

296. The final area we consider is the police workforce: officer strength, recruitment and retention, the role of PCSOs, and progress against diversity targets to ensure that the police force represents the population it serves.

297. As of 31 March 2008, the 43 area police forces in England and Wales employed:

- 141,859 full-time equivalent police officers (with an additional 2,579 officers employed by the British Transport Police, and 502 officers seconded to central services such as the NPIA and HMIC);
- 76,948 full-time equivalent police staff;
- 15,805 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs); and
- 14,547 special constables, who constitute a voluntary resource for the police.³³¹

Police numbers

298. Police numbers increased dramatically in the last quarter of the 20th century and the early 21st century, from 108,000 in 1977 to over 140,000 in 2006.³³² These large increases appear to have been halted: following an increase of 369 between 2006 and 2007, there was a decrease of 33 officers nationwide between March 2007 and March 2008.³³³ There is a mixed picture across the country, with nineteen forces increasing their officer strength, particularly Gloucestershire and West Mercia and Derbyshire, and 24 forces reporting falls, the largest in percentage terms being Durham and North Yorkshire.³³⁴ Although numbers may be historically high, they are still low in comparison with other countries. In 2003 there were 264 police officers in England and Wales per 100,000 of the population, compared to a European average of 357. In New York, there are approximately 457 police officers per 100,000 of the population and in Chicago the average is 467.³³⁵

299. Some understood from Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* that he proposed a reduction in officer numbers. However, he told us: "I am certainly not advocating any reduction in the number of police officers. What I am saying is I cannot see the increase that we have enjoyed over recent years being sustained".³³⁶

300. The Minister of State said that the Home Office position was to maintain 140,000 officers, adding that the Government's chief concern was "to ensure that more of the 140,000 were freed up to get on with the policing, on the frontline and on our streets,

331 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2008*, July 2008

332 House of Commons Library research note 07/28, March 2001, p 3; Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2007*, July 2007

333 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2008*, July 2008; Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2007*, July 2007

334 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2008*, July 2008, p 5

335 M. Aebi et al, *European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics*, 3rd edition, 2006, p 74

336 Q 8

rather than simply a fixation ... on defining good policing as just a number”.³³⁷ Bob Jones, the Chair of the APA, agreed that this was a priority for police authorities:

We have probably been seeing an increase in police officers, though part of that of course is driven by the continued growth of the counter-terrorism units. I think there will ultimately be net increase. I would say the theme that all police authorities are united on, whether the numbers are going up or down, is about releasing more police officers to the front line.³³⁸

301. There has been a slight decrease in officer strength between 2007 and 2008. We would be concerned should police numbers reduce significantly. However, we accept that police forces and authorities should focus on how officers can be deployed in the most effective way rather than concentrating on maintaining an arbitrary number of officers.

Recruitment

302. In our *Police Funding* inquiry, police representatives suggested that uncertainty over police pay could affect future recruitment and retention. We concluded that, whilst we had seen no short-term evidence of recruitment and retention problems, the issue should be kept under review to guard against the possibility of problems developing in the longer term.³³⁹ In this inquiry, we were told by the East Midlands collaboration that, “generally there is no problem recruiting police officers and the quality of applicants is good”.³⁴⁰ Thames Valley Police have ten applicants for every one place; the national average is six per place.³⁴¹

303. The Police Federation admitted in its written submission that “on the surface, the number of individuals applying to be police officers appears to outweigh the number of vacancies available.” However, it also stated: “there is still a gap in our understanding about the quality and consistency of applicants to the force”.³⁴² Its Chairman, Paul McKeever, explained: “it does appear that there is not good record keeping in relation to those who fail to get in the service, so we are not sure how deep the quality is of those applicants who are applying”.³⁴³ He was unwilling to make a judgment on how new recruits compared with previous generations in this respect.

304. The ACPO lead officer for workforce development, Chief Constable Peter Fahy, has written in *Police Review* that “most forces have no difficulty in recruiting police officers or police staff; the challenge is how to recruit the best quality people. In time however, an ageing population may cause employment shortages”.³⁴⁴

337 Q 800

338 Q 717

339 Home Affairs Select Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2006–07, *Police Funding*, HC 553

340 Ev 228

341 Q 281; Ev 215

342 Ev 208

343 Q 616

344 Peter Fahy, “Modern Man”, *Police Review*, 27 June 2008, p 23

305. The East Midlands collaboration was concerned about future recruitment, because of the impact of decisions on pay and changes to pensions and conditions. This followed large-scale demonstrations in January 2008 against the decision of the Home Secretary not to abide by the Police Arbitration Tribunal's recommendation to award a pay rise of 2.5%.³⁴⁵ Although none of the officers we spoke to during our inquiry mentioned pay in connection with their future in the service, the 2007 pay award may have a negative effect on recruitment, as well as retention. The recent announcement of a three-year deal to award increases of 2.65% in 2008, 2.6% in 2009, 2.55% in 2010 has, however, been more positively received.³⁴⁶

306. The Police Federation's General Secretary, Ian Rennie, warned about the difficulties of making up any recruitment shortfalls very quickly because of the amount of training and years of experience it takes to produce an effective officer.³⁴⁷

307. During our inquiry, we saw little evidence of a problem in attracting candidates to the force, or of any concerns about applicant quality. However, we note police representatives' concerns about future recruitment, given concerns about pay, changes to terms and conditions and an ageing population. It can be difficult to make up any recruitment shortfalls very quickly because of the amount of training which officers need to undertake. The Home Office should continue to monitor applicant to vacancy ratios.

Retention

308. The Home Office notes that only 1.5% of officers voluntarily left the police service in England and Wales in the year ending 31 March 2007, in comparison with 11.5% across the whole economy, and 7.8% across the public sector.³⁴⁸ The "wastage rate", which is the total leaving as a proportion of total officer strength but includes those transferring to other forces, was 6% for the year to 31 March 2008, as it had been for the previous two years.³⁴⁹

309. However, police forces giving evidence were concerned about retention, including the East Midlands collaboration:

Turnover is another matter. The region has seen increasing numbers of officers leaving as people concentrate on quality of life. Northamptonshire have experienced significant retention issues during the last two years. The areas of specialism that have been particularly hard hit are accredited investigators and firearms officers. Both specialisms have seen a drain of numbers to the Met and City of London.³⁵⁰

The Director of Resources at Thames Valley Police, Mrs Teasdale, outlined their concerns:

345 HC Deb, 6 December 2007. Cols 94-95WS [Commons written ministerial statement]

346 "Police pay deal reached", Home Office press notice, 15 October 2008

347 Q 634

348 Ev 215

349 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2008*, July 2008, p 9

350 Ev 228

The overall turnover rate for police officers is consistently, over about the last six years, between about 7% and 8%. In any one year, about 2% to 3% is due to retirement; 2% to resignations, and the rest are transfers out. In relation to the transfers out, it is not the number; it is when you add them onto other people leaving—the normal turnover, if you like—and add capacity within the organisation to deal with the number of recruits that have to come in to replace them and the loss of experience.³⁵¹

310. Losing officers to the Metropolitan Police, particularly specialist officers, is a problem for forces in the surrounding areas. Thames Valley Police have lost 242 officers in this way over the last five years. Chief Constable Sara Thornton argued: “We believe that the different levels of pay in the Metropolitan Police Service contribute to that significantly and the free travel, from areas such as Thames Valley, up to 70 miles away from the centre of London also contributes to that.”³⁵² Metropolitan Police officers are paid around £3,000 per annum in London Weighting Allowance, while experienced officers who transfer across may also qualify to receive a rent or housing allowance of nearly £6,000 per annum, or will otherwise receive an additional allowance of another £3,000 per annum. They are also entitled to free travel.³⁵³

311. Chief Constable Thornton described the impact of these losses:

Over the five-year period it was 1,038 officers transferring from those forces [all the forces surrounding London plus Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire] to the Metropolitan police and at least 261 were specialists. When I say specialists, I mean firearms officers, detectives, or road policing officers. So about 25% were specialists. Of course we are concerned that we lose experienced officers. Even if we can replace them with new ones, we are losing experience, but it is also the cost. We have calculated that the cost of training a constable is £55,000 for a normal constable, going up to firearms officers to £77,000. If you think about it, if 20 officers transfer, even at £55,000 it is £1 million. Our concern is that, in all these areas surrounding London, local people are paying for the training of their local police and the benefit is being felt in London.³⁵⁴

312. The Metropolitan Police Service and Authority argued there is a two-way flow of recruits and insisted that they do not deliberately target outer London areas.³⁵⁵ Chief Constable Thornton noted the two-way flow is very unequal one: over the last two financial years, 121 transferred to the Metropolitan Police, with only 8.6 transferring from the Metropolitan Police, three of whom were Thames Valley officers in the first place.³⁵⁶

313. Chief Constable Thornton told us about Thames Valley’s efforts to attract and retain officers:

351 Q 287

352 Q 276

353 Metropolitan Police Careers website, www.metpolicecareers.co.uk

354 Q 293

355 Q 144

356 Q 280

We have a good housing scheme and we also make use of the DCLG housing schemes. This assists about 550 officers to start, so that is quite considerable. We are also now using 3% of our pay budget for Special Priority Payment in the south of the force—which is an awful lot of our money, and that is an increase—to try to give those officers who are in the south of the force, and therefore more likely to find it easier to work in London, a bit more money.³⁵⁷

Thames Valley Police is arguing for the flexibility to increase the South-East Allowance, which was introduced five years ago at £2,000 and has remained at that level.³⁵⁸

314. The Metropolitan Police has since agreed to give neighbourhood forces advance warning about the number of officers they are planning to recruit, pass details of numbers of applicants from neighbouring forces to them to help anticipate shortfalls, advise on recruitment issues and work with the Home Office towards a long term solution.³⁵⁹

315. One issue that was raised by two command teams during our visits as having a significant impact on officer strength, is how to deal with officers who are no longer capable of serving in the frontline. A freedom of information request in October 2008 found that forces lost more than a million days to long-term sick leave last year, at a cost of almost £90 million, an increase of more than 20% in the last five years.³⁶⁰ We were also made aware that Derbyshire is experiencing difficulty in effecting medical retirements due to significant cost implications.³⁶¹ One divisional commander advocated a move to the model used in New Zealand, where it is possible to move a recuperating officer to a staff role. It is not currently possible to compel this to be done in the UK. Durham Constabulary is conducting a three-month experiment in which officers on recuperative duty, such as those recovering from minor injuries, will be assigned unmarked police cars to attend lower priority ‘investigation by appointment calls’, as a means of taking pressure off frontline officers and ensuring a better service for victims of such crimes.³⁶²

316. According to official figures, retention levels remain relatively high. However, forces are more concerned about their potential to retain experienced officers than they are about recruitment. We strongly regret the move a year ago not to give officers the full pay award recommended by the independent pay review. However, we anticipate that efforts to cut bureaucracy and restore officer discretion, should they be successful, will also have a beneficial impact on morale.

317. Retention is a particular problem for forces surrounding London, who have collectively lost over 1,000 officers to the Metropolitan Police over the past five years because of the latter’s favourable terms and conditions. We recommend that the South-East Allowance be substantially increased to make it more feasible for officers living in

357 Q 276

358 Q 295

359 “Met to share job details with neighbours”, *Police Review*, 20 June 2008

360 “Surge in police sickness costs taxpayer £90 million a year”, *The Times*, 23 October 2008, www.timesonline.co.uk

361 Ev 229

362 “Force’s recovering officers will make public visits on new beat”, *Police Review*, 22 August 2008, p 12

the South-East to work outside London. In addition, we encourage the Metropolitan Police to agree a protocol with surrounding areas to seek to limit transfers.

318. Police force resources are being stretched by the number of officers on long-term sick leave who are not capable of serving on the frontline but who cannot be compelled to carry out back office functions under the terms of their contracts. The Home Office should commission research on the cost implications to forces of officers on long-term sick leave, with a view to move towards more flexible contracts that would allow for them to be transferred to a staff role.

Appointment of chief officers

319. In March 2008, the APA drew attention to what they described as a lack of “quality and quantity” in applications for chief officer posts. Fewer than three applicants applied for each chief constable post advertised between April 2006 and March 2007, with just under four applicants per post for assistant chief constable roles.³⁶³

320. Chief Constable Neyourd told us that the problem was not unique to the UK and in his opinion was explained primarily by two main factors: “There is a substantially greater pressure for public scrutiny ... The second thing is that we had the merger debate and, frankly, that moved the goalposts in a way that a lot of people just stopped applying at that point”.³⁶⁴ The President of ACPO, Ken Jones, also blamed distortions to pay and conditions and parochial thinking among forces for the lack of applicants.³⁶⁵ All chief officer are contracted on a fixed-term basis, for example.

321. To rectify the situation, the APA proposed that civilians without operational frontline experience should be able to enter directly into senior officer posts in the service to address the gap. This was strongly opposed by ACPO, the Police Superintendents’ Association (PSA) and the Police Federation. The President of the PSA, Chief Superintendent Ian Johnston, stated:

All officers who apply to the senior rank must demonstrate the ability to deal with operational matters. If you encourage direct entry you could arrive at a situation where the chief officers of the future are all strategists and have very little experience of dealing with critical incidents in real time and real life.³⁶⁶

When we met him during our visit to Monmouth, Chief Superintendent Johnston argued that there was sufficient talent within the service to meet demand, but questioned the appropriateness of the current assessment process, which in his view did not test operational competence, and a prevailing culture in the service which did not value experience or have respect for policing as a profession.³⁶⁷

363 “Officers display little interest in ACPO positions”, *Police Review*, 28 March 2008, p 6

364 Q 208

365 “Call for chiefs to improve business skills”, *Police Review*, 7 March 2008; PC 22 [ACPO], p 37

366 “Outrage over plans to appoint civilians into top police ranks”, *Police Review*, 7 March 2008

367 Committee visit to Monmouth, 16 June 2008

322. In the opinion of some of our witnesses, a leadership with strong operational experience is the solution to combating the culture of ‘risk aversion’ that has grown up in the service, and which Sir Ronnie Flanagan concluded was a key driver of bureaucracy.³⁶⁸ Chief Constable Neyroud argued:

If you have a leadership that is empowered and confident and understands how to take risk decisions and is supported through its governance to make those decisions in an effective way, then you will get the beginnings of a change. One of the biggest pieces of work that we [the NPIA] have been doing in the first year is working with the service to produce the revised leadership strategy, and a big part of that is continuing both to improve the professional operational qualifications of colleagues—because it helps if you are a confident professional operational commander who is clearly supported in making well-informed judgments about the risk—and to put a substantial emphasis on the personal and professional ethics of officers.³⁶⁹

323. We asked the APA to clarify their position. Mr Jones told us:

In respect of Home Office forces, I think the vast majority of our members would clearly see that a police professional is the only one that would have the credibility in the top job. I think the majority of police authorities would wish to see that remaining as a professional police officer. I do think it is a slightly different issue in terms of the top team. We heard at the last APA-ACPO conference that in 50% of forces at top team level human resources is not carried out by a human resources professional. In many cases we wish to see that professionalisation in the top team.³⁷⁰

324. The Government has since proposed that chief officer posts be advertised in co-ordinated rounds. This would be intended to provide police authorities with better choice and enable the Senior Appointments Panel, which advises Ministers on whether to confirm appointments following decisions by police authorities, to advise authorities and candidates about potential suitable matches on the basis of its work on the overall ‘pool of talent’. In relation to appointments from outside the service:

The Government’s view is that it is very important that Chief Constable should have at least two year’s chief officer experience in another force so that no force becomes too inward looking. However, very occasionally, there may be business reasons why an exception should be made. Subject to consultation, the Government therefore intends to retain the two year with exception provision in its current form, but will expect the SAP to set a high bar in considering any cases for an exception.³⁷¹

325. We oppose direct entry to the police at chief officer level. In our view, operational experience is crucial to allow chief officers to fulfil their role effectively. We were particularly struck by evidence which underlined the value of strong leadership in combating risk aversion in the service, which relies on a solid operational background.

368 Q 25

369 Q 192

370 Q 709

371 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, pp 50–1, 53

We understand the argument put forward by the Association of Police Authorities that forces benefit from external professionals directing human resources, for example, but such roles should be separated from chief officer responsibilities. More needs to be done, however, to attract applicants to chief officer positions. We are not convinced that the Government's proposal for advertising posts in co-ordinated rounds, with a greater role for the Senior Appointments Panel in advising on matches, will be sufficient.

Police Community Support Officers

326. Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) were introduced by the Police Reform Act 2002. Initially, Chief Constables could choose which powers to designate them with from a list of potential powers given in the Act, but their primary purpose was to provide a visible police presence and undertake a problem-solving approach to community concerns. They do not have powers of arrest.

327. Much of the media coverage of PCSOs has been negative, giving an impression of PCSOs as 'second-rate' police officers or 'plastic policemen' and focusing on a few occasions where individual PCSOs have been seen as failing to fulfil their duties.³⁷² However, the East Midlands collaboration told us this does not correctly reflect public reaction to PCSOs: "PCSOs contribute significantly, interacting with the community and meeting public demand for visible policing. They receive high public acclaim and are responsible for positive public feedback, contributing to increased public satisfaction."³⁷³

328. A national evaluation of PCSOs, published in 2006, found that:

CSOs were providing a service that was highly valued by the public, businesses and police officers. They were more of a visible and familiar presence than police officers, who had other demands on their time. The accessibility and approachability of CSOs meant that the public were more likely to pass on information to CSOs that they may have felt was too trivial for a police officer. The public appreciated the CSOs' role in engaging with young people and dealing with ASB [Anti Social Behaviour]. The diversity of CSOs, particularly in terms of ethnicity and age, has been one of the successes of the implementation of the role.

However, the report also highlighted some aspects of their deployment that needed further consideration, including turnover, supervision and training.³⁷⁴

329. Twenty standard powers and duties for CSOs were introduced from 1 December 2007, including the power to issue fixed penalty notices for offences such as cycling on a footpath and littering; the power to require name and address in a number of circumstances; power to require persons drinking in designated places or who are underage to surrender alcohol; the power to seize drugs; the power to enter and search any

372 See, for example, "Should the Government scrap 'Blunkett's bobbies'?", *Daily Telegraph*, 19 April 2005, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk>. Two PCSOs came in for particularly heavy criticism for failing to attempt to save Jordan Lyon from drowning.

373 Ev 225

374 Home Office, *A national evaluation of Community Support Officers*, January 2006

premises for the purposes of saving life and limb or preventing serious damage to property; the power to remove abandoned vehicles; the power to enforce cordoned areas and to stop and search authorised areas under the Terrorism Act 2000; and the power to photograph persons away from a police station.

330. Some additional powers remain at the discretion of the chief constable, including power to issue penalty notices for further offences such as disorder, truancy and graffiti; power to detain a person whom a PCSO has reason to believe has committed a relevant offence; power to use reasonable force in relation to detained persons and to prevent a detained person making off; powers to search for alcohol and tobacco; and powers to disperse groups and remove persons under 16 to their place of residence.

331. The Police Federation has been very critical of PCSOs in the past. Their current Chairman, Paul McKeever, admitted that many Federation members now cite successful team-working with PCSOs, although the Federation “would still like to see fully warranted officers rather than Community Support Officers”.³⁷⁵ Their General Secretary, Ian Rennie, added that “PCSOs were introduced for really good reasons: a high-profile, public reassurance out in the communities—the eyes and ears of the police”, but he warned against giving PCSOs powers to deal with confrontational situations: “I think it is important that that role is controlled and it does not stray into the use of police powers, otherwise all you are introducing is another tier of policing”.³⁷⁶

332. Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison also argued against increasing PCSO powers:

PCSOs do a different job to police officers. Police officers are traditionally a visible, accessible, familiar presence on the streets of the United Kingdom. What has happened in the recent years is that as they have been drawn in to deal with the greater amount of paperwork and the greater demands of the criminal justice system, et cetera, we put them out; they are out there for 10 minutes, they make an arrest and then they are in the station for the rest of their shift. PCSOs do something unique. They wear the uniform of the local constabulary and walk the beat of a dedicated area day-in and day-out, thus restoring that visibility and familiarity. PCSOs should not be given any more powers than are commensurate with that role. Giving them additional powers that take them off the street would be throwing the baby out with the bathwater.³⁷⁷

333. The Mayor of London, on the other hand, supported a cautious extension:

I do think it would be a good thing if PCSOs did have greater powers. Unfortunately, it is not possible to give them powers of arrest without effectively removing the distinction between them and the warranted officers. What we have done is give them greater powers to issue fixed penalty notices for minor offences of one kind or another—nuisance parking and that kind of thing. That has moved a small step in the direction I would think. There is a genuine difficulty in that the more you beef up

375 Qq 626–7

376 Q 625

377 Q 207

the PCSOs, the more you run the risk of eroding the distinction between them and the warranted officer.³⁷⁸

334. The Police Federation noted that a lot of criminals are aware of the fact that PCSOs do not have full powers, and take advantage of this.³⁷⁹ There have been reports of PCSOs been ordered to withdraw ‘for their own safety’ after confrontations, for example in Biggin Hill in Kent.³⁸⁰ The Home Office will be evaluating the standard and discretionary list of powers by the end of 2008. In its recent Green Paper, the Government set out its view that the most valuable contribution to policing made by PCSOs is high visibility patrol, reassurance, community engagement and problem solving, while “within the police workforce only holders of the Office of Constable should have wide-ranging coercive powers applicable in the community at large”.³⁸¹ The Home Secretary has since announced her view that all police community support officers should be given powers which would allow them to be able to detain suspects until a police officer arrives.³⁸²

335. In our report on *Police Funding*, we expressed concern that substantial numbers of PCSOs were being deployed inside police stations rather than on front-line duties, as the intended purpose of PCSOs was to provide a more visible public policing presence. We welcomed undertakings by the Government and the Police Federation to commission research into how PCSOs are used and recommended this research be commissioned as a matter of priority.³⁸³ During this inquiry we were told that 75% of PCSO time was spent on the beat.³⁸⁴ Sir Ronnie Flanagan was “confident” that PCSOs would not be drawn back into stations to cover bureaucracy.³⁸⁵ However, a study by Kent Police found that one of the reasons PCSOs have had less of an impact than expected is that they spend two-thirds of their time filling in forms.³⁸⁶

336. Louise Casey drew attention to the lack of standardisation in PCSO roles and powers, as well as uniforms.³⁸⁷ The Minister of State told us:

We are already looking and taking seriously the notion of the standardisation of uniform nationally so that wherever you are in the country, you know what a PCSO looks like ... and a lot of them did look very, very much like utterly indistinguishable police officers. Last November we looked at a first cut of standardisation of powers and put a whole host of powers on a statutory basis that all PCSOs up and down the country would have, but then added a whole load up to and including the potential for half hour detention before a police officer arrives and put that second swathe into the discretionary category at the discretion of the Chief Constable. Louise Casey’s

378 Q 847

379 Q 632

380 “Mob of teenage drinkers forces three support officers to flee”, *Daily Telegraph*, 10 October 2008, p 16

381 Home Office, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, July 2008, pp 16–17, 47

382 “Community support officer to be given the power to detain”, *The Independent*, 17 October 2008, p 4

383 Home Affairs Select Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2006–07, *Police Funding*, HC 553

384 Q 77

385 Q 54

386 “Good cop support or bad?”, *The Times (Public Agenda)*, 24 June 2008, p 3

387 Louise Casey, *Engaging Communities in the Fight Against Crime*, Cabinet Office, June 2008, Executive Summary, p 11

review said very clearly she thought that was confusing and rather like a warrant officer there should be a whole array of powers potentially at the disposal of a PCSO and then they would be tasked accordingly within that.³⁸⁸

337. We agree that the primary role of PCSOs should be to provide a visible presence, act as the “eyes and ears” of the police service and facilitate community engagement exercises undertaken to inform local priority-setting. However, we support a cautious extension of their powers so that all PCSOs are awarded powers that are currently at the discretion of Chief Constables. Moreover, the Home Office should consider piloting the provision of a warrant card to allow PCSOs to make arrests in exceptional circumstances, where lives are in danger. We understand that this will require more rigorous training and supervision. PCSOs should not undertake any more than the bare minimum of bureaucracy necessary to the role and should not be based in police stations.

338. The public needs to be made better aware about the role of PCSOs. We believe that, in addition to standard powers, PCSOs across the country should wear the same uniform, as the current disparity is confusing to the public. We hope that PCSOs are now accepted as full members of the policing family.

Diversity

Women

339. Women represent 24% of police officers, 44% of PCSOs and 60% of police staff.³⁸⁹ Recruitment figures are encouraging, however: in Thames Valley Police women comprise 40% or 45% of the new intake.³⁹⁰

340. In an interview with *Police Review*, Assistant Chief Constable Suzette Davenport cited research for the British Association of Women in Policing, which shows that without affirmative action, it will take another 15 years for women to reach the Home Office target of 35% representation. Under the affirmative action scheme she proposed, every person recruited would have to achieve the stipulated required standard, employers would only take members from a pool of qualified applicants and the scheme would be time-limited.³⁹¹

341. Women still fall behind in the senior ranks: 12% of senior police officers (Chief Inspector level and above) are women³⁹² and only five forces in England and Wales are led by female chief constables. This is partly to do with the length of time it takes to progress through the ranks, and so increased intakes in recent years will take a while to penetrate the highest echelons. More worryingly, resignations from female police officers are twice as

388 Q 817

389 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2008*, July 2008, pp 6, 13

390 Q 281

391 “Service ‘lacks focus’ on equal representation”, *Police Review*, 16 November 2007, p 4

392 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2008*, July 2008, p 6

high as from their male counterparts, with one woman in four citing domestic responsibilities.³⁹³

342. Cultural reasons may also prevent women from progressing, even though structural barriers may have been removed. Chief Constable Thornton told us:

We need to challenge the idea of leadership as a white, male leader ... Every time we do these exams, the sergeant and inspector exams, there are some people in the top 1% or 2%. I get a list of names, and I always invite them up for a cup of tea and a chat. It strikes me that I often have as many, if not more, women in that top group than men. When I ask them all the question, "What are you going to do now?" there is a tendency amongst some of our women to say, "Well I'm not going to get promoted straight away. I just need to do a bit of this or a bit of that, then I'll be ready" and a tendency for men to say they are going for it.³⁹⁴

She argued for more networks and mentoring schemes for female officers.

343. Although the service is a long way from meeting the Home Office target for women in the service, we are encouraged by the proportion of women entering the service and do not support the introduction of affirmative action. We are concerned at the significantly higher levels of resignation from female officers and urge forces to offer more flexible options to make it easier for women to remain in the service. There do not appear to be structural barriers to women progressing through the ranks, but we believe there should be more mentoring opportunities throughout the service to support women in applying for promotion.

Black and minority ethnic officers

344. Following the Macpherson Inquiry, the police service was set a target by the Home Office for black and minority ethnic (BME) officers to comprise 7% of the workforce nationally by 2009. Progress against the target is set out below.³⁹⁵ There are 5,793 full-time equivalent BME officers as of 31 March 2008, representing 4.1% of the service. More encouragingly, 7% of staff are BME and 11 of PCSOs.³⁹⁶

393 "Female officers – a soft touch?", *The Times (Public Agenda)*, 4 March 2008, p 4

394 Qq 304–5

395 Home Office, *Eighth annual report of Race Employment Targets 2006/07*, p 20

396 Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2008*, July 2008, pp 6–7, 13

	1999 %	2000 %	2001 %	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %	2008 milestone %	2009 target %
Police Service	3	3	3.1	3.5	3.8	4.3	4.6	5	5.3	4.6	7
Police Officers	2	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.9	4	7
Special Constables	2.9	3.2	3.5	3.6	4.4	5	6	6.6	8	5	7
Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	15.2	11.7*	-	-
Police Staff (inc. PCSOs)	5	4.7	4.8	5.3	5.5	6	6.5	6.9	7.2	6	7

The Minister of State told us:

I think, nationally, in terms of targets for BME recruitment all our forces are there or thereabouts but I do think a lot more needs to be done ... The targets are something around 8-9% depending on the force, and most are absolutely in line to at least come close to that, but I think the target is but the start, I would say, and all forces can and should do better.³⁹⁷

345. The former Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, told us about the operational benefits of increasing diversity in the police:

Bearing in mind what I remember of tensions between the police and ethnic minorities in London 25 years ago, it is never going to be perfect and it never can be because their job is to police, it is to control, it is to check, but it is infinitely better than it was. I never go to bed worrying if there is going to be a riot in London; whereas that was a constant threat 25 years ago.³⁹⁸

The current Mayor agreed, saying: "I want to increase our recruitment from black and ethnic minority communities because London has got to be policed by people who resemble the people of London and to whom the people of London respond and identify with".³⁹⁹

346. However, almost two-thirds of forces, including the Metropolitan, Greater Manchester, West Midlands and West Yorkshire, will miss their individual 2009 targets.⁴⁰⁰ Moreover, Home Office statistics show that BME officers are resigning or are dismissed from the police service at a higher rate than their white colleagues. At some stages the rate

397 Q 787

398 Q 72

399 Q 851

400 "Police miss target for mirroring communities", *The Guardian*, 21 April 2008, p 5

is almost double: 6% of BME officers who have served less than six months have resigned or been dismissed, compared to 3% of white officers.⁴⁰¹

347. A 2000 Home Office study of attitudes of people from minority ethnic communities towards a career in the police service found that respondents were discouraged by:

- The thought of having to work in a racist environment, having to face prejudice from both colleagues and the general public on a daily basis;
- The isolation of minority ethnic police officers in a predominantly white male culture leading to them having to deny their cultural identity in order to fit in;
- The dangers of the job and having to deal with unpleasant situations coupled with a lack of confidence in (racist) colleagues assisting them in circumstances where their life or physical safety were at risk;
- The anticipated reaction of friends or family who may be hostile; and that BME officers may be put under pressure to reveal sensitive and confidential information; and
- A perception that BME officers have few or no promotion prospects.⁴⁰²

348. Commander Dizaei gave his views as to why people from BME communities are less likely to apply:

There is a variety of reasons. Lack of progression is one, lack of role models is another, negative media images of our members within the National Black Police Association being disciplined and often discriminated against is another.⁴⁰³

349. The NPIA told us that it was working with the National Black Police Association to promote the High Potential Development scheme, which trains officers for leadership roles, and runs a four-day Positive Action Leadership Programme for officers or staff from under-represented groups in the service. ACPO has set up a BME Progression Group and in collaboration with the NPIA has set up a BME Senior Staff Network.⁴⁰⁴

350. However, Dr Ranjit Manghnani, a Development Advisor at the National Senior Careers Advisory Service of the National Policing Improvement Agency, noted that only 4.6% of the 388 people currently in the High Potential Development Scheme are BME. During the last assessments for senior positions, which took place a year before, 5% were BME and none of them achieved promotion.⁴⁰⁵

351. During our inquiry, there were a number of high profile allegations of racism during promotion processes, particularly at the Metropolitan Police. It is not for us to comment on the rights or wrongs of individual cases, but we are aware of figures obtained by *Police*

401 "Retention of ethnic minority officers 'a cause for concern'", *Police Review*, 21 December 2007, p 10

402 Home Office, *Attitudes of people from minority ethnic communities towards a career in the police service*, November 2000

403 Q 309

404 Ev 301

405 Q 313

Review in November 2007, showing that in the past two years, forces have received more than 700 complaints of discrimination from police officers and staff, and that when forces lose cases, the person responsible often goes unpunished.⁴⁰⁶

352. Commander Dizaei also gave us anecdotal evidence that Muslim applicants are vetted out without good reason, which, if true, is worrying: “from the basis of national security, I think we need more Muslim officers in the Police Service and the security services”.⁴⁰⁷ The Metropolitan Police Authority has also raised concerns that the lack of diversity in the police force has ramifications for counter-terrorism work.⁴⁰⁸

353. We support increased diversity in the police to ensure forces have access to the best people, regardless of their background, and can continue to improve relationships between the police and minority communities.

354. We are disappointed that police will not meet Home Office targets for BME recruitment in 2009. We do not support affirmative action, but concerted efforts must be made to make the service a more attractive prospect for BME candidates. In particular, Home Office resources should be invested in a targeted recruitment campaign. The level of PCSO recruitment from minority communities is encouraging, and we hope that some of these PCSOs will be encouraged to apply for officer positions where appropriate.

355. We are unable to assess the extent of racism in the police service. Amongst the police leadership who gave evidence to us there appeared to be a genuine belief in the importance of increasing recruitment from BME communities for policing. It is important that all claims of discrimination are investigated in a transparent manner, and, where guilt is established, those who are responsible are punished. We note that the Mayor of London and the Home Secretary have initiated inquiries into racism in the Metropolitan Police and the police service as a whole, respectively. We hope that the results of these inquiries and subsequent actions taken will encourage black and minority ethnic officers to join the police.

406 “Gagging order”, *Police Review*, 30 November 2007, p 20

407 Q 321

408 Metropolitan Police Authority, *Counter-Terrorism: The London Debate*, February 2007

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The role of the police in the 21st century is broader than it has ever been, owing to a sharp rise in crime levels during the second half of the 20th century, the classification of increasing numbers of incidents as criminal offences, the impact of changes in society and technological advances on patterns of criminality, and growing police involvement in multi-agency approaches to public protection. To ensure the police can fulfil their core roles effectively, there is a need for greater clarity as to their mission and the extent of their responsibilities. Recent reviews of different aspects of policing have not gone far enough. We recommend that an independent review, such as a Royal Commission, or similarly independent review, is established to review what the police do and how they are organised to do it. This review should be focussed and time-limited, in order to provide the police with the clarity about their role that they urgently need. The Government should exercise caution in future when classifying undesirable behaviour as criminal offences. (Paragraph 17)
2. It is vital that the police are involved in partnership activity at a local level as an effective means of preventing and protecting the public against crime. However, the police should not be expected to fill gaps left by a lack of capacity on the part of other statutory or community organisations. All agencies involved in partnership work should be held accountable for delivery. In replying to this report, the Home Office should provide us with assurance that all local authorities in England and Wales will be held to account for Assessment of Policing and Community Safety indicators. (Paragraph 18)
3. The current system of measuring police performance has distorted operational priorities, criminalised many individuals for trivial misdemeanours, and prevented forces from focusing on what is important locally. There is much to be welcomed in initial attempts to reform the performance framework. We are pleased that the generic targets for offences brought to justice and sanction detections, which encouraged forces to focus on the easiest crimes to resolve rather than those which have the most significant impact on public safety, have been removed from the 2008/09 statutory performance indicators. These changes should be reflected in local practice and must be reinforced by an alignment in performance measures between the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. We support the Government's proposal to end top-down numerical targets, as set out in the Green Paper. The shift towards greater performance monitoring at a local level will require that police authorities are properly resourced to undertake this role. (Paragraph 38)
4. We are disappointed that fraud is not a police priority, given that it is estimated to cost the UK nearly £14 billion per year and identity fraud is a cause of major public concern. We recommend that forces are required to give greater priority to tackling fraud and are allocated sufficient resources to carry out this function. (Paragraph 39)
5. There should be a greater focus on the qualitative aspects of police performance. We accept that it is inappropriate to measure performance on counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime through quantitative targets and the Home Office

should devise a different means of measuring performance in this area. (Paragraph 40)

6. Officers should be given greater discretion so that they can deal with incidents in the most appropriate way, particularly from the perspective of the victim, but also for the perpetrator and the criminal justice system as a whole. But the success of this measure relies on effective supervision from frontline sergeants. To this end, we urge the Government to facilitate speedy implementation of HMIC recommendations for national standards for the role of sergeant, training for frontline sergeants and review of promotion processes. We also seek assurances that training for all new officers will help to ensure that they are confident to use their discretion, and the public can have confidence in them to do so. (Paragraph 41)
7. Low levels of public confidence in the police and distrust of crime statistics are in part driven by a lack of clear information about local crime and police activity. The public should be provided with better information about crime levels in their neighbourhood. Neighbourhood crime mapping appears to be a useful means to achieve this, but the Home Office should be alert to the potential for criminals to use this information to target certain areas. Local police successes should also be publicised in more detail, to reassure the public in a way in which outline crime reduction statistics do not. The Government should consider how this information can be provided in a way that is genuinely accessible. In addition to improving trust and confidence, this information should prove a useful tool in setting neighbourhood policing priorities that genuinely reflect local problems. As a matter of course, police forces should make available to the media the general details of criminal activities that have been reported to the police. (Paragraph 46)
8. The majority of the public do not have confidence in the police's ability to deal with minor crime and to be there when they are needed. While, on the one hand, we support the renewed focus on serious crime as a way for the police to focus their attentions on this important area of work, on the other, we are concerned that minor crime and anti-social behaviour, which are of great concern to the public, will continue to lack sufficient police attention. (Paragraph 56)
9. We were impressed with trials undertaken in some forces to give members of the public who contact the police in a non-emergency situation more choice of whether and when they would like an officer to attend. Forces should take note of this approach as a way of increasing public satisfaction. (Paragraph 57)
10. Members of the public are often unsure of how to contact the police in a non-emergency situation, which results in misuse of the 999 emergency number and delays in reporting and resolving low-level crime and anti-social behaviour. We are disappointed that the Home Office withdrew funding from the single 101 non-emergency number, which would have helped to resolve this situation. We recommend that central funding for the single 101 non-emergency number be reinstated and that the scheme be implemented across England and Wales. (Paragraph 58)

11. We support the principle behind providing local people with mobile numbers for their neighbourhood officers, but in this form the proposal is impracticable, given that neighbourhood officers are not always on duty. It may be more appropriate for forces to reconfigure call-handling procedures to ensure that members of the public can access local information and be directed to the relevant local officer. (Paragraph 59)
12. The public want a more visible police service. We support greater use of visible patrols as a key component of neighbourhood policing and a means of increasing public confidence in the police and, potentially, deterring crime. We welcome the Government's removal of the front-line policing measure from the statutory performance indicators, because the range of activities included within it had the potential to mislead the public as to its meaning. Rather, the Home Office should keep the public informed of the amount of time officers spend on visible patrol. (Paragraph 63)
13. Police representatives believe that the funding increases allocated in the most recent Comprehensive Spending Review are not sufficient to meet requirements. We consider specific aspects of policing for which a case has been made for additional funding later in this Report. However, in general, especially given the fact that the UK spends a higher percentage of GDP on public order than comparable countries, we consider the solution lies in finding ways to release resources through greater efficiency rather than major increases in funding. (Paragraph 72)
14. We support Sir Ronnie Flanagan's recommendation for full application of the police funding formula at the next Spending Review. The Home Office must work closely with forces that currently benefit from the damping arrangements to help them manage the transition. In the interim, we recommend that the 5% cap on council tax be removed for those authorities which have below-average precept levels, and that this is coupled with measures ensuring greater accountability to local people for policing. (Paragraph 73)
15. It would appear that foreign nationals are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of crime. However, it would also appear that they are disproportionately represented among numbers of those committing certain—mostly low-level—crimes. We recommend that all forces employ consistent recording practices for offender and victim nationality, in order to improve understanding and allow resources to be allocated to meet demand. In addition, we recommend that some of the monies from the transitional migration fund allocated to integration projects be diverted to support greater education on British laws, particularly those governing driving, on how immigrants can protect themselves from becoming victims of crime, and how to report crime, in the manner of information already provided by some local authorities. The results of the Migration Statistics Improvement Programme should be made available in time for the next Spending Review. The Home Secretary should give consideration to how population growth can be captured more quickly in funding settlements. (Paragraph 90)
16. It is clear, however, that dealing with foreign nationals is more expensive for police forces because of the need to employ interpreters and because offenders often spend

longer in custody. In replying to this report, the Home Office should clarify whether or not individual police forces will be allowed to bid from the transitional migration fund. If they will not, the Home Secretary must set out proposals to assist those forces whose funding has not kept pace with changes in population. (Paragraph 91)

17. A more diverse workforce can ease some of the burden on forces by reducing interpretation costs and facilitating information-sharing between new communities and the police. (Paragraph 92)
18. Alcohol-related crime places a heavy burden on police resources and diverts officers away from dealing with other types of crime. There is limited evidence of the effect of the Licensing Act 2003 on the total number of alcohol-related offences, but there is certainly a strong perception amongst police forces that alcohol-related violence is on the increase. What is clear is that forces now deploy resources to deal with alcohol-related crime and disorder for longer periods of time, as a result of longer opening hours, and in larger areas, as late-night drinking is no longer confined to city centres. (Paragraph 100)
19. Licence-holders who sell to under-age drinkers or who do not take reasonable steps to prevent alcohol-related crime and disorder increase pressure on the police. We are not convinced that full use is being made of powers under the Licensing Act 2003 to review licences where the holder is found to be irresponsible. The Government should also investigate the ability of local authorities to refuse licences or impose appropriate conditions on licences to promote the licensing objective of preventing crime and disorder, and their capacity to monitor compliance with licence conditions. (Paragraph 106)
20. Increased police powers to deal with drunk offenders do not appear to have had a significant impact on their ability to reduce alcohol-related crime. We recommend that the Government commission further research into proactive use of penalty notices for disorder. Alcohol referral schemes may prove effective in reducing the numbers of repeat alcohol-related offenders but, having heard sceptical views from frontline officers, we recommend that thorough evaluation of the pilots should be completed before they are implemented nationwide. (Paragraph 107)
21. We support the principle behind Alcohol Disorder Zones, which encourage licensees to work with the police and local authorities where there is a particular problem of alcohol-related disorder. However, we share the concerns of the House of Lords Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee that they may be overly-bureaucratic. We recommend an evaluation of their take-up and effectiveness within one year of their commencement. We further recommend that the Government encourage greater participation in voluntary Pubwatch schemes to facilitate partnership between licensees and the police. (Paragraph 114)
22. The cheap availability of alcohol in the off-trade is fuelling alcohol-related crime and disorder and under-age drinking. A lack of clarity about competition law is impeding effective action in this area. We recommend the Government establish as soon as possible a legal basis for banning the use of loss-leading by supermarkets and setting a minimum price for the sale of alcohol. The Home Office should also work with the

Department for Culture, Media and Sport to ensure that local authorities are fully informed on how to use their powers under the Licensing Act 2003 to impose licence conditions forbidding drinks promotions. (Paragraph 124)

23. KPMG has issued a damning verdict on the negligible impact of the alcohol trade's Social Responsibility Standards. The standards need to be reissued on a compulsory basis with a more effective inspection regime and penalties for breaches. They should include a ban on drinks promotions and measures to ensure responsible labelling and staff training. We are also disappointed by the decision by the British Beer and Pub Association to withdraw its policy on promotions. Safeguards intended to promote public health and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour are needed. The Government should clarify whether competition law really does prevent such safeguards, if necessary by bringing a test case. (Paragraph 125)
24. We understand that policy makers are considering proposals for under-21s to be banned from buying alcohol from supermarkets and off-licences while continuing to be able to buy it in bars. Such proposals seem to unfairly penalise young people who do drink responsibly. Furthermore, we have seen no evidence to suggest that teenage drinkers cause more problems for the police than those in their early 20s. We do not support an increase in the age at which alcohol can be legally purchased; rather, young people should be encouraged to drink responsibly. (Paragraph 126)
25. We strongly believe that there should be a presumption against the award of bail in cases of murder, owing to the grave nature of the offence and subsequent risk to the public. We support the option set out in the Ministry of Justice consultation on Bail and Murder proposing that bail be granted in cases of murder only if the court is satisfied that there are really exceptional circumstances to justify it. (Paragraph 138)
26. Police forces do not always have sufficient capacity to monitor offenders released on bail. Therefore, we also support proposals for courts to be made aware of local police practices regarding monitoring of bail conditions, so that these can be taken into account in determining the adequacy of bail conditions; and for courts to be able to impose conditions that must be met by the police before the defendant is released on bail. Given this lack of consistency in police practice, ACPO should consider drawing up guidance on monitoring procedures for offenders released on bail. (Paragraph 139)
27. Although not directly within the remit of our inquiry, we were concerned by evidence we heard of the experiences of victims' families in attending trials, in terms of the distress they suffer in having to fight for a seat and the potential for intimidation by defendants' supporters. Therefore, we welcome the proposal that Her Majesty's Court Service should introduce separate seating arrangements for victims' families in court. This should be done immediately. (Paragraph 140)
28. We welcome the use of tagging orders to enable the police to monitor more effectively defendants released on bail. However, we still have some reservations about the extent to which breaches may occur; the Home Office should keep this under review. In our opinion, breaches should be dealt with by withdrawal of bail. (Paragraph 144)

29. Official statistics appear to demonstrate a slight decrease rather than an increase in knife crime but we doubt whether these represent the true picture. Greater use of accident and emergency data would help to build a better understanding of the extent of the problem, as would proposals to extend the British Crime Survey to cover under-16s. Gun crime causes irreparable damage to the communities affected by it. We do not underestimate the importance of police efforts to combat it. However, we believe that more emphasis and resources should be assigned to tackling knife crime, given its far greater prevalence. (Paragraph 151)
30. The evidence we heard on knife-crime convinced us of the value of undertaking an inquiry devoted to that subject, which will commence in the autumn. We do, however, make a series of initial recommendations here, based on the evidence we have taken in this inquiry. (Paragraph 163)
31. We were impressed by successful approaches in Hackney and Moss Side which combined focused, intelligence-led campaigns against key offenders with diversionary activities to tackle knife and gun crime respectively. We recommend that the additional funding provided by the Government to tackle knife crime is used to replicate this approach. (Paragraph 164)
32. The power to search for weapons, where used appropriately, is a key tool in tackling knife-crime. We recommend that police officers are given clearer guidance as to when they may search those they have stopped for non-arrestable offences for weapons, upon discovery of any recent convictions for carrying a knife or gun. (Paragraph 165)
33. We are concerned at evidence suggesting that many who are convicted of being in possession of a firearm do not receive the minimum jail term, and that very few teenagers found in possession of a knife receive appropriate sentences. Possessing a weapon is a very serious offence. We recommend that the Home Secretary asks the Sentencing Guidelines Council to revisit their guidelines for knife and gun offences to ensure this is properly reflected. (Paragraph 166)
34. We are disappointed that police officers are still spending 25–30% of their time completing paperwork. However, we were impressed by Staffordshire Police's efforts to condense their crime-recording procedures and look forward to the results of the crime-recording and streamlined justice process pilots. Should they prove to be as successful as anticipated, we urge national implementation as soon as possible. In addition to the two-tier approach proposed for recording 'serious' and 'local' crimes, we consider there are a number of minor crimes which could be re-classified as 'incidents', with discretion as to whether they need be recorded. (Paragraph 176)
35. Time spent waiting for CPS charging decisions means that officers are often forced to bail offenders before charges can be brought. Earlier this year, Sir Ronnie Flanagan recommended the issuing of guidance to enable forces to make full use of the charging powers that they currently hold, and extension of these powers to include all summary offences and additional offences subject to trial at magistrates or crown courts. In its reply to this Report, the Government should confirm that these recommendations are being implemented. (Paragraph 177)

36. On the basis of the evidence we have heard, we conclude that Sir Ronnie Flanagan's proposals for Stop and Account incorporate the appropriate accountability mechanism and are unlikely to damage community relations. We therefore welcome the change of PACE Code A to allow the approach to be piloted in seven Basic Command Units across four forces over the summer. We await the results of the pilots, which will be presented to the House in due course. (Paragraph 181)
37. On the basis of early evidence from the pilots, we are cautiously optimistic that current attempts to reduce bureaucracy may be more successful than previous efforts. It is essential that the service achieves the level of efficiency savings quantified by Sir Ronnie Flanagan. (Paragraph 182)
38. Personal digital assistants can significantly increase the amount of time that police officers spend on visible patrol and dealing with incidents outside the station, and reduce the time they spend on paperwork. We welcome the Home Secretary's recent grant of £50 million to fund PDAs in 19 English forces and her promises of a further £25 million, but recognise that many forces were disappointed not to win funding bids. We recommend that sufficient funding is made available as soon as possible to enable all frontline officers to have access to a PDA. (Paragraph 192)
39. Central procurement of new technology allows for economies of scale, consistent standards and integrated systems, and makes the police service a more attractive client for providers. In addition, while we commend individual innovations towards more effective policing on the part of individual forces, we query how much time is wasted in duplicated efforts. In our view, it is possible to achieve a balance with meeting the needs of individual forces by developing a common platform that can then be tailored to suit the local situation. (Paragraph 205)
40. The National Policing Improvement Agency should take the lead in negotiating the purchase of PDAs and their supporting infrastructure on a uniform basis, in order to reduce costs and remove contractual burdens from individual forces. In doing so, they should give careful consideration to the supporting infrastructure to ensure ease of use and flexibility to adapt to future innovations. It is important that officers who will use the technology are involved in system design to ensure it meets their needs. (Paragraph 206)
41. The British Transport Police play a key role in protecting against the threat of terrorism. It is therefore essential that the force is able to access the Police National Database on the same basis as Home Office forces, to enable intelligence to be shared fully across the service. We hope that, in its reply to this report, the Home Office can provide assurances that funding for this will be forthcoming. (Paragraph 209)
42. Collaboration between forces at a regional level to share support services enables forces to operate more efficiently. While there is a range of good practice throughout England and Wales, it appears that many forces are not collaborating to the extent that they could be. We recommended last year in our Police Funding report that the Home Office should keep under review its policy of not mandating forces to share services. Given the lack of progress in this area, we recommend the Home Secretary

should now use her powers to mandate those forces who are not doing so voluntarily to share support services. (Paragraph 215)

43. We accept that the use of experienced professionals from outside the police service in administrative roles such as finance and human resources, and the transfer of back-office functions to police staff, allows for a more professional service to be delivered in a more cost- effective way and facilitates the deployment of more police officers on the frontline. (Paragraph 228)
44. However, we urge caution when it comes to allowing police staff to undertake investigative tasks. Despite evidence suggesting that staff can undertake tasks such as taking statements in a cheaper and potentially more effective way, we are concerned about the implications for resilience in dealing with emergency situations, should officer numbers fall significantly; and for public consent for policing, should officers only be seen to undertake confrontational roles. (Paragraph 229)
45. In particular, we do not consider the role of custody sergeant suitable for a non-sworn officer, owing to the complexity of the role and the need for a police officer's training and experience. Therefore, we welcomed the assurances we received from the Minister of State that he would seek to repeal Sections 120 and 121 of the Serious and Organised Crime Act. (Paragraph 230)
46. As control over performance moves away from the centre to the locality, it is important that local accountability structures are strengthened so that people have the means to judge police performance and express their confidence, or lack of it. Police authorities in their current form are under-resourced and relatively unknown to local people. Therefore, we support reform in this area. (Paragraph 245)
47. It is not clear to us how the Government's proposals for reforming police authorities as set out in the Green Paper will help to increase the accountability of the police to local people. The relatively low turnouts at local elections are unlikely to rise for independent authority members, meaning that new Crime and Policing Representatives may have as little, if not less, mandate to represent local people than current councillors. In addition, with regard to London authorities, we query why elected authority members appointed by the Mayor to sit on the MPA have any greater democratic mandate than elected councillors who sit on other police authorities. We are also concerned about the potential for this additional layer of representation to undermine partnership working between the police and local authorities. (Paragraph 246)
48. We do, however, welcome the Government's further proposal to raise the capacity and influence of police authorities by introducing guidance on capacity, improving training and skills development and removing barriers to exchange of data from police force to authority. It is doubtful, however, whether their capacity can be much improved without more resources. (Paragraph 247)
49. Early evidence suggests that neighbourhood policing can have a positive impact on public confidence in the police. In order to improve confidence levels, it is important that the public is kept informed of progress against local priorities. (Paragraph 257)

50. We believe community engagement exercises facilitated by neighbourhood police teams can be an effective means of setting local priorities. However, in order for priorities to be truly representative of local concerns, the local community must be made more aware of how they can be involved. Despite the proposed move away from central targets, conflicts may still arise between neighbourhood priorities and priorities set at Basic Command Unit, force or national level. Neighbourhood police officers should be prepared to give an explanation to local people where it is essential that higher priorities take precedence. (Paragraph 258)
51. Local intelligence gathered through neighbourhood policing is being used to help tackle terrorism and other serious crime. All forces should ensure that they have adequate systems in place so that intelligence can be shared easily between neighbourhood officers and specialist and response teams. (Paragraph 261)
52. Neighbourhood policing is competing with specialist services for funding. We welcome the Government's three-year commitment to continue to provide ring-fenced resources to neighbourhood policing. We are concerned that a large number of neighbourhood officers also have to undertake with response duties. In our view, all forces should adopt an abstraction policy that ensures that neighbourhood police officers are dedicated to operating in their neighbourhood. (Paragraph 264)
53. We are concerned about the shortfall in police capacity to deal with serious and organised crime. In our view, there is a strong case to be made for more resources to be provided to the police. We remain unconvinced about the effectiveness of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency and its relationship with police forces. (Paragraph 277)
54. While we consider the Government was right to withdraw its proposals to compel forces to merge, we are convinced of the need for closer working at a regional level. Therefore, we are not opposed to voluntary mergers but reiterate we our support for the Government to require collaboration in protective services where this proves necessary. (Paragraph 278)
55. We are encouraged at progress made to improve the ability of the police to manage the terrorist threat. However, we were unable to judge during our inquiry whether the police have the capacity and capability to respond to a major terrorist attack. (Paragraph 279)
56. Insufficient progress has been made in bringing forward a plan to secure the London Olympic Games, which are now only four years away. We are concerned at the potential implications both for security during the event and for planning by individual forces who will be involved in delivery. The Home Office should take urgent steps to ensure that planning security for the Games is properly co-ordinated across police forces and other authorities. (Paragraph 293)
57. The Airwave radio network can struggle to cope where a very large number of users are concentrated in the same area. We are concerned about the potential for the network to fail during the Olympic 2012 games, given the numbers of officers who will be deployed. The Home Office should address this as a matter of urgency, including consideration of expanding the radio band assigned to Airwave. We expect

the Home Office to keep us informed as to practical steps they are taking in partnership with Airwave Solutions. (Paragraph 294)

58. We welcome assurances that radio communication between tunnel and surface is now possible through most of the London Underground network. This is of particular importance should the system once again be subject to terrorist attack. The priority for remaining installation work should be those stations with greatest operational need. (Paragraph 295)
59. There has been a slight decrease in officer strength between 2007 and 2008. We would be concerned should police numbers reduce significantly. However, we accept that police forces and authorities should focus on how officers can be deployed in the most effective way rather than concentrating on maintaining an arbitrary number of officers. (Paragraph 301)
60. During our inquiry, we saw little evidence of a problem in attracting candidates to the force, or of any concerns about applicant quality. However, we note police representatives' concerns about future recruitment, given concerns about pay, changes to terms and conditions and an ageing population. It can be difficult to make up any recruitment shortfalls very quickly because of the amount of training which officers need to undertake. The Home Office should continue to monitor applicant to vacancy ratios. (Paragraph 307)
61. According to official figures, retention levels remain relatively high. However, forces are more concerned about their potential to retain experienced officers than they are about recruitment. We strongly regret the move a year ago not to give officers the full pay award recommended by the independent pay review. However, we anticipate that efforts to cut bureaucracy and restore officer discretion, should they be successful, will also have a beneficial impact on morale. (Paragraph 316)
62. Retention is a particular problem for forces surrounding London, who have collectively lost over 1,000 officers to the Metropolitan Police over the past five years because of the latter's favourable terms and conditions. We recommend that the South-East Allowance be substantially increased to make it more feasible for officers living in the South-East to work outside London. In addition, we encourage the Metropolitan Police to agree a protocol with surrounding areas to seek to limit transfers. (Paragraph 317)
63. Police force resources are being stretched by the number of officers on long-term sick leave who are not capable of serving on the frontline but who cannot be compelled to carry out back office functions under the terms of their contracts. The Home Office should commission research on the cost implications to forces of officers on long-term sick leave, with a view to move towards more flexible contracts that would allow for them to be transferred to a staff role. (Paragraph 318)
64. We oppose direct entry to the police at chief officer level. In our view, operational experience is crucial to allow chief officers to fulfil their role effectively. We were particularly struck by evidence which underlined the value of strong leadership in combating risk aversion in the service, which relies on a solid operational background. We understand the argument put forward by the Association of Police

Authorities that forces benefit from external professionals directing human resources, for example, but such roles should be separated from chief officer responsibilities. More needs to be done, however, to attract applicants to chief officer positions. We are not convinced that the Government's proposal for advertising posts in co-ordinated rounds, with a greater role for the Senior Appointments Panel in advising on matches, will be sufficient. (Paragraph 325)

65. We agree that the primary role of PCSOs should be to provide a visible presence, act as the "eyes and ears" of the police service and facilitate community engagement exercises undertaken to inform local priority-setting. However, we support a cautious extension of their powers so that all PCSOs are awarded powers that are currently at the discretion of Chief Constables. Moreover, the Home Office should consider piloting the provision of a warrant card to allow PCSOs to make arrests in exceptional circumstances, where lives are in danger. We understand that this will require more rigorous training and supervision. PCSOs should not undertake any more than the bare minimum of bureaucracy necessary to the role and should not be based in police stations. (Paragraph 337)
66. The public needs to be made better aware about the role of PCSOs. We believe that, in addition to standard powers, PCSOs across the country should wear the same uniform, as the current disparity is confusing to the public. We hope that PCSOs are now accepted as full members of the policing family. (Paragraph 338)
67. Although the service is a long way from meeting the Home Office target for women in the service, we are encouraged by the proportion of women entering the service and do not support the introduction of affirmative action. We are concerned at the significantly higher levels of resignation from female officers and urge forces to offer more flexible options to make it easier for women to remain in the service. There do not appear to be structural barriers to women progressing through the ranks, but we believe there should be more mentoring opportunities throughout the service to support women in applying for promotion. (Paragraph 343)
68. We support increased diversity in the police to ensure forces have access to the best people, regardless of their background, and can continue to improve relationships between the police and minority communities. (Paragraph 353)
69. We are disappointed that police will not meet Home Office targets for BME recruitment in 2009. We do not support affirmative action, but concerted efforts must be made to make the service a more attractive prospect for BME candidates. In particular, Home Office resources should be invested in a targeted recruitment campaign. The level of PCSO recruitment from minority communities is encouraging, and we hope that some of these PCSOs will be encouraged to apply for officer positions where appropriate. (Paragraph 354)

70. We are unable to assess the extent of racism in the police service. Amongst the police leadership who gave evidence to us there appeared to be a genuine belief in the importance of increasing recruitment from BME communities for policing. It is important that all claims of discrimination are investigated in a transparent manner, and, where guilt is established, those who are responsible are punished. We note that the Mayor of London and the Home Secretary have initiated inquiries into racism in the Metropolitan Police and the police service as a whole, respectively. We hope that the results of these inquiries and subsequent actions taken will encourage black and minority ethnic officers to join the police. (Paragraph 355)

Formal Minutes

Thursday 30 October 2008

Members present:

Rt Hon Keith Vaz, in the Chair

Ms Karen Buck
Mr James Clappison
Mrs Ann Cryer
Mrs Janet Dean

Bob Russell
Martin Salter
Mr David Winnick

Draft Report (Policing in the 21st Century), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 355 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for printing with the Report.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 4 November at 10.15 am]

Witnesses

Tuesday 26 February 2008

Sir Ronnie Flanagan GBE QPM, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary Page
Ev 1

Tuesday 11 March 2008

Mr Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London Ev 11

Mr Boris Johnson MP, Conservative Candidate for Mayor of London 2008 Ev 15

Mr Brian Paddick, Liberal Democrat Candidate for Mayor of London 2008 Ev 20

Mr Len Duvall, Chairman, Metropolitan Police Authority, and **Mr Paul Stephenson***, Deputy Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service Ev 23

Tuesday 22 April 2008

Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison, Association of Chief Police Officers, and **Chief Constable Peter Neyroud**, Chief Executive, National Policing Improvement Agency Ev 32

Sergeant Guy Rooney, Custody Sergeant, Acton Police Station, Metropolitan Police Ev 42

Mr Paul Carne, **Mrs Rachel Carne**, and **Mrs Helen Newlove** Ev 45

Thursday 24 April 2008

Chief Constable Sara Thornton, **Ms Terri Teasdale**, Head of Personnel, and **Mr Maurice Collins**, Police Federation Chair, Thames Valley Police Ev 49

Commander Ali Dizaei, President, National Black Police Association, and **Dr Ranjit Manghnani**, Development Adviser, National Policing Improvement Agency Ev 55

Superintendent Steve Kirk, Commander, Reading Police, and **Mr David Betts**, Chairman, Purley Neighbourhood Action Group Ev 58

* Mr Paul Stephenson is now know as Sir Paul Stephenson, following his knighthood awarded on 10 October 2008

Tuesday 3 June 2008

Sir Simon Milton, Chair, Local Government Association, and **Chief Constable Julie Spence**, Cambridgeshire Constabulary Ev 62

Mr Rob Chester, Head of Licensing, Asda, **Mr James Lowman**, Chief Executive, Association of Convenience Stores, **Mr Rob Hayward OBE**, Chief Executive, British Beer and Pub Association, and **Mr Alan Brown**, Director for Group Loss, Prevention and Security, Tesco Ev 68

Chief Constable Stephen Otter, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Ev 77

Tuesday 10 June 2008

Mr Richard Bobbett, Chief Executive, Airwave Solutions, **Ms Charmaine Eggberry**, Vice President and Managing Director, EMEA, Research in Motion, and **Mr Paul Moonan**, Managing Director, G4S Justice Services Ev 82

Chief Constable Ian Johnston, British Transport Police, and **Inspector Jim Hitch**, Bedfordshire Police Ev 91

Mr Paul McKeever, Chairman, and **Mr Ian Rennie**, General Secretary, Police Federation of England and Wales Ev 97

Tuesday 17 June 2008

Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green, Children's Commissioner for England Ev 103

Tuesday 1 July 2008

Mr Bob Jones, Chair, and **Mr Phil Blundell**, Vice-Chair, Association of Police Authorities Ev 110

Ms Cherie Booth QC, Chair, **Mr Liam Black**, Commissioner, Street Weapons Commission Ev 115

Chief Superintendent Steve Dann, Borough Commander for Hackney, Metropolitan Police Ev 121

Rt Hon Tony McNulty MP, Minister of State for Security, Counter-terrorism, Crime and Policing, Home Office Ev 125

Tuesday 15 July 2008

Mr Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, and **Mr Kit Malthouse**, Deputy Mayor for Policing Ev 133

Sir Adrian Bruce Fulford, member of the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court Ev 139

List of written evidence

1	Matthew Baggott CBE QPM, Chief Constable, Leicestershire Constabulary	Ev 142
2	Research In Motion	Ev 143, 276
3	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary	Ev 146
4	Policy Exchange	Ev 158
5	Michael David Everleigh	Ev 163
6	CIFAS	Ev 166
7	British Association for Shooting and Conservation	Ev 169
8	Youth Justice Board for England and Wales	Ev 173
9	Nottinghamshire Police Authority	Ev 176
10	RoadPeace	Ev 179
11	SBAC	Ev 181
12	City of London Police	Ev 183
13	British Irish Rights Watch	Ev 185
14	Nottinghamshire Police	Ev 192
15	Navigant Consulting	Ev 200
16	Police Federation of England and Wales	Ev 203
17	Airwave Solutions Ltd	Ev 210, 212
18	Home Office	Ev 213
19	Independent Police Complaints Commission	Ev 216
20	National Policing Improvement Agency	Ev 219, 277
21	Five Police Forces and Authorities of the East Midlands	Ev 222
22	Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland	Ev 230
23	Royal Academy of Engineering	Ev 244
24	Former Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone	Ev 246
25	Liberty	Ev 253
26	Iain Gordon, Ex-Metropolitan Police Detective Inspector	Ev 259
27	Paul Carne	Ev 261
28	British Transport Police	Ev 264
29	British Beer and Pub Association	Ev 267
30	Musgrave Retail Partners GB	Ev 268
31	Group 4 Securicor	Ev 271
32	Local Government Association	Ev 279, 298
33	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	Ev 280
34	British Chambers of Commerce	Ev 290
35	Staffordshire Police	Ev 291
36	County Car Park Watch	Ev 298
37	Thames Valley Police Authority	Ev 299

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2007–08

First Report	The Government's Counter-Terrorism Proposals	HC 43
Second Report	Bulgarian and Romanian Accession to the EU: Twelve months on	HC 59
Third Report	Security Industry Authority	HC 144
Fourth Report	Work of the Committee in 2007	HC 226
Fifth Report	A Surveillance Society?	HC 58 (Cm 7449)
Sixth Report	Domestic Violence, Forced Marriage and "Honour"-Based Violence	HC 263 (Cm 7450)

Session 2006–07

First Report	Work of the Committee in 2005–06	HC 296
Second Report	Young Black People and the Criminal Justice System	HC 181 (Cm 7217)
Third Report	Justice and Home Affairs Issues at European Union Level	HC 76 (HC 1021)
Fourth Report	Police Funding	HC 553 (HC 1092)

Session 2005–06

First Report	Draft Corporate Manslaughter Bill (First Joint Report with Work and Pensions Committee)	HC 540 (Cm 6755)
Second Report	Draft Sentencing Guideline: Robbery	HC 947
Third Report	Draft Sentencing Guidelines— <i>Overarching Principles: Domestic Violence and Breach of a Protective Order</i>	HC 1231
Fourth Report	Terrorism Detention Powers	HC 910 (Cm 6906)
Fifth Report	Immigration Control	HC 947 (Cm 6910)
Sixth Report	Draft Sentencing Guideline: Sexual Offences Act 2003	HC 1582