

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE AUTHORITY

Report to: Stakeholder Relations & Communications Strategy Committee

Date: 14th May 2009

Subject: Update on progress with the Neighbourhood Policing Evaluation

Sponsor: SR&CS Committee Chair

For: Information

1. PURPOSE OF PAPER

- 1.1 To update the full Authority on progress with the BTP/A review of the Force's approach to Neighbourhood Policing (NP) and to provide an overview of the headline findings of the work carried out thus far.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

- 2.1 The Committee (and previously the Force) originally undertook to carry out a review of BTP's approach to NP in order to answer a number of questions about the appropriateness of Force's approach to Neighbourhood Policing and what outcomes it had delivered for the Force, passengers and rail industry partners.
- 2.2 In July 2008 the Committee received an interim report from consultants commissioned by the Force to carry out an initial evaluation of BTP's approach to Neighbourhood Policing. The consensus of both the Committee and Force representatives present was that, while elements of the interim report were of interest, it had not delivered the outputs required and was unlikely to do so in the second phase of the evaluation. As a result the Committee and ACC Pacey undertook to bring the evaluation in-house and requested that the Force and Secretariat carry out a joint evaluation of the Force's approach to Neighbourhood Policing to date.

2.3 The revised project brief developed at that committee meeting recommended that the evaluation gather and evaluate evidence of the following¹;

- Why neighbourhood policing had been introduced
- The issues associated with adapting neighbourhood policing to the railway environment
- The early neighbourhoods that had been set up and the results of these
- How stakeholders were engaged in neighbourhood policing
- How targets were set for neighbourhood policing teams
- The lessons learned so far
- The outcome of the HMIC report into neighbourhood policing
- A data review of where neighbourhood policing teams started from and where they are now
- The way forward

3. PROGRESS TO DATE

3.1 In carrying out the review the Force and Authority have considered a range of data sources including;

- Outputs from an internal (BTP only) workshop facilitated by BTP and attended by both NPT and non-NPT staff
- Outputs from in-depth focus groups with NP team members from the case study sites (Birmingham Cross City, Southport, Pontypridd and Lewisham with control sites at Preston and Bromley South)
- Outputs from a series of interviews/focus groups and electronic surveys with partners from the case study sites
- Outputs from a baseline perceptions survey carried out with passengers and staff at a number of sites in London South, London North, Wales & West, North East and North West
- Evidence of good practice supplied by the NP teams as case study summaries
- Additional evidence submitted by Southeastern Trains
- Outputs from TOC research – Arriva trains ‘code of conduct’ study
- Findings and recommendations of HMIC inspections of BTP in 2006 & 2008
- Assessment of the Force and Authority’s progress against APA good practice guidance
- Secretariat discussions with key BTP personnel

3.2 A first draft of the full report and an executive summary have been produced and will be considered in detail by the Members of the Stakeholder Relations & Communications Strategy Committee at its next meeting in July.

¹ See section 35/2008 of the minutes of the meeting of the SR&CS Committee 01.07.08

4. HEADLINE FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Main benefits realised to date;

- *Improved visibility for BTP* – all stakeholders report greater visibility of BTP officers post implementation of NP
- *Improved engagement with industry partners* – partners engage with the Force more regularly and better understand respective roles around crime prevention and detection
- *A more consistent and structured approach to problem solving* – a process is set out which partners understand and have a defined (and owned) role in
- *Improved feelings of safety* - industry staff in particular report improved perceptions of personal security, this is also replicated for passengers at some sites
- *Impacts on crime* – this varies by crime type. For volume offences the initial impact has been an increase in levels of reporting followed by an indication of an ongoing reduction. For serious offences such as robbery NP has (in some Areas) had a significant impact in reducing crime which also extends beyond the territory of the NPT
- *Development of the extended policing family* – the Force has successfully used both warranted and police support staff in its NPTs and has (as per its strategy) built successful working relationships with a range of accredited rail and staff private security resources
- *BTPA* – the Authority (via the SR&CS Committee) has adopted the APA's good practice framework for its oversight /involvement in NP. The Authority has good oversight in the key areas suggested as essential for good practice and has considered its role in relation to all other areas of work

4.2 Key challenges;

- *Developing a process for allocating NPTs to sites* – this has been the main rail specific challenge for the Force which is in the unique position of having to decide where to place its NPTs. By contrast Home Office forces have absolute coverage of their territories with an NPT in every ward. The Force has developed and refined this process² which it reports is understood by all partners. The Force intends to capture this process in a formal framework to be included in its future NP documentation

² This process is described in detail the NP evaluation report

- *Effective engagement with passengers* – this has been successful in some Areas but remains a challenge generally. The Force is currently exploring a range of options to develop a suite of methods for more effective passenger engagement
- *Engagement with train crew* – this has been identified as a challenge for all NPTs and is influenced by both the limited time train crew can spend with NPT staff and the fact that train crews operate outside the territory of the NPT
- *Demand profile/rostering* - staff and passengers identify a general gap in coverage at off peak times particularly late at night and at weekends. This issue is being considered as part of the Force's wider demand and resourcing project
- *Monitoring abstractions* – whilst an abstraction policy is in place, monitoring of abstractions has been carried out manually and at a local level. However, at the moment the Force does not routinely take an overall view of the wider picture. This is has already been identified as a potential vulnerability by the Force and they are currently exploring the possibility of automating the process via NSPIS Command & Control. Any future approach will need to be monitored via a jointly owned action for the Force and Authority
- *Quality assurance of the PACT³ process and PSP⁴s* – while the process is understood by all partners there has not been a consistent process for quality assuring and monitoring the main problem solving tools. The Force has now allocated Area and Force champions (Crime Reduction Officers) to take forward this role
- *Managing stakeholder expectations* – feedback on NPT from partners at the sites researched has been overwhelmingly positive to date and demonstrates a clear improvement on previous policing arrangements. However, as stakeholders become more familiar with the NP process they are likely to become more demanding of the Force both in relation to inputs and outcomes. The expectations around existing and future NPTS will need to be carefully managed
- *Communications* – creating awareness and building knowledge of Neighbourhood Policing, particularly amongst the key audience of rail passengers, remains significant challenge. The Force is revisiting its NP communications strategy and is working closely with the media department to reinvigorate this work stream.
- *For BTPA* – the Authority (via the SR&CS Committee) has adopted the APA's good practice but has identified gaps in its current coverage. Recommendations were made and approved at the

³ Police and Community Together

⁴ Problem Solving Plans

January meeting of the committee covering issues such as mechanisms for monitoring of abstractions and evaluating engagement techniques

- *Baselining* – to date the Force has not routinely baselined its new NP teams, although a range of data is captured during the proposal and initiation phase for each. This has made it somewhat problematic to robustly evidence the benefits delivered by Neighbourhood Policing on the rail network. The Force is currently baselining the teams established under the 'Mayor's 50' funding programme and has gathered evidence for its new teams at Bromley South and Preston via the evaluation project. The Force and Authority will continue to reflect on the most appropriate approach to gathering evidence in order to baseline any future teams

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 As set out above, progress to date has enabled us to identify some important conclusions. The detailed report and discussions about the recommendations arising will be considered in depth at the next meeting of the SR&CS Committee on 20th July.
- 5.2 The final version of the report and the recommendations arising will be made available to all Members following completion of any amendments requested by the SR&CS meeting.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the information or recommendations presented in this paper.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 No significant risk implications arise from this paper.

8. DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 There are no specific diversity implications arising from this paper.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to note this paper.