
BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY COMMITTEE
6th APRIL 2009, 11.30AM

At

BTP AREA HEADQUARTERS, AXIS HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

Present: Mr J King (Chair)
Mr L Adams
Mr M Holden

Apologies: Mr R O'Toole
Suzanne May

In attendance: Mr A Pacey, Assistant Chief Constable Operations
Mr S Peel, Performance Analysis Manager
Ms S Weller, Quality of Service Research Manager
Ms V Delices, Secretariat Manager

Mr P Haddock, Chief Executive
Miss L Barrick, Business Support Manager & Minutes
Mr M Daventry, Communications Officer

Observing: Ms M Banerjee

16/2009 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Non Agenda

The Committee formally welcomed Mr Holden to his first meeting of the Committee. The Chair also welcomed the Authority Chairman Ms Banerjee who had come to observe.

Apologies were received from Suzanne May and Mr O'Toole.

17/2009 MINUTES OF MEETING 20th JANUARY 2009

Agenda Item 1

The Committee received and **approved** these minutes.

18/2009 MATTERS ARISING

Agenda Item 2

The Committee asked when an evaluation of the crime mapping website would be carried out. The Force answered that there was currently ongoing discussion around crime mapping with the industry and no formal evaluation was planned as yet. The Committee requested an update on this in 6 months if any evaluative work had been carried out.

It was reported that the evaluation of BASS training should be completed in the summer. The Committee requested that the outputs from this come to its October meeting.

It was agreed that the Chair and Miss Barrick would arrange a meeting to look at the Committee's reporting cycles and develop a proposal on how to action its oversight responsibility.

The Chair said that he would be writing to the Secretariat on how he was progressing with the Independent Advisory Network (IAN) and National Independent Advisory Group (NIAG). He added that he would brief Ms Banerjee on this outside of the meeting. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said that he would set out a list of advisory groups that were currently operating, including how they came to be established and what their governance arrangements were.

The Committee had asked the Force how it receipted stop and account encounters. The Force responded that this was purely verbal at present but it was looking at towards some sort of quick electronic form of receipting. It was added that if a stop and account became a stop and search then the full form would be completed and a copy given to the person.

The Chair said that he would be speaking with the Deputy Chief Constable on passenger engagement on Areas and would update to the Committee on this.

An update was given on the Authority's branding exercise. A logo had been selected following consultation. This was now being honed and put on stationery and was expected to come into use by the end of April.

Agreed:

- **The Force to provide an update on the evaluation of the crime mapping website in the next 6 months if there was anything to report.**
- **A report on the BASS evaluation to be submitted to the October Committee meeting.**
- **The Chair to write to the Secretariat updating on his work with the IAN and NIAG and also to brief Ms Banerjee on this outside of the meeting.**
- **Assistant Chief Constable Pacey to set out a list of advisory groups that were currently operating, including how they came to be established and what their governance arrangements were.**
- **The Chair to update the Committee following his discussion with the Deputy Chief Constable on passenger engagement on Areas.**

19/2009 INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITOR (ICV) UPDATE

Agenda Item 3

It was updated that a formal contract for ICV services had been negotiated with Greater Manchester Police Authority (GMPA) and a signed copy was expected back shortly. GMPA ICVs already visited the BTP custody facility at Manchester Piccadilly but this was now a formal arrangement between the authorities and as such a quarterly report would be received by the Committee. A contract was also being negotiated with the MPA.

The MPA's quarterly report was very positive. The main issue was around language barriers and the report requested the Committee to consider facilitating ICVs use of language line or translators. Members asked that the scale of the language problem be looked into. It was also requested that MPA visit statistics be requested to look at the times and days that their facilities are visited.

Agreed:

- **The Secretariat to ask for more information around the scale of the language problem.**
- **The Secretariat to ask the MPA for its own statistics on visit times and days of the week for comparison.**

20/2009 STOP AND SEARCH SCRUTINY

Agenda Item 4

There was some discussion around research into the demographics of rail users. The Force updated that there had been a meeting with the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) regarding research into this area which had seemed promising. The Force would continue to keep the Committee updated on any developments.

The Force updated that the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) had published revised stop and search guidance, particularly in relation to section 44. The Committee requested that this be circulated to Members.

Fewer searches under section 44 were expected as more officers received BASS training. Encounters would also become more professional and be much more open. The Force confirmed that there were no numerical targets around section 44 as this would be inappropriate. Locations where section 44 was authorised were decided based on their vulnerability, any intelligence received, and then BASS training would be the final tool to help officers identify people for stop and search. It was noted that the Force was a heavy user of stop and search in terms of volume but unlike airports, the railway network did not have the same fixed security systems in place to screen passengers..

In Scotland, the Force had still been running at a fairly high rate of section 44 mainly in Glasgow and Edinburgh but this should start

to reduce and this should be reflected in the numbers that would come to the next meeting.

On examination of the figures, section 44 encounters were running at broadly the same rate as 2008, stop and account had reduced and there had been an increase in section 60, largely around the Notting Hill Carnival.

The Committee noted a dip in section 44 for December. The Force said that it was unclear of any particular reasons for why this had occurred. The overall arrest rate also appeared to have fallen. The Force said that it was trying to draw out the reason for this. It was added that it was difficult to get data from other forces to make comparisons. Also, if data was obtained there was no guarantee that it would include the same disposals, for example BTP data did not include penalty notices whilst other forces did so. It was noted that the Scottish Area had also been including unattended vehicles in their in their figures. The Committee asked for a breakdown of unattended vehicles vs attended vehicles vs people on foot.

There had been a visit by Lord Carlile who had looked at the documentation and guidance around stop and search and gone out with officers on patrol. Lord Carlile had been very positive about the activity.

The complaint data was noted.

The report was **noted**.

Agreed:

- **The Force to circulate the revised NPIA guidance around section 44 to the Committee Members.**
- **The force to break down a snapshot of Scotland area section 44 data by unattended vehicles, attended vehicles and people**

21/2009 CONTROL ROOMS PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

Agenda Item 5

The project had been completed and everything was up and running. All the smaller control rooms had been closed and there were now two control rooms that dealt with emergency calls. These were Force Control Room London for the London Areas and Force Control Room Birmingham for the outer London Areas. Both had a Chief Inspector on duty at all times. All non-emergency traffic was directed to the First Contact Centre.

There was the potential for some industrial action around terms and conditions affecting the control rooms but the Force had contingency arrangements in place, should this go ahead. There would also be a robust communications plan.

Following the new call handling arrangements the signs were that call traffic was decreasing as internal calls were reducing.

The Committee asked if the First Contact Centre took calls for the neighbourhood policing teams. The Force answered that it did when neighbourhood policing teams were off-duty.

The report was **noted**.

22/2009 DEPLOYMENT OF TASER

Agenda Item 6

The Force briefed the Committee on its plans regarding the deployment of tasers and consultation around this. The Force confirmed that it would only ever be specially trained units (STUs) that would be permitted to carry and use taser. A project plan for the pilot had been produced, which would be a consultation exercise looking at how people feel about the use of taser.

There would be some costs associated with the use of taser including, abstraction and training costs as well as cartridge costs.

A technical assessment of taser had been carried out and it had been found that taser was less damaging to use than batons. However, there were some issues regarding the use of taser that were specific to the railway environment which would need to be thoroughly researched.

The Committee said that the Force should identify for the Authority what the stakeholders' feedback on taser had been so far. It would also need to be considered how taser might affect resource deployment.

The Force said that taser was not something that was going to be highly visible. There were also particular benefits for those officers in the provinces where back-up was not readily at hand. The Committee said that it would be useful to have the data on incidents involving violence and weapons where taser would have been useful and also comparisons with other forces. The Force answered that it would provide this to the full Authority.

Mr Adams and Mr Holden raised some points of detail.

The Force reported that there was currently differing opinions on taser from some of the PSA holders that had been spoken to. ACPOS had also currently only approved taser for use by armed response officers.

The Committee **noted** the report and looked forward to the full report that would go to the full Authority meeting.

Agreed:

- **The report to the full Authority to include stakeholder feedback and data on incidents involving violence and weapons along with comparisons to other forces data.**

23/2009 AUTUMN NATIONAL PASSENGER SURVEY (NPS) RESULTS

Agenda Item 7

The Force updated that the Autumn NPS had shown that passenger feelings of personal security had risen by 1% from a high base rate, but the direction of travel was as hoped for.

The main finding of the NPS related to the evidence of success for neighbourhood policing. There appeared to be a relationship between high visibility and decreasing concerns around anti-social behaviour. However, it was also noted that this could be a result of Operation Alert and could not be attributed to neighbourhood policing solely.

A demographic breakdown of the results showed inflated concerns of BME respondents regarding safety and a concern around anti-social behaviour. There were also raised levels of concern from young people and the Force was working with youth groups looking at this. The Committee asked what percentage of respondents were young people. The Force said that it would send these figures to Members outside of the meeting.

There was particular interest in the result demonstrating that 8% of rail users did not use trains at certain times of day. This needed to be looked at further as it demonstrated the economic value of railway policing.

The Force felt that its questions on the NPS were no longer providing anything further than the surveys that the Force carried out itself. It was suggested that the questions be reviewed with a view to changing them for the future surveys. The Committee was content with this.

The Chair said that if the Force could help facilitate the RSSB study on alcohol on the railways this would be helpful. The Force said that it had given RSSB some guidance on how it might want to frame its questions for them to be included in the NPS.

The Force said that it was hoped that free text sections could be analysed in future. The Committee said that this would be a good idea as a lot of useful insights would otherwise be lost.

The Committee felt that the Force needed to be getting the message to passengers and staff about how to report to BTP and make this as easy as possible for people. The Force said that it was already working on this and the next control room phase was about getting the message out further. It was agreed that an options paper on this from Ms Bird would be brought to a future meeting. There was also discussion around the reasons for not

contacting police which were included in table 6.3 it was considered that these needed to be more precise.

Agreed:

- **The Force to send the figures setting out how many respondents were classed as young people to Members outside of the meeting.**
- **Ms Bird to write a paper giving options around getting a wider message out to passengers and rail staff about how to contact BTP to be brought to a future Committee meeting.**
- **The reasons for not contacting police which were included in table 6.3 to be revised to be more precise.**
- **The secretariat to circulate Mrs Elvy's paper on passenger perceptions of crime to Mr Holden and Ms Banerjee.**

24/2009 BTPA UPDATED FOI AND DATA PROTECTION SCHEME

Agenda Item 8

A model scheme had been drawn up by the Information Commissioner's Office and this was recommended for adoption by the Authority. It was noted that currently only the full Authority minutes were published on the website but that this was due to technical issues rather than any desire to withhold information.

The Committee questioned why there was a policy and a scheme. They said that they would want it to be kept as simple as possible.

The Committee approved the scheme subject to confirming with Members that they were happy for their portfolio interests to be published, particularly in the case of any sensitive ones. Also, that expenses would only be published on request.

Agreed:

- **Scheme approved subject to the minor caveats outlined above.**

25/2009 UPDATE ON NPIA TRIPARTITE EQUALITY STRATEGY

Agenda Item 9

This paper was **noted**.

26/2009 UPDATE ON PROGRESS WITH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING EVALUATION

Agenda Item 10

The Chair said that the current evaluation was not yet finished but he felt that a second phase with a broader view from a strategic perspective was required. The paper included next steps suggestions and it would need to be clear exactly what the next phase was trying to achieve from the outset. It was suggested that both the terms of reference and the project plan be brought to the Committee for sign off. HMIC had also offered to be available for consultation on the terms of reference. The Chair said that he

recognised the quality of the work that had been completed thus far but he felt it was now time to move to a broader piece of work.

The Force felt that most of the aspects included in the next steps section of the paper had been covered in the current evaluation. They also cautioned that although it would be useful to have HMIC input into any terms of reference it had to be remembered that HMIC had experience of neighbourhood policing from a different perspective.

The Chair said that the next stage was to draft the terms of reference and then have a small group discussion about where next.

Agreed:

- **The terms of reference to be drafted based on the next steps section and the outputs from the current evaluation.**

27/2009 AOCB

Agenda Item 11

There was no AOCB.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 20th July 2009

Signed.....

Chairman