

**BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT FORCE HEADQUARTERS LONDON
ON THURSDAY 13 DECEMBER 2001 AT 10.30 AM**

Present

Mr J Jerram CBE (in the Chair); Dr Helen Atkinson; Mr D Heseldin;
Mrs Diana Lamplugh OBE; Dr M Mitchell; Sir Trefor Morris CBE QPM;
Mr A Shooter; Mr S McManus; Mr I Brown; Sir David O'Dowd CBE QPM
(Observing)

In Attendance

Mr I Johnston CBE QPM, Chief Constable; Mr. A Lake, Deputy Chief
Constable; Mr C Hulley, Assistant Chief Constable; Mr C Somani,
Finance & Admin. Director BTP; Miss K Sanderson, Treasurer to the
Committee; Mr D Riddle, Clerk to Committee; Inspector W Baker.

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76PL2001 MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman expressed the Committee's appreciation to Sir Trefor Morris and Simon Osborne, for their service. He welcomed Sir David O'Dowd, Iain Brown (as the Railtrack nominee), and Spencer McManus from LUL, substituting for Mike Brown.

77PL2001 MINUTES 18 OCTOBER 2001

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October were approved.

The Clerk reported with reference to Minute 71, that the Finance Director of the SRA had asked to be satisfied that the arrangements for internal audit for the Committee were compatible with the SRA's standards and accountabilities. A further report would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

78PL2001 CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

The Chief Constable advised the Committee of the circumstances surrounding the stabbing of Inspector Dan Tanner at Finsbury Park Station. The Committee expressed appreciation of the Inspector's courageous action and conveyed their best wishes to him for a speedy recovery from his injuries, and to his family.

The Chief Constable briefed the Committee on the current state of threats to security, and the increase in the number of suspicious incidents. The Committee commended the actions of officers in Birmingham on 3 November in dealing with a car bomb.

The Chief reported on a recent fatality at Hitchin that had resulted in the closure of the East Coast Main Line down line for several hours. Coincidentally, the Minister for Transport was on the train. A prompt multi-agency debrief had revealed a number of lessons that could be learned, and he would share them fully with ATOC. David Heseldin expressed concern at the predicament of passengers up the line who were faced with long delays without adequate explanation. He said it had been suggested that the problem was compounded by the failure of Railtrack to make effective arrangements for signallers. Mike Mitchell asked whether a standard could be set across the network for the removal of remains, with the performance in each area being compared.

The Chairman supported the concerns expressed by David Heseldin. He said that a primary justification for a specialist BTP was its inbuilt understanding of the knock on effects of an incident along the line. In this case he felt it was vital to understand exactly how and why BTP, Railtrack and the TOCs concerned had failed to minimise the impact on services and passengers. He asked the Chief Constable to carry out further investigations and to report back to the Committee.

The Chief Constable updated the Committee on his programme of internal communication, and on the development of the performance regime. He reported on several strategic initiatives including the successful outcome of a meeting of senior representatives of the industry to discuss the better management of rail accidents, a special conference on Trespass and Vandalism, and a Football conference involving representatives from all parts of the industry and all BTP Areas. He advised the Committee that arrangements for bringing CS spray into operational use were progressing to plan.

The Chief Constable sought guidance from the Committee on a possible television programme or series featuring the Force. After discussion of the advantages and risks, the Committee supported the initiative whilst emphasising the need for caution over editorial control and the management of the filming process.

The Deputy Chief Constable gave a short report on force performance. At present, the Force was meeting 2 out of the 12 targets set in the Policing Plan, and might recover to meet 2 others. He explained the key factors affecting performance in relation to violent crime, sex offences robbery, and railway disruption. In the course of discussion Adrian Shooter urged the Force to prepare a Best Practice guide to Crime Prevention that could be promulgated across the industry. He also stressed the importance for the industry of a sustained attack on trespass and vandalism. The Chief responded that the latter would feature in the policing plan for 2002.

The Chief Constable advised the Committee that the Mayor of London was considering the advantages of a unified police service for London. If this idea was to proceed, it could involve the BTP LUL Area becoming part of the Metropolitan Police, but it might also extend to a Metropolitan Police role or responsibility to police major transport interchanges. If the idea was ever adopted, it could have a dramatic impact on BTP's role and viability. The Chief's personal view was that BTP should not resist changes to policing in London that were seen to be in the overall public interest after a proper evaluation, but that at this stage the Mayor's proposals lacked justification and were unconvincing. The Committee fully supported the Chief Constable's position and asked to be kept informed of any developments.

- *ACTION*
- *CHIEF CONSTABLE TO MAKE FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HITCHIN INCIDENT AND REPORT BACK IN DUE COURSE – CHIEF CONSTABLE*
- *A DEMONSTRATION OF THE USE OF CS SPRAY TO BE ORGANISED FOR A FUTURE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE – CHIEF CONSTABLE (ACC TERRITORIAL OPS)*
- *CHIEF CONSTABLE TO PURSUE THE IDEA OF A TV SERIES/PROGRAMME FEATURING THE FORCE, SEEKING AS MUCH EDITORIAL CONTROL AND INFLUENCE AS POSSIBLE AND PUTTING IN PLACE APPROPRIATE RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES WHEN FILMING IS TAKING PLACE*
- *COMMITTEE TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF ANY DEVELOPMENTS IN PROPOSALS FROM THE MAYOR REGARDING THE POLICING OF LONDON – CHIEF CONSTABLE AND CLERK*

79PL2001 FORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Deputy Chief Constable made a presentation of the Strategic Plan, and tabled the latest draft version of the Plan. Members expressed approval of the way the Plan was developing. The Chairman suggested that at first sight the latest draft met all of the points raised at the October meeting. It was agreed that Committee Members should give their comments to the Deputy, on matters of substance not detailed drafting, by 13th January 2002. The definitive version of the Strategy will be reported to the Committee in February for approval.

- *ACTION*
- *MEMBERS TO GIVE FEEDBACK TO THE DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY BY 13 JANUARY 2002*
- *STRATEGY TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE IN FEBRUARY 2002 FOR APPROVAL – DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE*

80PL2001 POLICING PLAN 2002/3

The Deputy Chief Constable presented the first ideas on the policing plan for 2002, reflecting the emerging Strategy.

In discussion on the proposed target areas, including one related to policing football events, the Chairman suggested that the debate about payment for football policing needed to be widened as it was untenable for the industry to have to continue meeting these costs. The Chief Constable commented that the recent conference had invited ATOC to take the lead on this issue.

The Committee indicated that the programme for Best Value Reviews to be incorporated in the Plan should ideally phase those reviews with the potential to produce efficiencies in the early years of the

total programme.

Adrian Shooter asked for a higher profile to be given to crime prevention and the importance of a multi-agency response.

- *ACTION*
- *POLICING AND BEST VALUE PLAN TO BE REPORTED TO THE COMMITTEE IN FEBRUARY 2002 FOR APPROVAL*

81PL2001 BUDGET PLANNING 2002/3

The Chief Constable presented the preliminary and outline assessment of the Force budget requirement for 2002. He surveyed the range of strategic, external and operational factors bearing on the need for resources. He presented some comparisons of force manpower with other forces, and international comparators. He reminded the Committee of the emerging strategy and its implications. He also recalled that HMIC in his recent Inspection recommended a number of improvements in force organisation that would involve manpower.

Pay inflation was estimated at 3.5% and non-pay price increases were estimated at 2.5%. There would be inescapable additional costs from the adoption of the new national fingerprint system of £0.8m. Provision had to be made for anti-terrorism and CBRN. The Commonwealth Games and Royal Jubilee would give rise to additional spending of about £0.7m. There was a need to invest more in training, of about £0.5m. Finally, he reminded the Committee that the Strategic Review would be a one-off cost item in 2002. Allowing for all these factors, and assuming efficiency savings of 1%, the budget requirement would be an increase of 3.25% compared with 2001. A budget at that level would allow for a very modest increase in police numbers and in civilian staff.

He went on to identify a number of key strategic objectives that had been supported by the Committee, and which had resource implications. Chief amongst them was the imperative of operating the National Intelligence Model, with a requirement for around 20 posts. HMIC had urged the creation of a Professional Standards Unit. There was a need to strengthen the IT function. These factors could be offset to some extent by the expected yield of the equivalent of about 20 extra officers from reductions in sickness absence. It was also expected that Best Value Reviews, especially those dealing with Control Centres and Crime Management Centres would produce savings in the long term, although they might not be fully achieved within the year.

In addition, there were a number of risks to the budget. Police pay seemed likely to increase over and above inflation, as a result of negotiations on the Police Reform programme. This would affect BTP in the longer term. More locally, there were uncertainties about rating and VAT. Also, the costs arising from anti-terrorism measures could escalate.

As for capital investment, the Force estimated a requirement of £6m in 2002, allowing for costs of relocation of Force Headquarters, Estates and IT. Vehicles would, as at present, be dealt with by leasing.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Constable for his presentation. He considered that the Committee should give the Chief clear guidance as to the parameters for spending in 2002. The pace of development of the Force was inevitably subject to financial constraints, especially given the funding arrangements for the Force. The Committee had, he felt, endeavoured in recent years to provide resources that enabled the force to grow. He was not however convinced that the force had fully delivered its part of the bargain, in terms of efficiency savings and performance improvement. He considered that the Committee was bound to ask the force to direct renewed energy into mining efficiencies that are still attainable, and redeploying those savings to finance improvements, before new money could be available.

Adrian Shooter expressed the view that the Chief had perhaps understated the potential for efficiency savings. As far as the industry was concerned, 2001 had been a very tough year and 2002 looked even

harder. Railtrack was in administration and a number of train operators were in poor financial health. In his view it was reasonable for the industry to look to the Force to achieve a real reduction in its costs, and he proposed a cut of 5% in real terms compared with 2001. It was clarified that, on present inflation assumptions, he was proposing a cash cut of at least 2%.

Helen Atkinson recalled that for 2001 the Committee had held back from funding further growth because of the impact of the Hatfield crash on the industry, and had devoted all of the savings from the pensions holiday to keep charges level. She felt that in the current climate it would be very difficult for the Committee to justify a real cut in spending on policing the railway.

Sir Trefor Morris also reminded the meeting that the policy up to last year had been to support modest growth each year to enhance performance. Although it was disappointing that performance had not really improved, he did not think there was justification for a reversal of policy.

Sir David O'Dowd commented that it would be helpful to have a clearer understanding of the options for, say, 5% reductions and 5% growth, so that the Committee could understand the impact of given choices.

David Heseldin agreed that more information was needed about the options. He said that the RPC Network as a whole felt strongly that there was a need to invest more in safety and security. He could not approve of a reduction in spending without much more information as to the impact.

Mike Mitchell supported the views expressed by Adrian Shooter about the level of financial difficulty facing railway operators. The possibility of recession loomed too. Operators considered that it was a period of inevitable belt tightening. They were seeking a 10% reduction in the cost of ATOC. He was not unsympathetic to the needs of the force as expressed by the Chief Constable, and he felt that the industry would like to see enhanced security but at present it was not affordable. He suggested that the budget for 2001 be re-examined to identify one-off items that could drop out, as one means of bridging the gap. A limit on spending might have an impact on the Strategy, but in his view it would be on the timescales for achieving the strategic goals rather than the goals themselves.

Iain Brown commented that he would take the sense of the discussion back to Railtrack. His view was that the business case for any given level of spending ought to be set out more rigorously, and that the scope for efficiency savings should be scrutinised much harder.

Diana Lamplugh agreed with the comments made by other Members about the desirability of clearer options.

Spencer McManus commented that London Underground were currently proposing a modest increase in the police budget for the underground but had yet to have this approved. It was possible that the budget would be limited to cover inflation only. In the longer run, after PPP, policing costs would represent a large proportion of the operating budget of LU and would therefore be visible and under pressure.

The Force Finance Director urged a cautious assessment of what was possible by way of savings in the short term, because of up front costs on redundancies and relocation that might well arise before a payback is achieved.

The Chairman summed up. He endorsed the view that it would be indefensible to impose a cash reduction on the force budget. He felt however that the Committee had to be mindful of the state of the industry as expressed by its representatives. He recognised that the budget for LU was a bilateral between LU and the Force, and so his remarks related to the overland railway. He proposed that the Force should aim to produce a budget that represented a zero increase in charges, that is a cash standstill. That would mean that the effects of inflation and other inescapable extra costs in 2002 would be offset by efficiency savings and other economies. He hoped that the Chief Constable would look to efficiency savings as the main vehicle for getting to a balanced budget. He recognised that there could be an impact on the pace of developments towards the Force Strategy but he felt that the Strategy itself maintained its validity. In future, when the Committee could be satisfied that everything possible had been done to extract the efficiency reserves, the Committee would look positively at investing in growth. As regards capital, the Chairman proposed that the force should work on a maximum investment programme of £4m, subject to SRA approval.

There was no dissent.

- **ACTION**
- **CHIEF CONSTABLE TO PREPARE A DETAILED BUDGET FOR APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE IN FEBRUARY WITH THE AIM OF PRODUCING A ZERO INCREASE IN POLICE CHARGES, BY COVERING PAY AND PRICES INFLATION AND OTHER INESCAPABLE COSTS TO BE INCURRED IN 2002/3 FROM EFFICIENCY SAVINGS AND OTHER ECONOMIES.**
- **CHIEF CONSTABLE TO PREPARE A CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME OF NOT MORE THAN £4M, WITH SCHEMES RANKED IN PRIORITY, FOR APPROVAL IN FEBRUARY.**

82PL2001 FUNDING BTP – A CRITIQUE OF USER PAYS

Alan Nichols of Jacobs consulting presented his circulated report. The study had been commissioned by the Committee to inform its debate on the issue with a view to deciding what if any views to submit to the Government as part of the Committee's response to the Consultation Paper on BTP.

He explained that in his view the philosophical arguments for user pays were unconvincing. However, a transfer of the burden of the cost of railway policing from the industry to the Treasury would be unlikely to generate any new money for the industry or for policing. The funding arrangements underpinned the governance structure, and provided the basis for engaging the industry in the oversight of policing as well as giving them the legitimate basis to press for improvements. It was also conceivable that central funding for BTP might undermine the specialist nature of BTP. He judged that the chances of winning the argument for central funding were very small. He considered that the case should be pressed for BTP to receive Home Office funding for national policing programmes and technology. He also suggested that the arrangements for charges to be set and reviewed periodically should be such as to minimise the volatility of charges to operators.

Sir Trefor Morris reminded the Committee that he had long argued for central funding for BTP. In light of the report he was however convinced that there was little prospect of success.

After discussion, during which all who spoke indicated agreement with the Consultant's recommendations, it was agreed that there was negligible chance of winning the argument for central funding, and that the Committee should make no representations on the matter of funding, other than to lobby for BTP to be eligible for Home Office funding for appropriate national projects or programmes.

It was suggested that the industry would not welcome a further review of charges in the foreseeable future. The Committee agreed to take soundings from the SRA initially.

- **ACTION**
- **REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT THE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FORCE TO BE CONFINED TO THE QUESTION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME OFFICE FUNDING FOR NATIONAL PROJECTS OR PROGRAMMES - CLERK.**
- **CONSULTATIONS TO TAKE PLACE, INITIALLY WITH SRA, ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY AND TIMING OF A FURTHER PERIODIC REVIEW OF CHARGES - CLERK**

83PL2001 MODERNISING BTP

The Committee considered the report of the Clerk with a suggested joint response from the Committee and Force to the DTLR Consultation Paper. They agreed that, subject to minor amendments, the response drafted by the Clerk be submitted.

- ACTION
 - JOINT RESPONSE TO BE SUBMITTED IN THE FORM OF THE DRAFT PREPARED BY THE CLERK – CLERK
-

84PL2001 RELOCATION OF FORCE HEADQUARTERS

The Committee considered a report from the Force Finance Director with an outline proposal to relocate Headquarters to a building in Pentonville Road, near Kings Cross. They were not convinced that the business case for the specific proposal was sufficiently analysed or conclusive. However, in order that the matter could be progressed, they agreed that negotiations for the building should continue. The Chairman stated that he would expect the terms to include the right for the force to sublet without any restriction by the landlord, and a break clause at 10, 15 and 20 years. As it was clear from the information presented that the building would exceed the force's space requirement, plans should be made to sublet the surplus from the outset of force occupancy.

The Chairman suggested that the relocation be discussed in greater depth at a special informal meeting, so that the experience of Committee Members in relocation projects could be made available to the force.

- ACTION
 - NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE BUILDING IN PENTONVILLE ROAD TO PROCEED, WITH A VIEW TO A REPORT TO A FUTURE MEETING – FORCE FINANCE DIRECTOR
 - INFORMAL MEETING TO BE ARRANGED TO DISCUSS THE PROJECT - CLERK
-

85PL2001 SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

The Committee approved the proposals in the report of the Clerk

Decided

That the SRA be recommended to approve delegations to the committee as set out in Appendix 2 of the Clerk's Report.

That delegations to the Chief Constable, the Chairman, the Clerk and the Force Finance Director be approved as set out in Appendix 4 of the clerks Report.

That the Chief Constable be empowered to delegate his functions under resolution to other officers in accordance with a scheme approved by the Clerk and Treasurer

86PL2001 FINANCIAL RESULTS 2001/2 AND FORECAST

The Force Finance Director submitted his report, which forecast an out-turn for the year within the budget subject to a number of risk factors identified in the report.

87PL2001 APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLES

The Clerk informed the Committee that the Assistant Chief Constable (Operational Support) had agreed to retire on 31 March 2002. His post would be advertised in January. The vacant post of ACC Scotland would also be advertised in January, separately.

88PL2001 AIRWAVE ON LONDON UNDERGROUND

The Clerk reported that following the Chairman's approach to PITO a meeting had taken place on 11 December of all interested parties, chaired by a senior Consultant from PITO. Although the meeting had not identified solutions to the problem, it had enabled a constructive discussion of each party's perspective and potential contribution to a solution. A programme of work had been agreed on, with a view to identifying and appraising the range of options by June 2002. BTP had agreed to manage this programme of work as a project, in the expectation of full co-operation of all parties.

89PL2001 POLICE CHARGES – DISPUTES

The Clerk reported on the latest position concerning the disputes with GNER, First Group and EWS, and noted that Arriva had withdrawn their dispute and paid all outstanding sums.

90PL2001 STRATEGIC REVIEW OF RAILWAY POLICING

The Committee noted that the Steering Group would interview a short list of Consultants on 11 January with a view to appointing a firm to undertake the assignment.

The meeting concluded at 2.40 p.m.

Chairman.....

Dated.....