

**BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT FORCE HEADQUARTERS LONDON
ON THURSDAY 16 MAY 2002 AT 1.30 PM**

Present

Mr J Jerram CBE (in the Chair); Dr Helen Atkinson; Mr D Heseldin;
Mrs Diana Lamplugh OBE; Sir David O'Dowd CBE QPM; Dr Mike Mitchell; Mr Adrian Shooter; Mr I Brown; Mr M Brown;

In Attendance

Mr I Johnston CBE QPM, Chief Constable; Mr. A Lake, Deputy Chief Constable; Mr P Nicholas and Mr P Robb, Assistant Chief Constables; 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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21PL2002 MINUTES 21 FEBRUARY 2002

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February were approved.

22PL2002 ATTENDANCE BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STAFF ASSOCIATIONS

The Clerk and Chief Constable explained the circumstances in which, following consultation with the Chairman, representatives of the police staff associations had been invited to attend the meeting as observers. Several Members of the Committee expressed concern that an invitation had been issued before the Committee had been given the opportunity to consider the matter, and that without that consideration it was inappropriate for observers to attend this meeting. After considerable discussion, the Committee resolved not to allow the attendance of observers at this meeting, and agreed to consider a paper on the issue at the next meeting.

The Committee regretted the inconvenience to the representatives of the Federation who were in attendance, and the Chairman with the Clerk and Chief Constable left the meeting to explain the position to them.

➤ *ACTION*

➤ *REPORT TO NEXT MEETING – CLERK*

23PL2002 STRATEGIC REVIEW OF RAILWAY POLICING

Mr Peter Smith, accompanied by Sir John Smith and Mr Roy Clarke (Police advisers), Mr Ian Godden, Mr Neville Wade and Ms Vaseliki Anyfioti, made a presentation to the Committee of the findings and recommendations in the Strategic Review carried out by Roland Berger and SPL. Members had received the final draft Report of the Review a few days previously.

(The slides of Peter Smith's presentation have been circulated to Members separately).

The key points of the presentation were: -

- ❑ The demand for railway policing services is expected to remain stable over the next decade.
- ❑ Hotspots of demand can be identified by region, location and type of crime.
- ❑ London and twenty other major cities account for 70 –80% of total recorded rail crime.
- ❑ BTP cannot remain as it is, as it represents poor value for money, it is not flexible enough in deployment and response to customers, it has operational inefficiencies, and internal morale is low.
- ❑ The Strategic options were to keep the force as it is but make it more efficient; to reallocate BTP activities to others; and to focus BTP on essentials. The recommendations made in the Review have derived from a combination of the second and third options.
- ❑ Stakeholders who were consulted recognised BTP's role and were in favour of its continuance as a specialist railway police organisation.
- ❑ Stakeholders generally wanted greater visibility, a higher profile, and more effective use of resources by BTP.
- ❑ There was a requirement from stakeholders that BTP should strengthen its interface with and its sharing of intelligence and resources with Home Office forces.
- ❑ There was much room for improvement in Account Management in BTP.
- ❑ Freight companies did not see a big role for BTP in policing their operations.
- ❑ Internally, leadership, management and communications skills were seen as very weak. There was a great need for improved HR functions.

- ❑ Stakeholders generally supported the proposals for a Police Authority.
- ❑ BTP's operational strengths were in accident management, football / events policing, crime prevention, and terrorism threat assessment. It was weaker in intelligence led policing, community partnership building, car park policing and depot policing. Its link into the wider criminal justice system was also in need of improvement.
- ❑ Although there was a high level of confidence in the Chief Constable, the general level of managerial capability in the force was not highly regarded, internally or externally.
- ❑ Organisational and operational efficiency was rated low.
- ❑ The Strategic recommendations were a package revolving around an improved focussing of resources on hotspots; reallocation of resources away from areas and tasks that BTP was not good at (such as depot policing); development of new protocols and SLA's with Home Office forces in those places where BTP will have minimal deployment; an increased use of civilians in back office functions and where possible as police auxiliaries releasing police resources back to the front line; a radical restructuring to demolish the existing Area structure and replace it with 4 BCU's (Scotland, East, West, and London and south East); and a rationalisation of central and support functions.
- ❑ The Review concluded that there was a strong rationale for retaining BTP as a national, dedicated and specialist force.
- ❑ Implementation of the recommendations would result in improved efficiency and effectiveness.
- ❑ It should be within BTP's capability to increase front line police visibility by at least 10% in a few years, within the existing budget level.

Dr. Atkinson asked the Consultants to clarify how they envisaged that a 10% or more increase in front line policing could be achieved within the existing budget. Mr Godden responded that the Review had identified scope to reallocate resources from "back office" functions to the front line. The Review envisaged that the restructuring of BTP Areas and Headquarters, with a concurrent rationalisation and centralisation of support functions, would eliminate duplications and save money as well as leading to more responsive and effective "local policing", with enhanced visibility. The broad order of financial savings and reallocations that the Consultant's considered feasible was illustrated in the tables in Section 7 of their Report.

Adrian Shooter questioned the Consultant's assertion that ATOC supported the idea of increased visibility. If this meant an increase in the number of PC's on patrol at stations, he was not convinced that ATOC shared that view. Mr Wade responded that the Consultants were referring to "visibility" in the broadest sense, encompassing CCTV, signage in stations and on trains, use of civilian police auxiliaries, signage of vehicles, all of which were in their view as important in building reassurance as having police officers on patrol. Mr Godden added that increasing visibility as described required more resources.

David Heseldin commented that passengers wanted to see more flexible and responsive deployment of policing to hot spots, but he questioned how realistic were the notions of protocols and SLA's with other forces as a means of achieving this. Sir John Smith responded that the analysis of workloads in Thames Valley and Northumbria showed that Home Office forces were already handling a significant proportion of policing that is within BTP's remit. He considered that there was a growing awareness by Chief Constables of the contribution that BTP could make to local policing as a result of the extended jurisdiction of BTP officers and the specialist work of BTP on football crowd control. His discussions with ACPO leadership led him to the view that police service leaders were ready to recognise that re-casting relationships with BTP could have mutual benefit.

Mike Brown said that he was concerned about the proposals to create a single BCU for London, including LUL. It appeared unbalanced compared with the BCUs for Scotland and the other areas. He was sceptical that this BCU could be put in place without creating a new bureaucracy of its own, and worried that the specialist task of policing an underground mass

transit system might not have been sufficiently understood. He also felt that the interest of Transport for London and the Mayor/GLA in the policing of the underground would argue against a unified BCU for London and the south East. Ian Godden and Roy Clarke responded that the BCU for Scotland might be considered sub-optimal in organisational terms but was well justified by the special requirements of Scotland's rail industry structure and government. Similarly, the proposal for London was for three sectors (London, SE and LUL) each of which would respond to the special requirements of the industry and local government, but overlain with a strategic BCU structure for operational and planning focus, for service cohesion and for maintaining relationships with the industry and passenger groups.

In the ensuing discussion on this issue, it was clear that a number of members have unease about the proposals for a single BCU for London and SE.

The Chairman recognised that some of the Members had had only a short period to study the Report. Even the Steering Group Members were to an extent unsighted, because the draft Report included recommendations that had not been presented to the Steering Group. His summation of the Report was that it identified, over the decade, a steady demand curve in which the components were subject to change, the capacity to meet demand by mining efficiency reserves (although some members were cautious about the level of efficiencies possible), and the basis on which the price could remain steady in real terms.

He proposed that the report should be received, but not accepted, at this stage, bearing in mind that the Committee had not had time to study the Report in depth, or to consider all the implications. He suggested that the Chief Constable be asked to report to the Committee in October with his strategy for railway policing in light of the Strategic Review. In the meantime, the Chief Constable should be tasked to proceed to implement recommendations concerned with organisational efficiency, to secure as many quick hits as possible. Finally, he proposed that a small group be appointed, consisting of Sir David O'Dowd, Mike Mitchell and David Heseldin, to consider a medium term financial strategy, also to report back in October.

Mike Mitchell endorsed the proposal to take action on recommendations that would produce results in the short term. He cautioned however that from the perspective of TOCs, the recommendations of the Review were not cost free. The refocusing of BTP into the major urban areas could result in the need for TOC's to increase security and/or staffing elsewhere, at their own cost. He was not convinced about the structural changes in their entirety. He was also concerned that the redeployment of resources between regions could have a significant impact on cost allocation and charges.

In further discussion Members agreed upon the need to have a full and considered debate on the Review findings and recommendations. They agreed that this should take place at the meeting on 18 July. The outcome would provide clear guidance for the Chief Constable in the preparation of his Strategy.

- *AGENDA FOR 18 JULY MEETING TO BE STRUCTURED TO FACILITATE FULL DEBATE ON THE STRATEGIC REVIEW – CLERK AND CHIEF CONSTABLE*
- *FINANCE SUB-GROUP (SIR DAVID O'DOWD, MIKE MITCHELL, DAVID HESELDIN) TO MEET TO PREPARE RECOMMENDATIONS ON MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY IN LIGHT OF STRATEGIC REVIEW AND CHIEF CONSTABLE'S STRATEGY – CLERK*

The Chief Constable presented his report on force performance for the period to the end of March 2002.

For the year 2001/2, the Force achieved 3 of the 12 targets set in the Policing Plan for the year. The Chief Constable referred to the factors that had contributed to that level of performance, which had been explained to the Committee previously.

One of these factors was the previous mis-recording and under recording of line of route offences. Now that better recording practices were in place, the result appeared to be an increase in excess of 100%. There were further increases to come as the improved reporting processes bedded in over a full year in all areas. The Chairman asked the Chief Constable to examine the data carefully to enable the Committee to understand the real trend. Adrian Shooter agreed, emphasising that vandalism was coming to be seen as the primary risk to rail operations. He urged that the Force should share information with Rail Safety. The Chief Constable responded that joint working was undertaken, but that information was difficult to reconcile (he stated that the industry data showed substantially more incidents than were reported to BTP).

The Deputy Chief Constable reported that in the current year 2002/3, performance to date showed that the force was on target in 5 out of 9 targets. The trends in numbers of robberies and the rate of detections were particularly gratifying. Vehicle crime was increasing, but so were detections. Performance times in managing fatalities were improving towards the target. Sickness absence continued to decline, and the Committee noted that the force had now achieved 9 consecutive months of reducing sickness, with consequent benefits in terms of police availability.

The Chief Constable reported that after much lobbying of, the force had been included in the special programme to tackle street crime, with a likely package of c£1.5m for video identification jointly funded by Home Office and DTLR.

The Chief Constable reported on the Potters Bar Accident, commenting that there had been a high level of co-operation between all industry parties and HSE, and also good joint working with Hertfordshire Police and other emergency services. The force for its part had sought to minimise the "crime scene" orientation of previous incidents, without compromising the investigation. Adrian Shooter, Ian Brown and Sir David each complimented the force on the manner and efficacy of its involvement in the accident. The Chief Constable commented on the impact of the investigation on resources, especially detectives. This pressure was likely to be exacerbated by an expected instruction from the CPS to re-open the Ladbroke Grove investigation.

➤ *ACTION*

➤ *DETAILED ANALYSIS OF LINE OF ROUTE OFFENCES TO BE INCLUDED IN A FUTURE REPORT- CHIEF CONSTABLE*

25PL2002 FINANCIAL RESULTS – PROVISIONAL RESULTS FOR 2001/2

The Finance & Administration Director reported that the Force budget underspent at outturn by about £1.9m (of which £1.2m was attributable to the overland railway and £0.7m to LUL). This was in line with the projection made at the time of the budget. Subject to Audit, the underspend would be carried forward to support the budget for 2002/3.

The special Voluntary Severance Scheme had cost £351,000 in 2001/2 and 10 employees had left under the Scheme, with an annual saving of c£400,000.

The view of the External Auditor was still awaited on the question of depreciation adjustments in respect of fixed assets.

The Treasurer reported that following negotiations, officials from Customs & Excise had confirmed that BTP could not charge VAT to its customers and therefore could not recover VAT on its supplies. However, Customs & Excise would grant concessionary relief until 31 March 2003. There would therefore be no retrospective adverse impact of this change.

Customs & Excise had accepted that if a new Police Authority were created for BTP, then that authority would be exempt from VAT in practice because of its special status. They were considering a request from SRA to extend the concessionary treatment until 1 April 2004 in anticipation of the creation of the new Police Authority.

The impact of non-recovery of VAT on supplies was estimated to be £3.5m per annum.

26PL2002 BUDGET 2002/3

The Chief Constable reported on the use to be made of the 1% growth provided in the budget. Together with the use of the rolled forward underspend, the growth allocation would ensure that there would be no reductions in front line policing. It would also fund an extra 10 officers in London South Area, and a special task force of at least 15 officers in London to deal with high priority crime and support the National Intelligence Model. The Force had created an Initiatives fund of £100,000, for Areas to bid for special projects to support policing plan targets, and a Spend-to-Save Fund of £175,000.

The Committee noted that the budget plan, combined with normal turnover, implied recruitment of almost 200 police officers in 2002/3. The ACC Operational Support commented that a reasonable start had been made, and that many practices and processes were being changed to ensure a sustained level of recruitment performance.

The Force Finance Director commented that the costs of the investigation of the Potters Bar accident could be significant, with implications for the budget. He undertook to report to the next meeting.

Members asked questions about the pensions holiday, and about the impact of the new Accounting Standards for pensions FRS17. In reply, the Clerk advised that the next actuarial valuation of the Police Pension Fund was to take place at the end of 2002 and the Report would be available by June 2003. The new Accounting standards were being complied with, and an actuarial; report on this issue was expected to be available for the next meeting.

Sir David O'Dowd commented that the new Police pay package as agreed in the PNB would have a significant impact in 2003/4. Unless BTP introduced a pay package equivalent to the PNB arrangements quickly, there could be an adverse effect on recruitment and retention.

- ***ACTION***
- ***DETAILS OF PNB PAY AGREEMENT TO BE CIRCULATED - CLERK***
- ***FUTURE MONITORING REPORTS TO INCLUDE STATE OF COMMITMENT AND TIME TABLE FOR ALL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCHEMES- FINANCE & ADMIN DIRECTOR***
- ***PERFORMANCE ON RECRUITMENT TO BE INCLUDED IN FUTURE REPORTS, TO SHOW TOTAL TO DATE AND PERFORMANCE PER WEEK – FINANCE & ADMIN DIRECTOR***

- *REPORT TO NEXT MEETING TO INCLUDE UPDATE AND PROJECTION ON POTTERS BAR INVESTIGATION – FINANCE & ADMIN DIRECTOR*
 - *REPORT TO NEXT MEETING TO INCLUDE REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH FRS17*
-

27PL2002 SPECIAL CONSTABLES

The ACC Operational Support reported on the state of play in the recruitment of Special Constables. The original target of 426 within 4 years had been proved to be over ambitious. There were currently 118 Specials in the Force and a new target was proposed of 308 by 2007 – an increase of 190. 15 Specials had been sworn in as the product of the Connex/BTP initiative, and the Force would be looking to develop that model with other TOC's. The Committee endorsed the revised target.

- *ACTION*
 - *REPORT ON RECRUITMENT AND STRENGTH OF SPECIALS TO BE INCLUDED IN CHIEF CONSTABLE'S PERFORMANCE REPORT AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR – ACC OPERATIONAL SUPPORT*
-

28PL2002 BEST VALUE – REVIEW OF COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS

The Deputy Chief Constable presented the report of the Best Value Review, including a Business Improvement Plan. It had not been possible to arrange a meeting of the Challenge Panel before this meeting, but the Panel would meet on 28 May and it's comments would be taken on board in a revised Business Improvement Plan if necessary.

Dr. Atkinson, as the Lead Member for this Review, asked that much more comparative information about staff numbers in BTP and other forces should be available for the Challenge Panel, together with more detail about the proposed cultural audit.

Sir David O'Dowd commented that the Business Improvement Programme appeared to be an ambitious programme. The Deputy Chief Constable acknowledged that this was so, and emphasised the importance that Chief Officers attached to it.

After discussion, the Committee approved the Business Improvement Plan subject to any revisions arising out of the deliberations of the Challenge Panel.

- *ACTION*
 - *STATISTICAL AND OTHER INFORMATION TO BE PREPARED FOR THE CHALLENGE PANEL – DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE*
 - *BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PLAN TO BE AMENDED AS NECESSARY TO REFLECT VIEWS OF CHALLENGE PANEL – DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE*
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29PL2002 RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

The Committee was asked to endorse the draft Race Equality Scheme prepared by the force

pursuant to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Act imposed general duties on police forces and other public bodies to tackle discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people from different racial groups, and a specific duty to prepare the Scheme and to monitor employment procedures and practices.

Extensive consultation, internally and externally, had taken place on the Scheme.

ACC Robb explained that an information and training programme was planned, to ensure that all employees understand the Scheme and its importance. The Force had in mind to produce a user-friendly version in plain English.

David Heseldin suggested that taxicab operators should be included in the list of consultees set out in para. 10.8 of the Scheme.

The Committee endorsed the Scheme as drafted.

- *ACTION*
- *INCLUDE TAXI CAB OPERATORS IN LIST OF CONSULTees – ACC ROBB*

30PL2002 MODERNISING BTP

The Committee noted the clerk's report that there had been no progress towards legislation, and that DTLR Officials considered that legislation in the next session was still a possibility.

31PL2002 POLICE REFORM PROGRAMME AND PNB PROPOSALS FOR POLICE PAY

The Chief Constable and Clerk reported that DTLR and Home Office had agreed that BTP should have power to prepare a Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (which would enable the Chief Constable to confer limited police powers on employees of, for example, accredited TOC's or Security Companies). This was being progressed as an amendment of the Police Bill. The Committee welcomed this development.

The DTLR had declined to offer any government contribution towards the additional payroll costs that would arise from implementation of the new Police pay package. The Department has confirmed that Government remained willing in principle to provide funding for BTP for special programmes such as Airwave but expected that the industry would continue to fund core costs.

32PL2002 APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLES

The Clerk informed the Committee that Paul Robb had been appointed to the post of Assistant Chief Constable (Operational Support). Members expressed their congratulations.

The post of ACC Scotland was expected to be filled following interviews on 25 June.

33PL2002 AIRWAVE

The Assistant Chief Constable (Operational Support) reported that there was continuing

slippage in the national roll out of Airwave. This would have an impact on BTP, and could delay final roll- out by up to six months.

It had become clear that the planned LUL Connect System could meet BTP's underground radio communication requirement. It was envisaged that this would involve using a single radio handset that could "roam" between Airwave above ground and Connect below the surface.

Although it remained desirable to find a solution that would provide a common radio platform for BTP, the Met and City Police and the other emergency services, the cost of immediate steps to take the joint work forward were estimated to be £150,000. The Committee were informed that the Clerk had proposed to the Metropolitan Police Authority and the City of London Police that BTP would meet up to £50,000 of this cost, provided that the Met and/or others contributed the balance. Neither the Met Police nor any other service had agreed to contribute to the cost. The Met were understood to believe that priority should be given to developing an integrated radio service for all the Emergency Services in London, above and below ground, and were lobbying for PITO to take the lead on this.

In these circumstances, BTP Joint work towards a solution to the problem of Airwave underground had been suspended.

The Committee noted the position and endorsed the action taken.

34PL2002 POLICE CHARGES – DISPUTES

The Clerk reported on the latest position concerning the disputes with GNER, First Group and EWS. The Dispute process had been delayed by the death of the Arbitrator.

35PL2002 POLICE SERVICES AGREEMENTS

The Clerk reported that agreement had been reached on the terms of a revised PSA for London Underground, giving effect to changes in charging arising out of the PA Consultants' review in 1999, and modernising the agreement to reflect current operations. PSA's had also been agreed with Infracore JNP and Pre Metro Operations Limited.

36PL2002 DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

The Committee noted and approved decisions taken by the Chairman under delegated powers, on the following matters as detailed in the Clerk's Report: -

- Sun Mainframe Systems Computer
- London Weighting for Chief Officers
- Support Staff Pay Remit
- Special Voluntary Severance Scheme

37PL2002 AUDIT PANEL

Sir David O'Dowd drew attention to the Minutes of the Audit Panel meetings, especially the meeting held on 30 April. He felt that the Audit work to date identified significant lapses in control and that a lot of work needed to be done within the Force to restore confidence in systems and processes.

In response, the Finance Director gave an account of the most significant areas of weakness

and confirmed that matters identified by the internal Audit were being addressed. The Treasurer confirmed that in her opinion there were some serious issues, but none were insurmountable.

The Chief Constable assured the Committee that he was aware of the issues, that he was supporting the Finance Director's proposals for staffing and for a recovery programme, and that he would monitor progress closely.

The Committee noted the Minutes of the meetings of the Panel and the assurances given by the Finance Director and Chief Constable.

38PL2002 COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINE SUB-COMMITTEE

Sir David O'Dowd presented the Minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 24 April, and confirmed that the Sub-Committee were satisfied with the performance of the force in dealing with complaints. The Committee noted the report of a forthcoming Employment Tribunal ruling that was expected to be unfavourable.

The meeting concluded at 4.30 p.m.

Chairman.....

Dated.....