

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**POLICE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY 20TH MAY 2004, 10.00 AM**

**at
FRIENDS HOUSE**

Present: Mr James Jerram (Chair)
Sir Alastair Graham
Mr Iain Brown
Mr Mike Brown
Mr Adrian Shooter
Ms Christine Knights
Mr Keith Ludeman

Apologies: Sir David O'Dowd

In Attendance: Mr I Johnston, Chief Constable
Mr A Trotter, Deputy Chief Constable (part)
Mr P Robb, Assistant Chief Constable
Mr P Nicholas, Assistant Chief Constable
Mr D McCall, Assistant Chief Constable
Ms S Budden, Finance Director
Mr S Thomas, HR Director
Mr Mike Turney, Director of Information Systems & Technology
Ms Marie Daniels, Corporate Development
Mr A Gregory, Inspector
Mr R Hemmings, Clerk to the Committee
Ms D McGovern (minutes)
Ms L Bryant, PA
Ms Karen Sanderson, Treasurer

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23/2004
Non agenda

WELCOME

Mr Jerram welcomed Nick Pope and Geraldine Mahoney-Moore from the Ministry of Defence Police Authority.

24/2004
Agenda Item 1

MINUTES OF MEETING 19TH FEBRUARY 2004

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

25/2004
Agenda Item 2

MATTERS ARISING/ ACTIONS OUTSTANDING

Mr Hemmings stated that a letter was due to be sent that day to TOC's informing them of the decision to release the pensions money. Mr Ludeman questioned what would happen in the event of the companies no longer existing. Ms Sanderson stated the SRA would help sort out who now owned the liabilities in these cases.

26/2004
Agenda Item 3

BUDGET OUT-TURN

Ms Budden stated that all figures were subject to audit. Ms Budden reported that there was a £1.3m overspend for 2003/4, which was consistent with what had been forecast and presented to the Committee on previous occasions. The number of officers was 29 higher than budgeted for, but the main reasons for overspend were forensics, compensation claims and the cost of the PSA disputes. This had also been notified to the Committee previously. Ms Budden commented that on the positive side, the new financial reporting system was now producing robust figures, which would make forecasting more accurate in future. Now that this system was in place, the focus for the next year would be on budgetary control.

Mr Jerram stated that the staff and pay costs showed good control, however the control over supplies and services had been insufficient in the past. Sir Alastair asked whether profiles were requested on a monthly basis. Ms Budden reported that they were scrutinised each month. Mr Jerram questioned whether there had been any "quick-spend" on the capital budget. Ms Budden stated that things had progressed on several projects.

Mr Ludeman questioned the correct number of staff. Ms Budden stated that the 142 included the additional 100 officers from L area. The Chief Constable stated that the issue also involved the number of constables who had been acting as Sergeants. The Chief Constable stated that a further issue was that the recruitment process took 3-4 months to stop and 5-6 months to get going, so any impact would not be felt for 6 months. Mr Ludeman asked whether the Force was losing officers to other Home Office forces. Mr Johnston replied that BTP had lost 7 but gained 14. Mr Ludeman questioned whether there would be a decision in the PSA disputes. Mr Hemmings reported that the latest timescale from the DfT was "soon".

Mr Mike Brown wished it noted that the extra 150K for LU officers was on top of their standard share.

27/2004
Agenda Item 4

CLERK'S REPORT

Mr Hemmings reported that the transition to the new Authority was progressing as well as anticipated, and that everything was expected to be in place for the 1st July.

Four applicants had been short-listed for the Treasurer post, with interviews scheduled for w/c 24th May. It was noted that the applications had been of a high standard.

Mr Jerram asked whether staff would be paid on the 1st July, and asked that the affirmative reply be minuted. In response to a request for further information, Mr Hemmings provided the following updates:

- All staff had received a letter informing them of the change to the Authority
- Discussions around banking arrangements were concluded, although the process was not absolutely in place yet
- The process for determining the future ownership of Tadworth would be concluded by the 31st June
- All contractors had been identified to be notified of the change
- PSA's would transfer by SI

In summary, Mr Jerram requested it be minuted that the meeting had received assurance from the Clerk that there were no remaining unresolved issues on business continuity for the Force. Sir Alastair added that the appointment of members was on track, although no formal date for announcement had been given. Mr Iain Brown stated that the breakdowns the Audit Panel had received from the Project Board had assisted in their scrutiny of the project.

28/2004
Agenda Item 5

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

The Chief Constable informed the Committee that 8 out of 11 targets had been met, but if the 9th was taken in terms of percentages, then this had also been met. The Committee **agreed** with the decision to headline 9 out of 11 targets met.

Sickness: This target was met and continued to fall, with the Force now being one of the top Forces. Mr Shooter stated this was a good result. Mr Mike Brown questioned how the momentum would be maintained. ACC Robb replied this had a lot to do with the culture change which was becoming evident.

PNC: ACC Robb and his team were congratulated on transforming BTP from one of the worst forces to the top, with BTP now being cited as best practice by HMIC.

Alpha Response: The Force now owned the best identification and monitoring kits available. Mr Ludeman asked what would happen

when the funding ran out. Mr Johnston replied that the kit belonged to the Force, the problem would be making up the manpower, however this need would be met as long as it remained. The gap, if any, would appear in other functions. Mr Jerram raised the point that historically funding of the BTP came 80% from industry and 20% from Government, to cover these types of resources. Mr Jerram thought this debate was worth re-opening. Sir Alastair asserted that both he and the Chief Constable had been taking every opportunity recently to achieve this, but did not underestimate the enormity of the task.

Transport Select Committee: The TSC had stated that the highly comprehensive background papers they had received were one of the best sets.

Appointments: ACC McCall was formally welcomed. Chief Superintendent Crowther had become Area Commander of LU on Mr Hotston's retirement. Chief Superintendent Daly had recently announced he would be going to EWS. This left vacancies in Corporate Development, London North and London South. Mr Turney had also announced his retirement, which left an opportunity to review the way IT was structured.

Mobile Custody Suite: BTP is one of only two Forces to have this resource. Mr Johnston requested the help of industry colleagues in ensuring parking was available when it was being used to support operations.

Police Parliamentary Scheme: Two MP's on this scheme had recently become Special Constables on LU. This attracted media interest when one made an arrest.

SAME Conference: Hazel Blears had attended the SAME conference and had been highly complimentary of the Force's enthusiasm in this area, and their innovative approach generally.

Mobile Phone Crime Unit: A series of arrests emanating from this unit had been the subject of an ITV programme. When questioned how relevant this was to the railways, it was confirmed that mobile phones were the most common item stolen from people on trains, accounting for 54% of all robberies. The officer in the MPCU was paid for out of the Street Crime Initiative money.

Other points of note:

- Publication of the HMIC report had been delayed due to the period of political purdah
- Some very substantial seizures had been made under the Proceeds of Crime Act, and the Chief Constable hoped to be able to get some of this money back
- An ATOC sponsored conference on complimentary policing had gone very well with lots of interest
- The Force maintained its 100% clear up rate for murder
- One of the most prolific graffiti offenders had been prosecuted

On the last point, Mr Ludeman stated this was a very good result for the Force, but questioned how magistrates could be persuaded to give tougher sentences. Mr Jerram stated that one way would be for TOC's (or NR or LU) to always put in a claim for compensation for damage done.

Mr Jerram commented that the result on pick-pocketing achieved by putting in extra effort was highly commendable.

29/2004 **MINUTES OF COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item 6

Ms Knights presented the minutes of the meeting held 15th April 2004. Overall, the work of C&D was to be commended, however Ms Knights raised concern over the sustainability of this in the move to the IPCC. In terms of independent members of tribunals, BTP were joining with MPS, CoL and NCIS. Mr Brown queried whether the sums paid out in compensation in a period were related to the number of claims for that period. It was confirmed that the sums were only those paid out in that period, and did not relate to the claims for that period.

30/2004 **MINUTES OF AUDIT PANEL**

Agenda Item 7

Mr Iain Brown presented the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March. Mr Brown stated that there had been a lengthy discussion with regards to the VAT money. The audit report presented showed signs of improvement, however confirmation was needed with respect to the audit requirements of the SRA for the part year, and whether they would pay for this. Ms Sanderson stated this would need to be addressed to Alex Butt directly.

It was clarified that PWC would be working with the Force in the run up to 1st July, and while FRS 17 was still unresolved generally, there were no other issues.

There was discussion around the proposed review of police charges. Ms Sanderson thought this was timely in that financial accounting standards were moving towards a measurement base, and this could be incorporated into the review. Mr Jerram stated his preferred option would be for the TOC's to run the review, and questioned whether the review needed to be run at all. Mr Hemming stated it was a legislative requirement for the new Authority to review the allocation of charges. Mr Shooter felt that there would be no agreement reached, and that time could be better spent on other things. Ms Knights felt that independent input was needed. Mr Ludeman stated that leaving it to the TOC's would result in even less agreement, and he supported the paper as any new system would be an improvement on the current one, which was not a defensible base. Mr Mike Brown supported Mr Ludeman. Mr Jerram stated that the paper should be deferred until the new Authority could meet, as it would be their responsibility to ensure the review was carried out to their satisfaction.

**ACTION: Ms Budden to speak with Alex Butt
Charges Review paper to be scheduled for first
business meeting of the PA.**

31/2004 BEST VALUE REVIEW SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT

Agenda Item 8

ACC Robb stated that he and Mr Shooter had had to reschedule their meeting a number of times. However, BTP had begun some useful dialogue with ATOC on fraud and it was agreed that BTP would attend an ATOC fraud seminar on 14th July 2004 as a starting point. It had been agreed that there was a need to more closely engaged with BTP on commercial developments within the industry. Mr Shooter stated that BTP had excellent links with other Forces, but needed access to some of the data held by the Industry. Mr Shooter suggested a series of seminars to include experts and academics in particular areas of specialism. ACC Robb had agreed to identify two or three key areas where 'value' could be added and take the matter forward via Mr. Shooter. Mr Jerram requested that this work be progressed.

32/2004 AOB

Agenda Item 9

The BTP Letter of Assurance to the SRA was circulated for members to approve. This was **approved**.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: there will be a short meeting of the Committee on the 1st July to formally hand over to the new Police Authority.

Signed.....

Chairman

33/2004 CHIEF CONSTABLES COMMENTARY

Agenda Item 9

Mr Johnston reported that counter terrorism was still the main issue for the Force.

34/2004 REVISED BUDGET

Agenda Item 10

Mr Jerram asked whether the VAT money should go back to the Force instead of the being returned to the TOC's. This was **approved**.

It was **agreed** to spend the money on:

- £1.3m overspend
- Adjustment to keep officer numbers stable
- Contingency fund (likely to be used for over-time on terrorism)

35/2004 ICCS

Agenda Item 11

The option to buy the kit and then have it managed by a company. was **approved**.

36/2004 FHQ RELOCATION

Agenda Item 12

The paper was **approved** in principle.

37/2004 VEHICLE REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

Agenda Item 13

The programme was **approved**.

38/2004 FINAL MEETING

Non-agenda

Mr Jerram stated that as this was the final session of the British Transport Police Committee, he would like to thank all those present for their contribution, and wish those who were continuing every success.

Mr Shooter stated he would not be continuing his involvement, but he had enjoyed his time on the committee and was delighted with the significant improvements the Chief Constable had made, although there was still a long way to go.

Mr Johnston thanked the Committee for their leadership and support, and stated he had enjoyed working with them.

Mr Jerram intended calling a final meeting of the Committee on 1st July 2004 to effect a formal handover.