

# BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE AUTHORITY

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**MINUTES**  
**POLICE AUTHORITY**  
**TUESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2006**  
at  
**FHQ – CAMDEN ROAD**

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**Present:** Sir Alistair Graham (Chair)  
Sir David O'Dowd  
Mr L Adams  
Mr M Brown  
Mrs W Towers  
Ms C Knights  
Suzanne May  
Mr M Holden  
Mr C Foxall  
Mr R Gisby  
Mr J King  
Mr R O'Toole

**In Attendance:** Mr I Johnston, Chief Constable  
Mr A Trotter, Deputy Chief Constable  
Mr D McCall, Assistant Chief Constable (part)  
Mr P Robb, Assistant Chief Constable  
Mr A Pacey, Temporary Assistant Chief Constable  
Ms S Budden, Director of Finance and Corporate Services  
Ms L Scott, HR Director  
Mr P Zieminski, Chief Superintendent Strategic Development  
Mr M Smith, Detective Chief Superintendent  
Mr K Shanahan, Detective Chief Inspector  
Mr B Townsend, Detective Inspector  
Ms V Delices, BTP Secretariat Manager

Mr R Hemmings, Chief Executive & Clerk  
Ms D McGovern, Deputy Clerk  
Mrs E Pike, Treasurer  
Miss L Barrick, Meetings Manager and Minutes  
Mrs S Elvy, Research and Policy Officer  
Miss L Bryant, PA

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**09/2006 WELCOME**

Non-Agenda

The Chair began by welcoming Ms Scott to her first Authority meeting.

**10/2006 MINUTES OF MEETINGS 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER & 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY**

Agenda item 1

The Authority received and approved both the minutes for 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and 10<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

**11/2006 MATTERS ARISING/ACTIONS OUTSTANDING**

Agenda Item 2

There were no matters arising and all actions had been discharged.

**12/2006 COMMITTEE ISSUES**

Agenda Item 3

***Professional Standards Committee (18/01/06)***

Mrs Towers informed the Authority that the meeting had been the last for Chief Superintendent Bryon who had moved on within the Organisation and that Chief Superintendent Carroll had now taken over the running of the department. Mrs Towers said that she had nothing more to update. No further points were raised.

***Stakeholder Relations and Communication Strategy Committee (09/02/06)***

Mr King said that there were still a couple of changes to be made to the minutes. Mr King raised a few points saying that the Committee was disappointed that the Passenger Workshop had been deferred and that he felt it a shame that the RSSB study had not received the backing of the industry, as he felt that it would have been very useful. He went on to say that the consultation strategy had gone to this meeting and also that Passenger Focus Survey questions had been finalised.

***Human Resources and Remuneration Committee (14/02/06)***

Ms Knights began by saying that there had been an excellent presentation of the NSPIS software system demonstrating how it would improve management within HR as it allowed conglomeration of personal details, command and control data and payroll information. MS Knights also said that there would be a follow up meeting with SAME and that both she and Mrs Towers would be meeting with all the support groups within BTP.

***Urgency Panel Meeting (24/02/06)***

The Chair explained that the urgency Panel had been called to discuss the vehicle replacement programme 2006/7 and the mobile data project. Ms Budden explained that the vehicle replacement had to be started early so that it would be completed by March 2007 and that it was solely about next year's money. The Chief Constable said that there was an opportunity within the capital programme for 2005/06 to bring forward some vehicle replacement.

The early progression of the mobile data project was also approved as it was to be funded through the underspend on the 2005/06 capital programme and by TfL.

The Chief Constable spoke to his report the key points were:

- The terrorism threat was still at the second highest-level known.
- The first draft of the DfTs review had been received and was at present being worked on. The Chief Constable remarked that this had taken up a lot of staff-time including serious management time.
- All the operational targets for 2005/6 were being achieved by a significant margin, reflecting good investment. Particularly theft of passenger property, which had been reduced by 14%.
- Through negotiation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and others it had been agreed that railway staff should be included in the definition of public servants. This meant that people who assaulted rail staff would be more likely to face prosecution and prison sentences in the future.
- The Chief Constable had attended the RMT conference in Blackpool where there had been some positive feedback for BTP.
- There had been a joint conference with the industry held on graffiti in York. Representatives had attended this from a range of countries and international links had been forged. Due to the problem of graffiti some countries were moving from generic policing to specialist railway forces, for example France and Romania.
- With regard to organisational targets those for BME officers and specialists had been achieved. However, the targets for females still had some way to go.
- The Force had massively improved its Police National Computer (PNC) performance. The target was to have 90% of records on PNC within 24hrs of them happening and where the Force had previously been at the bottom of a National League table, they were now achieving 96% against a national average of 72%.
- BTP was achieving 54% on the criminal justice target which needed to be improved upon.
- TfL was giving funding for 89 officers for overground and underground policing, this was in the final stages of negotiations.
- The Evening Standard had been running a campaign on railway safety following a GLA report on crime on the railway which was quoted as saying that BTP had a "Herculean task given its numbers".
- Operation Shield was underway. This Operation was targeting knife crime on the railways.
- When its existing stocks had to be replaced BTP had moved from CS Spray to Captor, a pepper spray, as this was more suited to the railway environment.
- BTP crime statistics would be recorded in the national crime statistics published by the Home office as of April 2006.
- BTP congratulated London Underground on its awards at the Rail Awards event, and thanked them and other contributors for their generous comments about the Force.

The Chief Constable drew the Authority's attention to the cases of interest section of the report, and in particular Appendix B, which showed a randomly chosen week of violent crime on the railway,

giving a stark picture of what the Force was up against. He spoke further about Operation Shield explaining that this operation had involved taking portable electronic scanners to stations in crime hotspots in an effort to reduce knife crime on the railways. So far the operation had led to 57 arrests and good feedback from rail staff. The Chief Constable also spoke about Operation Houston, which had assisted in the identification, arrest and subsequent detention of the main suspect in a group of serious sex offences. BTP then handed the operation over to a local force, as the case had implications beyond the railway. The Chief Constable praised officers involved in the investigation of a gang responsible for multiple robberies saying that it had been a very complicated case.

Ms Knights asked why the Force was only achieving 54% on the criminal justice target. The Chief Constable said that BTP struggled with the reporting of the results. The Force lacked the resources to manage many aspects of criminal justice work. He also recognised the Force could be better organised in this area, and one of his budget bids sought to address this.

Mr King asked if the classification for railway staff in Scotland had also been changed. ACC McCall said that they were in the process of trying to change this but that at present they were at the stage that the crime office in Scotland had put staff assaults under the aggravation category, which should lead to more prosecutions.

Mr Gisby asked why the tariff for graffiti offences appeared to be so random and who would be in the lead for greater consistency in this area. ACC Robb said that there was an over arching approach from the Government to take graffiti seriously. With regard to BTP there had been a lot of work done in conjunction with the CPS over the last year and there was now a liaison officer in each territorial area looking at the railways and they are very keen to engage. ACC Robb also said not as a result of BTP pressure that the London Criminal Justice Board was very interested in raising the profile of railway crime.

**14/2006**                    **BUDGET SETTING 2006/7**

Agenda Item 5

This paper gave the background to the budget.

**15/2006**                    **FORCE OVERLAND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2006/7**

Agenda Item 6

The Chair began by explaining his intentions on how he would approach this item. He said that he would begin by reporting what had occurred since the last meeting, and then he would circulate his proposition as to the budget, which was different from that proposed by the Chief Constable. The Chair said there would then be an opportunity for others to give any propositions they may have, which he would take as amendments to his proposal.

The Chair stated that representations had been made to the Secretary of State regarding the loan, and he had spoken to officials only that morning to have it confirmed that it was the Secretary of State's intention to defer the first year of repayment from 2006/7 to 2007/8. This meant the second repayment would be made in 2008/9. There

was, therefore, £5m to be removed from the proposed budget figures. The Chair said that for the purposes of the debate Members should assume that the Secretary of State could deliver on his intention.

A meeting had been held with senior industry representatives, where they made it clear the difficulties they had with the increased charges. They were, however, all in favour of the continued existence of the BTP as a specialist railway Force, although no agreement was reached on what was meant by a "refocused" BTP. To this end, the chair has suggested a working group to be chaired by the industry, in order that they can help define what is meant by the term "refocused" as seen by the industry. The industry also made it clear that in their view, the cost of policing the new normality should be met by the Government. However the Authority had been given no indications to date that this would be the case. Letters had been received from John Armit (Network Rail) and Chris Garnett (GNER). These were circulated to all present at the meeting and copies are in the minute book. The Chair said that he had also received a telephone call from the Director General of ATOC, George Muir, who had suggested that if the growth proposals were removed from the budget there would be support for the budget from the industry. In light of this the Chair proposed the Authority agreed the budget proposals from the Chief Constable minus the growth proposals. This would be a budget of £172.279M.

Ms Knights asked, if the industry was supporting the revised budget, was there any support with regard to the strategic plan. The Chair said that Mr Muir had made it clear that this acceptance was only for this year. They remained of the view that the base budget for BTP was too high, and should be reduced by refocusing, although no indication of what refocusing would mean was given. Mr O'Toole said that there was a clear perception from the industry that they had not bought into the plan and their view was that it should be revisited in its entirety so that they could fully see and understand its implications. The Chair said he understood but this came under the refocusing debate and at present the obligation was to set a budget for 2006/7.

The Chief Constable said that he would like to highlight some points such as several elements of the plan had been deferred last year and more had been deferred this year, despite the fact that the plan had been published and set out exactly what the Chief Constable needed to achieve. He said he recognised the issue of affordability but that the growth here for year 2 of the 3 year plan was 2.9% and many of the items were needed to meet national standards – for example, aligning the Force's intelligence systems to Home Forces in response to issues such as Bichard. The Chief Constable highlighted that there had been a 50% increase in items being reported as suspicious and the deployment of specialist units had gone up 100%. The Force also had to respond to a range of audit recommendations where items such as the purchase to pay system would be invaluable giving a solid framework to address audit issues. A Crime Recording Centre was needed regardless of the size of the Force and any refocusing, as were PCSOs. The Force was going through its fourth review in as many years and if previously the decision had been made not to do anything until reviews were complete BTP would not have moved

forward in this time. The Chief Constable also alluded to angst from the industry around emulation to be like Home Office Forces but he reminded the Authority that this was only around standards of policing not function. He said that the Mayor of London obviously felt BTP was worth investing as Transport for London (TfL) had increased their funding greatly and given money to police the overland system for which he had no responsibility. The Chief Constable said that over the last five years crime had risen as had been noted by the Public Accounts Committee and the terrorist threat was still very real. The Chief Constable said that there was a great momentum for change and the Force was moving forward. He suggested that after 2007/08, increases in budget were expected to flatten out, as the published development plan was completed.

With regard to the outturn from 2004/5 the Audit Director at the National Audit Office had said that any apparent surplus could not be taken into account in assessing the budget.

The Chief Constable briefly went through Annex A, which outlined the growth proposals and all benefits and risks associated with them. He said that the key project was the Crime Recording Centre as this offered a massive service enhancement, moving from a service that worked 5 days a week and a maximum of 10 hours a day to a 24/7 facility. This would allow increased visibility, as officers would be able to communicate with the centre whilst mobile and satisfy criticisms from HMIC. This project would result in efficiency savings of £470K a year with an initial cost of £1.5M.

The bid for PCSOs was a great opportunity as these were to be part funded by the Welsh Assembly and Arriva Trains Wales so would increase policing in Wales at a relatively small cost to the Force.

Ms Knights asked what other Forces were doing with regard to IMPACT. ACC Robb said that the first phase of IMPACT, the creation of a nominal index (INI) had been delivered to all forces apart from BTP. However, following negotiation with the IMPACT team BTP would get access to this database with April as the target. Sir David felt there was a lack of clarity over IMPACT as a way forward so he did not see the immediacy of it.

Mrs Towers asked what the increase to the industry was with the loss of the £5M. The Chief Constable responded that it would be 16.4%. Mrs Towers said that if the growth were also to be wiped out it would become around 13-14%.

Mr Holden asked what the costs of the Crime Recording Centre were, offset against the efficiency saving. The Chief Constable replied that the set up costs would not be there in year 2 so he would expect an efficiency saving of £470K which would return the investment in around 3 years, but he said the Force would see if they could squeeze it any further once it was up and running.

Mr O'Toole asked if he could see the business case for this as the saving had gone up from £250K to £470K. The Chief Constable said that he would provide Members with the business case. He said the

message from the industry had been that £250K was not enough so he had revisited the item and squeezed more out of it. The Chair said that the Authority's job was to ensure that the Chief Constable delivered what he said and all business cases had been reviewed by Ernst and Young on behalf of ATOC with a positive outcome.

Sir David said that he would like to put forward an amendment to the Chair's proposition. Sir David said that following the meeting with the industry he felt the message was that the Chief Constable was to go back and review his bids to see whether any except for the Crime Recording Centre, which the Chief Constable saw that as essential growth, could be put back this year. He said he was concerned that if no growth was agreed this would be a missed opportunity leading to a deteriorating situation regarding crime recording. Sir David said that he had been charged by the Authority to review the crime recording process within the Force following a damning report from the NAO and he had done so revealing only disparate and marginal improvements.

Sir David also spoke of the legal obligation to deal more effectively with victims of crime from 1<sup>st</sup> April and said that this was embedded in having an adequate crime recording system.

Due to the revisions of the business case Sir David believed that it was more compelling for investment and should not be dismissed lightly and it appeared that the building for this Centre had already been secured with support from the Welsh Assembly. Sir David also pointed out that the revision of this business case was a clear response to Mr Muir's letter which called a 6 year payback period in the original business case a "little weak", which was also reiterated in the letter received from Mr Armitt of Network Rail.

The other item Sir David recommended keeping was the PCSOs as the Welsh Assembly, Midland Mainline and Arriva Trains Wales were willing to co-fund these staff. He felt this was too good a deal to miss especially in the present political climate for greater visibility and assurance.

Therefore, Sir David proposed that the Crime Recording Centre and the PCSOs for Wales be kept. This would be growth of £1.86M which itself would bring around 25% of savings of that total investment year alone and translated into a total budget of £173.365M.

Suzanne May seconded Sir David's proposal.

Mr Adams said that he would like to make a further amendment. Mr Adams moved to support the budget as set out in the Chief Constable's paper, due to the level of crime on the railways and fact that in the current climate all police forces were asking for more money. He said that all Authority members had a responsibility and all subscribed to the strategic plan. Mr Adams said that he wanted to see the industry prosper but that when looking at the strategy set out in the strategic and policing plan long term financing was essential. Having read reports of TOCs profits who say they cannot afford BTP's charge, he said that he did accept affordability arguments and he would never want to take risks with the industry. Mr Adams said that he had

listened to arguments about loss of revenue following the London Bombings but that these profits would come back in time and having more police presence would help this. He said that he was surprised people were prepared to compromise the plan as the Chief Constable was doing a good job and had always delivered and never let the Authority down. The Authority should be offering him its support. Mr Adams said that he felt strongly about the letter from ATOC which suggested that the Authority did not take into account the industry's issues as he certainly did. He said that he could not see anything in Annex A that could be taken out and the Authority was there to assist in the prevention of crime. Mr Adams particularly warned of the risks involved in removing the money to address Bichard recommendations saying that this could result in the Force facing its own 'Soham' and those voting would need to answer for it. Mr Adams suggested that the industry approach the DfT for help.

Mr King seconded Mr Adams amendment. He said that the Authority had provided the industry with detailed breakdowns and the argument was always about affordability yet the Authority had never seen any evidence of this but only had vague assertions. Mr King was concerned about a loss of confidence and direction in the Force if the budget was compromised.

Mr Foxall said that it was very difficult to pick and choose but he thought that Sir David's amendment sounded sensible. Mr Foxall said that he supported the PCSOs for Wales not only because of his Welsh interest but also because it was a wrong to go against it when it had the backing of both the Welsh Assembly and TOCs. He said that the only compromise he would want was one that concentrated on putting most of the budget in place and particularly those items that put officers on the streets.

The Chair agreed that a strong argument for all projects existed and offered an explanation for the terms of his proposition. He said he saw his role as finding a unified approach. He said that there was no doubt about the message received from the industry, it was unequivocal that if all the growth bids were not taken out the industry would say that the Authority had not been listening and that this would be damaging to the relationship. The Chair said that they should be able to find a commonality of interest and the Authority could not afford to go so far so fast that it alienated the industry that funded it. The Chair said that the industry did not listen well to the Authority and he felt that they had not taken on board how much the budget had been squeezed. He said there was the possibility of reaching a unanimous decision and that was a prize worth having. The Force had an outstanding senior team who would ensure that morale was not lost.

The Chair summarised the 3 options before the Authority, assuming that the repayment of the DfT loan of £5M in 2006/7 was deferred:



1. **The Chair** - No growth, £167.279M
2. **Sir David** - Crime Recording Centre and PCSOs for Wales, £169.142M
3. **Mr Adams** - Full budget, £171.471M

Mr Brown said that London Underground and TfL believed in investing in BTP and that he was interested in Sir David's proposal. He said that he believed in investing in policing and the officers for London South were of particular interest in addition to those items mentioned by Sir David. Mr Brown felt that as a result of the review, the views of the industry were being given more consideration than they would be normally. The Chair stated this was not the case. Mr Brown asked the Chief Constable how he proposed to mitigate for the losses that could be faced.

Mr O'Toole said that the Secretary of State had written a letter to the Authority, which said that costs had to be addressed and controlled. Mr O'Toole said the industry's perception was that they had not been consulted on the strategic plan. He said in light of efforts on both sides and the ability to see the business case for the Crime Recording Centre he would support the budget with the only growth being the Crime Recording Centre. He said that BTP did a good job.

Mr Gisby said that the review had changed things. Relationships between the industry and DfT were growing faster and becoming stronger than those between the Authority and the Department, and this could progress to the detriment of elements of the BTPAs role. Mr Gisby said his concern was that once the strategic plan had run its course, the increases might not go to inflation as there would always be more initiatives. Mr Gisby said that he would support the Crime Recording Centre but would, as with Mr O'Toole, want to see the business case. He said he would also support the PCSOs for Wales. Mr Gisby said he felt the industry would support this, as it was consistent with what had been said in December

Suzanne May said that good points were being raised but from different perspectives and it had to be remembered that passengers were customers as well, and at present many felt uncomfortable and unsafe on the railways. She said that it did not look good to be cutting back and it had to be remembered that there were consequences. How would the Authority justify to the public that money for counter terrorism had been cut back, should another atrocity occur? She said that there were too many important things not to support, but building a good relationship with the industry was also very important. However, she felt the industry did not seem to take on board all the things that do not get reported and asked whether they realised the risk to their reputation by not investing properly in fighting crime? Suzanne May said she would support the compromise as put forward by Sir David.

Ms Knights also said that if a compromise could be found this could help the relationship with the industry. Ms Knights said she would support Apollo being continued as it was effective and efficient but she would be concerned about having to explain publicly why all the growth items were not going forward. She said that she was

disappointed the industry did not support the RSSB study into the economic benefit of BTP to the industry, as this would have answered a number of questions continually posed by the industry. She offered support for Sir David's amendment.

Mrs Towers said that she shared Mr Holden and Mr O'Toole's concerns about the leap in savings from the Crime Recording Centre but supported it if savings of £470K could be made. She also supported the PCSOs for Wales, so supported Sir David's proposal.

Mr Holden made the point that it would take a lot to unite all areas of the industry. He said that all the projects in the plan were good and worth doing and that the issue of the £4M was totemic but decisions had to be made based on prioritisation. He said that funders' issues could not be ignored and the Authority did not want to have its funders offside. Mr Holden said that he would support the Crime Recording Centre and PCSOs for Wales. Any other projects would have to be funded through efficiencies.

The Chair said that the business case for the Crime Recording Centre would be circulated after the meeting. The Chair offered the Chief Constable the opportunity to reply to the discussions and said this would be followed by a 10 minute break for any private discussions, after which he would come back and put the various proposals to the meeting.

The Chief Constable said that what was needed to meet the requirements on the Force was set out in the paper. He said the issue of affordability was for the authority not him in a decision sense but the relationship with the industry was very important and valued. The Chief Constable said that the Crime Recording Centre and the PCSOs for Wales were his top two candidates for retention. Thereafter, it would be officers for London South, Apollo project, purchase to pay project, and criminal justice. The Chief Constable concluded that not funding the other projects would constitute a major risk but he would accept whatever outcome and work hard to deliver within whatever budget he was given.

Mr O'Toole asked for reassurance that if the Authority settled for only the Crime Recording Centre and PCSOs this would not leave the Force exposed. The Chief Constable said that he could not give this. The risks would be there and would have to be borne by the Force and the Authority. There was no doubt to Members that the risks existed.

10 minute break

The Chair first put Sir David's amendment to the meeting, to give the only growth as the Crime Recording Centre and PCSOs for Wales. With the loss of the loan repayment, this would result in a budget of £169.142M. Around the table 11 were in favour and 1 against, this then became the substantive motion and the Chair asked if there were any further amendments. There were no further amendments and it was agreed upon unanimously, allowing for sight of the Crime

Recording Centre business case and continuing to press the Home Office for funding for the new normality.

**Agreed:**

- **Force budget of £169,142,000 for 2006/07**
- **Force to produce paper on impact of the settlement for the next meeting**
- **Chief Constable to circulate business case for Crime Recording Centre**
- **Authority and Force to continue to press the Government for funding of counter terrorism**
- **Authority to place continued pressure on the DfT to turn the loan into a grant**
- **The Chief Executive and Clerk be authorised to issue invoices to PSA holders in relation to the allocation of charges for 2006/7, on the same basis as the charging arrangements for 2005/6.**

**16/2006**  
Agenda Item 7

**LONDON UNDERGROUND FORCE REVENUE BUDGET 2006/7**

Ms Budden spoke to her paper that set out the budget for London Underground Area. This budget was an increase of around 15% on last year's as TfL had given extra funding for an additional 89 officers, 60 for the overground and 29 for the underground. Mr Holden asked how these officers would fit in with those on other areas in London. The Chief Constable replied that this would not be problematic and the Force was still in negotiations with TfL.

The budget was **approved at £52.5M.**

**17/2006**  
Agenda Item 8

**2006-7 POLICING PLAN TARGETS**

The Chief Constable spoke to the paper and said that the policing plan working group had met and discussed the targets that were taken to the previous meeting. He said that the targets in the present paper were slightly changed from those agreed at the meeting but not in any way significant. The Chief Constable asked for the group to reconvene to finalise and agree the targets in view of the budget that had been agreed, and bring them back to the next meeting of the Authority for information.

Mr Brown said that he would like to make a correction to paragraph 2.2. This paragraph said that it was subsequent strong representations from TfL that had resulted in a detection rate target for theft of passenger property being substituted for a reduction target, Mr Brown said he made it absolutely clear at the meeting that TfL was looking for a reduction in this area. Mr Brown said he was far from satisfied with the targets and did not think they would find favour with TfL or the Mayor.

The Chair said that the targets needed to be looked at again as TfL gave BTP a lot support.

The Deputy Chief Constable said that he could see no reason why the 'L' Area could not have its own targets as well as the overarching

force targets. He said that targets tended to concentrate on detections as that was where BTP expertise was.

Mr Holden said that he was led to believe that the Home Office Force targets were based around reduction and not detection so why not BTPs. The Chief Constable said that he had a good sense of what other forces were trying to achieve as he was the Chairman of the ACPO Crime Committee. He said where BTP could be most effective was around detections as the police had more control over these. Detections result in reductions as offenders are taken off the streets. He said the targets were not out of tune with those of Home Office Forces.

Ms Knights said that she was disappointed to see that the target for female specialist posts was 15% less than last year. The Chief Constable said that this was due to the limited amount of recruitment in 2006/7. Ms Scott said this target had been looked at long and hard.

Mr Holden felt there was more information that the Force could be presenting to the Authority and publishing externally with regard to their targets. Mr Holden said it would be interesting to see targets at BCU level. The Deputy Chief Constable said this information could be made available. The Chair asked that the working group look at what was available and see if anything more was suitable to go on the website.

**Agreed:**

- **Working Group to reconvene and finalise targets**
- **Working Group to look into more information being made available to the Authority and the public.**

**18/2006**

**BTPA – CURRENT FINANCIAL RESULTS 2005/6 AND BUDGET 2006/7**

Agenda Item 9

Mrs Pike spoke to her paper and said that the forecast overspend for the year was £176K but £60K could be recouped as the NAO were not coming in more expensive than originally proposed despite the length of time the work had taken. Mrs Pike said that the increase in consultation costs had been agreed by the Stakeholder Relations and Communication Strategy Committee. There was also depreciation to take into account and an increase in appeals costs. The proposed budget for 2006/7 was £1,702K. For 2005/06 there was an expected overspend of £63K. Mrs Pike said that the overspend was principally due to timing.

Mr Holden asked what the additional member of staff was for and why more consultation was needed and recruitment costs had risen. Mr Hemmings said that the extra member of staff was needed to run the new charging regime for PSA holders and there were also a number of other tasks that this person would take on. Ms McGovern said setting the charges following refranchising of TOCs was a very complicated and time consuming process, as had been proved when it had been outsourced previously.

Mr Hemmings pointed out that there were also many costs that the BTPA picked up that other Authorities didn't such as HMIC, pension's valuation and internal audit costs.

Ms Knights asked what the cost for the Independent Custody Visitors related to this as this was shared with the MPS. Mr Hemmings said that it was for using their facilities.

The Chair said that more attention should be given to the Authority's budget and that from the new financial year the secretariat would report to the SB&PM Committee. Mr Foxall said that benchmarking would be helpful. Mr Holden said that he was not happy with a rise of 11% when inflation was around 2%. Mrs Pike reminded the Authority that when the budget was first fixed it was a complete estimate so there was always going to be room for change.

The Chair suggested that a provisional budget should be agreed at the forecast outcome for the year and a revised budget should be brought back to the next meeting after detailed consideration at the SB&PM Committee.

**Agreed:**

- **The Authority's budget be set at £1,658,200.**
- **The Secretariat to bring a further report to the SB&PM meeting in May on the detailed proposals.**

**19/2006 POLICING PRESENTATION: OPERATION SHIELD**

Agenda Item 10

DCS Smith, DCI Shanahan and DI Townsend gave a presentation to the Authority on Operation Shield. The Chair thanked them for their informative presentation.

**20/2006 PAYMENT OF TAXABLE BENEFIT FROM TRAVEL CONCESSION**

Agenda Item 11

The Chief Constable spoke to the paper which explained that now BTP were charged by ATOC for the travel concession enjoyed by some staff, there was a tax liability gross which should be met by the employee. The Chief Constable said that the Force had been looking at how the MPS dealt with this for their staff, as they enjoy some dispensation from the Inland Revenue in this area.

Ms Scott said that she would like time to maximise negotiation opportunities to see if the same situation for BTP could be achieved as for the MPS. Mrs Towers asked if this was achieved but the tax had already been paid could the tax be refunded. Ms Scott said it could not.

Mr Holden explained that with the MPS the police officers were treated as on duty when they were travelling and there was an agreement that they would intervene if they were witness to any crime. Ms Scott said tax experts were needed to look at this matter.

With regard to paying the liability for 2005/6 Mr O'Toole said he did not feel that the Force should be paying the tax liability and asked how much it was. Ms Scott said that it was £0.5M but that the staff did not

see it as a concession as they had always had it. Their employer status had disadvantaged them.

The Chair said at the moment all that was being done was maintaining the status quo but this needed to be sorted quickly as it should not be an ongoing budgetary issue but clearly had to be paid this year as it was too late to do anything else.

**Agreed:**

- **Tax liability be met by the Force for 2005/6 for the last time.**
- **Force to explore options to restructure payments within 1 month to minimise tax liability.**
- **Force to seek dispensation from Inland Revenue in respect of police officers and report back within 1 month to COG.**
- **If above not successful consultation to begin with staff associations to prepare staff to bear tax liability arising from this benefit in kind.**

**PART II – ITEMS TAKEN IN PRIVATE**

**21/2006 UPDATE ON DISPUTES**

**Agenda Item 12**

The Authority received and considered an update on the outstanding disputes.

**22/2006 UPDATE REPORT FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CLERK**

**Agenda Item 13**

This paper was for information.

**23/2006 AOB**

**Agenda Item 14**

There was no AOB

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 5<sup>th</sup> May, 10.00am**

Signed.....  
**Chairman**