BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES

STRATEGY, BUDGET & PERFORMANCE MONITORING COMMITTEE
12th FEBRUARY 2008, 10.00AM

at
G1 & G2 FHQ, 25 CAMDEN ROAD

Present: **Sir Alistair Graham (Chair)**
Sir David O'Dowd
Mr M Holden
Ms C Knights
Mr J King

Apologies: **Mr R Gisby**
Mr R O'Toole
Mr J Weimar

In attendance: **Mr I Johnston, Chief Constable**
Mr A Trotter, Deputy Chief Constable
Ms Burd, Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Mr P Zieminski, Chief Superintendent
Mr N Khinch, Head of Finance
Mr N Barker, Staff Officer to Chief Constable
Ms M Daniels, Deputy Head of Strategic Development
Ms S Brown, Portfolio Manager

Mr R Hemmings, Chief Executive & Clerk
Mrs S Elvy, Research & Policy Officer
Miss L Barrick, Business Support Manager & Minutes

Observing: **Mr I Dobbs, Chief Executive, Stagecoach**

01/2008 **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**
Non-Agenda

The Chair gave apologies from Mr Weimar, Mr O'Toole and Mr Gisby.

02/2008 **MINUTES OF MEETING 20TH NOVEMBER**
Agenda Item 1

The Committee received and **approved** the minutes as an accurate record with one small amendment.

03/2007 **MATTERS ARISING**
Agenda Item 2

The Chair asked when the Committee could expect a paper on the governance arrangements for the contingency fund. Mr Hemmings said Treasury sign off on establishing a reserve was awaited. Once

this had been received a paper on governance arrangements would then be tabled.

The Chair informed Members that a letter had been received from the DfT giving agreement in principle to funding BTP costs of policing the Olympics subject to scrutinising BTP's bid. The Chief Constable said that HMIC had signed off BTP's bid so he was confident that it would withstand scrutiny.

The funding for a police station at Stratford had been included in both the capital bid and the Olympics bid and would now be removed from the proposals for the Olympics.

Mr Hemmings said that Assistant Chief Constable Thomas had presented the BTP Olympic budget proposals to the DfT and would be taking their questions back to the Olympic Steering Group for follow up.

There had been an action to report back on what the Government announcement of a stepping up of transport security meant for BTP. The Chair asked if there was anything further to report on this. The Chief Constable said that there were no direct actions for BTP coming out of this at present.

04/2007 **REVENUE AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING**

Agenda Item 3

Ms Burd spoke to her paper and informed the Committee that the current position showed a balanced outturn. The capital position was tight but £500k had been vired from the revenue to capital to alleviate this.

Ms Burd said that the period 10 figures showed an £8k overspend but following the decision not to backdate the pay rise this had changed to a £600k underspend. With this underspend it was proposed that either an alternative spending proposal be brought forward from the 2008/9 budget, or the money could be rolled forward as a provision against future pay.

The Chief Constable said there was a chance that the £600k may be needed for pay, as the Police Federation for England and Wales had taken the pay decision to judicial review. However, if the money were available he proposed that it should be used to begin replacing the uniform with a more up to date and comfortable design, such as that worn in Scotland. He felt this would improve morale and create efficiency savings in the long term. He said that this would be put to the HR&R Committee before it was progressed further.

Mr Holden asked what the uniform would look like next to those of the Home Office forces. The Chief Constable said that there was a trend toward the more modern type of uniform that was being discussed. Mr King asked if this would standardise the uniform across BTP. The Chief Constable responded that it would.

Ms Knights said that she would welcome this, particularly with regard to the source of the money. However, she added that the consultation must be carried out thoroughly and the figures would need to be worked up fully. HR&R had explored concerns in the past about the consultations that had been carried out previously.

Mr Dobbs noted that there was a reported risk of capital project timeframes slipping. He asked if there were contingencies in place to ensure that the money was not lost if this happened. The Deputy Chief Constable assured Mr Dobbs that he was highly conscious of this risk and was monitoring it carefully with strategies in place.

The report was **noted.**

05/2007 **UPDATE ON FRONTLINEFIRST**

Agenda Item 4

The Deputy Chief Constable spoke to his report which updated on the FrontlineFirst programme. This programme involved reviewing support structures to find resources for frontline activities, particularly for neighbourhood policing schemes. Chief Superintendent Zieminski was the Programme Director.

The first support department to have been reviewed was the HR department. The report that came out of this had been subject to robust discussion in both COG and FMT. The finding was that staffing levels were generous and it was going to be a considerable challenge for all involved to reduce. A two-day conference was to be held by the HR department to look at how to implement the findings of the review. He added that the Force was unable to give reassurance to staff at this stage. The Deputy Chief Constable said that regular updates would be provided to the Authority via the HR&R and SB&PM Committees. It was expected that considerable savings would be found whilst performance would be improved.

Ms Knights said that the HR department now had a strong senior team, which was committed to the change programme. She said the HR&R Committee would be looking at the performance indicators to ensure that standards were consistent throughout the transition period. She added that it was important that the performance indicators reflected what the department did and increased the confidence of other departments to utilise HR.

There were a number of other areas to review, including those outside of London. The Deputy Chief Constable said the most important thing was to have better performing departments that were responsive to the needs of their Areas.

The Chair read a note from Mr Weimar which said that he was generally in favour of the FrontlineFirst programme. He felt that the priority and focus of the programme should be on recurring savings. The Deputy Chief Constable agreed but added that it was a

challenge to achieve recurring savings and this would take further consideration.

Ms Knights said that she would like to sit on the challenge panel for the HR review. The Chief Constable said that she would be welcome.

Agreed:

- **Ms Knights to sit on the challenge panel along with Mr Weimar.**

06/2007 **PERFORMANCE AGAINST POLICING TARGETS**

Agenda Item 5

The Chief Constable updated that the Force was meeting 72 of its 100 targets. It was noted by Members that there was wide variation between the successes of the different BTP Areas. The Chief Constable said that this depended on many things such as culture on the Area, its history, target structure and the quality of the leadership. He picked out the three bottom Areas and explained why they were having problems.

Wales and Western covered a large area. As a result they had taken on a very difficult target structure including many localised targets and they were finding these difficult to fulfil.

London North had similar problems but rather than the geographic area being such a big issue it was the fact that many operators operated in that Area which meant that there were many relationships to manage. This had resulted in a complex target structure in an attempt to accommodate all points of view.

Finally, London Underground Area was hitting the targets that London Underground management had the most interest in. These were around reducing crime and perception of crime on the Underground. It was the targets which had been imposed that were providing the biggest challenge and were causing the Area to appear to be falling behind, such as those around detections.

The Chief Constable updated that crime was down by 12% overall. Mr Holden noted that crime appeared to be falling at a faster rate on the railways than elsewhere and asked the Chief Constable what he felt was behind this reduction in crime. The Chief Constable said it was due to better strategies being in place and also the level of support received from the industry. Mr Holden said this was good news and needed to be benchmarked so that it could be communicated. The Chief Constable said that this would not be easy as the national crime figures statistics were three months out of date.

The Force was struggling to achieve some of its central targets. This included Quality of Service for which the target was 80% and the Force was currently achieving 79%. The Chief Constable said that a

lot of energy was being put into getting the extra 1%.

The target around Persistent Young Offenders (PYOs) was not wholly under the control of BTP. The Force depended on the court system and data at the National level was late in being provided to BTP. Also, some cases could not be heard until other matters had gone through other courts first. However, the Force was doing everything within its power to ensure that PYOs were dealt with expeditiously.

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The Force was also finding it difficult to achieve the recruitment targets. To aid with this, the waiting list had been reviewed and as a result significantly reduced. The Chief Constable said that previously it had been difficult for the Force to move away from the national practices. However, he felt the Force was now reputationally better placed and as such could adopt a more radical approach.

Sir David asked if localised recruitment could help with these targets. Mr King said that this had happened successfully in Scotland. Ms Knights added that this issue had been discussed in the HR&R Committee and it was felt that it was best kept as a central function for consistency, but Areas could help in the initial stages to attract the right candidates. The Chief Constable said this was something which had been considered as part of the review of HR and the recommendations were currently being reviewed.

With regard to Appendix A, Mr Dobbs requested that trends be included so that the Committee could get a better feel for what the figures were showing them.

Agreed:

- **The Force to look at ways of including information on trends.**

07/2007 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN FOR PERIOD 2008-11 AND DRAFT 2008-9 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET**

Agenda Item 6

Ms Burd spoke to her paper. She said that some figures had been finalised since the proposals had been put to the Authority in January. The capital programme had also been looked at in broader timescales and balanced over the three year period.

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was included in the proposals. This had been developed using RPI. A rate of 4.1% had been assumed for 2009/10. This had been chosen as an average for the purposes of the MTFP. It had been decided that the budgets for 2009/10 and 2010/11 would be set using the previous year's August RPI figure, as the budget setting process would begin in September.

The known risks to the budget were set out in section four of the

paper and the Members were cognisant of these. Included in the risks were the major items such as the Olympics funding and demand for policing over the next three years.

The Chair asked whether the Force had progressed with regard to collaborative working arrangements particularly around protective services.

The Chief Constable said that this would be picked up as part of the frontlinefirst programme. He added that nationally there had been little progress on this as far as he was aware. Therefore, the Force was not behind others. He added that it was different for BTP as they were working in a specialist operating environment which required and benefited from specialist knowledge but it would be something that would be explored. The Force currently has collaborative arrangements with CoLP for recruit training.

Ms Knights made the point that the Force was dealing with all crimes that occurred on railway owned property, even if the property was not being used for railway purposes, and therefore did not require the specialist skills of BTP. She noted that for the North East this had resulted in some serious crimes being reflected in BTP figures. She was concerned that this was taking the Force away from its specialist role. The Chief Constable acknowledged that this was an issue particularly in the North East where there were nightclubs on railway owned property.

Mr King said that the pressure on police forces to merge in Scotland was greater than that in England and Wales.

The Chair turned to the credibility of the MTFP. Mr Holden asked that London Underground's charge be included for greater transparency. Mr Hemmings explained that the London Underground charge was in two parts. They paid a specific charge for their Area and then also made a contribution to central costs. It was agreed that these figures would be included in the March paper.

Mr Holden asked for further clarity around the central events' costs. The Deputy Chief Constable said that at present this was a London Underground only department and was to be expanded to have a national perspective. He added that this would bring efficiencies by improving organisation.

Ms Knights asked what was happening with regard to Tadworth. The Chief Constable said the Force was looking at a range of options. The building was not well located and did not have the correct layout for its purpose although it was a good as a dog school.

The Chair asked Members if they could agree to recommend the proposals. This was agreed.

Agreed:

- **The London Underground figures to be included in the March budget paper.**
- **The proposals as outlined in the paper to be recommended to the full Authority.**

08/2007 **BTPA BUDGET 2008-9**
Agenda Item 7

Mr Hemmings spoke to the paper. There had been a rise in the cost of salaries as a temporary post was to be retained for a further year to work on the charges disputes. There had also been a review of the Secretariat following the departure of the Deputy Clerk and this had resulted in some roles being re-graded. There were also costs to run the new communications strategy included in the proposals.

Mr Holden asked where the efficiencies were. The Chair said that he felt efficiencies would be more relevant when the disputes had been dealt with and the work on the charging model was completed. Mr Hemmings said it was very difficult to estimate the legal costs that were likely to arise out of the disputes.

Ms Knights said that with the move of FHQ and the Authority the cost of meeting room requirements should have reduced. Mr Hemmings said this was the case and the majority of the money in this category was for rent and rates.

Agreed:

- **The proposals as outlined in the paper to be recommended to the full Authority.**

13/2007 **AOB**
Agenda Item 8

There was no AOB.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 3rd June 2008 at FHQ

Signed……

Chairman