BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE AUTHORITY

MINUTES
STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 8th JANUARY 2008 11.30am

at
THE FORUM - CAMDEN STREET

Present: **Mr J King (Chair)**
Mr L Adams
Suzanne May
Mr R O'Toole

Apologies: **Mr R Gisby**

In attendance: **Mr A Pacey, Assistant Chief Constable**
Mr W Smith, Performance Analyst
Mr S Peel, Performance Analysis Manager
Ms G Mason, Community Placement Coordinator
Ms O Butson, Project Manager
Ms V Delices, Secretariat Manager

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

01/2008 **WELCOME**
Non-Agenda

The Chair gave apologies from Mr Gisby who had been called to a meeting at the DfT.

02/2008 **MINUTES OF MEETING 10th JULY 2007**
Agenda Item 1

There were some minor amendments suggested to the minutes. These included altering the action under section 40/2007 which was to update on the control rooms project. The word 'project' was to be removed so that the action became to update on the control rooms performance. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey also requested that the action under section 39/2007 regarding CSPGs be changed. Mr King said the Committee would ask Mr Gisby to inform the force on which CSPGs were running and when they were taking place.

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Mr Adams was concerned that section 30/2007, which related to independent custody visiting, was too sparse in its recording of the concerns raised by Ms Idehan, Chair of the Camden ICV Panel. Mr Hemmings said it was felt that the Committee meeting had not been the appropriate forum for the discussion, however, all points raised had been picked up. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey confirmed that he had been in contact with Ms Idehan following the meeting and had followed up the concerns she raised. Ms Idehan was now in contact with the appropriate Area Commander.

Mr King said the Committee's main concern had related to those people being used as appropriate adults. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said this had been addressed and officers had been briefed on more acceptable options for an appropriate adult.

Agreed:

- **Mr Gisby to advise which CSPGs were running and when they were taking place.**

03/2008 **MATTERS ARISING**
Agenda Item 2

All items had been discharged.

The Committee questioned whether a dedicated press officer was required by the Independent Advisory Network (IAN). It was agreed by the Force that this seemed unnecessary. The Committee also said that they would like to see the IAN adhering to the APA terms of reference for independent advisory groups.

Agreed:

- The Force to ensure that the IAN adheres to the APA terms of reference.
- A dedicated press officer was not to be recruited for the IAN.

04/2008 **INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING (ICV) UPDATE**
Agenda Item 3

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said that custody did not sit within his portfolio but he would do his best to answer any questions. He would also ensure that there was someone who looked after this area present at future meetings.

Mr O'Toole said he could not get a feel for how good or bad the report was saying things were. Mr King said that on the whole he felt that the judgement was positive. In the general overview Ms McClelland reported that the ICVs had found no or minor concerns with BTP facilities and treatment, which should be considered a positive outcome.

Mr Adams was concerned that the report received indicated a much more positive outlook than the verbal indications that were given at the last meeting. Mr Adams added that he was not aware of when it

had been agreed that Ebury Bridge would become a weekly visit. Suzanne May was also concerned that agreement at the last meeting regarding West Ham had been that the Independent Custody Visitors would ring to see if there were detainees present before visiting as this facility was seldom used. However, in the report this appeared to have been transposed with custody officers to inform ICVs when detainees were present. Suzanne May felt that it was much more appropriate that ICVs call first, as custody officers could not be expected to call each time they had a detainee, and it would also make the process more accountable as officers would have little warning.

The report stated that there had been an increase in the number of immigration detainees being held in BTP custody, particularly at Ebury Bridge, and for prolonged stays. The ICVs felt that this was not good practice as the facilities were not equipped for this. Mr Adams said that he had seen the facilities at Ebury Bridge and could understand this. Mr King asked the Force to inform the Committee of the numbers of detainees that were involved and of the average length of stay.

Mr Hemmings said that the Estate was on the agenda for the next Authority meeting and custody facilities would form part of the discussion.

Mr Adams felt that it would be useful for the Committee visit the custody facilities in London. Mr King agreed that this would be worthwhile and suggested it could be arranged to follow the next meeting.

Mr Adams said he would be interested to know what the diversity make-up of the ICV Panels was, particularly as they were to be reconfigured.

Agreed:

- **Assistant Chief Constable Pacey to ensure that someone with a custody portfolio will attend the next meeting.**
- **Mr King asked the Force to inform the Committee of the numbers of detainees that were involved and of the average length of stay.**
- **The Committee to visit the London custody facilities following the next meeting.**
- **The Secretariat to ask the MPA about the diversity make-up of the ICV Panels.**

05/2008 **CONTROL ROOMS PERFORMANCE**

Agenda Item 4

Mr Smith gave a presentation on the current control room performance. He said that currently the Force was receiving around 775,000 incoming calls a year, and these fell into three categories;

emergency, non-emergency and internal. Mr King asked why there was a large disparity between the percentages of emergency calls received per Area. Mr Smith answered that this depended to an extent on which numbers were advertised in that Area. He added that some emergency calls were received on non-emergency lines and that to combat this the Force was considering realigning its numbers.

HMIC had inspected the Force on its call handling in 2006 and had graded it as poor and stable. However, on their return in 2007 HMIC had graded the Force as fair, demonstrating the work that had taken, and was taking place, to improve this function. Mr Smith said the national standard was to answer all calls in fewer than 2 minutes and BTP performed at around 55 seconds.

Work was under way to reduce the number of abandoned calls. This focused on ways to reduce the number of internal calls which would free call handlers to deal with external lines. For example, officers had to call in to register their status and this could be done by Airwave once a special function was enabled, which should result in a large reduction in internal calls. Other methods were also being adopted to drive down internal calls. The project was realising efficiency savings, as more staff had been recruited reducing overtime rates and resulting in a significant reduction in the number of abandoned calls. This meant that people were not calling, hanging up and then calling back, which in turn reduced some of the pressure on call handlers.

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said it was difficult to balance the number of call handlers to the type of calls, particularly as around 40 per cent of calls requiring an emergency response were received on non-emergency lines.

Mr O'Toole agreed that the key to continuing to improve performance was to drive internal calls down. Mr Smith said that with dedicated emergency call staff and call profiling the situation was improving.

Mr King thanked Mr Smith for an informative presentation, noted that the direction of travel was in the right direction and the Committee would look forward to the next report.

06/2008 EVALUATION OF REASSURANCE POLICING ON THE UNDERGROUND AND THE IMPACT OF PCSO EVALUATION – PERCEPTION OF PERSONAL SECURITY

Agenda Item 5

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey spoke to his paper which summarised the evaluation reports produced by Matrix Research and Consultancy, commissioned by TfL, and the University of Glamorgan on neighbourhood policing.

Matrix Report

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said he was not convinced that the methodology had been right for this report. Suzanne May agreed and said she felt that the report had been done too soon. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said that the high level issues were fair and agreed that staff turnover could be an issue, as the point of neighbourhood policing was to build up relationships. He added that jointly solving problems was an area for improvement. The report had been based on the reassurance model in place at the time and the new Area Commander for London Underground wanted to move toward the BTP reassurance model and would be presenting his proposal to London Underground management later in the month. Suzanne May said that she had seen the proposal and hoped that it would help things move forward.

Mr Adams asked for clarification on the neighbourhood policing model as this was different in all the Areas. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey explained that it was more of a basic framework that Areas could then build from which explained the regional variations. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey added that BTP was getting better at making local targets and in the next policing plan it was the ambition for neighbourhood policing teams to have their own targets.

University of Glamorgan

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said a further report was due from the University in the near future and this could then be evaluated against the baseline. He added that the Welsh Valleys were a challenging area to police as anti-social behaviour was a particular issue, but neighbourhood policing was gradually helping to improve the situation.

Mr Hemmings said that regular reports on neighbourhood policing were required and also an overall evaluation should be presented to the full Authority before the end of the year. Mr King said the report should include a page on each neighbourhood team detailing;

- Definition of the area or line of route covered
- The rationale for having a neighbourhood policing team at that location
- Key stakeholders involved
- Issues being addressed and baseline team working from
- Targets set by team and how they were being measured
- Progress made

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey updated that HMIC were due to carry out a further inspection in February and he hoped that this would yield positive results. However, he was concerned that HMIC

must recognise the uniqueness of BTP as if BTP were to be inspected against the same criteria as provincial forces this would not be a true reflection. He expected the report to be finalised around October.

The Committee felt that excellent work had been done with neighbourhood policing but the Force had not communicated this to its stakeholders.

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said that a person was being recruited to run the neighbourhood policing website which would help to publicise BTP's successes. He added that the staff at stations that had neighbourhood policing schemes would be fully aware of the successes. Mr Adams agreed but added that the message needed to be spread wider and include onboard staff. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said his ambition was to have cross Area neighbourhood policing teams, where policing teams would look after rotes and get to know onboard staff.

Agreed:

- **The Committee to prepare an overall evaluation of neighbourhood policing for the full Authority by the end of the year.**

07/2008 **STUDENT OFFICER TRAINING MODULE – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND DIVERSITY**

Agenda Item 6

Ms Mason gave a presentation on the community placement scheme, which forms part of the student officer programme. The Committee were very impressed with the scheme and felt that it was a highly commendable initiative. Mr King thanked Ms Mason for her presentation.

08/2008 **ENGAGEMENT WITH PASSENGER FOCUS**

Agenda Item 7

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey gave an update on the Force's engagement with Passenger Focus. Engagement differed depending on Force Area with some being more proactive than others.

Mr King suggested that the best model would be to have an annual strategic meeting with the Force. He said the local arrangements were helpful but there also needed to be a more top down process. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey suggested that the industry should also be involved.

Mr King asked that a meeting be set up as soon as possible. Mr King felt that industry colleagues did not need to be invited to these meetings as there were already meeting processes in place.

Suzanne May asked how the Force went about speaking directly to passengers. Assistant Chief Constable Pacey said that this was

done by neighbourhood policing teams and some of the Area Commanders had passenger panels.

Agreed:

- **BTPA and The Force to set up annual strategic meetings with Passenger Focus.**

09/2008 **PUBLICATION OF STOP AND SEARCH INFORMATION**

Agenda Item 8

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey spoke to his paper which looked at how other forces reported their stop and search information. Mr Smith informed Members that the media had started asking BTP to justify its disproportionality in stops and searches.

The Committee noted the paper.

Mr King said he would be happy to brief the IAN on the Committee's work around stop and search.

10/2008 **BTPA CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Agenda Item 9

Mr Hemmings presented his paper on the consultation and communication strategy. Mr King felt that the key decision makers list under objective 1 needed further definition, as some of the descriptions were too broad. He suggested that if people were happy with the remainder of the strategy approval should be given to move on to the next step of having a Public Relations professional have a look at it.

Mr King suggested that Ms Bird, Head of Communications, and her team, could give the Committee an overview of their communications strategy. Mr Adams said successes must be communicated at all levels including rail staff and passengers as well as management.

Agreed:

- **BTPA strategy approved for next step.**

- **The BTP communications team to present their communications strategy to the Committee.**

11/2008 **RE-BRANDING OF STOP AND SEARCH KNOW YOUR RIGHTS (KYR) CAMPAIGN**

Agenda Item 10

This paper informed Members of the changes to the Stop and Search KYR campaign. Changes included a revamped 'Z' card to be handed out to the public which included a detachable section for people to save. This contained website details for further information.

Mrs Elvy informed the Committee that the cards were being printed in 10 languages and each Authority would receive 5,000 free cards. If any more were required these would be charged for. Mrs Elvy said

the Authority had worked with Operation Shield to identify the most popular languages requested. If any further languages were required the Authority would have to have these translated.

Ms Mason requested that the Youth Offending Team be sent some of the cards once received.

12/2008 SUMMARY OF FOI AND PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION REQUESTS

Agenda Item 11

Mr Peel distributed a summary of the Freedom of Information and Parliamentary Question requests that had been received between October and December 2007. Mr King thanked Mr Peel for the summary and suggested that this should become an annual report to the Committee to be presented at the start of the Policing Plan process. It was agreed that the front page summary along with a short paper pulling out the main themes and any significant requests would be presented on an annual basis. Mrs Elvy added that it was a statutory requirement to publish an annual report on this type of request.

Agreed:

- **The Force to present the front page summary along with a short paper pulling out the main themes and any significant requests on an annual basis.**

13/2008 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Agenda Item 12

Mr Hemmings spoke to the paper saying that it outlined the responsibilities on the Authority and Force.

This paper was **noted.**

16/2008 AOCB

Agenda Item 15

Mr Hemmings informed members that there had been a debate on Olympics funding in the House of Lords.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 8th April 2008, 11.00am Member pre-meet, 11.30am Meeting

Signed…….

Chairman