

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE AUTHORITY

Report to: Stakeholder Relations & Consultation Strategy

Date: 20th January 2009

Subject: APA Guidance – Neighbourhood Policing Oversight and BTPA's Role

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For: Information & Approval

1. PURPOSE OF PAPER

- 1.1 To present the APA's guidance on police authority oversight of Neighbourhood Policing (NP) to the Committee for information.
- 1.2 To present an initial analysis of BTPA's current role in relation to monitoring and oversight of BTP's approach to Neighbourhood Policing. This evaluation was based upon the APA guidance and carried as part of the current evaluation project on Neighbourhood Policing; as such the information presented here will appear as a chapter in the final NP evaluation document.
- 1.3 To invite Members to consider and approve the findings of this initial evaluation of BTPA's role and the recommendations arising as set out in section 5.1 below.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Chapter three of the 2004 Government White Paper, and the subsequent 2005 Home Office publication 'Neighbourhood Policing. Your police; your community; our commitment'¹ set out the Government's specific intentions in relation to delivery of Home Office neighbourhood policing teams across England and Wales. In particular the Home Office gave a commitment that by 2008

'every area in England and Wales will benefit from dedicated, visible accessible and responsive neighbourhood policing teams – led by

¹ Home Office (2005) 'Neighbourhood Policing. Your police; your community, our commitment. Home Office Communication Directorate, London.

officers but involving special constables, community support officers, volunteers, neighbourhood wardens and others too²,

2.2 While the Home Office did not intend to prescribe a one-size fits all template for what constituted a 'neighbourhood' or what was neighbourhood policing must look like in every area (a deliberate decision not to mandate the Met standard of one Sergeant, two PCs and three PCSOs per ward) but it did establish the following as the key features shared by all successful teams³;

- Dedicated resources for neighbourhoods which include the extended police family – appropriate to the local neighbourhood
- An emphasis on local problem solving with appropriate mechanisms in place for doing so
- Engagement with communities using a range of appropriate methods with a focus on public involvement in both identifying and prioritising problems
- Mechanisms in place to target resources and hold partners to account for delivery

2.3 While BTP was not formally involved in the piloting and establishment of initial Home Office Neighbourhood Policing Teams, the value and applicability of such an approach for the rail network was identified at an early stage. Similar arrangements for BTP evolved from an original Reassurance Policing Programme on London Underground Area and were further developed through a piloting process on London South, London North and Wales and Western Areas. BTP NP teams now exist across all of BTP's operational Areas and each Area has at least one NP related target in its local policing plan.

3. THE AUTHORITY'S ROLE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

3.1 The Association of Police Authorities (APA) has identified that police authorities have a fundamental role to play in successful delivery of NP and has produced guidance which supports and develops authority roles in this respect. BTPA has referred to various iterations of the draft APA guidance for authority oversight of NP in developing its approach. The final version of the APA guidance⁴ was published in June 2008.

3.2 In summary the APA guidance identifies that an authority has a key role to play in terms of oversight and scrutiny of their force's activities to ensure delivery of the following key outcomes;

² Home Office (2005) 'Neighbourhood Policing. Your police; your community, our commitment.p2. Home Office Communication Directorate, London.

³ Home Office (2004) 'Building Communities, Beating Crime'. Home Office, London, p20

⁴ Association of Police Authorities (June 2008). The police authority role in neighbourhood policing. Ensuring sustainability. London, APA.

- An increase in trust and confidence amongst communities⁵
- That their force is working closely with their partners and community to understand the issues that matter to people
- That the force is dealing with such issues effectively

3.3 To date Neighbourhood Policing has been considered by BTPA at three key levels within the organisation;

Oversight carried out by	Level of oversight	Activities involved
Full Authority	Strategic	Consideration of strategic priorities, resourcing of NP activities and high level delivery against respective policing plan targets, receives reports from lead Committee.
Stakeholder Relations & Communications Strategy Committee	Operational	Monitors roll out and evaluation of benefits of NP. More detailed consideration of the delivery against respective policing plan targets. Receives reports from the Secretariat on lead Member feedback.
Lead Members	Operational	Meetings with Force leads, visits to NP teams, attendance at relevant conferences and seminars.

4. AN INITIAL EVALUATION OF BTPA'S ROLE TO DATE

4.1 The APA guidance provides a practical framework by which an authority can both monitor and evaluate current practice and identify areas for further development. This framework is based on six key areas of work for the authority the first four of which form the headings of the separate sections of the self assessment template;

- Strategic direction
- Performance
- Community engagement
- Value for money
- Learning and development
- Collaborative partnerships

4.2 An initial assessment of the current status of BTPA's oversight role against the APA template is set out in detail in the table at Appendix B and the recommendations arising are drawn out in section 5.1 below.

⁵ BTP does not currently measure this outcome but is working to develop a similar metric to that included in the British Crime Survey

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The following themes emerge as possible areas for developing the Authority's current oversight role;

Activity	Delivered by	Suggested timescales
R1: Develop a mechanism for periodically monitoring the delivery and effectiveness of NP training	SR&CS or HR&R Committee	Develop a mechanism on completion of the NP evaluation then annually ongoing
R2: Consider NP performance at an Area level in addition to general oversight carried out by SB&PM and the PA	SR&CS Committee or as addition to the work of the SB&PM	At each/alternate meetings of the Committee
R3: Periodically monitor abstraction rates for NP teams	SR&CS Committee	At alternate meetings of the Committee
R4: Monitor the continuity in post of neighbourhood teams from time to time	SR&CS Committee	Annually
R5: Receive regular updates on community engagement specifically in relation to NP	SR&CS Committee	As part of BTP's regular feedback to the Committee at each meeting
R6: Regularly review partner perceptions of NP	SR&CS Committee	Annually as part of ongoing consultation with partners (or less frequently if a bespoke piece of consultation is needed)
R7: Periodically consider options for more effective partnership working in relation to NP	SR&CS Committee	Following completion of NP evaluation. Then annually (or less frequently) see R6 above

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of the recommendations made in this paper. However, if Members wish to

commit to work which falls outside the budget allocated for the Authority's ongoing consultation activities additional costs are likely to arise.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no new risks arising from this paper, indeed the guidance and assessment tool will enable the Authority to develop processes through which it will better monitor and evaluate the delivery of NP.

8. DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 In considering its approach to the oversight of Neighbourhood Policing, the Authority will want to reassure itself that diversity issues are given appropriate consideration. This will need to include consideration of a number of issues including delivery of training, accessibility of community engagement/consultation techniques, priority setting, and performance monitoring.

9. FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the publication of the final version of the APA's guidance attached to this paper at Appendix A.
- 9.2 Members are also invited to consider and discuss the outputs of the initial evaluation set out in Appendix B.
- 9.3 Members are asked to consider and where appropriate amend or approve the recommendations set out in section 5.1 of this paper.