

Minutes

Policing Plan Working Group

Date: 10th December 2010

Venue: The Forum, Camden

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Present:

Sir David O'Dowd (Chair)

Mr Lew Adams

Mrs Elizabeth France

Mr Michael Holden

Mr Jeroen Weimar

In attendance:

Mr P Crowther, Deputy Chief Constable

Mr Alan Pacey, Assistant Chief Constable Territorial Policing

Mr S Peel, Temporary Head Strategic Services

Mr Andrew Figgures, Chief Executive BTPA

Mrs S Elvy, Research & Policy Manager (Minutes)

Apologies:

Mr James King

06/2010 INTRODUCTION

Non Agenda

The Chair opened the meeting by thanking all attendees for their support and inputs to the development of the national and local Plans thus far; in particular he expressed his thanks to Mr Peel and his team for the work carried out in preparing the paper presented at agenda item 2. The Chair welcomed Mr Weimar to the Group explaining that he was providing some additional support in Mr King's absence. The Group stated that they wished to send a note of thanks to Mr King for his continued support in all of the work of the Authority, and the Policing Plan Group in particular, while he was unable to attend in person.

Action: Mrs Elvy to arrange for a note of support and thanks to be

sent to Mr King.

Referring to the minutes of the previous meeting the Chair indicated that the proposals presented did seem to support the four broad themes agreed at the last meeting but that the discussion to follow should test the proposals against the agreed themes. Referring again to minutes of the last meeting he noted that there was now certainty around the funding envelope for 2011/12 as a budget had been agreed in principle at the full Authority on 9th December.

He introduced one key challenge to the draft operational targets as presented and asked the Group to reflect on the extent to which they generically supported the Authority's strategic objective, more effectively than hitherto, to demonstrate how BTP provides value for money and that this should be drawn out explicitly in the supporting commentary in the final Plan.

The objective for the remainder of the meeting was to review the draft proposals, where possible agreeing the themes and direction of travel and where necessary adding some detail to the commentary to make the targets more meaningful to stakeholders and the full Authority. The Chair noted that the targets discussed at this and the next meeting of the Group would then be recommended to the full Authority for approval in March.

07/2010 MINUTES OF MEETING 28.09.10

Agenda Item 1

The minutes were approved.

08/2010 DRAFT NATIONAL PLAN

Agenda Item 2

By way of background the Deputy Chief Constable revisited the four proposed themes that would underpin both the annual operational Plan (considered here) and the Strategic Plan that was also currently in development. Members queried the difference in terminology used by the two plans in relation to confidence/fear of crime. The Deputy Chief Constable suggested that, in common with Home Office ambitions for other forces, there was a drive to focus the Force's operational activities on those things that would improve confidence in personal security. While this wasn't proposed as operational target for next year, and was clearly not the sole responsibility of BTP, it was an overarching objective that individual targets would be designed to support. The Chair suggested that this should be made explicit in the supporting narrative within the Plan and there should

be commonality of the wording/terminology between the two documents.

The Chair asked for agreement that, subject to alignment of wording in the Policing and Strategic Plans, the four overarching themes of;

- Reducing disruption
- Reducing crime
- Improving confidence
- Improving value for money

would be recommended to the Authority as the drivers for the 2011/12 Policing Plan.

Agreed: The four themes above were recommended to the Authority as the overarching drivers for the 2011/12 Policing Plan.

Before discussing the individual targets Members also reflected on the extent to which BTP could realistically be expected to commit to further improvements given the changed funding environment. The Group considered whether, given the clear need to reduce costs and improve efficiency, anything other than maintenance targets would be unrealistic. The Deputy Chief Constable agreed that delivering the same for less resource was in itself a demonstration of improved value for money but that the Force would always seek to improve the service it provided whenever possible.

Members suggested that there was a need to try to articulate, to the full Authority and stakeholders, the impact resource constraints were having on the proposed Plan under discussion. Did it mean now accepting fewer targets or maintaining performance rather than recommending improvement targets after the recent period of consistent improvements? It was suggested that, given the option, some stakeholders might want to accept maintenance targets rather than continued improvement, if this could lead to a further reduction in their charges.

The deputy Chief Constable asked the Group to note that savings in 2011/12 essentially built on those identified in 2010/11. Delivering further reductions in funding in the future would have a significant impact and could have implications for police posts. However it was not possible to say with certainty at this stage what impact, in terms of quantum, this would have on performance. The Chair queried the extent to which it was ever possible to directly link reductions in resource with reductions in performance.

Members suggested that the challenge that the 2011/12 funding envelope posed was to make best possible use of available resource by focusing activities on those priority issues that genuinely required

maintenance or further improvement. However it was important to note that this did not mean that maintaining business as usual for non-priority issues should not be an underpinning ambition. The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that it was also always possible, and necessary, to move resources to address high impact crimes as any changes in demand emerged.

Reducing disruption:

The Deputy Chief Constable explained that internally a great deal of work had been done in relation to the 'reducing disruption' theme; both in terms of identifying and then quality assuring possible data sources that were potentially relevant to BTP's focus. Also work had been carried out to understand how useful this information would be in directing BTP's (and partners') activities and evaluating the outcomes. In doing so BTP had identified Network Rail data both for overall delay minutes and in relation to the following themes.

Minutes lost through;

- Fatalities/injuries
- Cable vandalism/theft
- Trespass
- Level crossing incidents/misuse
- Criminal damage

In particular it had been essential to try to understand the degree of correlation between industry delay minute data and BTP's own crime and incident data for each of these themes. There seemed to be a good correlation for some crime/incident types but this was less marked for others. There had also been discussions with some individual operators to identify supplementary data sources and to understand whether these could also be configured for BTP's use. However the position on this was still unclear and further work would need to be undertaken. Members noted the work to date and suggested that while this may be possible data sets were likely to be very large so manipulation of the data would require assistance from Network Rail and Train Operators both in terms of specialist software and personnel. The outputs would then need to be analysed and interpreted for BTP's use. This might prove to be too resource intensive to be justified by the end use but was worthy of further consideration at this stage.

The Deputy Chief Constable explained that, data issues aside, no target was being proposed at this stage as further work was needed; but early thinking internally was shaped around a possible national reduction target for the combined themes. This would be supported by local problem solving plan (PSP) targets at an Area level with

stakeholders which would require - and hopefully drive - partner inputs. Members supported this broad approach reemphasising the need to secure partner support and engagement. The Chair asked whether this was deliverable in practice and which partners BTP would be dependent on; asking would this just be Network Rail or individual operators as well. The Force suggested that both would need to be involved.

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey asked whether reductions would be expected for each of those themes or whether Areas could prioritise whilst still contributing to the whole. Members agreed that the latter would be the most effective approach suggesting that, for example, in London reducing delays due to fatalities would be the priority issue while on the North East reducing cable theft would take precedence. Each Area would need to analyse which elements of that list were contributing most to disruption on their operational areas and then prioritise efforts accordingly in liaison with stakeholders.

Members asked whether reducing delays was simply a matter of reducing the overall number of crimes/incidents or whether, as was currently the case for fatality management, there was also an issue of responding efficiently when an incident did occur. The Deputy Chief Constable expressed concern that it was not within BTP's gift to reduce overall delay minutes directly but that its key role was to work with partners to try to minimise the number of incidents occurring. Members suggested that the narrative around this target would therefore need to clearly express BTP's ambition to make a contribution, with partners, to reducing minutes lost through disruption on the rail network. The overall recommendation was that the principle rather than the quantum should be the focus of this target. Members suggested that BTP would need to secure commitment from Network Rail's Route Directors to also make a contribution to this objective; also noting that, as this was a performance objective for them, this theme should have traction with them. Without such a commitment the target was unlikely to achieve the desired outcomes.

The Chair proposed that further work was needed on this target before any formal dialogue should be started with stakeholders or before meaningful recommendations could be made to the full Authority. However an update on the work and early thinking around this theme should be included in the forthcoming consultation with stakeholders. Members suggested that as part of next steps Network Rail should be approached to develop a year end forecast figure for total minutes lost through disruption.

Agreed: further work to be carried out on the reducing disruption target(s) before recommendations are made to the full Authority. An update on the work and early thinking around this theme

should be included in the forthcoming consultation with stakeholders.

Other targets:

In support of the draft strategic aims, and following consultation with Area Commanders, an overall notifiable crime reduction target was proposed though it was recommended that this should exclude police generated crime. Members suggested that it was necessary to reflect in the supporting commentary why a separate additional target to reduce violent crime (including robbery) was not proposed this year. This commentary should reflect the significant achievements of the recent past and the pressure it would place on resources to deliver further reductions. Whilst acknowledging recent successes Members expressed a significant concern about not retaining some sort of focus on these high impact crime types. The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that crimes such as these would always be managed and monitored closely internally and would receive an appropriate level of focus from officers.

Assistant Chief Constable Pacey proposed that a detection rate maintenance target be added for the most serious crime codes within sexual, violent crime and robbery offences.

Agreed:

National overall notifiable crime (non-police generated) reduction target be recommended

National detection rate maintenance target for violent crime, sexual and robbery (for the most serious crime codes) be recommended

The Deputy Chief Constable explained that there was a clear emphasis from stakeholders on the need to retain a focus on reducing staff assaults; Members agreed that this should remain a target for 2011/12. However, the paper presented under this agenda item also recommended a staff related aggression detection target and following further discussions internally there was concern that this might drive inappropriate officer activity which could focus on very low level disorder where words of advice were probably most effective. As such BTP wished to recommend removing this target; Members endorsed this view.

Agreed:

A staff assaults reduction target be recommended

The proposed target around increasing detections for staff related aggression be removed

The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the 'reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents' target explaining that this was a slightly different approach to the current year's target which he felt would more effectively drive BTP's activity in the right areas. Members asked how this would be monitored and the Force explained that this theme was currently tracked via BTP's Command & Control system. The Force explained that the key focus of this target was to drive down the number of incidents reported by rail staff and the public at key locations/times; as such this would not deter BTP intervention in ASB incidents witnessed by officers. Members agreed to recommend this target clarifying that police generated incidents should be excluded.

Members discussed the proposed 'post 8pm visibility' target and asked for clarity about what time periods this would cover. The Deputy Chief Constable explained that to best align BTP's resources with times of greatest demand this would cover the period from 8pm until 1am. He further described that the purpose of this proposal was to support BTP's ambition to change its deployment of uniformed (visible) resources. Members noted two options for this target presented in the supporting paper and agreed that proposal two should be taken forward. The Chair asked for confirmation that sufficient baseline data would be available in time to monitoring of performance if the target was accepted by the full Authority in March. Mr Peel explained that this work was already underway.

Agreed:

The anti-social behaviour incident reduction target be recommended

The post 8pm visibility target be recommended, specifically that the following wording was the preferred option

An increase in the percentage of NPT and response units on duty between 8pm and 1am (as a proportion of the total hours worked by all operational Area resources)

Members supported the Force's commitment to an ongoing focus on reducing sickness as part of a wider drive to improve value for money for its stakeholders. The sickness reduction target for all employees was agreed but further consideration was necessary to determine whether this could be presented more effectively i.e. in hours; days; cost etc.

Agreed: The sickness reduction target be recommended

Members also noted progress on the development of the Area policing plans; in particular proposals to move to a wider roll out the Problem Solving Plan (PSP) approach which had evolved from an earlier pilot on Scottish Area. BTP recommended this shift in emphasis as it both allowed the flexibility to refocus priorities in year as new issues emerged and it supported the Force's ambition to develop its partnership working approach even further. All Areas except London South were recommending the PSP approach at this stage; London South was proposing a set of more traditional targets as it felt that this better reflected stakeholder feedback. Draft proposals on Area targets would be presented at the Group's meeting on 21st February.

The Chair thanked all members of the Group again for their support in preparing and discussing the information presented and reiterated the need to present the targets to stakeholders and the Authority with robust supporting commentary that explained how each element of the annual Plan contributed to the four themes within the Policing and Strategic Plans. The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that BTP would work on this narrative while the proposed targets were shared with stakeholders for their feedback and comments. Members suggested that an overarching statement about the Force and Authority's commitment to improving and demonstrating value for money within the Policing Plan document would be a good starting point linked to the Strategic Review work.

A discussion about a possible Policing Plan target specifically focused on demonstrating improved value for money then followed. It was noted that this proposal was not fundamentally different to the sickness target, in principle, in that it related to how the Force was managed rather than policing outcomes. A number of suggestions were debated including the relationship between staff costs and overhead costs, staff ratios and utilisation rates for frontline/visible versus back office activities.

Members and Force colleagues expressed a number of concerns about the amount of preparatory work this might require and noted the ongoing work being carried out as part of the 'Futures Project' and the recent Report Card and Value for Money inspections by HMIC. While it was acknowledged that a 2011/12 policing plan target might provide an opportunity to track the progress of efforts to improve value for money, it was agreed that - to avoid duplication of effort and to not pre-empt the findings of those work streams - Members would note the discussion at this stage and return to the topic in the future. It was also noted that some of the issues proposed were probably more strategic and structural in nature and were therefore likely to fall within the remits of the Authority's Strategy and Finance Groups.

09/2010 NEXT STEPS

Agenda Item 3

Members indicated that a further opportunity to consider the 'reducing disruption' target and progress with other work streams before the February meeting would be helpful and asked that a supplementary meeting be arranged by the Authority Executive. As stakeholders had been informed that there would be an opportunity to comment on the draft targets following this second meeting of the group; the interim the targets as discussed at this meeting should be circulated with supporting commentary for feedback.

Actions:

BTPA to carry out an initial consultation exercise on the national targets discussed at this meeting - to include an update for stakeholders on the work carried out so far on a possible 'reducing disruption' target.

Further consideration will be made by the Force and the Executive as to the feasibility of including a VFM target as indicated though this work is likely to be of a more strategic level and therefore lead by the BTPA Strategy Group.

Mrs Elvy to arrange an interim meeting for mid January to discuss progress on the reducing disruption target and to consider initial feedback following consultation with stakeholders.

10/2009 AOB

Agenda Item 4

There was no AOB.

The date of an interim Group meeting confirmed for 25th January.

Final scheduled meeting of Group Monday 21st February 11-1pm.