

Minutes

Policing Plan working group

Wednesday 21st February 2013

at The Forum, 74-80 Camden Street

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Present:

Mr Michael Holden (Chair)
Ms Liz France
Mr Lew Adams

Apologies:

Mr Paul Crowther, Deputy Chief Constable BTP

In attendance:

Mr Alan Pacey, Assistant Chief Constable Territorial Policing
BTP
Mr Mike Furness, Head of Strategic Development BTP
Mr Richard Moffatt, T/Chief Superintendent BTP
Mr Jai Chainani, Statistician BTP
Mrs Samantha Elvy, Research & Policy Manager BTPA
Mr Jon Newton, Performance Analyst BTPA (minutes)

01/2013 Welcome and apologies

Non-Agenda

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the Policing Plan Working Group meeting. Apologies were received for DCC Paul Crowther.

02/2013 Minutes of meeting 30th November 2012

Agenda Item 1

The minutes were approved as an accurate representation of the 30th November meeting.

03/2013 Summary of consultation responses

Agenda Item 2

Stakeholders were consulted on the draft strategy and medium term financial plan, draft national policing plan, and the budget for 2013-14. Mrs Elvy provided an overview of the responses on the draft national policing plan. There was, as with previous years, a good level of response from stakeholders. Most of the comments focused on the strategy and medium term financial plan.

The majority of comments on the proposed national policing plan targets were positive, albeit with a few comments. There were no consistent messages to suggest that any themes had been missed out in the proposed targets.

One of item to note, which was received from the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), was a suggestion to divide the policing plan into two sections. The first would include business as usual targets whilst the second would be for initiatives aimed at driving change. ATOC was not seeking for this change to be made for the 2013-14 policing plan, but there was agreement that the proposals would be considered for the 2014-15 policing plan.

Mr Holden recommended that the force considers the ATOC proposals, to have a two-tier plan, for the 2014-15 policing plan.

There was some nervousness about the target to increase the number of hours worked by officers between 7pm and 3am. Stakeholders were concerned about the availability of resources at other times. It was reiterated in the meeting that there is a need to strike a balance; however, stakeholders continued to support the increased policing presence later in the day.

There was also some nervousness about the national target regarding the detection rate for public order offences. Stakeholders were seeking reassurance that the force would not simply be chasing detections.

The stakeholders sought reassurance that the proposed target to increase the number of detections for public order offences would not lead the force to simply chase detections in order to meet the target. Members were informed about the force's recent launch of Operation Inspire which sets out a range of corporate values for BTP employees.

The proposed local policing plan targets were circulated at the ATOC Policing Forum prior to this meeting. The only comment received, which was received from South Eastern, was seeking a commitment to focus on local issues. It was confirmed that BTP consulted with South Eastern when drawing up its local policing plan targets.

There was a discussion regarding the targets proposed by Transport for London (TfL). The force currently follows an agreed abstraction target for neighbourhood policing teams, of eighty per cent, which is still measured locally; this has become part of business as usual. The number of cable offences in the London Underground area is so low that it would not be appropriate to apply a percentage target relating to these. Members noted that a local target to achieve a partial reopening for fatal incidents on four track stretches of railway had been proposed for London South.

Action: ACC Pacey agreed to contact TfL to discuss the proposed targets. Mrs Elvy will provide ACC Pacey with the relevant contact details.

There was a discussion about the inclusion of unexplained fatalities within the fatality management target. Overall, the comments on this proposed target were very positive. Most stakeholders were not asking for a reduction in the clearance time, to under ninety minutes. There will, however, always be some seeking a reduction in this time. There is a need to emphasis in the commentary for the policing plan target the difference that including unexplained fatalities will make,

04/2013 Common and Local targets for review and recommendation

Agenda Item 3

ACC Pacey provided an overview of the proposed national and local policing plan targets. There was discussion about the future context, contained in the introductory paragraphs of the report for agenda item 3. It was agreed that some of the content regarding the length of franchises was a bit out of date. There was also discussion about the comment regarding increasing levels of crime, given that crime levels appear to have been falling in recent years.

The Group discussed the increasing use of social media, by members of the public, to report crimes and incidents. BTP is improving its response to requests made via Twitter; it is now receiving numerous requests that would not have previously been reported. This method of reporting may increase significantly. The force has also been testing a method of reporting via phone text; this is expected to go live on 4th March 2013. The increasing number of incidents being reported via Twitter is having a subsequent affect on resources.

It was noted that the national targets had not changed significantly since the previous meeting, in November 2012. There were, however, ongoing discussions regarding the strategy that were likely to result in the strategic aims for BTP to reduce both delay and crime by twenty per cent, and increase confidence by ten per cent by 2019.

These aims will be reflected in the proposed targets to reduce crime and delay, which will include percentage reduction metrics. The exact figures are still being calculated but caution is likely to be used in 2013-14, which will be year one of the new strategy.

There was discussion about the proposed fatality management target. It was agreed that the significance of including unexplained fatalities within this target could be better highlighted. There was, however, caution about any messages that may be inadvertently conveyed to members of the public by communicating about how quickly these incidents are being dealt with.

The Group was informed that, because of the current high rates, the target to maintain the notifiable crime detection rate would be challenging. It was noted that rail industry stakeholders were not aware of how high the detection rates being achieved by BTP were in comparison to other forces and that this could be better communicated.

Discussions in the previous Policing Plan Working Group meeting, in November 2012, about the percentage of budget spent on frontline resources resulted in an action for the force to consider a potential value to be used as a metric. A number of potential metrics were presented to the February 2013 Strategy Group meeting. It was agreed, at the Strategy Group meeting, that the originally proposed target would be more effective.

CIPFA statistics have revealed that BTP is the highest ranking force with regard to the percentage of resources devoted to the frontline. The Group was informed that HMIC had outlined very clear definitions of the employee roles that could be defined as frontline. These definitions are also applicable to Home Office forces and, as such, will enable comparisons to be made. There was a discussion about setting a percentage target figure. It was agreed that a target of at least 60% would be achievable. The Group noted the need to emphasise in the commentary for this target that BTP is performing very well.

Action: BTP to include a percentage metric in the proposed target to increase the percentage of budget spent on frontline resources.

The Group noted that the previously proposed single sickness target had been split into two targets. The first of these would be a continued sickness reduction target; the second would focus on moving employees from temporary duty restrictions to being available for full duties within four weeks. The Group was informed that a proposed metric was being calculated, but was likely to be ninety per cent.

The proposed target to increase the visibility of Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Response officers later in the day had been extended to 3am, from the 1am time contained in the equivalent 2012-13 target. This extension would provide a more representative picture of work going on later in the day. The new target would also be better aligned with the force's rostering practices making it more meaningful and simpler to manage. The proposed target will start 7pm because this is the start of the peak time.

Members questioned whether the proposed detection rate target for notifiable public order offences would have a percentage metric. The Group were informed that the target could be reworded to include a metric that would be a one percentage point increase on the current year's outturn; this was expected to be around 62%.

Action: BTP to include a percentage metric, to be one percentage point higher than the current year's outturn, in the proposed target to increase the detection rate for notifiable public order offences for the 2012-13 figure.

ACC Pacey updated the Group on specific issues with the regard to the local policing plan targets. It was explained that there was a gap in the London North Area targets with regard to theft of passenger property. This was not picked up in the stakeholder meetings, but it was felt that there should be a reduction target. Members highlighted that there seemed to be a lack of crime prevention advice with regard to some of the larger stations in the London North Area.

It was suggested that BTP includes an extra comment to link the local targets to the strategic themes. The Group was informed that this had been debated with Area Commanders, who were aware that unless there was a specific issue they could not go off on a different tangent.

The only Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) that the BTPA had received any feedback from was the PCC for Cambridgeshire, who raised the issue of bicycle theft; BTPA had provided a response. The Group noted that the London North Area has had a good year with regard to reducing cycle theft. These offences would also likely be focussed on as part of the force's efforts to reduce notifiable crime, as per the proposed national target.

It was suggested that the London Underground targets did not seem to be as developed as for the other Areas. The Lost Customer Hours metric, for the proposed target LU4, was highlighted as an example. ACC Pacey highlighted that there had been a new Area Commander in the London Underground Area and that there had been an internal debate that the mechanism for calculating the equivalent 2012-13 target had not been quite right and that, as a result, there had been ongoing discussion with regard to developing this target.

It was questioned whether the LU targets to increase the number of detections for sexual assaults and racially aggravated offences, LU2 and LU5 respectively, were aimed at encouraging people to report these crimes. There was agreement that the commentary should be amended to reflect this aim and also to inform people that this may result in an increase in the number of these crimes being recorded.

Members agreed that the next steps, following this meeting, will be for the force to develop the targets and more detailed commentary as needed, and for BTPA to produce a paper on the proposed targets to go to the full Authority meeting, on 21st March 2013.

Action: BTP to develop the targets and more detailed commentary, as needed, to accompany the targets.

Action: BTPA Executive to draft a paper on the proposed policing plan targets for the BTPA Authority meeting on 21st March 2013.

05/2013 Any other business

Agenda Item 4

This was the final Policing Plan Group meeting to be Chaired by Mr Holden. All members of the Group placed on record their thanks to Mr Holden for Chairing the Group over the last two years.