

Report to: Police Authority
Agenda item: 5
Date: 24 March 2020
Subject: Forward look – Authority and Executive
Refocus of Priorities 2020/21
Sponsor: Chief Executive
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For: Information

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1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1 In light of the current Covid-19 crisis the Executive has drafted a forward look of its priorities and those of the Authority over the next six months.
- 1.2 This paper is provided for information and your views are welcomed on its contents.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Executive is focusing on how it can best support the Force to deliver efficient and effective policing in this time of crisis, whilst also ensuring that the Authority continues to deliver its statutory duties. This will inevitably mean some refocusing of priorities.
- 2.2 This paper sets out those areas that we will continue to give priority, those which will inevitably have their timeframe lengthened and those areas that may gain traction from the time freed up by the work that is delayed.
- 2.3 This is a first pass at our forward look in response to the current Covid-19 crisis and has been completed in quick time. We recognise that we will need to take a dynamic approach in this ever-evolving situation. As such some of the below may well change depending on staffing levels and other administrative/operational challenges that occur.
- 2.4 We continue to review business as usual and other tasks that may not feature on the list below which focuses on high level matters. We assure you that we will continue to make the best use of time throughout this period of crisis.

3. Priorities for the next three to six months

3.1 The following areas of work will be the key focus over the next three to six months;

- Working with BTP to ensure that efficient and effective policing of the railways continues to be delivered despite the current crisis and to keep members and stakeholders up to date with the situation
- Working with BTP to ensure that our employees are supported and that we respond quickly to changes in government policy and ensure that the workforce are clear on how changes will impact them and their terms and conditions
- Working with BTP and the DfT to ensure that cashflow is not interrupted and to monitor the financial impact of Covid-19 activity
- Working to ensure that we continue to deliver our statutory duties during this period, including
 - delivery of the 2019/20 annual report and accounts, and external audit (we are monitoring government communications on the accounts timetable should this be extended)
 - a refresh of the current strategy which will continue behind the scenes and is expected to be light touch
 - Recruitment of the next BTP Chief Constable
- Finalisation of the 2019/20 internal audit activity
- Embedding and driving improvement into our remote working practices, to be maintained when we are able to return to a steady state
- Engagement with the DfT on the Police Officer Pension Scheme Valuation and finding a way forward with The Pensions Regulator
- The implementation of the new staff pensions scheme and progressing the 2019 valuation when required
- Resolution of the ongoing legal dispute
- Enhancement of the contract management function within the Executive
- Delivery of the Board Effectiveness Evaluation Report

4. Workstreams that will now be progressed in slower time

4.1 The following areas of work continue to be progressed but it is recognised that their timeframes will inevitably be extended as we focus on maintaining efficient and effective railway policing throughout this time of crisis:

- **Complaints and discipline regulations** – The implementation of these involves significant input from BTP HR and Professional Standards as it requires a large-scale cultural shift. BTP HR is currently under particular strain addressing the impact of covid 19 on the workforce and as such it is not anticipated that they will have the capacity to deliver the changes required to make the implementation of these regulations a success. When we have a clearer picture of the future we will come back to the Authority with a clear plan for the implementation of these regulations. In the meantime, the current regulations remain extant.
- The 2020/21 **internal audit** timetable may be revised and focused on the priority areas identified by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) with lower priority audits possibly moved to 2021/22. This will be for discussion with the Chair of ARAC.
- Work will continue with HMICFRS to develop an inspection plan for the remainder of 2020/21 but this is likely to be finalised later in the year than originally planned.
- **TfL 5-year plan** - good progress has been made on the 2020/21 plan. Our ambitions to move this into a longer term more stable commitment, so obviating the need for annual ‘negotiation’ may need to proceed in slower time.
- **Transformation mark two** – BTP will continue to progress certain elements of this work as and when things settle down and we will seek to make progress over the next 12-24 months
- **Stakeholder engagement activity** – with the exception of Covid-19 briefings this will inevitably slow down as everyone works remotely. We will continue to do what we can by phone and email, including refreshing stakeholder maps to improve the range of contacts who can inform our strategic planning activities. It is also our intention to reinstate the Cardiff stakeholder event around the September Authority meeting.
- **Williams Review response** – release expected to be delayed by the DfT.
- **Review of the charging model** – this will be progressed as far as possible but is reliant on significant levels of stakeholder engagement which will be difficult to deliver in the current environment.
- **Elizabeth line cost assessment** – we expect that we will still be able to progress this work but anticipate that engagement will be slower than it would have been prior to the crisis. This will be same for the assessment of all additional infrastructure costs.

5. Possible gains

- 5.1 Whilst the Executive will be focused on the priority areas outlined in section three, it is possible that the areas where we are forced to slow the progress

will free up some time to progress areas that otherwise would have been lower down the priority list. Areas identified so far include:

- Preparation for **the tailored review** (although it is recognised the review may well now be delayed further)
- A focus on improvements to **governance practices** based on a review of other models
- **Review and refresh of delivery oversight coverage** – i.e. what we monitor, how and with what frequency

6. Authority and committee meetings

- 6.1 The next round of committees begins on 7 May with Performance and Delivery Committee and finishes in late June with the year end Authority meeting. It is anticipated that these meetings will go ahead via conference call but will be refocused on the impact of covid 19 and delivery of key statutory duties. The Executive will endeavour to ensure minimal Force time is required to prepare for them.

7. What else can Members do

- 7.1 Outside of the formal committee structure Members are encouraged to keep in touch with their BTP contacts by phone and email to offer support and encouragement throughout this difficult period and develop an understanding of the areas that are working well and those that need greater focus.
- 7.2 Industry colleagues are encouraged to share updates from within the industry with the chief officer team and keep these vital communication channels open as they are now more important than ever before.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 Members to note the contents of this report.