



Report to: Police Authority
Agenda item: 3
Date: 3 December 2019
Subject: Chief Constable's Report
Sponsor: Chief Constable
For: Information

1. Introduction

1.1 As previously requested by Members, the Chief Constable's report brings to Members' attention the most pressing issues for the Chief Constable at the current time.

2. Workforce Wellbeing

2.1 As part of routine and planned engagement by Chief Officers with colleagues across the Force it is clear that in many areas and departments colleagues are under discernible increased pressure as they deliver policing services. Significant reductions in staff brought about through the savings requirement, alongside rapidly expanding demand are clearly having an impact with remaining staff having to do much more.

2.2 At a police station level gaps in police resourcing caused by recruitment cancellations are creating real challenges for those who are at the forefront of service delivery. It is clear that resource gaps are viewed as an indicator of the Force and Authority's commitment and support to frontline colleagues.

2.3 Police staff colleagues have experienced the most significant level of cuts but with little reduction in expectation and demand for their services. A review of the remuneration and pay scales of police staff is long overdue and there is a strong sense amongst police staff colleagues that their terms and conditions have not kept pace with the increasing demands they face. It will be essential that this is addressed in the next 18-24 months although there is little budgetary scope to do so.



2.4 While the commitment and resilience of all BTP colleagues is to be greatly admired and the feedback from the public and stakeholders continues to be first class, it is a matter of concern to the Chief Officer Group that it is becoming increasingly challenging to be able to provide the resource and support colleagues require.

2.5 It was clear from the BTPA stakeholder event in September that the industry wants and expects network wide officer coverage and a high level of responsiveness and visibility. The focus on dealing quickly with fatalities and other disruptive incidents and restoring service rapidly was a clear priority and an area of performance the industry seeks ongoing improvement. Against this backdrop, it is important that the Authority and Force ensure that colleagues can deliver that crucial service while also maintaining a clear strategic eye on their wellbeing and welfare.

2.6 Given the demands we place on colleagues (both officers and staff) in respect of dealing with fatalities, the Force has reviewed the degree to which individuals are exposed to traumatic incidents. This is in the light of increasing numbers of colleagues experiencing traumatic stress related diagnosis. The results make sobering reading and highlight the importance of putting our staff more clearly at the centre of our considerations. During the 10 month period 28.06.18 to 09.04.19:

- 2,094 officers or staff members were linked to at least 1 traumatic incident (39.2%)
 - 1,312 officers or staff members were linked to 2 or more traumatic incidents (24.6%)
 - 870 officers or staff members were linked to 3 or more traumatic incidents (16.3%)
 - 411 officers or staff members were linked to 5 or more traumatic incidents (7.7%)
 - 149 officers or staff members were linked to 10 or more traumatic incidents (2.8%).
- One individual was exposed 40 times.

2.7 It is difficult to think of a profession that asks its employees to undertake anything like this level of exposure to traumatic incidents of the unique nature encountered on the railways. As a result, a comprehensive structure has been implemented to address this important wellbeing issue with the Deputy Chief Constable chairing a Gold Group. A key part of the



response is to commission expert external psychological expertise to advise the Force on how best to manage the situation where colleagues are repeatedly exposed to trauma.

- 2.8 Experience in other areas of policing which involve repeated exposure to traumatic experiences (for example in child sexual exploitation investigations) may provide useful guidance and good practice to be adopted. It is likely that going forward it may be necessary to radically adjust the way the Force deploys individuals to traumatic incidents and potentially adopt a much more managed approach. This is likely to have resource implications that will challenge current deployment and availability levels but is an area that both the Force and Authority must address.
- 2.9 It will be of great importance that in agreeing the budget for 2020/21 and forthcoming years that primary focus is placed on the needs of the people that make up BTP and who are instrumental in delivering the service so valued by the public and industry.

3. Resourcing

- 3.1 The national campaign to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers is likely to present challenges to BTP. The risk of losing officers to other forces is clear, although the Home Office has confirmed that only new recruits to policing will count towards the target. Any pressure on resources can only exacerbate the issues set out above.
- 3.2 Officer numbers currently remain below establishment as a result of multiple factors - further holding of 26 PCSO posts at TfL's request to meet a funding gap; the slower recruitment of CT resources as part of the uplift due to national AFO shortages and unresolved pension transfer issues; scaling back recruitment in order to deliver officer reductions necessary to achieve the £30m savings target set by the Authority and, in addition, the cancellation of recruit intakes to address the shortfall in funding following the withdrawal by TfL of funding for 160 officers and the Authority's decision, part way through the year that the Force should meet this funding gap from within the current budget.
- 3.3 The recent government agenda sought to restore officer numbers to the levels preceding the austerity programme, while increasing police staff resources in recognition of the need



for appropriate support to enable officers to be effective. Conversely, there is a risk that resourcing in BTP is proceeding in the opposite direction. Taking these factors into account, the Chief Officer Group reviewed the increasing operational demands and requirements against the reductions in front line headcount which the current £30m savings target necessitates. This review concluded that removing frontline resources will limit the ability of BTP to meet the rapidly expanding operational challenges and deliver the strategy. As a result, the Chief Officer Group has committed to not reduce visible front line officers.

- 3.4 The Force is taking several steps to reduce turnover and increase recruitment to bring resources back to the numbers required through a Recruitment & Retention strategy led by the Director of People & Culture. Recruitment literature and adverts have also been refreshed to emphasise the unique and specialist nature of BTP's work. Three additional intakes have been introduced to drive headcount back towards establishment at the beginning of 2019/20. For 2020/21, planned recruitment for police officers has been increased by a third, with PCSO recruitment doubled. In anticipation that Special Constables will seek opportunities to retrain as police officers, Specials intakes have been lifted from five to eight. This enhanced effort will require additional capacity at both Spring House and Northwick Park to prevent delay and will present a cost pressure.
- 3.5 To more effectively retain our staff, a multilayered plan has been developed. Following the Chief Officer Group's decision to allow PCSOs and Special Constables to transfer directly to police officer courses on recommendation from line management, 50 individuals have been booked on to a police officer conversion course. MPS adverts to recruit probationers have been withdrawn after successful challenge in relation to College of Policing guidance. Following feedback from new recruits, the restriction for them to remain at Hub stations during their probationary period has been removed.
- 3.6 Starting salary and location allowance options are being modelled to try to ensure that remuneration for BTP officers is competitive with other forces to whom we may lose officers on transfer. However, there is no scope within the budget allocation that the Authority appears set to agree to fund this.



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- 3.7 Both the Labour and Conservative parties have committed in their manifesto to increase public sector pay by 5% if successful in the Election in December. If BTP is to remain an attractive employer for police officers, it will be essential that any increase in police pay is adopted. However, such a requirement would create an immediate £6m additional gap in funding, based on the proposals being put forward by the Authority at the meeting.
- 3.8 Free train travel to and from work for police officers on production of warrant cards is being explored with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG). This facility is currently available to a number of Home Office forces as a result of local agreements. The benefits case related to the visibility and availability of officers during their daily journey is being prepared.
- 3.9 The 2019 Staff Survey results will be available in January 2020 which will provide further insight into staff morale and wellbeing and encourage further evidence-based ideas to improve staff retention.

4. County Lines

- 4.1 In October the Home Secretary announced new funding for County Lines operational activity. BTP was specifically mentioned by the Home Secretary in the intent to form 'dedicated BTP teams at railway hubs tackling County Lines'. The proposal was for multi-year funding. Confirmation has since been received that BTP will be allocated £1m in dedicated funding for 2019/20.
- 4.2 When the new government is in place, details as to future funding will be established. In the meantime, ACC Doyle is leading plans to commence this work as soon as possible, ensuring this investment has the best possible operational impact. The Authority Chief Executive requested a specific update on BTP's plans on deliver against the Government funding for County Lines and this will be presented to the Authority in the private session of the meeting.

5. Chief Officer Group

- 5.1 ACC Robin Smith has been appointed as the Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police and takes up his new post in January 2020. The Force congratulates ACC Smith on this achievement.
- 5.2 Having considered the Force's financial challenges, including the Chief Constable's determination not to reduce frontline police officers, it is important that the Chief Officers also identify and exploit opportunities to make savings from within their portfolio. For this reason, the Chief Constable has taken a decision not to seek an ACC replacement at this point. Instead, the Territorial Policing and Specialist Operations portfolios will be brought together into a combined command under ACC O'Callaghan. ACC Doyle will retain responsibility for the Crime and Contact Management portfolio. A review of wider the Chief Officer portfolios will also take place once the new ACC structure has been developed.
- 5.3 Whilst this ambition will present large spans of command and responsibilities which must be carefully designed and monitored over the coming months, there are some opportunities to achieve greater consolidation of our operational effort as the new command structure materialises. It has been agreed with the Authority Chair that the operational effectiveness of this model will be evaluated after a six-month period.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

- 6.1 Since joining BTP in October, Nicola Dykes, Head of External Engagement, has been meeting with Divisions to understand the operational functions whilst gathering information on existing stakeholder engagement throughout the Force. Early activity has included external meetings with the London Mayor's Office and TfL with plans to contact key stakeholders including RDG and Network Rail. The Head of External Engagement is developing a stakeholder engagement for both industry and wider political engagement opportunities.
- 6.2 BTP's executive engagement plan, which was developed following feedback from the industry last year, aims for the Chief Constable's to secure attendance at each owning group board meeting once a year. Since the last Authority meeting the Chief Constable

has attended two owning group board meetings, Abellio Group and Go-Ahead Group. The BTPA Chief Executive joined the Chief Constable at these meetings. The Chief Constable has also attended a Network Rail Board. Attendance at these Board meetings provides a good opportunity to collectively brief and discuss strategic matters of importance to BTP and the industry with the Owing Group Board and their TOC MDs.

- 6.3 The Chief Officers conduct a visit to a sub division each month, part of the visit includes a meeting with local partners. In November the Chief Officers visited Western sub division and met with representatives from Network Rail, MTR Crossrail and Great Western Railway. The feedback from partners during this event was extremely positive and both the industry representatives and COG found the session helpful in terms of briefing and information sharing. A BTPA member would be welcome to join these divisional visits.

7. Operational matters

7.1 Counter Terrorism

- 7.1.1 The country's threat level is reviewed every six months by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC). On 4 November 2019 the UK terrorism threat level was downgraded from "Severe" to "Substantial", which means an attack is likely. The threat to the rail network nationally remains unchanged at "Substantial". Attack planning remains a reality. Since the Westminster attack in 2017, 24 attack plots have been thwarted by counter terrorism policing and there are 800 live counter terrorism investigations. Preventing future attacks will continue to require a high degree of collaboration between BTP, the rail industry and wider police service.

- 7.1.2 On 29 October 2019 BTP held a major live exercise addressing a 'marauding multi person active firearms attack' on the Underground, known as Exercise Eleanor. As well as providing an opportunity to test BTP's response, these exercises also provide an opportunity to invite observers from government and the rail industry to see firsthand how BTP prepare for and respond to such scenarios. Observers included Chris Heaton-Harris, Minister of State, Baroness Vere, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, the Director General (DfT) responsible for international and transport security, senior representatives from the rail industry and BTPA members.

7.2 Brexit & the General Election

7.2.1 The emergence of a potential Brexit deal has seen BTP stand back from planning for a no deal scenario. The extensive planning undertaken placed the Force in a good position to be able to respond to whatever developments might emerge and remain ready.

7.2.2 The announcement of the general election and dissolution of Parliament takes us into a period of Purdah. However, with the campaign trail underway, it is anticipated that more Parliamentarians from a range of political parties will be travelling by train. BTP will continue to ensure an appropriate policing response during this period and are linked into national policing structures through the NPCC.

7.3 Recognition

7.3.1 On 1 November 2019 BTP held its 'Make the Difference' awards ceremony at Drapers' Hall. Now in its third year, this event provides an opportunity to recognise and celebrate individuals across the Force who consistently go above and beyond and provide exemplary service to the public, rail industry and their colleagues. The event is also a great opportunity to showcase BTP and was well attended by senior partners from across the industry and wider police service, including the Rail Minister. For the first time sponsorship towards the event was secured and sponsors included the RDG, RSSB and key suppliers.