

Minutes

Scotland Railways Policing Committee

Tuesday 22 October 2019, 11:00

Boardroom SPA, 1 Pacific Quay, Glasgow, G1 1DZ

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Present:

Bill Matthews, Chair
Willie Gallagher
Dominic Booth
David Crichton (SPA)
Robert Hayes (SPA)

In attendance:

BTP

Charlie Doyle, Assistant Chief Constable
Eddie Wylie, Chief Superintendent

BTPA

Hugh Ind, Chief Executive
John McBride, Senior Scotland Project Manager (Secretariat)

Mark Williams, Assistant Chief Constable, Police Scotland
Graham Stickle, Risk and Policy Specialist, SPA

Welcome and apologies

Agenda Item 1

1. The Chair opened the meeting and warmly welcomed members and the public to the first meeting of the Scottish Railway Policing Committee and explained the Committee has been set up to improve oversight and accountability of railway policing in Scotland and comprises members from both the British Transport Police Authority (BTPA), and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA).
2. The Chair invited members and officials present from both authorities to introduce themselves. He then recognised the work of Graham Stickle and John McBride (who will be acting secretary) in successfully getting the Committee to this stage. The Chair then thanked Susan Deacon and SPA for making the venue and

refreshments available and thanked Scottish Government and Department of Transport officials for their support in establishing the Committee.

3. Finally, the Chair reminded those present that the Committee is a product of the desire, expressed via the Smith Commission, to devolve railway policing in Scotland, and his belief that the Committee's job is simply to provide local scrutiny of performance whilst fostering a strong partnership between Police Scotland and the British Transport Police in making the railways of Scotland as safe as possible.
4. Apologies were noted for DCC Adrian Hanstock, represented by ACC Charlie Doyle and Tom Halpin, represented by David Crichton.

Declaration of interests

Agenda Item 2

5. Both SPA and BTPA have existing registers of interests available on their respective websites. The Chair asked members for any matters beyond what is already declared that may have an impact on today's business. For clarity, Dominic Booth reminded the Committee he was a director of Abellio Scotrail.

Introductions/establishment of the committee

Agenda Item 3

6. The Chair advised the intention is that the vast majority of the business of this meeting is carried out in the public meeting and documented appropriately. However, there may be times when, for valid reasons, the Committee may have to meet in private - for example where the Committee may be taking an intelligence briefing - but an assurance was provided to endeavour to report on the topic considered unless to do so would breach confidentiality or fall foul of some other similar restriction. The Chair said one area that has become apparent during the preparation of papers for this meeting is that as a result of the small number of serious incidents on the railways of Scotland care will be required in questioning and discussions in order to be respectful to the individuals and families involved.

Policing Plan and performance reporting

Agenda Item 4

7. The Chair asked the Chief Executive of BTPA to provide an overview of current issues to provide some context for the operations of the SRPC. Two pressing priorities were highlighted;

8. Planning for the medium-term financial plan

- 8.1. There was a focus on retention and recruitment particularly following the Home Office announcement of an uplift in police officers' numbers for England and Wales
- 8.2. Continued focus on transformation, looking at HR, back office and digital policing and delivering efficiencies as well as devices
- 8.3. Officer and staff pension schemes are currently undergoing the scheduled actuarial review and evaluation
- 8.4. The Authority are planning to introduce a defined contribution pension scheme for police staff
- 8.5. Transport for London (TfL) funding discussions were planned given the significance of this funder
- 8.6. County Lines funding was being made available through a Home Office announced initiative which links in to the medium-term financial planning

9. Relationships with the rail industry

- 9.1. Business as usual policing plan consultation is the focus of the Authority
- 9.2. A summit was recently held in Birmingham to reset the strategic relationships between the Authority and the rail industry

10. The chair was grateful for this useful update which helped set the wider context.

Policing Plan and performance reporting

Agenda Item 4

- 11. ACC Doyle spoke to the performance paper which had been circulated and summarised a positive position laid out in the paper; Scotland's railway has approximately 17 crimes for every one million passenger journeys and one serious crime for every five million passenger journeys. Crime is reducing, compared to an increasing trend seen on railways in England and Wales and detection rates are good in comparison too. Assaults against rail staff had reduced by 20% and rail passenger confidence levels for safety on the railway is 81%. ACC Doyle described the force's work on the County Lines initiative where vulnerable young people are targeted by criminals. He also described how police related disruption levels had reduced, as had minutes lost through fatal accidents and those lost through trespass and vandalism following work to identify trespass locations linked to young people and children.

12. Chief Superintendent Wylie described how, low crime rates and rising passenger satisfaction and more people being brought to justice was a positive and enviable position. He highlighted the following;
- Performance is a golden thread woven through the division
 - Excellent joint working with Police Scotland
 - Harnessing the benefits from rail industry investment in infrastructure CCTV coverage and
 - Further work investigating the efficient distribution of CCTV information
13. Members clarified that the uplift of 20,000 in officers in England and Wales was not, so far, affecting recruitment and retention however agreed that there was a need to track this over the next few meetings.

Action: Chief Superintendent Wylie to review performance reporting to include items raised.

Action: BTP Analysis and Insight team to explore synergies, where proportionate, in compatibility

Interoperability BTP and Police Scotland

Agenda Item 5

14. Chief Superintendent Wylie spoke to this paper and summarised;
- Relationships were very good
 - Cited staff secondments at Inverness had delivered very good knowledge transfer
 - Multi-agency working in Glasgow city with local authority and health colleagues focussing on homelessness and addicted/dependent people was benefiting the wider-city and city centre rail stations
 - Joint work and intelligence sharing on County Lines work leading to arrests in Aberdeen
 - Information sharing agreements with premiership football clubs to combat those who cause trouble at and travelling to/from football matches
 - BTP and Police Scotland delivering a series of command shadowing opportunities; exposing staff to the specialism of command in both transport infrastructure and stadia
 - Joint planning underway for the Euro 2020 football and the forthcoming climate conference
15. Members asked for details on work to reduce anti-social behaviour. Chief Superintendent Wylie outlined joint work undertaken with partners, under the 'Safer Shores' initiative including Ayrshire councils, ScotRail, Coastguard and Police Scotland to make Ayrshire coastal resorts and those travelling to and from them safer for

everyone especially during periods of good weather. He also shared details on Operation 'Code' in Dunbartonshire. Together with health and social care colleagues BTP focussed on antisocial behaviour which was affecting rail staff and the public, involving young people in and around towns and railway stations.

16. A discussion ensued around the handling of disruption during the Edinburgh Festival and the complexities of large visitor numbers coinciding with large sporting events (Rugby internationals) and disruption and heard that preplanning and readiness for such events is being reviewed.
17. ACC Mark Williams supported Chief Superintendent Wylie's characterisation of cooperation and noted that planning was already underway for Euro 2020. He also highlighted joint work in preparation for the climate event which he informed the Committee will require mutual aid from across the UK. Summarising, he said there was a great deal in place from embedded officers at the Gartcosh campus, secondments at Inverness to training, both specialists (detectives and family liaison officers) as well as probationary officers.
18. Members asked what might pose a risk to interoperability. ACCs Doyle and Williams offered the following; harmony in legislative provisions, so that police activity on the rail system is not overlooked. In a period of political change and uncertainty it is important that policing is able to contribute in an independent and professional way. Members noted the report.

Stakeholder engagement

Agenda Item 6

19. Chief Superintendent Wylie spoke to a previously circulated paper and explained that industry relationships were good, he described the links and how these relationships develop from Constables at a major station having daily meetings with station managers to senior officers' regular meetings with railway executives and attending board meetings. He explained how the most recently issued Scottish Government policing priorities will be shared and considered during upcoming policing plan stakeholder events (31st October). The output from that day will be developed and brought back to the Committee for review and support. It will then progress onto the BTPA's policing plan working group. Members supported this process and updates were received on emerging issues. Members agreed the timescales for the formulation, consultation and preparation of the D division policing plan worked. Members agreed that SPA members of the committee should be involved where it is appropriate to do so. Members noted the report.

Evaluation methodology

Agenda Item 7

20. The Chair led a discussion on this agenda item outlining the aim of the Committee; to contribute to the effectiveness of railway policing in Scotland. He suggested it was very likely the Committee would want to conduct a board-like assessment process on an annual basis to look at the effectiveness of and the contribution the Committee was making.
21. A discussion ensued with members acknowledging;
- Timing of any review is sensitive and should not be premature, allowing the Committee time to develop and demonstrate its effectiveness.
 - Good practice would suggest a review at each Committee meeting to assess whether it had met its aims
 - Any formal review should consider an independent body
 - Important to include feedback from staff associations and unions.
 - In terms of timescales members agreed that any formal review should not take place until two or three years down the line.
 - Independent organisations to consider included Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and HMICS.

Action: Secretariat to prepare an options paper.

Committee work plan/business cycle

Agenda Item 8

22. The Senior Scottish Project Manager spoke to a previously circulated paper which outlined the way in which the Committee might work and discussed the appendix to that paper which outlined a draft work plan for the year ahead with items the Committee may wish to consider. Members reviewed the plan and suggested a distinct separation from operational areas and remaining strategic with oversight of workforce planning, performance reporting and risk management.

Action: Secretariat review workplan in light of the observations

Summary of the key risks, message and communication points

Agenda Item 9

23. The Chair summarised;
- It is useful to have the context of the wider BTPA for this Committee
 - Risks, issues and performance reporting, resource planning and absence reporting would be beneficial and
 - Explore alignment in reporting, where possible for better benchmarking

Evaluation and Reflections

Agenda Item 10

24. It was agreed that this initial meeting had been a good opportunity to share and set the scene of the operating context of railway policing in Scotland. The agenda might look different as the Committee's work progresses and everyone recognised SPA members are in learning mode on how BTP and BTPA do business.

Any other business

Agenda Item 11

25. There being no other business the meeting was closed.

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