

Board Effectiveness Evaluation Report and Action Plan 2022

Published June 2022

Introduction

1. At the British Transport Police Authority (BTPA) we work hard to drive continuous improvement in our ways of working to deliver our purpose of maintaining an efficient and effective police force for the railway. We conduct an annual evaluation of our practices as we continue to shape and deliver good governance and public accountability in railway policing.
2. Our annual evaluation also ensures compliance with the HM Treasury guidance [Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice \(2017\)](#) covering the systems and processes in place at Board, Committee and individual level.
3. The purpose of the exercise is to assess the effectiveness of changes made the previous year, consider any significant changes in the environment that may require a new approach and to identify further opportunities for BTPA to operate more effectively in the future. This is achieved through analysis of the perspectives of Authority Members, BTPA Executive team and the Chief Officer Group (COG) within British Transport Police (BTP), gathered through surveys and discussions. This is in addition to a review of meeting evaluation feedback gathered throughout the year and learning from best practice in corporate governance.
4. Supporting our evaluation this year, BTPA commissioned Deloitte to provide independent input on our effectiveness, acknowledging the importance of the relationship between the BTPA and BTP as fundamental to the effectiveness of the Board.
5. Deloitte's commission was dual focused. The first element was a discrete piece of work reviewing the effectiveness of our financial governance, including the financial regulations and scheme of delegation between BTPA and BTP. This followed an action from the previous year's evaluation and an intention to provide more empowerment to BTP. The second element of the commission was a wider piece of work looking at how effectively BTPA and BTP work together, both in terms of BTPA's governance and oversight role and BTP's role as a supplier to BTPA for functions such as technology, payroll, finance and procurement. The final report was received in early June and the recommendations have been incorporated into this report where appropriate.
6. Once the evaluation report and action plan are approved, BTPA issues these to the Principal Accounting Officer at the Department for Transport (DfT) alongside an explanation of how we plan to address any identified areas for development.

Context

7. This evaluation has been completed during a period of a continuing pandemic, including a period of adjustment as Government restrictions have eased. For the majority of the time under review, meetings have typically taken the form of a virtual or hybrid style to maximise attendance to meet statutory responsibilities, whilst also applying health safeguards. There is an expectation that virtual and hybrid meetings will remain an option as they can support efficiency and reduce carbon footprint. There is, however, a clear drive towards greater use of face to face meetings than has been possible over the last couple of years to support improved ways of working.
8. It is not surprising that the restrictions in place have impacted the pace of change particularly with regards to relationships and culture. However, the majority of the actions arising from last year's exercise have been discharged leading to noteworthy improvements, including but not limited to the following:
 - Development of BTPA goals ensuring alignment and collective focus to shape Member and Executive workplans for the year.
 - Greater use of informal workshops focused on board effectiveness and strategic issues.
 - Commission of external consultants to work with BTP/A to update, refine and modernise ways of working, including the financial governance framework.
 - Reinstatement of a Chair's Forum.
 - Establishment of a People and Culture Committee.
 - Continuous development of oversight mapping.
 - Introduction of monthly Breakfast Briefings.
 - Refresh of the annual Member appraisal process.
9. It is intended that during the year ahead BTPA will build on existing efforts to maximise its effectiveness. This includes creating further opportunities to work better and smarter with BTP through refined governance workstreams and greater exposure to each other's work. The co-location of the BTPA and BTP also aims to further facilitate greater harmony with regards to shared strategic objectives.

The Evaluation

Methodology

10. The evaluation approach has been streamlined to focus on the themes that were identified in the preceding evaluation. The data collection included a questionnaire to Members (Appendix A) which focused on progress against the previous year's themes and whether they felt these had been achieved, what the notable differences had been and what challenges remained. The second section of the questionnaire was more broadly focused on generic areas of board effectiveness to ensure there was an opportunity to identify any emerging issues or good practice.

Executive colleagues were also provided the opportunity to complete this questionnaire.

11. A separate commission was sent to the BTP Chief Officer Group (Appendix B) which focused on the ways of working between BTPA and BTP in respect of how we jointly discharge our responsibilities. COG were asked for suggestions for areas of improvement for BTPA in 2022/23.
12. In addition, the following information has fed into evaluation:
 - a. Feedback via an informal Member/COG workshop on the emerging themes in May;
 - b. A review of meeting evaluation feedback provided at the end of each committee meeting in 2021/22;
 - c. Best practice principles in corporate governance.

Findings

13. The overarching themes identified in the previous evaluation remain relevant, but the focus within each has progressed as described below.

Relationships and ways of working

14. There is consensus that the relationship between BTPA and BTP is on a positive trajectory and has become increasingly more constructive throughout the past year. This is supported by the findings prepared by Deloitte where it has also been reported that there is greater sense of openness and transparency.
15. The pace of change however has been hindered by COVID-19. Identifying efficient and effective ways of working together and fostering a strong working relationship generally should continue to be a focal point, as this is seen to be the key to success. One area which has been particularly prominent from both the findings of this exercise and of Deloitte is that there is an appetite for BTP/A colleagues to spend more time together. This does not exclude the Executive, but the view was directed primarily towards Members and Chief Officers whose exposure to each other to date has been broadly limited to the formal governance structure. It is believed that creating greater opportunities for more informal interactions would be advantageous and would support greater operational awareness and strategic alignment.

Effectiveness

16. Progress has been made in developing the narrative to illustrate BTPA's value add, encouraging governance processes to be seen as opportunities to leverage the experience and expertise of the BTPA rather than hurdles to be overcome, but there remains more to do.
17. Last year the Board was encouraged to reflect on how effective it saw itself as being and what the measures of success looked like. In recent months, BTPA has been

focusing greater efforts in this area through a series of dedicated workshops, from which a set of goals has been established. Work is now underway to develop this further to identify links to BTPA's oversight work and workplans, including Member engagements.

People and Culture

18. Greater focus has been placed in this area. The newly established People and Culture Committee is recognised as the main avenue to enhance awareness of people and cultural matters and has received positive feedback. A Performance and Delivery Committee focus on key elements of legitimacy has also helped this move forward. There is however a sense that visibility is not complete across the full membership, so more work remains to further embed this.
19. Given the importance placed on the modernising of the culture and the national issues in respect of recruitment and financial hardship, the view is taken that this should remain an ongoing focus for BTPA and should be subject to continuous probing.

Communication

20. Feedback on progress against this theme was very positive, particularly with regards to the lines of communication between Members and the BTPA Executive and the quality of the products provided in support. The levels of interaction between the two parts of the BTPA team were perceived to have increased, with the combination of formal and informal channels being well received. Board Intelligence was reported as being an effective mechanism for information sharing.
21. The key area for continued development under this theme is capturing and effectively utilising learning arising from Member activity outside of the formal governance structure. It has been noted that this has been a largely one-way communication and feedback to Members on how their reporting is received and acted on would be useful and provide assurance. Refinements have also been made to the mechanisms which facilitate this and many have felt that the visit reports have been useful. Further work is however planned to enhance this further to get the most out of engagements, ensuing good lines of communication between all parties to maximise impact as well as delivery of the BTPA Goals.

Board Governance

22. There is a sense that the use of virtual meetings still has its advantages in a post pandemic world, but there has been a push for a greater proportion of meetings to be face to face, particularly those which are more strategic in nature. Hybrid meetings are recognised as being more challenging and therefore require greater efforts from the Chair to be truly effective. It is recommended that this is kept under review.
23. It has been reported that the right balance is struck between holding the Force to account and the BTPA being a critical friend, though as has been referenced under

the relationship theme, more could be done to leverage Board expertise. This is welcomed by BTP and is consistent with the findings from the Deloitte work.

24. Commissioning of papers for formal Committee meetings has been identified as one of the key areas within the governance theme which requires further development. Recognising that this is not an insignificant piece of work and should be a joint endeavour with BTP, placing greater importance and focus on the planning phase should support successful delivery. It is recommended that the initial commissioning for Committees involves early input from the Chair, COG and Executive lead to set forward plans and agendas. Greater emphasis on a forward look and mapping was also a recommendation arising from the findings of Deloitte.
25. Following on from this, the flow of information from Committees to the Board is felt to have improved during the past year. There does however remain a feeling amongst some that agendas can still be overloaded and topics do not always focus discussions in the right areas. BTPA will therefore need to reflect on how it best discharges its oversight responsibilities across different mechanisms, specifically whether by discharging oversight responsibilities outside the Committee structure can free up congested agendas.
26. There is encouragement for greater alignment between BTPA and BTP governance structures with a view to reducing and making use of integrated reports. An observation was observed within the Deloitte report that the BTPA Executive spends much time reviewing papers before being presented to Committees. This can leave the Executive with limited capacity to prioritise on more strategic, advisory or research work. Further consideration should be given to where greater efficiency could be gained in Committee preparation.
27. There is strong feeling within BTP that the pace of governance and formal decision making could be more efficient, particularly with regards to business case decisions. There is not perceived to be a clear line of sight or a process between BTP/A which lends itself to conducive working. This features heavily within the report prepared by Deloitte and requires further attention. This may be the result of a natural tension between an organisation and its oversight body where both sides feel the other could be clearer and crisper in their communication and processes. Or it may be that there are specific areas for improvement here.

Strengths & Weaknesses

28. It is evident that the BTPA has some important strengths, offering a good foundation. This includes the quality, breadth of experience, expertise and drafting. Whilst the diversity of background and skills is thought to have been improved following the most recent intake of Authority Members, the diversity amongst the board is still limited.
29. Feedback also acknowledged a strong sense of purpose amongst the board, with Members being positively motivated to do the right thing through professional engagement. Further opportunities for board cohesiveness are sought, which

should also support the consistency of contribution, which is seen to be variable in places.

30. The findings have been converted into a detailed action plan which can be found at Appendix D. The 2021 Action Plan has been closed and is attached as Appendix F for information.

Conclusions

31. It is clear that the approach to evaluating board effectiveness has buy-in and is effecting real change. This is evident through:
- a. the significant steps that have been taken in the last year which have offered positive results and improved effectiveness, such as the documented improvements in the relationship between BTPA and COG, supported by the findings of the Deloitte work;
 - b. the response rate to the evaluation questionnaire and statements;
 - c. the successful implementation of the key items of the previous action plan; and
 - d. the significant progression of the themes with clear benefits identified as a result.
32. These benefits should be built upon further as we continue our journey to ensure we are efficient and effective, recognising that what effectiveness looks like is dependent on several factors. As such, what is efficient and effective now will not necessarily be efficient and effective in the future.
33. Finally, it is of note that the themes have remained consistent and relevant with only the focus under each shifting to reflect the progress made. The action plan will build on these with a particular focus on ways of working, relationships and culture, as the absence of COVID-19 restrictions should support a quicker pace of change.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Member Questionnaire
- Appendix B – Commission to COG
- Appendix C – Best practice principles & meeting evaluation feedback
- Appendix D - 2022 Action Plan
- Appendix E – BTPA Goals
- Appendix F - 2021 Action Plan (closed)

Appendix A: Member Questionnaire

| BEE 2022: Member Questionnaire | | | | |
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| Section 1 – Assessing progress | | | | |
| 1. In the last BEE action plan our intention was to maximise change opportunities to refresh ways of working with BTP, building on previous efforts to facilitate more informal sessions between BTPA/COG. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To what extent have we achieved this? ii. Have you observed a notable difference? | | | | |
| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |
| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
| 2. In the last BEE we acknowledged that we needed to agree what 'effective' looks like for BTPA, identifying any board/individual development needs to ensure excellence in delivery and focusing on how the Authority adds value to delivery of the Strategy and what is needed to deliver this i.e. any changes to project/financial governance, terms and conditions to deliver the desired culture and behaviours etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To what extent have we achieved this? ii. Have you observed a notable difference? | | | | |
| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |
| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
| 3. In the last BEE we identified a need to enhance awareness of people and culture matters to ensure an understanding of and strategic focus on, what type of employer BTP/A is and wants to be in the future. | | | | |

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| i. To what extent have we achieved this? ii. Have you observed a notable difference? | | | | |
| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |
| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
| 4. In the last BEE we identified a need to further refine the format, level and frequency of communication between the BTPA Executive and Members, including how we capture learning and other outputs from Member activity outside of the formal governance structure. i. To what extent have we achieved this? ii. Have you observed a notable difference? | | | | |
| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |
| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
| Section 2: Testing current board effectiveness | | | | |
| 5. Does the board dedicate the optimal amount of time to agenda items, should more be delegated to committees or working groups? | | | | |
| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |
| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
| 6. Are there sufficient opportunities for Members to have strategic discussions? | | | | |

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| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |
| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
| 7. Does the Board strike the right balance between holding the Force to account and being a critical friend, whilst also offering support at appropriate times? | | | | |
| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |
| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
| 8. Do you feel that the current ways of working are conducive to operating as an effective board? Consider face to face meetings versus virtual set up, the frequency of engagement, provision of information and board dynamics. | | | | |
| Comments and suggestions for improvement: | | | | |

| Please score the Authority's performance in the above area | 4 Outstanding, one of the best in this area | 3 Consistently good | 2 Needs improvement | 1 Significant improvements required |
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| 9. What do you consider to be the board's greatest strength and greatest weakness? | | | | |
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| 10. Please offer two recommendations to develop the Authority going into 2022/23 | | | | |
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| Additional comments: | | | | |

Appendix B: Commission to COG

Dear All,

We are taking a slightly different approach to the annual Board Effectiveness Evaluation (BEE) this year as we continue to progress along this journey. We are very keen to focus on the ways of working between BTPA and BTP in respect of how we jointly discharge our responsibilities. We have outlined six areas below which we would appreciate your feedback on.

Comments on the following:

1. The accessibility and clarity of the BTPA's formal governance structure/framework including the division of responsibilities between committees.
2. The way that BTPA articulates its areas of interests and requirements through formal commissioning briefs, pre-meets and discussions.
3. The cohesion between the BTPA and BTP governance structures.
4. How BTPA responds to early-warning signals of problems ahead that will adversely affect reputation, key outcomes, targets or financial performance.
5. The level and approach taken towards strategic and collaborative working.

Additionally, we are also interested to hear if you have any suggestions for areas of improvement for BTPA going into 2022/23?

We are keen to hear from each of you given your differing experiences in respect of your portfolios and committee interactions with BTPA. If you could provide us with comments by Friday 18 March to Calvert.Yasin@btp.police.uk we would be grateful.

Lucy and Stephanie

Appendix C: Best practice principles and meeting evaluation feedback

Review of Best Practice 2021/22

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| <p><i>Board Intelligence</i> Workshop – High Impact Board Packs</p> | <p>Average corporate Board pack is 280+ pages Recommend reducing length and drawing out the ‘so what?’ Better Board packs represent reduced time and cost / corporate peace of mind.</p> <p>‘Good’ = well-structured agenda of high-quality papers.</p> <p>High quality paper = focused commission; 1-page max exec summary; well-structured info that anticipates Member questions / seeks Member insight.</p> |
| <p><i>Board Intelligence</i> Beyond the Virtual Boardroom Spotlight Report</p> | <p>Recommends a hybrid calendar approach where meeting calendar is a mix of wholly in-person meetings and wholly virtual meetings.</p> <p>Recommends against hybrid meetings as arguably virtual attendees of a hybrid meeting will never achieve effectiveness of being in the room.</p> <p>Recommends in-person meetings for Board meetings where fostering relationships/external engagement takes place.</p> <p>Recommends virtual meetings for monitoring performance and progress.</p> |
| <p><i>Board Intelligence</i> ExCo Guide to Shorter Papers Report</p> | <p>Recommends commissioning that generates shorter papers which promote,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlled narrative • Faster decision making • Good time management • Motivated report authors • Member confidence in Exec/Force <p>Notes long agenda packs risk diluting key messages; poor conversations; and are result of poor commissioning process. Recommends more time given over to commissioning structured around</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear aim • Time for authors to query commission |
| <p><i>Board Intelligence</i> Definitive Guide to Decision Papers Spotlight Report</p> | <p>Recommends that process not volume of research or analysis underpins whether a decision is ‘good’ or ‘bad’.</p> <p>An effective decision paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is clear what stage of the decision cycle the proposals sits at • what need is being met and why now is the opportune time • set out assumptions, risks, people and peer examples • what options were considered and discounted • what needs to happen to implement decision effectively |

Meeting Evaluation Themes 2021/22

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| Meeting Preparation | Members could have more thorough induction on joining a Committee for the first time. |
| | Member agenda briefings were welcome. |
| | Commissioning could happen earlier and involve direct liaison between COG Committee Leads and Chairs. |
| | Commissioning should ensure papers were strategic rather than operational in focus. |
| | More thought to be given to agenda timing allocations. |
| Meeting Software | Some BI issues e.g. disjointed comments / update downloads not occurring. |
| Meeting Format | Hybrid format prompts thought on who needed to be in the room. |
| | Some formats e.g. workshop benefited from in person format i.e. ability to read body language. |
| | Hybrid Facilities perform well albeit can be unreliable. |
| | Whole-day sessions should be avoided. |
| | Infographics and presentations add value if used judiciously. |
| | Hybrid/online meetings represented a lower carbon footprint. |
| | Size and layout of BTPA Committee Room 2 nd Floor not optimal for in-person meetings. |
| | Potential to hold more of meetings in public. |
| | Potential to meet elsewhere in UK aside from London. |
| Report Content | Papers of right length albeit some circulated late. |
| | High quality reports encouraged high quality discussion and insight. |
| | User friendliness of BI risks culture of late papers. |
| | Make updates to papers explicit. |
| | Risk profile format compares favourably with public and private sector organisations. |
| | Performance reporting would benefit from more trend data rather than point data. |
| | Verbal narrative at meetings preferable to written narrative / longer papers. |
| | Agenda briefing should make clear what scrutiny a paper had undergone at peer Committees/Working Groups. |
| Member Engagement | Pre-meeting consultation risked items being 'rubber stamped' at formal meeting with public perception of little scrutiny. |
| | Peer Forces benefited from Authority Members performing NED role on internal boards: albeit any such approach in BTP should be governed by a clear protocol to avoid loss of operational independence. |
| Decision Making | Formal meeting framework should facilitate decisions being made at pace. |
| | Minutes and Actions arising from meetings could be circulated sooner. |
| | Some positive examples of Authority critique of Force proposals e.g. Paid Partner Parental Leave approval. |
| | Some lessons to learn on how Force engages Executive and Members in advance of high-profile decisions e.g. <i>A Force on the Move</i> . |
| | Consideration should be given to how papers are drafted to ensure Members were clear what insight/value add was being sought from them. |

Appendix D: Action Plan 2022

| Theme | Context | Actions |
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| 1. Relationships & ways of working Maximise change opportunities to refresh ways of working with BTP, building on previous efforts to facilitate more informal and strategic sessions between Members, BTPA Executive and COG. | It was agreed that the arrival of the new Chief Constable presented an opportunity to progress this work and the Strategic Directive to the CC (Serial B071) was drafted to set out how we wanted to work together. This has been a developing theme over a number of evaluations and steady progress is now being made. An improved relationship means there is a route to work through objectives. | 1. Receive the Deloitte report which looks at ways of working between BTP/A: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> consider the recommendations explore proposals with BTP implement the recommendations as appropriate. |
| | | 2. Create opportunities for more informal/strategic time between BTPA and BTP within Members' time commitment. Not to be London centric. |
| | | 3. Resurrection of Executive/COG meetings to build on existing routes of communication, preferably during the middle of each quarter to complement other touch points. |
| | | 4. A review of Member engagement outside of committees and touch points with COG to ensure optimal arrangements. |
| | | 5. The Executive to explore with BTP a succinct list of strategic issues to assist the range and scale of issues the BTPA would be likely to scrutinise and comment upon. |
| 2. Effectiveness Agree what 'effective' looks like for BTPA and identify any board/individual development needs to ensure excellence in delivery. Focus on how the Authority adds value to delivery of the Strategy and what is needed to deliver this i.e. any changes to project/financial governance, terms and conditions to deliver the desired culture and behaviours etc. | This theme builds on previous work looking at oversight mapping and the setting of goals to help illustrate BTPA's focus and value add. | 6. Continue to explore a shared vision and understanding of BTPA effectiveness. Embed BTPA goals, measuring success at set intervals. |
| | | 7. A revised scheme of financial delegation ways of working with BTP to be approved which ensures sufficient empowerment (action 1 refers). |
| | | 8. Populate a training plan for Members. |
| | | 9. Revisit oversight mapping work previously considered at a BTPA workshop on 3 February 2021, consider any remaining gaps, whilst having regard for overloaded Committee agendas. |
| 3. People and culture Enhance awareness of people and culture matters to ensure an understanding of and strategic focus on, what type of employer BTP/A is and wants to be in the future. | In September 2021 the BTPA established a dedicated People and Culture Committee to enable sufficient focus to be attributed to people and cultural matters. This need was driven by last year's BEE exercise recognising BTP's ambition to modernise culture and promote a more modern and agile BTP. There has also been increased focus on policing legitimacy which should continue to develop. | 10. The Executive to continue to work closely with BTP People and Culture to identify strategic people projects and workstreams where the BTPA can add value and agree how best to engage, having regard to the delivery of the People Strategy. |
| | | 11. To continue to develop the People and Culture Committee workplan, leading and testing cultural change within the organisation. |
| | | 12. Broaden legitimacy focus ensuring that it complements operational oversight from Performance & Delivery Committee. |
| | | 13. As the culture evolves, respond to changes required to terms and conditions. |

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| 4. Member/Executive Communication Identify optimal arrangements for communication between the BTPA Executive and Members, including the capture of learning and progression of work arising from Member activity outside of the formal governance structure. | This builds on a previous action to ensure that Members are aware of key decisions/discussions, including those they are not allocated to. Improved engagement outside of formal structures continues to evolve. | 14. CEO to provide Members with monthly updates reporting on key decisions and oversight activity undertaken by the Executive. |
| | | 15. Create further engagement opportunities, enabling individual Member expertise to be leveraged to a greater extent using the Chief Constable's strategy as a platform. Develop a proposal which will support the delivery of this. |
| | | 16. Develop an effective mechanism for capturing, sharing and progressing outputs from engagements. |
| 5. Governance Continue refining governance procedures. | To ensure a consistent and effective approach towards BTPA governance. | 17. Continue to assess the effectiveness of hybrid meetings and considering the approach for 2023/24, taking account of sustainability considerations. |
| | | 18. Review the commissioning process to ensure greater strategic input is received and at an earlier stage between Chairs, Executive and COG leads. |
| | | 19. In conjunction with action 18, keep meeting agendas under review to ensure they are manageable and facilitate best discussions and outcomes. |
| | | 20. To consider further opportunities which could lead to greater cohesion between BTPA and BTP governance structures. |
| | | 21. Revise the approach and timetabling of BTP/A Executive Review Groups ensuring that these meetings complement action 3. |
| | | 22. To explore the new FEB/COG report template with a view to identifying what needs to be adapted for BTPA governance. Adopt report writing guidance/templates/training in support. |
| | | 23. Board agendas to be refocused to ensure emphasis on strategy and forward look. |
| | | 24. Make refinements to the Code of Governance to make it more accessible leading to an increased awareness of the requirements and compliance. Linked to action 1. |
| | | 25. Increase public accessibility to BTPA meetings, applying greater focus on professionalism and reputation. |

Appendix E: BTPA Goals

1. We want to be a well-run Arm's Length Body, trusted by all our stakeholders.
2. We want to promote & enable a modernised and inclusive culture in the BTP.
3. We want to provide effective, supportive and challenging police oversight for today and tomorrow across the full range of BTP activity.
4. We want to develop our vision for security and lead the conversation with industry and DfT to improve outcomes for industry and passengers.
5. We want to drive transformation and ensure BTP is respected for their specialism by the rail industry and for their innovation across policing.
6. We want continuously to deliver efficiencies and keep improving productivity through BTP.

Appendix E: Board Effectiveness Evaluation Action Plan 2021 (closed)

| Theme | Context | Actions | Progress |
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| 1. Relationships Maximise change opportunities to refresh ways of working with BTP, building on previous efforts to facilitate more informal and strategic sessions between Members, BTPA Executive and COG. | This builds on action six from last year's action plan, as the pandemic restricted our options in 2020 and the first half of 2021. It was agreed that the arrival of the new Chief Constable presented an opportunity to progress this work and the Strategic Directive to the CC (Serial B071) was drafted to set out how we wanted to work together. | 26. In addition to the softer, less tangible changes in how we communicate, an integrated Member meeting & engagement cycle to be developed with BTP to include, in addition to the formal meeting cycle: a. Informal BTPA/BTP briefing sessions in the form of breakfast briefings with guest speakers from BTP/industry; b. More workshop style events to discuss strategic matters and reach consensus. | Nearing completion – rolled forward 1. Integrated business cycle for the remainder of 2022 has been published. Proposed dates for 2023 are in development. 1a. Monthly Breakfast Briefings have been scheduled for the calendar year, with a range of topics having been identified through consultation with BTP and other partners. 1b. A suitable programme to support workshop style events to consider strategic matters is to be developed. An invite has been extended to BTP to join the BTPA for part of its Board Development Session on 25 May on Board Effectiveness Evaluation and a Strategic Risk Workshop. |
| | | 27. Chairs' Forum focused on committee business/strategy to be reinstated. | Complete Since its reinstatement, the Chairs' Forum has met four times (in September, October, January and March). This forum continues to evolve. In recent meetings the Chairs have provided with a forward look from the CEO. There is further work planned to revise the approach taken towards the commissioning of committees, which should positively impact the focus of this group ensuring that sufficient consideration is given to how the board's time is split across strategy, performance and governance for example. |
| | | 28. A review of Member engagement outside of committees and touch points with COG to ensure optimal arrangements. | In progress – rolled forward Development of a rolling series of visits is in progress. The process of matching Member skillsets with COG portfolios/projects and facilitating conversations is also intended to support engagement. |
| | | 29. Board agendas to be refocused to ensure emphasis on strategy and forward look. | Nearing Completion – rolled forward The new agenda planning tool is being used and a dedicated forward look item has been introduced into committee agendas, supported by annual workplans. |
| 2. Effectiveness Agree what 'effective' looks like for BTPA and identify any board/individual development needs to ensure excellence in delivery. Focus on how the Authority adds value to delivery of the Strategy and what is needed to | This builds on actions one and five from last year which led to the development of the oversight mapping work and the identification of a number of areas that required additional focus which have now been largely addressed following discussions in | 30. Facilitated session to coalesce around what 'effective' looks like for BTPA. Resulting in a shared vision and understanding amongst the membership. | Complete Facilitated sessions were held in February and March, the former of which had a dual purpose of forming part of the new Member induction programme, as well as specifically considering BTPA effectiveness. Through these sessions, BTPA goals have been established which will be revisited at the Board Development Session on 25 May. Individual Member effectiveness has been considered through the appraisal process completed in September '21 and April '22. |

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| deliver this i.e. any changes to project/financial governance, terms and conditions to deliver the desired culture and behaviours etc. | September 20 and February 21. The actions are the identified next steps along the journey towards becoming a high-performing board. | 31. Actions from the above session to be progressed along with a review of collective and individual skills gaps to ensure continuous board development driving value, innovation and excellence in delivery. | To be progressed There is further work to be done to measure the success of the delivery of the BTPA goals. In parallel, identify and address any skills gaps within the BTPA. |
| | | 32. As part of the development of the Strategy, discuss and agree the culture, values and behaviours for BTP/A and any resulting changes required to term and conditions. | Complete Using the People Survey and 'Have your say' sessions BTP created values with the workforce. Five values were agreed, launched and focus is now on embedding them into the organisation. The People and Culture Committee was provided an update on this work at its November meeting. BTPA has had the opportunity to feed into culture, values and behaviours as part of the work to develop the next Strategy. Any resulting changes to Terms and Conditions or significant policy shifts as a result of the Strategy will require Authority approval. |
| | | 33. Review the scheme of financial delegation and service level agreement with BTP to ensure that this is efficient and effective and provides sufficient empowerment. | Nearing completion – rolled forward Deloitte is supporting the BTPA with this key programme work. There was initially a delay to the intended timetable due to the commercial process, but work began in earnest at the start of April and is on track. The final report has been shared and a proposed framework provided. |
| | | 34. Oversight mapping work to be progressed and outstanding gaps closed. | Nearing completion – rolled forward Work remains ongoing to identify any remaining oversight gaps. Following the implementation of the People and Culture Committee, the division of committee responsibilities is becoming more conducive. The introduction of the breakfast briefings has also provided an opportunity to provide the Authority with further exposure to different areas of BTP and other business. The BTPA may need to be more creative with its approach towards oversight to close the remaining gaps. |
| 3. People and culture Enhance awareness of people and culture matters to ensure an understanding of and strategic focus on, what type of employer BTP/A is and wants to be in the future. | This partly builds on action five from last year which was to modernise BTP's culture and drive a more modern and agile organisation, which has been partly captured in the previous theme in respect of the opportunity to influence and set the culture, behaviour and values as part of the development of the Strategy. However, this theme broadens out the previous action to expand into wider people matters. | 35. The Executive to work with BTP People and Culture to identify strategic people projects where the Authority can add value and agree how we best engage. | Complete The People and Culture Committee has met three times. This forum has provided an opportunity for richer conversations around the various workstreams components which make up the People Strategy. A forward look for the committee has been developed and will be retained as a living document. |
| | | 36. The Appointments and Remuneration Committee to be replaced with a wider People and Remuneration Committee. | Complete An Appointments, Remuneration and Appraisal Committee has been retained with a narrow remit and is Chaired by the Authority Chair. The People and Culture Committee has been implemented with a focus on wider people and culture matters. |
| | | 37. A separate Appointments and Appraisal Panel to be established with a narrow remit of Chief Officer and equivalent succession planning/appointments at BTP/A and appraisals for those appointed to these posts. | Complete See above |

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| 4. Member/Executive Communication Further refine the format, level and frequency of communication between the BTPA Executive and Members, including how we capture learning and other outputs from Member activity outside of the formal governance structure. | This builds on the action from the 2018/19 Board Effectiveness Evaluation following which committee digests were implemented to ensure Members were aware of key decisions/discussions from other committees, improved engagement outside of formal structures was delivered through the Member WhatsApp group and the Chief Executive's digests. | 38. Review Member engagement opportunities with BTP and stakeholders using the Chief Constable's strategy as a platform. | In progress – rolled forward Engagement opportunities are being explored and developed. Now that the Strategy has reached its final stage this can be used as a platform. |
| | | 39. Develop the mechanisms to facilitate effective two-way communication between Members and the Executive focused on activity outside of committees through: a) Increased informal briefings; b) Creation of standardised report backs with observations; c) Refinement of presentation of material shared on BI. | Nearing completion - rolled forward The only outstanding element is to work on two-way communication. 14. Members have been reminded of the activity log and the need to report their activities and observations to the Member Engagement Manager/BTPA Executive. 14 (a) The Executive continues to share information by BI and through designated briefings. 14(b) This mechanism exists but requires enhanced use. 14(c) Following consultation with colleagues, the BI architecture has been refined. |
| 5. Governance Continue refining governance following the appointment of the Board Secretary. | This builds on action two from last year's plan to ensure a consistent approach to governance following the appointment of the Board Secretary and takes into consideration recognised best practice. | 40. Adopt a policy on succession planning. | In progress – rolled forward This is currently being achieved through the allocation of deputy Chairs, which the revised committee allocations laid the groundwork for. Engagement with DfT on Member succession planning remains ongoing and receives continuous focus from the Executive. |
| | | 41. Agenda structures to be benchmarked against Strategy/Policing Plan. | To be progressed This will be implemented alongside the Strategy 22/27 and Policing Plan 22/25. |
| | | 42. Adopt report writing guidance/templates/training. | Nearing completion A draft narrative committee/board report has been developed and steps are being taken to share best practice guidance. The next steps are to produce a recognised suite of templates and facilitate report writing training. Increased awareness of commercial and political sensitives, including appropriate consideration of protected markings has also been promoted. |
| | | 43. Develop the induction programme for incoming Members including a refresh of the Member Handbook. | Complete An induction programme has been developed and delivered. This included a significant refresh of the Member handbook. |

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| 44. Refresh annual Member appraisal process. | 45. Incorporate recommended oversight mapping governance outputs, including a refresh of committee workplans and development of performance dashboards. | 46. Increase accessibility to public meetings. | Complete Refinements to the process have been made. Member appraisal meetings took place in October and April, now aligned with the end of the performance year. |
| | | | In progress – rolled forward The Executive has put in place a broader range of oversight activity to respond to the recommendations identified through the oversight mapping work, most prominently legitimacy. Outputs continue to be incorporated into the committee terms of reference, aligned with new BI agenda planner and quarterly Chairs' Forum planning meetings. Dashboards have been created for the new Policing Plan ready for adoption. There is also one in development for SRPC. |
| | | | In progress - rolled forward Accessibility to documentation supporting committees and Authority meetings continues to be refined. The Executive has been exploring the technology and cost implications to enable streaming of meetings. Meanwhile accessibility of board meetings has been enabled through the recordings of Authority meetings being published online. |