

**Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership
Strategy Committee Meeting
Crouch Street, Banbury
Wednesday, 11 August 2010
Minutes**

Attendees

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| Stephen Brown | Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (Chair) |
| Andrew Garrett | West Berkshire Council |
| Jim Stevens | Buckinghamshire County Council |
| Rob Povey | Thames Valley Police |
| Gill Wootton | Thames Valley Police |
| Patrick Doyle | Her Majesty's Courts Service |
| Simon Beasley | Reading Borough Council |
| Joe Carter | Slough Borough Council |
| Matt Davey | Wokingham Borough Council |
| Keith Woodcock | Milton Keynes Council |
| Adrian Carden | Milton Keynes Council |
| Neil Mathews | Bracknell Forest Borough Council |
| Savio deCruz | Slough Borough Council |
| Terry Ridley | Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue |
| Keith Wheeler | Bucks Fire & Rescue |
| Martin McMahon | Highways Agency |

In Attendance

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| Sue Brown | Buckinghamshire County Council – Partnership Board Chair |
| Richard Owen | Partnership Team – Operations Manager |
| Dan Campsall | Partnership Team – Communications Manager |
| Ian Wilson | Partnership Team – Data Manager |

Apologies

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|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Dave Etheridge | Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue |
| Cariad Eveson-Webb | CPS |

Statement of position from partners – for this year, and 2011/12

RBWM (SB): will stick with the financial state agreed, i.e. a 27% cut on the original level. They are committed to the future, possibly using a different funding model.

Bucks CC (JS): The full 27% cut will be passed on to the Partnership. There will be no further cuts, but they will continue pressing for change, with further pressure for next year. 10 cameras are to be withdrawn in Buckinghamshire. Bucks CC will not cover any residual costs for Oxfordshire.

Bucks Fire & Rescue (TR): resources will be the same but potential cuts for next year.

Bracknell Forest BC (NM): Remain in this financial year but with the 27% cut passed on to the Partnership. BFBC is committed to continue but dependent on further spending cuts.

Thames Valley Police (RP): TVP will add £355,000 from other reserves for this year. All fixed penalty and camera operators' jobs have been put at risk.

Wokingham DC (MD): They will pass on the 27% cut and stay in the Partnership this year. Next year, savings are possible so no decision yet.

Highways Agency (MM): the HA is not a core funding partner although it has made some funding available for roadworks, etc. There is no indication that this will change. However, all road safety funding including education has stopped this year.

West Berkshire Council (AG): Committed this year with 27% cut. Early days for decisions on next year.

Reading (SB): Reading plans to stop enforcement from 27th September this year. The new council does not want money spent on speed cameras. They want to retain a partnership but not the speed camera component.

Slough (JC): similar to BFBC. Committed this year including the 27% cut. The future depends on funding levels.

HMCS (PD): they need to know volumes created. There will be a workshop next week to investigate streamlining their costs.

Milton Keynes Council (AC): passing on the 27% to the Partnership, but no camera cuts. They are reviewing their future but are committed to the partnership.

The Reading contribution for 2010-11 is £125,000. It will take months to wind down the NIPs to be issued. RP confirmed that current prosecutions cannot be suspended, they must proceed. Therefore large cuts for Reading may not be possible. SB will advise his Council Members.

RP: TVP will carry out speed enforcement through Roads Policing but only a small proportion of the current level.

Review of revised budget and in year reductions / Options for further cost savings

RO outlined possible revised budgets. The entire capital budget has been removed. The communications budget has been reduced by £80,000. [REDACTED]. There are other possible revenue cost savings, e.g. Fixed Penalty software including StarTraq.

There is currently a budget deficit of £203k which could rise to £265k without Reading in the Partnership.

There are 3 possible options for savings: Redundancies, Increase Course Fees, New Courses

Action: Partnership Board to look at possible savings.

RP: Changing course fees in mid-year would be a challenge but it would be better to look at a sustainable model for next year. There will be a new seat belt course introduced later.

This leaves redundancies as the main option.

HMCS has a meeting planned to bring back office staff together to discuss savings, centralising in one office, etc. Any savings would be planned for next year, and difficult to bring in this year, as changes this year would include redundancy costs. Redeployment is the first option.

It was clarified that currently the cameras previously used in Oxfordshire are now being deployed in other areas, so the overall enforcement levels stay at the current level.

The budget deficit is £203k. After a discussion, it was agreed by all that the Partnership would go back to Oxfordshire and bill them for the remainder of their costs.

Course fee increases were discussed. RP was unhappy about making a short term increase to pass on to the motorist before full negotiations take place.

How would the Partnership handle a deficit? There is a contingency of £200k but using this would mean there would be no winding up costs available for next year.

Action: SB (RBWM) will work with RO to put together a reasoned letter to Oxfordshire. It will be made very clear that it is on behalf of TVSRP not BCC.

Partners agreed that for this year, there should be 1 invoice to cover the full year, and everyone must pay their full 1 year costs now. This is to bring as much stability to the Partnership as possible.

Action: RO will send out a full budget breakdown to all partners.

Partnership Model post 2011

RO provided a series of possible models for the future Partnership structure.

Model 1 – Hypothecation. This would require Government approval, and has been ruled out.

Model 2 – Specific Road Safety Grant (via Highways Authorities). This requires all partners to agree activity levels, and would be non-ring fenced. This is likely to be cut in October, perhaps being merged into central funding for local authorities.

Model 3 – A central partnership agreement (MoU) to set out aims and objectives. Individual SLA/contracts between the “Partnership” and Highways Authority members to agree levels of service and costs. Each SLA would be completely flexible and costs would be charged based on activities: Fixed speed cameras, mobile speed cameras, red light cameras, average speed systems, roadside checks, education campaigns (e.g. SDSA).

The “Partnership” format would need to be decided. A charity, or not for profit company, etc are possible structures.

In model 3, HA funding needs to be set at £765k and will consist of a membership fee (variable by partner) and annual fixed camera loading fee, with a mobile component. The TVP funding from course fees will be £2,379k.

There could be more course fees, by either increasing camera loading (we are the lowest level in the UK) or more courses - ACPO suggest extra courses for offences between 40-49mph. One course is currently allowed every 3

years. Perhaps this might be changed to 1 every 2 years. Re-offenders could have a second longer education course. The suggested cost might be £80k course with £30 administration fee.

The Partnership could include bespoke services to individual partners, e.g. road user risk profiling and campaign development; route analysis and cluster mapping, SID management.

ACPO are keen to look at regionalisation of fixed penalty costs.

Thames Valley Police believe that the concept of individual service agreements seems a good way forward. RP commented that we cannot professionally continue with current structure; we need a stable coordinated plan to ensure road safety.

Timetable and next steps

RP: The Thames Valley Police Chief Constable is concerned about the current position and staff level risk. She wants a stable model by next month.

JS: Bucks CC needs detail for building their budget. Bucks politicians will be making the final decision after consultation/advice from JS/SB. The cut-off point to close the Partnership is Dec 1st 2010.

Action: RO will model what the partners will need to pay in 2011/12 to help decisions. This will be included with the minutes of the meeting.

SB (RBWM): The Partners must respond to questions and commit to future in advance of their Comprehensive Spending Review.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 29th September 2010 (RO to confirm date and location)