

transport provision



Transport Provision

**Best
Value
Review**

Best Value

**Executive
Summary of
Transport
Provision
Best Value
Review**

**Police Authority
Lead Member**



Helen Mercury

Consultant



Garwyn Phillips

**Best Value Review
Team Member**



Phil Fortun

***transport
provision***



Contents

| Section | Page |
|--|------|
| 1. Introduction | 2 |
| 1.1 Context | 2 |
| 1.2 Overview | 2 |
| 1.3 Historical Perspective | 3 |
| 2. Project Definition | 4 |
| 2.1 Project Objective | 4 |
| 2.2 Project Scope | 4 |
| 2.3 Costs and Benefits of the Review | 6 |
| 3. Project Methodology | 7 |
| 3.1 Outline | 7 |
| 3.2 Approach to the Five 'C's | 7 |
| 4. Position Statement | 10 |
| 5. Findings | 11 |
| 5.1 Detailed Findings | 11 |
| 5.2 Summary of Findings | 15 |
| 6. Evaluation of Strategic Options | 16 |
| 6.1 Historical Option | 16 |
| 6.2 Out-source Option | 17 |
| 6.3 Fleet Management Collaboration | 18 |
| 6.4 Fleet Provision Collaboration | 20 |
| 6.5 Views Expressed during Consultations | 21 |
| 6.6 Summary of Options | 21 |
| 7. Recommendations | 23 |
| 7.1 Areas for Improvement | 23 |
| 7.2 Main Recommendations | 26 |
| 8. Improvement Plan | 28 |

1. Introduction

Context

Bedfordshire Police is subject to the Best Value legislation, which subjects police authorities to a duty to make arrangements for the achievement of Best Value in the performance of their functions. Best Value is defined as:¹

"A duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which functions are exercised having regards to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness."

The process entails each Authority producing a Best Value Performance Plan. Bedfordshire Police has chosen to embed this in the Annual Policing Plan. The current plan has a five-year timetable from 2000/01 (year one) to 2004/05 (year five). The Best Value Performance Plan has scheduled two years (years two and three) in which the subject matter 'deployment' is to be reviewed.²

"Deployment is the efficient and effective use of people and other resources (e.g. vehicles) across the range of services we provide on an on-going basis"

This Best Value Review addresses the transport resource. As a holistic review, it covers all modes of transport provision and cuts across departmental boundaries. The bulk of transport provision is vehicle fleet provision, which is the responsibility of the Transport Department. Responsibility for other areas of provision (such as private vehicle use, public transport) lies elsewhere.

Overview

Bedfordshire Police, in common with other police forces, has a duty to provide Best Value in the delivery of its services under the Local Government Act 1999. As a consequence of this Act and the problems experienced with the support function in 2001, the Director of Finance and Administration commissioned a fundamental, independent, holistic Best Value Review of transport provision.

The provision of transport services is vital to the mobility of the police service. The Audit Commission recognised the importance of transport in its research paper:³

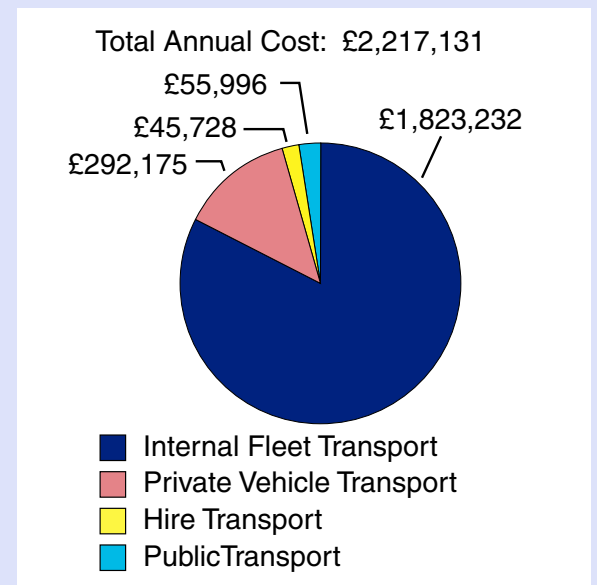
'Transport underpins the operational effectiveness of the police service.'

Bedfordshire Police is one of the smaller provincial forces in the U.K. This is reflected in the Transport Department, which operates a fleet of around **235** permanent vehicles to meet the operational requirements of the Force. The total cost of transport provision is approximately **£2.2 million** per annum. (Figure 1). This represents **3.3 per cent** of the annual budget of the force (£66.8 million).⁴

The provision of fleet vehicles (including maintenance and fuel) accounts for **82 per cent** of expenditure. The responsibility for this provision resides principally within the Transport Department.

The remaining **18 per cent** of expenditure is spent on the use of private vehicles, the provision of hire vehicles, and travel by public transport. The responsibility for these forms of transport provision resides principally with the devolved budget holders.

FIGURE 1
Annual Cost of Transport Provision



Source: Bedfordshire Police Audited FMS accounts fiscal year 2000/2001.

¹ Local Government Act 1999, Part I Best Value [section3(1)].

² 'Annual Policing Plan & Best Value Performance Plan' Bedfordshire Police Authority 2001/02.

³ 'Improving Vehicle Fleet Management in the Police Service', Audit Commission, 1989.

⁴ 'Annual Policing Plan & Best Value Performance Plan', Bedfordshire Police Authority, 2001/02.

1.3 Historical Perspective

The Transport Department has been subject to periodic reviews and inspections. The major outcomes of which are as follows:

1995 HMIC Inspection of Bedfordshire Police

The report by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary stated that:⁵

'Her Majesty's Inspectors were highly impressed at the efficiency and sound business practices of the Fleet Manager. Robust systems and performance monitoring of staff and vehicles has ensured that Bedfordshire Police has one of the lowest vehicle running costs per officer at £3,848 compared with the English non-Metropolitan figure of £4,937. Indeed, by the energetic driving down of costs, the Fleet Manager has been able to maintain lower running costs than in commercial fleets, whose vehicles do not operate in such a demanding environment.'

1998 EFQM Assessment.

The Force Inspectorate of Bedfordshire Police carried out a performance assessment of the Transport Department. The Review concluded that:⁶

'A major failing when measuring departmental performance ... was the lack of 'hard evidence' provided or otherwise uncovered.'

1999 Review by Business Concepts Ltd.

The Review by Business Concepts International Limited was commissioned to identify the scope for the improvement of processes within the Directorate of Finance and Administration. Recommendations related to the Fleet Management Function and centred on the need to improve the performance management.⁷

'The current quality and performance measurements are not related to the outcome of the (Transport) Unit.'

2000/2001 HMIC Inspection of Bedfordshire Police.

The most recent HMIC report identified shortcomings in the fleet information system and recommended a review of management information requirements.⁸

'The computer database ... does not provide sufficient management information to monitor performance against targets.'

2002 Best Value Review by ADvisa/Bedfordshire Police

During the time leading up to September 2001 the level of service provided by the Transport Department had fallen noticeably and the Director of Finance and Administration commissioned this Review. The project team was based on a partnership arrangement bringing together the inside knowledge of the Bedfordshire Police Transport Department with the expertise of an external consultant – an approach that is commended as good practice for this kind of review. The selection of a suitably qualified industry consultant to lead the Review (ADvisa Research & Consultancy Services) brought to the Review in-depth knowledge of Best Value legislation, specialist expertise in the transport industry and a track record of experience within the police arena.⁹

5 HMIC Inspection Report on Bedfordshire Police, 1995 (section 3.18).

6 Performance Assessment of 'R' Department (Transport), Force Inspectorate, May 1998 (executive summary).

7 Business Concepts Report Volume 4 Fleet Management, 1999 (section 1.2.1).

8 HMIC Inspection Report on Bedfordshire Police, 2001 (section 5.19).

9 HMIC Briefing Paper on Best Value, Dec 2001 (section 14 support services).

2. Project Definition

2.1 Project Objective

The terms of reference for the Review were defined as:¹⁰

'To undertake a Holistic Performance Review of Transport Provision in Bedfordshire Police in order to produce a Best Value Improvement Plan that charts the strategic way forward.'

2.2 Project Scope

In order to be holistic, all activities associated with transport provision need to be reviewed. This includes pertinent activities, the responsibility for which resides outside the Transport Department. In addition, the Review needs to address high-level strategic activities as well as day-to-day operational activities. A matrix that encompasses all these activities is shown in Figure 2, as a hierarchy of three levels.

Level 1 -Transport Strategy and Policy

The activities of level 1 concern the policy-making decisions associated with corporate priorities, strategic aims, procedural processes and performance standards.

The transport function is carried out within a policy-setting environment determined by the Authority. Policy, as a core function, is a corporate responsibility.

Level 2 - Transport Management

The activities of level 2 concern the managerial control in the delivery of the transport service and management of the transport resource.

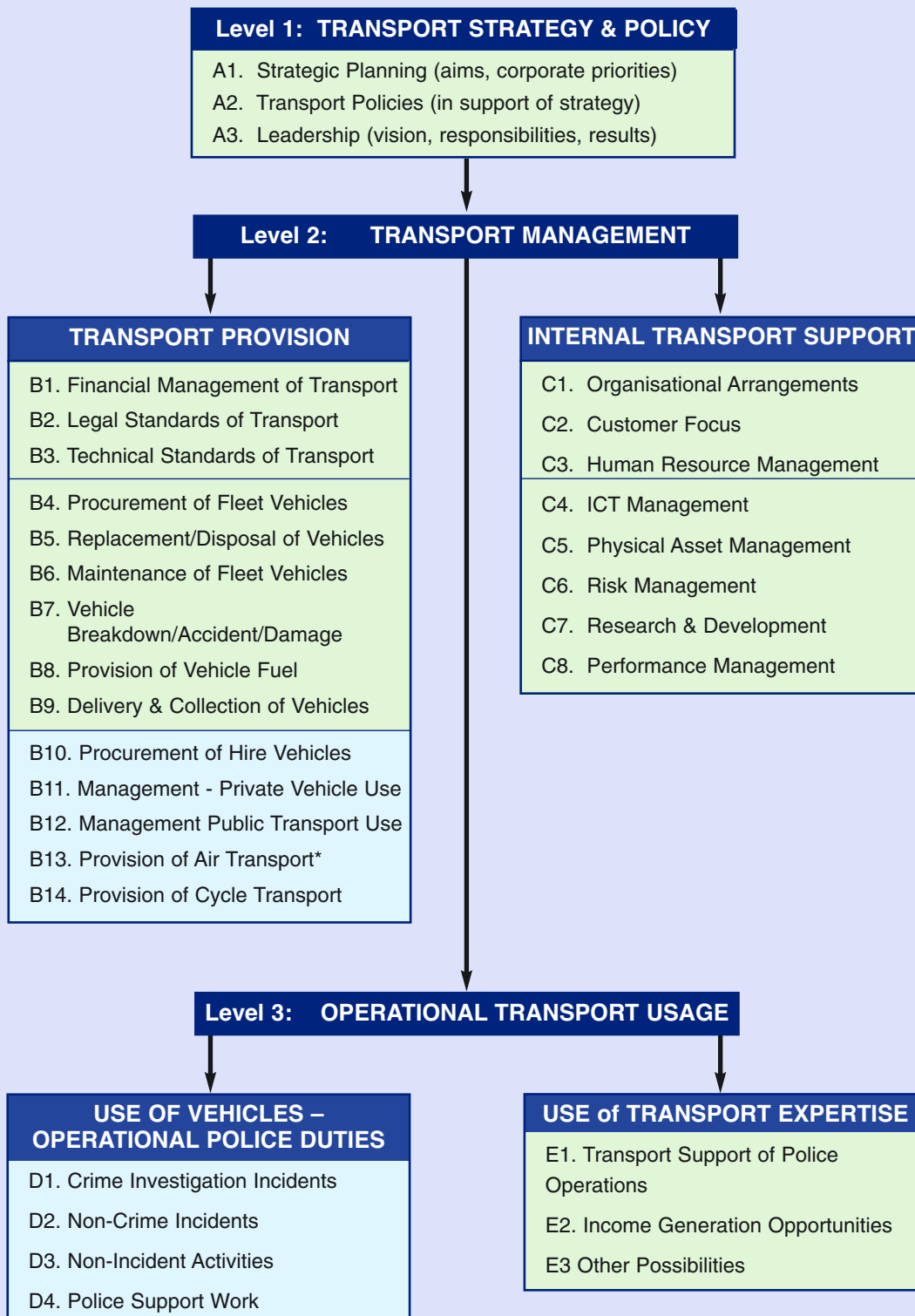
Transport services consist of both fleet and non-fleet provision to the Authority. Management of the delivery of these services also requires management of the support resources.

Level 3 - Operational Transport Usage

The activities of level 3 concern the usage of transport in the execution of police and support duties.

The purpose of providing transport services is to aid the effectiveness of operational policing. Use of transport expertise, in areas such as vehicle maintenance for external bodies are value-added activities, provided they comply with corporate aims and objectives.

FIGURE 2 Transport Function – Matrix of Activities



Note: The responsibility for activities shaded green resides within the Transport Department.

* Activity B13 concerns the provision of a helicopter and the consortium arrangements for this will be examined as part of another Best Value Review. Consequently, Activity B13 is excluded from this Review.

2.3 Costs and Benefits of the Review

The resources and cost of carrying out the Review is shown in Figure 3. The total cost of the Review was £21,500. This is made up of £16,500 spent on external resources and £5,000 of internal staff resources.

The potential benefits depend on the option chosen. The collaboration options offer estimated cash savings at a minimum of £50,000, recurring (year-on-year). This is based on the availability of greater

procurement discounts and the savings in adopting a proven fleet management information system.

Further benefits arise from non-cashable efficiency improvements that will improve the overall mobility and effectiveness of operational policing. These benefits have started to become evident during the six months of collaboration since September 2001.

FIGURE 3 Cost of Best Value Review

| RESOURCES | Number of Days Forecast | Number of Days Actual Forecast |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| External Consultant | 20 | 25 |
| Fleet Control Officer (Acting Head of Department) | 20 | 24 |
| Other Bedfordshire Police Officers | 2 | 2 |
| Thames Valley Police Officers | 5 | 5 |

| RESOURCES | Opportunity Cost Forecast | Opportunity Cost Actual | Cash Cost Forecast | Cash Cost Actual |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| External Consultant | - | - | £10,000 | £12,500 |
| Bedfordshire Police | £4,500 | £5,000 | £2,000 | £2,000 |
| Thames Valley Police | - | - | £2,000 | £2,000 |
| TOTAL | £4,500 | £5,000 | £14,000 | £16,500 |

The total cost of the Review was £21,500. The potential cashable savings from the Review over the next five years could exceed £250,000, resulting from savings made dependent on the option selected. Furthermore, the opportunity for non-cashable efficiency improvements that will improve the overall operational mobility and effectiveness of core service delivery of policing is substantial.

3. Project Methodology

3.1 Outline

The corporate methodology for large projects within Bedfordshire Police is 'PRINCE TWO' Project Management. This methodology has been adopted for the Best Value Review. A professional external consultant was engaged to carry out the Review in association with in-house staff. The consultant, as project leader, had the remit of ensuring that the principles of the Best Value legislation were fully applied.

The project produced two sets of documentation, circulated to members of the Best Value Review Board:

● Evidence Dossier

The dossier consists of a report on each activity identified in Figure 2. Each report includes the following:

- A Position Statement.
- Performance Information.
- Analysis of the five 'C's.
- Findings.
- Areas for Improvement.

The dossier provides detailed evidence supporting the findings and recommendations of the Review. In addition, the dossier is a source of reference for external scrutiny by HMIC and will be a reference for those with responsibility for implementing the improvement action plan.

The dossier contains a degree of confidential information that is not intended to be disseminated in the public arena. However, the material is available for clarification purposes if required by members of the Force or Authority. The Evidence Dossier has been scrutinised and approved by the Project Board.

● Executive Summary Document & Improvement Plan

This document provides an overview of the Review process, contains a summary of the findings and makes recommendations for improvements. It is intended that this document will, following approval by the Authority, become the final published Best Value document on transport provision.

3.2 Approach to the Five 'C's

The heart of a Best Value Review is the application of the five 'C's, which are

Challenge, Compare, Consult, Compete and Collaborate. Each activity in transport provision has been subject to an analysis under each 'C', as reported in the Evidence Dossier. This analysis has led to a set of findings, which have formed the basis of the recommendations (Section 7).

3.2.1 Challenge

The external consultant provided a set of challenging questions in each area of activity. These challenge questions were an amalgam of questions devised by bodies active in providing Best Value advice including HMIC, Audit Commission and ADvisa Consultancy. Additional challenge questions were posed during the Review by members of the project board, finance officers and service users.

The response to these challenges is collated within each section of the Evidence Dossier. The nature of these questions are illustrated as follows:

- Why should the service be provided (is it statutory duty, a legal power or a supportive function of front-line services)?
- Who should deliver the service (make or buy)?
- How should the service be delivered (options)?
- What should be the objectives of the service (performance standards)?
- Where should the service be delivered (needs analysis)?
- When should the service be delivered (needs analysis)?

3.2.2 Compare

Each activity was subject to a comparative analysis with other forces and the transport industry. A general problem encountered was the lack of reliable transport information from the internal transport fleet management system within Bedfordshire Police. Particularly valuable sources of comparative information were:

- The Bedfordshire Police Audited Accounts (most recent three years).
- The CIPFA¹¹ Annual Police Statistics (most recent three years).
- The NAPFM¹² Transport Survey (2002).
- Best Value Transport Reviews of Thames Valley Police and Kent Police.

¹¹ Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.
¹² National Association of Police Fleet Management.

- Various Benchmarking Data from Other Forces.
- Transport Industry Indicators.
- Internal Performance Indicators within Bedfordshire Police.

3.2.3 Consult

Consultation is an innovative aspect of Best Value Reviews when compared with traditional management reviews. Ideally, consultation occurs with all stakeholders so that a wide cross-section of views is gathered. Such consultation needs meticulous planning to ensure good use of time and resources.

The following methods of consulting stakeholders were used:

- e-mail questionnaires for users/customers of the transport service.
- Discussion forums, with questionnaires, for Focus Groups.
- Discussion forums, with questionnaires, for civilian transport officers.
- Discussion forums, with questionnaires for transport workshop staff.
- Telephone survey of key suppliers to the Transport Department.

A total of 51 stakeholders contributed to the Best Value Survey of Transport (details in the Evidence Dossier Annex):

- 15 detailed e-mail responses from users/customers of the transport service.
- 17 contributors within the Focus Groups.
- 4 civilian transport officers in police divisions.
- 6 workshop staff within the Transport Department.
- 9 key commercial suppliers to the Transport Department.

Individual consultees were chosen to ensure the views of a broad cross-section of stakeholders were obtained. Lines of communication with the Transport Best Value Review Team remained open throughout the Review to allow any stakeholder the opportunity to

express views. The focus groups were facilitated independently by the Bedfordshire Police Business Services Department to ensure equitability in the process. Consultees were appreciative of the fact that their views were being taken into account.

The Evidence Dossier contains an annex, which contains copies of the questionnaire forms, the results obtained and the analyses made. The consultation exercise provided valuable evidence to substantiate the findings of the Review (as referenced in the appropriate sections).

The consultation methodology has provided a valuable template for future consultations in implementing the Improvement Plan.

3.2.4 Compete

The view of HMIC on competitiveness within the transport service is summarised as follows:¹³

'Retaining significant elements of non-core police work in-house such as vehicle management is valid providing that the Force can demonstrate competitiveness.'

The Bedfordshire Police view on competition within the Transport Department is expressed as:¹⁴

'Bedfordshire Police corporately would always require to maintain in-house workshops within the Force property portfolio to deliver parts of the servicing and maintenance aspects of the service.'

This stance does not preclude market-testing or out-sourcing parts of the transport service, if found to be more cost-effective. However, total reliance on commercial provision would give rise to unacceptable risk because of the sensitive nature of some aspects of policing. The role of competition and the competitive value of the transport service were assessed in the light of the above views.

The extent of out-sourcing transport activities across 32 UK police forces was surveyed (Evidence Dossier, Section B6). The extent to which Bedfordshire Police out-sources transport activities was quantified in financial terms (Evidence Dossier, Section A). Labour

¹³ 'Best Value Briefing Notes for the Police Service' - Audit and Inspection, Home Office, Sept. 1999.
¹⁴ Bedfordshire Police Position Statement.

rates for vehicle maintenance were market tested (page 19). Finally, out-sourcing was examined as one of four strategic options for the way forward (Evidence Dossier, Section C1).

3.2.5 Collaborate

Collaboration is an optional fifth 'C', which is increasingly finding favour as a method of encouraging partnership working. Collaboration offers the prospect of innovative ways of delivering services that breaks out of geographical and organisational boundaries.

The exploration of collaborative opportunities has been an important part of the Review. Practical considerations indicate that collaboration is likely to be most effective with neighbouring police forces. One approach is to consider a multi-force collaboration across the Eastern Region. This approach was not pursued because it would be a large-scale and long-term undertaking with no immediate assurance that it would lead to Best Value.

The alternative approach of seeking partnership with one other police force was adopted. The force chosen for an in-depth investigation was the neighbouring Thames Valley Police. This choice was arrived at on the following basis:

- Thames Valley is already involved in a short-term collaboration arrangement on transport management, which is working to deliver Best Value. This arrangement was set up to address shortcomings in the transport service, as identified in a recent report.¹⁵

Her Majesty's Inspector congratulates Thames Valley for its impressive, professionally run fleet management operation.

- Thames Valley has been recognised as a centre of transport excellence:¹⁶
- A successful partnership already exists between the two forces in the operation of the helicopter service.

¹⁵ 'Bedfordshire Police Fleet Appraisal', report by Thames Valley Police, Sept. 2001.

¹⁶ HMIC Inspection Report on Thames Valley Police, 2000 (section 8.16).

4 Position Statement

The total annual audited cost in 2000/2001 for the provision of Transport Services is shown in Figure 4. This identifies the method of provision as either in-house or out-sourced

from which it can be calculated that three-quarters (£1,672,924) of the total transport expenditure is out-sourced and as such is subject to regular market-testing.

FIGURE 4 Transport Expenditure 2000/01

| Activity Heading | Area of Expenditure | Amount | In-House Provision | Description |
|------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| B2 | Insurance Policy | £224,716 | No | Annual Brokerage Exercise |
| B4 | Capital Purchase | £600,000 | No | PITO Contracts |
| B4 | Livery | £12,096 | No | Local Supply Arrangement |
| B6/7 | Out-source Vehicle Repair | £89,629 | No | Local Supply Arrangement |
| B6/7 | Parts & Tyres | £180,957 | No | PITO Contracts |
| B6/7 | Oils & Consumables | £24,962 | No | PITO Oil Contract |
| B8 | Fuel | £436,949 | No | PITO PHH Contact |
| B11 | Contract Hire | £1,891 | No | BCC Contracts |
| B11 | Car Allowances | £290,284 | Yes | |
| B12 | Public Transport | £55,996 | No | Local Arrangements |
| C3 | Staff | £238,188 | Yes | |
| C5 | Premises | £12,084 | Yes | |
| | Other | £3,651 | Yes | |
| | Total | £2,171,403 | | |
| B10 | Devolved Short-Term Vehicle Hire | £45,728 | No | Local Supply Arrangement |
| | Grand Total | £2,217,131 | | |

Sources: Main table — audited FMS accounts fiscal year 2000/2001
 Devolved short-term vehicle hire — devolved report 2000/2001

Notes: Income from vehicle disposal amounted to £88,000 (Activity B5).
 Net transport expenditure equals £2,129,131.

The responsibility for expenditure shaded green resides within the Transport Department.

The Transport Department has channels for partnership working with some external suppliers and with other forces through the national association (NAPFM). No formal partnership arrangements are in place, apart from those provided by the national fleet procurement framework.

Since September 2001, Bedfordshire Police has engaged in a partnership arrangement with Thames Valley Police. The latter has provided strategic transport support to address the shortcomings identified at that time.¹⁵

¹⁵ 'Best Value Briefing Notes for the Police Service' - Audit and Inspection, Home Office, Sept. 1999. Bedfordshire Police Position Statement.
 'Bedfordshire Police Fleet Appraisal', report by Thames Valley Police, Sept. 2001.
 HMIC Inspection Report on Thames Valley Police, 2000 (section 8.16).

5. Findings

5.1 Detailed Findings

The examination of each area of transport activity produced findings, which are summarised in Figures 5 to 9. The support for

these findings is set out in the corresponding sections of the Evidence Dossier.

FIGURE 5 **Level 1** **Transport Strategy & Policy**

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | DETAILED FINDINGS | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| A1 | Strategic Planning (aims, corporate priorities) | The Transport Strategy is under-developed and the standards of service to users are ill-defined with limited performance measurement. | Section A |
| A2 | Transport Policies (in support of strategy) | There is an incomplete set of policies to cover transport activities. | Section A |
| A3 | Leadership (vision, responsibilities, results) | There has been a failure in effective leadership at the departmental management level. The lack of effective departmental management has been a critical factor in the under-performance of the transport service. | Section A |

FIGURE 6 Level 2 Transport Provision (Activities B1 – B9)

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | DETAILED FINDINGS | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|----|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| B1 | Financial Management of Transport | There is good financial control and accountability. Devolved budgeting is good but present arrangement is over-complicated, and does not deliver customers expectations. Audit concerns emanating from the inadequacy of the ICT system remain. | Section B1 |
| B2 | Legal Standards of Transport | The compliance with legal standards is satisfactory and there is no high-level concern. Improvements dealing with low-level concerns within the Transport Department are in-hand | Section B2 |
| B3 | Technical Standards of Transport | There is no formal system in place to ensure the technical needs of customers, in the supply of new vehicles, are met. | Section B3 |
| B4 | Procurement of Fleet Vehicles | There is a strong indication that significant extra discounts in fleet procurement would be available by combining the purchasing power of Bedfordshire Police with Thames Valley Police. | Section B4 |
| B5 | Replacement/Disposal of Vehicles | The replacement programme has resulted in an uneven fleet profile, which has the potential to cause problems in efficiency and effectiveness. The administration and audit of vehicle disposal adheres to good practice. | Section B5 |
| B6 | Maintenance of Fleet Vehicles | The scope of maintenance work carried out in-house by Bedfordshire Police is in line with the majority of other forces. There has been, and continues to be, a high level of customer satisfaction with the quality of vehicle maintenance. There has been a marked improvement in overall customer satisfaction between Sept 2001 & Apr 2002. The collaboration with Thames Valley Police has proved beneficial. | Section B6 |
| B7 | Vehicle Breakdown/ Accident/Damage | There is a comprehensive policy in place for dealing with vehicle collisions. Accident repair work is subject to local arrangements. The use of extended warranty to cover the cost of vehicle recovery represents good practice (post Sept.01) | Section B7 |
| B8 | Provision of Vehicle Fuel | The use of fuel cards, under the national arrangements, represents good practice. The fleet is predominantly petrol driven, which is out of line with industry trends. | Section B8 |
| B9 | Delivery & Collection of Vehicles | There is no adequate monitoring of downtime and this is a factor in the dissatisfaction with the efficiency of the transport service. | Section B9 |

FIGURE 7 Level 2 Transport Provision (Activities B10 – B14)

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | DETAILED FINDINGS | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|-----|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| B10 | Procurement of Hire Vehicles | The size of the hire budget has historically been modest. However, in the last financial year it has increased by 50 per cent. | Section B10 |
| B11 | Management - Private Vehicle Use | Expenditure in this area is modest but there is no evidence of a review in recent times. | Section B11 |
| B12 | Management Public Transport Use | The size of the public transport expenditure is modest, but there is no Force guidance on the options and relative merits of public transport. | Section B12 |
| B13 | Provision of Air Transport | NO FINDINGS (this activity is subject to a separate Best Value Review). | |
| B14 | Provision of Cycle Transport | This is a minor expenditure area. | Section B14 |

FIGURE 8 Level 2 Internal Transport Support

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | DETAILED FINDINGS | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|----|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| C1 | Organisational Arrangements | Four options are identified to replace the current temporary organisational arrangement. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Historical Option ● The Out-Source Option ● The Fleet Management Collaboration ● The Fleet Provision Collaboration. | Section C1 |
| C2 | Customer Focus | There has been a marked improvement in customer satisfaction since Sept. 2001. The satisfaction score has increased from 40% to 62% | Section C2 |
| C3 | Human Resource Management | The transport staff have a fuller appreciation than customers of the deterioration in services that occurred in the year up to Sept. 2001. Transport staff are very supportive of the collaboration options. | Section C3 |
| C4 | ICT Management | The current Fleet Management System (entitled VFM – Vehicle Fleet Manager) is inadequate in its features and unacceptable in its performance in Bedfordshire. No other police force operates this system. The inadequacy of the Fleet Management System is a critical factor in the under-performance of the transport service. | Section C4 |
| C5 | Physical Asset Management | The current transport premises at Kempston and Luton meet the present and foreseeable needs for transport provision. Customers expressed a strong preference for retaining current transport facilities at current locations. The current modest cost of transport premises represents very good value for Bedfordshire Police. | Section C5 |
| C6 | Risk Management | Pre-Sept 2001, risk assessment received a low priority Collaboration with Thames Valley Police has introduced improved risk management through the development of a Health and Safety Code of Practice and the provision of training to all staff on manual handling. | Section C6 |
| C7 | Research & Development | As a small operation, the Transport Department relies on external research to inform on future developments. | Section C7 |
| C8 | Performance Management | The financial performance of the transport function is average when compared with other U.K. forces. There is a lack of departmental performance management (in terms of economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity and environment) with an absence of key performance indicators. The level of satisfaction with maintenance quality has always been high. However, customer satisfaction with the overall service has been low (40% score in Sept. 2001). This has improved markedly (62% score in April 2002) and the signs are that this improvement is set to continue in the short term. | Section C8 |

FIGURE 9 Level 3 Operational Transport Usage

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | DETAILED FINDINGS | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| D | Use of Vehicles – Operational Police Duties | The inadequacy of the Fleet Management System has resulted in a lack of information to inform on vehicle choice and usage for operational duties. The Force has responded to Audit Commission ¹⁷ advice in addressing the important role of vehicles in corporate identity and Force visibility. | Section D |
| E | Use of Transport Expertise | The Transport Department is active in providing transport expertise to appropriate external agencies. | Section E |

5.2 Summary of Findings

The consultation exercise indicated a general dissatisfaction with the performance of the transport service. This dissatisfaction was shared amongst customers, key suppliers and transport staff.

Two primary causes for the under-performance of the transport service up until September 2001 are identified as:

- Ineffective departmental management particularly in the lack of service efficiency and promptness, but also in poor staff motivation and morale.
- Inadequacy in the computerised Fleet Management System, particularly in its poor range of features and poor performance.

Any improvement plan must address these two fundamental problems.

Since September 2001, the first issue has been addressed by engaging transport expertise from Thames Valley Police. This expertise has been used to resolve strategic transport problems and to provide support to the fleet management staff in the operational delivery of the transport service.

A fundamental challenge of the current form of transport provision leads to the conclusion that the current organisational arrangement is not sustainable in the medium to long term. This is because it has been put in place, through the inter-police mutual aid provisions, to address the major shortcomings identified in September 2001. Four alternative organisational options are identified (Evidence Dossier, Section C1):

- The Historical Option.
- The Out-Source Option.
- The Fleet Management Collaboration.
- The Fleet Provision Collaboration.

¹⁷ 'Open All Hours', Audit Commission Report.

6. Evaluation of Strategic Opinions

The current management of the Transport Department is a temporary arrangement. Thames Valley Police provides strategic transport assistance on a mutual aid basis. This has allowed the main shortcomings in the transport service to be addressed. This arrangement is not sustainable beyond the short-term and a replacement arrangement must be found.

At present key Bedfordshire Police posts such as Transport Manager, Workshop Foreperson and Storeperson are vacant pending the outcome of the Best Value Review. The findings identified four options to replace the current temporary organisational arrangement for delivering the transport service. These are:

- 1) **Historical Option** – in which a Transport Manager is recruited with similar responsibilities to the previous incumbent.
- 2) **Out-Source Option** – in which an external commercial provider is engaged for fleet maintenance and/or fleet management.
- 3) **Fleet Management Collaboration** – in which Thames Valley Police is engaged to provide a fleet management service leaving fleet maintenance to be carried out in-house.
- 4) **Fleet Provision Collaboration** – in which Thames Valley Police is engaged to provide a full fleet management service and a fleet maintenance service, using the facilities at Kempston and Luton.

6.1 Historical Option

The Historical Option is a reversion to the transport arrangements of five or so years ago. The Transport Department would be operated with a Transport Manager with similar responsibilities to the previous incumbent. There would be the requirement to recruit a Transport Manager with suitable qualifications and experience. In addition, a new Fleet Management System would need to be procured.

The organisational structure for this option is shown in Figure 10. The three vacant posts (Transport Manager, Workshop Foreperson and Storeperson) would need to be filled. The recruitment of a Foreperson and a Storeperson should not present any particular problem.

Advantages of Historical Option

The benefits of reverting to the Historical Option are as follows:

- The Historical Option has worked satisfactorily in the past. It can work again provided a Transport Manager of sufficient calibre is recruited.
- The Historical Option enables Bedfordshire Police to remain in full control of resources, since transport staff would be direct employees of the Authority.

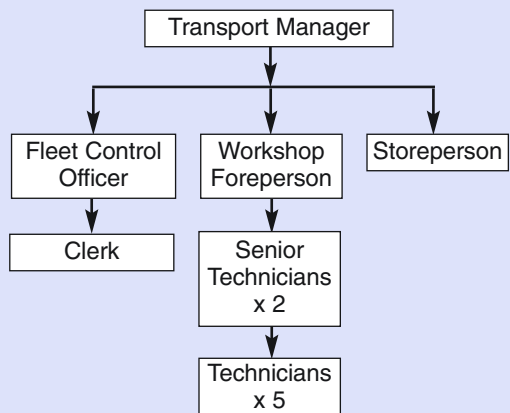
- The Force retains independence in all aspects of transport decision-making.

Disadvantages of Historical Option

The disadvantages of reverting to the Historical Option are as follows:

- Difficulty is likely to be experienced in recruiting a suitable Transport Manager. The job description is a combination of technical competence, managerial competence, familiarity with operational policing needs and the ability to generate strategic ideas. There is currently a skill shortage in the market place for Transport Managers of the required calibre and Bedfordshire Police might find difficulty in offering a competitive package given the modest fleet size.
- The Historical Option requires the procurement of a new Fleet Management System. This would involve significant effort, with the need for staff training, an elapsed time of at least twelve months before becoming operational, with an attendant capital cost of approximately £100K.
- The Historical Option is a conservative choice that looks back to the past when innovative thinking might produce a better option.
- The Historical Option suffers from diseconomies of scale. This manifests itself in limited purchasing power and limited management resilience should problems arise in staff shortages.
- There remains no depth in the technical managerial resource. This risks a repeat of the degradation to services experienced during 2000-2001.
- Significant time-scale involved before potential benefits might accrue.
- This option is not favoured by customers or transport staff.

FIGURE 10 Structure for Historical Option



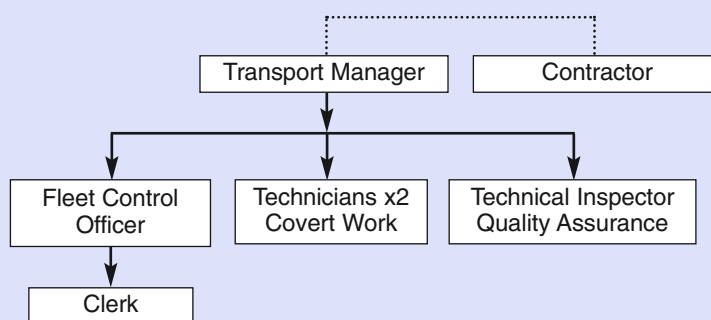
6.2 Out-Source Option

The out-source option consists of finding an external provider to undertake a contract for providing the fleet maintenance and/or fleet management service. Out-sourcing became a common option amongst local authorities during the period that compulsory competitive tendering legislation was in place (1988 to 1997). Police transport services were exempt from this legislation in recognition of the

sensitivity associated with police operations and security issues. Nevertheless several forces have out-sourced vehicle maintenance to the private sector (Metropolitan Police, Nottinghamshire Police). Other forces have engaged a Local Authority to undertake vehicle maintenance (Staffordshire Police, Warwickshire Police).

The organisational structure for an out-sourcing option is shown in Figure 11.

FIGURE 11 Structure for Out-Source Option



Advantages of Out-Source Option

The benefits of out-sourcing are as follows:

- The out-source option offers the possibility of access to specialist expertise available from a commercial organisation.
- A well-constructed contract based on contract-hire might provide Bedfordshire Police with fixed financial budget commitments. Such fixed costs would aid budgeting.

Dis-Advantages of Out-Source Option

The dis-advantages of out-sourcing are as follows:

- To date the experience of out-sourced police transport services has not provided clear-cut benefits. Dis-benefits of higher costs and customer dis-satisfaction have been documented.
- Recent experience of market-testing parts of vehicle maintenance have not been encouraging, with higher costs and lower quality ensuing. External labour rates are typically 60% higher with greater vehicle turn-around time (Evidence Dossier, Section B6).
- Bedfordshire Police retains statutory responsibility as a fleet operator with less effective control in discharging this responsibility. A manager able to take on these statutory responsibilities would need to be in place.

- The real cost of out-sourcing tends to be high. Higher costs arise from loss of favourable procurement discounts (as private sector companies do not have access to Government/PITO Contracts), from the necessity to use external workshop premises and from commercial exploitation of contracts.
- An out-source option requires the procurement of a new Fleet Management System. This would involve significant effort and an elapsed time of at least twelve months. The attendant capital cost would depend on the nature of the out-sourced provision but is likely to exceed £50K.
- Security issues would arise. While not insurmountable, systems would be needed in monitoring contractor staff and safeguarding secrecy on specialist operations and covert activities. The existing workshop sites are in police secure premises, which would not be available for use by outside contractors.
- The contract process requires specialist skill and significant resources to comply with the requirements of the EU public procurement regime. The tender process, together with vetting of potential contractors and the suitability of proffered premises would entail a lead-in time of at least a year.
- Strong reservations of customers.

6.3 Fleet Management Collaboration

The collaboration option consists of working with a partner organisation, such as Thames Valley Police, which can provide transport expertise under an open agreement that does not compromise security issues. This collaboration might be confined to the fleet management function. The fleet maintenance service is excluded from this collaboration.

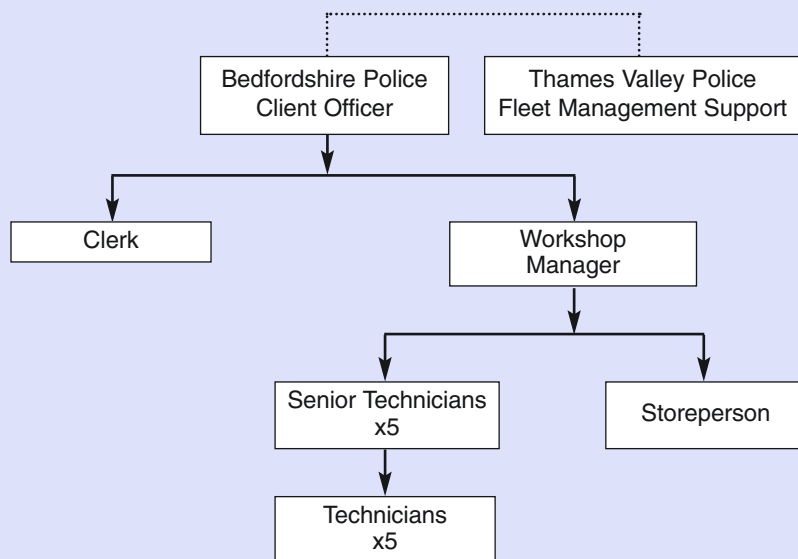
Recent developments in the public sector has seen the encouragement of collaborative ventures, through the use of Private Finance Initiatives (PFI), Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and the relaxation of barriers to partnership arrangements. The primary

impetus has been to seek innovative ways of delivering services that exploit specialist skills, achieve economies of scale and contribute to joined-up thinking.

The Government believes Best Value Reviews can uncover practical methods of collaborative working that deliver a real improvement to front-line services. This belief is supported by the positive experience of collaboration between Bedfordshire Police and Thames Valley Police over the past few months.

The organisational structure for a fleet management collaboration option is shown in Figure 12.

FIGURE 12 Structure for Fleet Management Collaboration



Since September 2001, the structure of Figure 12 has been in place on a temporary basis. The Bedfordshire Fleet Control Officer Acting Head of Department has handled the delivery of operational transport services while Thames Valley Police has provided strategic fleet management support.

The Fleet Control Officer Acting Head of Department is responsible for the in-house operations, staffing, management of fleet administration, budgetary control and user liaison. Thames Valley Police provides high-level strategic support on fleet management issues, providing expertise in areas such as technical specification of vehicles. The arrangement has given Bedfordshire Police workshop staff direct access to Thames Valley Police workshop staff for assistance in operational issues such as technical advice, parts issues and training needs.

Advantages of Fleet Management Collaboration

The benefits of this form of collaboration are as follows:

- Collaboration is in line with the policy of the UK Government to seek innovative ways of working, to achieve the benefits of joined-up thinking (a 'pathfinder' relationship).
- The current collaboration has been in place for eight months and has been shown to be successful. The arrangement has met with improved levels of customer satisfaction (Evidence Dossier, Section C2), increased transport staff morale (Evidence Dossier, Section C3) and significant improvements in the economies, efficiency and effectiveness of the support service (Evidence Dossier, Section C8).

- Collaboration has given Bedfordshire Police access to a larger pool of police transport knowledge, skills and experience with more management resilience. Direct access to Thames Valley Police for strategic & technical support removes the need for Bedfordshire Police to employ a technically qualified Transport Manager. The current Acting Head of Department is a qualified Fleet Manager and has the fleet administration and management skills that are required to act as Head of Department /Client Officer for Bedfordshire Police.
- Police collaboration entails no conflict of priorities, since both authorities have operational policing as their priority.
- The agreement would be with a known partner, with a proven track record. There would be no requirement to embark on a long, high risk, expensive EU procurement process.
- This option has support from customers and transport staff (Section 6.5).
- This option offers estimated cash savings of £50K, recurring (year-on-year). This is based on the availability of greater procurement economies.

Disadvantages of Fleet Management Collaboration

The dis-advantages of this option are as follows:

- The collaboration needs to be placed on a permanent footing through a formal agreement. As an innovative form of collaboration, extra care is needed in ensuring that the agreement is workable and meets the needs of both parties. This requires careful deliberation.
- An educative process is needed to ensure that affected staff share a willingness to make the collaboration succeed.
- Bedfordshire will be giving up some direct control, with long-term reliance, through the agreement, on the partner.
- This option does not address the urgent need for Bedfordshire Police to improve its transport information base (through procuring an adequate Fleet Management Information System with a capital cost of the order of £50K).
- This collaboration does not readily allow for joint procuring of vehicles that would enable economies of scale to be achieved.
- Accountability may become blurred between the two partners resulting in potential responsibility conflicts in the delivery of the service.

6.4 Fleet Provision Collaboration

The collaboration option consists of working with a partner, such as Thames Valley Police, which can provide transport expertise under an open agreement that does not compromise security issues. This collaboration covers complete fleet provision including fleet management and fleet maintenance service. This option retains the staff and workshop operations at Kempston and Luton. It is important to retain the positive benefits identified by customers in their praise of the quality of the work emanating from these workshops (Evidence Dossier, Section C2). The organisational structure for a complete fleet provision collaboration is shown in Figure 13.

Advantages of Fleet Provision Collaboration

This option offers the same benefits as option3 (fleet management collaboration) namely:

- Collaboration is in line with the policy of the UK Government to seek innovative ways of working and to achieve joined-up thinking (a ‘pathfinder’ relationship).
- Collaboration with Thames Valley Police, on a smaller scale, has been shown to be successful (Option 3).
- The collaboration has given Bedfordshire Police access to a larger pool of police transport knowledge, skills and experience with more management resilience. Direct access to Thames Valley Police for strategic & technical support removes the need for Bedfordshire Police to employ a technically qualified Transport Manager. The current Acting Head of Department is a qualified

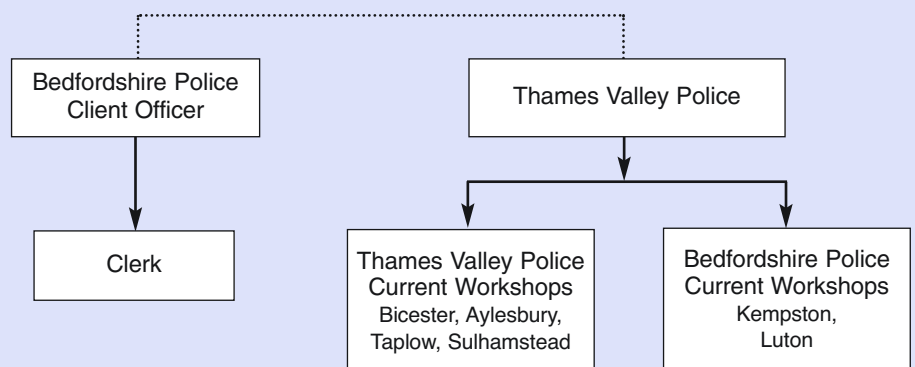
Fleet Manager and has the fleet administration and management skills that are required to act as Head of Department / Client Officer for Bedfordshire Police.

- Police collaboration entails no conflict of priorities, since both authorities have operational policing as their priority.
- The agreement would be with a known partner, with a proven track record. There would be no requirement to embark on a long, high risk, expensive EU procurement process.
- The collaboration agreement can be based on full transparency in information and costs, since there are no security implications in inter-police force co-operation.
- This option has support from customers and transport staff (Section 6.5).

This option of fuller co-operation has the following additional benefits:

- Increased purchasing power available to both Authorities. Bedfordshire Police, in particular, would gain in the procurement of vehicles, equipment and parts. (Evidence Dossier, Section B4)
- Bedfordshire Police would gain access to a proven Fleet Management Information System that is a market leader. This access entails minimal cost. (Evidence Dossier, Section C4).
- The Transport Service would exhibit greater resilience in coping with peaks and troughs in demand volume and resource supply.
- Standardisation on vehicles types could be achieved whilst maintaining corporate image

FIGURE 13 Structure for Fleet Provision Collaboration



- The collaboration partner through its Transport Department enjoys a reputation as a centre of excellence¹⁸ ¹⁹ in transport provision. This would provide Bedfordshire Police reassurance in obtaining high performance standards of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- The collaboration agreement can be based on full transparency in information and costs, since there are no security implications in inter-police force co-operation.
- Full transparency would limit corporate risk.
- This option has the highest level support from of customers and transport staff (Section 6.5).
- This option offers estimated cash savings well in excess of £50K, recurring (year-on-year). This is based on the availability of greater procurement discounts and the savings in adopting a proven fleet management information system.

Dis-Advantages of Fleet Provision Collaboration

The dis-advantages of this option are as follows:

- The collaboration would need to be placed on a permanent footing through a formal agreement. As an innovative form of collaboration extra care would be needed in ensuring that the agreement is workable and meets the needs of both parties. This would require careful deliberation.
- An educative process is needed to ensure that affected staff share a willingness to make the collaboration succeed.
- Bedfordshire would be giving up its direct control of technical staff, whose long-term reliance would be, through the agreement, on the partner. Vehicle types would be standardised across the two authorities (though this would not affect the corporate image of Bedfordshire Police, which would be maintained).

6.5 Views Expressed During Consultations

Extensive consultations on the future organisational arrangements were undertaken. The question asked was:

Transport is currently being managed by

engaging expertise from Thames Valley Police to oversee the service. This is a temporary arrangement and needs to be replaced by a more permanent structure. What are your thoughts about the following alternatives?

- 1. Revert to the historical arrangement and recruit a Transport Manager with similar responsibilities as the previous incumbent (plus new IT system).**
- 2. Out-source to an external provider for (i) fleet management and (ii) fleet maintenance provision.**
- 3. Out-source fleet management to Thames Valley Police, retain fleet maintenance.**
- 4. Out-source fleet management and fleet maintenance to Thames Valley Police.**

This question was posed to all the transport users (customers) and transport staff consulted. There was a remarkable degree of consensus. A summary of the response is as follows:

- The Historical Option (1) is regarded as a possibility, but concern is expressed whether a Transport Manager of the required calibre could be recruited. This is considered to present a significant risk. Stakeholders do not favour the reinstatement of the Historical Option.
- The out-source option (2) is viewed with disfavour with the citing that past experience of market-testing proved unsatisfactory.
- The collaboration options (3) and (4) are regarded favourably with cited benefits of economise of scale and the availability of expertise. Of the two both customers and transport staff favour the second (option 4).
- Any arrangement should maintain the current maintenance quality and that this should continue to be provided locally (at Kempston and Luton).

6.6 Summary of Options

A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each option is summarised in Figure 14.

Each option would require a plan of action to implement. The minimum time by which an option could be in place is April 2003.

¹⁸ HMIC Report on Thames Valley Police Section 8.16 2000

¹⁹ Best Value Review of Transport Provision in Thames Valley Police 2001.

FIGURE 14

Table of Strategic Options

| Option | Description | Advantages | Disadvantages | Capital Cost | Annual Revenue Savings | Corporate Risk | Comments |
|--------|---|---|--|--------------|------------------------|----------------|---|
| 1 | Historic Option. Recruit new staff. | Known Option. Total Resource Control. Retain Independence. | Risk that problems remain unresolved. Extra Cost of Fleet MIS procurement. Conservative and limiting option. Significant time-scale. Dis-economies of scale remain. No Depth of Resource. Not Preferred by Customers. | £100K | £ - | MEDIUM | Depends crucially on selecting manager of calibre. A conservative option indicating limited scope for innovation. |
| 2 | Out-Source Option. Competitive tender to find a private sector provide. | Access to private sector expertise. Fixed costs might aid budgeting. | Unproven benefits to date from out-source experience of police transport. Responsibility without control. Greater Overall Cost. Extra Cost of Fleet MIS procurement. Security issues arise. Poor Service Provision. Expensive tendering process. Strong reservations of Customers. | £50K | £ - | HIGH | Extensive out-sourcing of police transport has yet to provide convincing evidence of its benefits. This option is counter to the Force Position Statement. 8 |
| 3 | Fleet Management Collaboration Negotiate partnership agreement with Thames Valley Police. | Innovative pathfinder Successful experience. Access to pool of skill and knowledge. No priority conflicts. Best In Class Partner. Stakeholder support. User Support. | Requirement to Manage Servicing, Repairs & Maintenance in-house. Extra Cost of Fleet MIS procurement. Loss of some independence | £50K | £50K | MEDIUM | Offers some scope for worthwhile improvements and is closest to the current arrangement. |
| 4 | Fleet Provision Collaboration Negotiate partnership agreement with Thames Valley Police. | Innovative pathfinder Successful experience. Access to pool of skill and knowledge. No priority conflicts. Best In Class Partner. Stakeholder support. Strong User Support Large Purchasing Power. Access to proven Fleet MIS | Less Control Over Vehicle Choice Loss of In-house Expertise | £ - | At least £50K | LOW | Offers the greatest scope for on-going improvements into the future. |

7. Recommendations

Recommendations for the way forward for Bedfordshire Police in the future provision of transport services have been arrived at after a full Best Value Review of the current services, examination of the findings and consultation with stakeholders. Implementing these recommendations would help secure the future economic, efficient, effective, environmental and equitable delivery of this support function for the next five years.

7.1 Areas for Improvement

The examination of each area of transport activity produced areas for improvement, which are summarised in Figure 15, Figure 16, Figure 17 and Figure 18. The support for these recommendations is set out in the corresponding sections of the Evidence Dossier.

FIGURE 15 Level 1 Transport Strategy & Policy

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| A1 | Strategic Planning (aims, corporate priorities) | Improve the Transport Strategy (by addressing comprehensivity and performance management). | Section A |
| A2 | Transport Policies (in support of strategy) | Prepare a complete and consistent Set of Policies to cover all transport activities | Section A |
| A3 | Leadership (vision, responsibilities, results) | Institute an Annual Business Plan to deliver on corporate priorities Put in place Service Level Agreements to govern the relationship between transport provision and user expectations. | Section A |

FIGURE 16 Level 2 Transport Provision

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|-----|------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| B1 | Financial Management of Transport | Simplify the system of transport devolvement by adopting the contract-hire model. Reform the transport ICT system to address the needs for improved audit trail. | Section B1 |
| B2 | Legal Standards of Transport | None identified | Section B2 |
| B3 | Technical Standards of Transport | Develop a formal system for vehicle selection to ensure the technical needs of customers are met. | Section B3 |
| B4 | Procurement of Fleet Vehicles | Develop a procurement strategy in association with the vehicle selection system of B3. Exploit the opportunities for achieving greater discounts through collaboration with Thames Valley Police. | Section B4 |
| B5 | Replacement/Disposal of Vehicles | Develop a replacement policy based on justifiable criteria. Explore opportunities for collaboration. | Section B5 |
| B6 | Maintenance of Vehicles | Exploit the opportunities for achieving greater operational Fleet efficiency through collaboration with Thames Valley Police. | Section B6 |
| B7 | Vehicle Breakdown/ Accident/Damage | Consider subjecting the accident damage repair to a competitive tendering process. | Section B7 |
| B8 | Provision of Vehicle Fuel | Put in place a Fleet Management System that includes a fuel usage module. Evaluate the appropriate choice of vehicle fuel and produce a corporate fuel policy. | Section B8 |
| B9 | Delivery & Collection of Vehicles | Put in place a Fleet Management System that has the capability of recording vehicle downtime. | Section B9 |
| B10 | Procurement of Hire Vehicles | Investigate why hire costs are increasing significantly. | Section B10 |
| B11 | Management — Private Vehicle Use | Carry out a fundamental review of private vehicle use taking account of modern equity and environmental issues. | Section B11 |
| B12 | Management Public Transport Use | Put in place a public travel policy and explore the opportunities for collaboration with public transport operators. | Section B12 |
| B13 | Provision of Air Transport | None (this activity is subject to a separate Best Value Review) | |
| B14 | Provision of Cycle Transport | None identified. | Section B14 |

FIGURE 17 Level 2 Internal Transport Support

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|----|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| C1 | Organisational Arrangements | Choose one of the options identified to replace the current temporary organisational arrangement (Section 6): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Historical Option ● The Out-Source Option ● The Fleet Management Collaboration ● The Fleet Provision Collaboration. | Section C1 |
| C2 | Customer Focus | Organise an annual customer survey along the lines of that piloted in this Review. | Section C2 |
| C3 | Human Resource Management | Build and continue the improvements in staff motivation and morale achieved over recent months. | Section C3 |
| C4 | ICT Management | Put in place a tried and tested fleet management system to meet the needs of a modern police transport service. | Section C4 |
| C5 | Physical Asset Management | Support and maintain the on-going programme of improvement to facilities at the current transport premises. | Section C5 |
| C6 | Risk Management | Continue with the recent developments seeking continuous improvement on Health and Safety issues. | Section C6 |
| C7 | Research & Development | Ensure mechanisms in place to capture gains from the research and development of other forces and organisations. | Section C7 |
| C8 | Performance Management | Put in place a departmental performance management system (in terms of economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity and environment) with associated key performance indicators. This system to link and respond to corporate priorities. Develop improved consultation procedures with stakeholders, including annual surveys. | Section C8 |

FIGURE 18 Level 3 Operational Transport Usage

| | TRANSPORT ACTIVITY | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT | EVIDENCE DOSSIER Reference |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| D | Use of Vehicles – Operational Police Duties | Replace current Fleet Management Software. Develop corporate processes for determining the fleet size, distribution and specification. Develop corporate vehicle fleet policies. Implement recommendations of the Force Report on vehicle livery. ²⁰ | Section D |
| E | Use of Transport Expertise | None identified. | Section E |

20 'Corporate Fleet Livery', report by Bedfordshire Police, 2002

7.2 Main Recommendations

The Review has identified the two main reasons for the serious shortcomings of the Transport Department. These are:

- Lack of leadership and effective management of the department
- Lack of performance management consequent on an inadequate information system.

The following strategic recommendations will rectify these faults.

The Review has identified the following high level strategic areas for improvement in the provision of transport in Bedfordshire Police. The Project Board has agreed that these areas require addressing over the next five years if Bedfordshire Police is to meet the requirements of the Best Value Legislation and deliver its Operational Plan.

7.2.1 Strategic Way Forward

The recommended option for Bedfordshire Police to achieve a step change upwards in performance is to adopt the Strategic Option 4:

Fleet Provision Collaboration – in which Thames Valley Police is engaged to provide a full fleet management service and a fleet maintenance service, retaining the workshop staff and facilities at Kempston and Luton.

Bedfordshire Police is one of the smaller provincial forces in the U.K. In line with Central Government thinking serious consideration needs to be given to the future ability of a small organisation such as Bedfordshire Police Transport Department to achieve the economies of scale, effectiveness and efficiencies larger organisations can achieve. The Best Value Review has coincided with a window of opportunity for Bedfordshire Police to carry out an innovative review of the way in which transport services are provided as commended by HMIC:²¹

‘There is a particular need for ‘Blue Sky’ thinking which will lead to continuous improvement in each service.’

Option 4 is the fruit of this "Blue Sky" thinking as an innovative and practical form of collaboration on support service provision. This option is the preferred option of stakeholders and offers the most promising structure for

delivering on the Areas for Improvement identified in the Review (Figure 15, Figure 16, Figure 17 and Figure 18).

In addition, this option offers the greatest potential for efficiency savings both cashable and non-cashable. The principle benefits arise from:

- Substantially improved discounts achieved through greater purchasing power.
- Access at minimal cost to a proven computerised Fleet Management System.

The lack of the latter has been the dominant factor in major shortcomings in performance management as identified in earlier studies (Section 1.2).

7.2.2 Fleet Management Information System (FMIS)

The FMIS is critical to the management of transport provision as it is the means of converting raw data into useful performance information and achieving efficient transport administration. Some of the key areas of management information are:

- Fleet Inventory
- Vehicle Hiring
- Management of Fuel
- Administration of Vehicles Including Taxation
- Fleet Allocation & Utilisation
- Servicing & Maintenance Scheduling
- Accident Management Including Control of Drivers
- Stock Control
- Fleet Budgeting
- Replacement Programmes
- Whole Life Cost Analysis

The VRS System used by Bedfordshire Police is not used by other forces and makes any police benchmarking difficult. The software is not functional in all areas required and is not user friendly. The software, despite modification and tremendous effort from the staff is failing to meet the basic needs of the department.

The software has been criticised by the Auditors in not meeting the requirements of stock control and tracking of expenditure.

In summary, it is the view of the Review Team and Project Board that an immediate solution is required in this area if any improvements are to be made in the service provision. It is recommended that the Force explores the opportunity of moving to one of the two recognised software packages in the police service TRANMAN or CAR FLEET CONTROL that are also the industry top two packages. The anticipated cost of Bedfordshire procuring this software is 100K.

Adoption of Strategic Option 4 – (Fleet Provision Collaboration), allows Bedfordshire Police access to the TRANMAN system of Thames Valley Police at a nominal cost thus obviating the need for substantial expenditure in this area.

7.2.3 Other Transport Provision

Recommendations on transport provision outside the remit of the Transport Department are set out in Figure 16. These are recommended to be actioned alongside the other recommendations of Section 7.1:

- Investigate why hire costs are increasing significantly.
- Carry out a fundamental review of private vehicle use taking account of modern equity and environmental issues.
- Put in place a public travel policy and explore the opportunities for collaboration with public transport operators.

8. Improvement Plan

Option 4

Fleet Provision Collaboration – in which Thames Valley Police is engaged to provide a full fleet management service and a fleet maintenance service, retaining the workshop staff and facilities at Kempston and Luton.

Adoption of Strategic Option 4 requires an implementation plan. In order to migrate to this scenario both Bedfordshire and Thames Valley Police Authorities would need to approve the principle and a formal implementation plan would need to be drawn up.

Agreement

The implementation of this option would require both Police Authorities' approval and a formal SLA/Memorandum of Understanding or Contract for delivery of this option to be drawn up for the protection of both Authorities.

However, the current post September 2001 arrangements would enable Bedfordshire Police to continue to benefit from the current arrangements until the SLA/Memorandum of Understanding or Contract is implemented.

It is proposed that a realistic time-scale for implementation of this option would be a start date of April 2003.

Areas to Consider and be Included

The following bullet points, whilst not exhaustive, provide some of the key areas to be included in the SLA/Memorandum of Understanding or Contract.

- Terms & Condition of Provision
- Term of Arrangements
- Services to be Provided/Available
- Charges or Cost of Provision
- Provider & Supply Requirements
- Transfer of Staff (TUPE) (in employment terms, not location terms)
- Rental of Bedfordshire Police Workshops
- Management Information
- Contract Performance Information & Monitoring

Timescales and Resources

The preparation of an agreement requires consultation and preparation work that draws on experience of this kind of collaboration, while recognising the need to cater for the innovative ideas such as transparency of information and costs.

Such an agreement can be prepared in time for implementation at April 2003. A project team consisting of representatives from both Bedfordshire Police and Thames Valley Police together with an external consultant providing neutrality and expertise would be charged with preparing the agreement.

In the interim, the current arrangement between Bedfordshire Police and Thames Valley would continue until the end of the financial year 2002/2003.



Transport Provision

Best Value Review



Bridgebury House Woburn Road
Kempston Bedford MK43 9AX



BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE

Headquarters Woburn Road
Kempston Bedford MK43 9AX