

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held at 10.30 am on 17 January 2023 at Woodhatch Place, Reigate, Surrey.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Panel at its next meeting.

Members:

(*Present)

Councillor Satvinder Buttar
Councillor Keith Witham
* Councillor Mick Gillman (Vice-Chairman)
* Councillor Paul Kennedy
* Councillor Valerie White
* Councillor Victor Lewanski
Councillor John Furey
Councillor John Robini (Chairman)
* Councillor Barry Cheyne
* Councillor Hannah Dalton
* Councillor Ellen Nicholson
* Councillor Richard Morris
* Mr Martin Stilwell

1/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Cllr Keith Witham.

Cllr John Robini and Cllr John Furey joined remotely, so were unable to vote. Cllr Mick Gillman chaired the meeting.

2/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]

None received.

3/23 CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE ROLE OF CHIEF CONSTABLE OF SURREY POLICE [Item 3]

Witness:

Tim de Meyer, Proposed appointment to the role of Chief Constable for Surrey Police (Assistant Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police)

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. Mr de Meyer introduced himself and provided a brief overview of his professional background. The Chairman noted that Mr de Meyer would be coming straight from his current role as Assistant Chief Constable, having not served as Deputy Chief Constable, and asked what his approach would be to building confidence within his team, particularly with senior colleagues. Mr de Meyer clarified that he had served as temporary Deputy Chief Constable on two occasions at Thames Valley Police

(Thames Valley) and he considered this supported his credibility when applying for this role. Within his time at Thames Valley, Mr de Meyer improved investigative and criminal justice outcomes, as well as leading nationally on work in this area. Mr de Meyer had introduced new ICT systems across the region and was the Gold Commander for the policing operation of HM Queen Elizabeth II's funeral in Windsor. Mr de Meyer hoped that his professional background, combined with his clear vision, would provide the senior team with confidence. His vision involved preventing crime at every opportunity, protecting the vulnerable, serving victims tirelessly, investigating crime thoroughly, and pursuing criminals relentlessly.

2. A Panel Member asked what experience the proposed appointee had of increasing public confidence in policing and how he would look to do this in the Chief Constable role, especially with resource constraints. Mr de Meyer explained that he had particular experience related to violence against women and girls (VAWG), rural crime, and serious crimes and homicide. In 2019, Mr de Meyer held the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) portfolio for disclosure, at a time where the NPCC, the College of Policing, and the Metropolitan Police were being taken to judicial review by the Centre for Women's Justice regarding 'digital strip searches' of rape victims. Mr de Meyer led the response on behalf of the police service, whereby the judicial review was resolved. This resulted in reform of the process and improved public confidence in how Police deal with VAWG. Mr de Meyer was holding over 100 talks to officers within Thames Valley, setting out what needs to be improved in this area and he had also given this talk to external partners, such as sixth form colleges. Mr de Meyer explained that he felt it was his responsibility to influence the internal culture and to promote public understanding of the issue.
3. A Panel Member queried how the proposed appointee would approach the issue of retaining staff under a tight budget. Mr de Meyer explained that he had concerns about productivity and would seek to improve this by better realising the benefits of technology, training officers adequately, ensuring that officers were literate in investigations, and he would personally engage with partners across sectors to better manage unreasonable demands on policing. It was also crucial to recognise the work of officers and staff and reward them for it. The Force needed a sense of belonging, whereby they put service before self.

Cllr John Furey joined the meeting remotely at 10:47am.

4. In response to a question on partnership working, Mr de Meyer explained that he felt that one key partner of the Force was the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and that Surrey Police needed to increase the number of criminals it charged, particularly for the most serious crimes. Thames Valley was the first to introduce embedded detective inspectors with the CPS which substantially increased the rate of charges for rape and sexual offences. Mr de Meyer also represented policing nationally on a Joint Operational Improvement Board with the Director of Public Prosecutions, which had been instrumental in forming key operational policy across the Criminal Justice System (CJS). Mr de Meyer explained that Thames Valley had taken a public health approach to the reduction of serious violence, which involved preventing young people who were at risk in getting involved with serious crimes.
5. The Chairman asked how the proposed appointee would engage with staff and officers of all levels to involve them in the Force's future direction and how he would build morale in the workforce. Mr de Meyer explained that he would provide the workforce with a vision and would work to earn the trust and confidence of partners and the public. He also intended to visit every single department within the first six months and use funding in the most effective way. It was important to ensure that officers had a voice in crucial decisions and to identify their good work by calling or writing to them to reward good work. In Thames Valley, Mr de Meyer used the approach of encouraging staff to imagine that a hypothetical victim was a loved one, as sometimes they could get desensitised to crime when dealing with it every day.
6. A Panel Member asked how the proposed appointee would seek to understand and meet the needs of diverse communities and make them feel involved. Mr de Meyer emphasised the importance of trust from communities, as then they were more likely to share useful information with the Force. He would ensure that the Force was listening to communities and keeping them updated. Mr de Meyer gave an example of his experience with the gypsy, Roma, traveller community in Thames Valley, whereby he put himself into the community and engaged with them over a long period of time. Mr de Meyer also expressed the importance of working with sports partners to engage with young people and help them realise their potential and not turn to crime.
7. In response to a question on making Surrey Police a more diverse workforce, the proposed appointee explained that there

were three reasons to illustrate the importance of a diverse workforce. One reason was that there was a tough recruitment market, and it was crucial to utilise the skills of all communities, another was that it contributed to the Force's legitimacy, and to ensure that the Force was representative of communities. Mr de Meyer explained that often individuals joined the Force due to a pre-existing connection to policing and this did not always exist within underrepresented groups. Therefore, he would strive to encourage those people to apply and help ensure they had support with their application and mentor through their careers. Mr de Meyer also discussed the work he had done within Thames Valley to increase the progression of women and noted that over 70% of their new detective recruits were women.

8. A Panel Member asked about a time when the proposed appointee had to deal with a new threat or a public safety concern. Mr de Meyer explained that during his national work in respect of VAWG, he was able to predict issues that Thames Valley were likely to experience and was able to improve their work regarding VAWG, especially in terms of domestic abuse. He made representations to the Chief Constable to appoint a dedicated Senior Superintendent. This resulted in an increase in the arrest rate in this area and a reduction in the disengagement of women during their cases. This was an example of taking national learning and applying it locally.
9. A Panel Member asked about the most challenging situation the proposed appointee had encountered to date, regarding public and media scrutiny. Mr de Meyer responded that when he was the Gold Commander for the London Bridge Operation he worked closely with the military, the Cabinet Office, and other statutory partners to ensure there was a safe, proper and dignified family funeral for HM Queen. This process involved extensive planning and delivery of the funeral within 10 days, which required long working days away from home. During this process, Mr de Meyer had to deliver a national and international media briefing on the funeral to provide reassurance and encouragement to the public, whilst recognising the operational sensitivity of the plans. Mr de Meyer described the extensive scrutiny which he received from Cabinet in the upcoming months to the funeral.
10. A Panel Member asked about the proposed appointee's experience of dealing with rural crime and how it could be applied across Surrey. Mr de Meyer explained that in 2021, he was the Chief Superintendent for neighbourhood policing and

partnership in Thames Valley. He explained the importance of addressing rural crimes and how organised criminals operated in rural areas. Mr de Meyer chaired the Rural Crime Partnership and in Thames Valley they had made considerable progress by introducing a dedicated crime fighting rural crime team and resources to tackle organised crime in rural areas. Mr de Meyer noted the importance of earning and maintaining the trust and confidence of those living in rural areas within Surrey and the businesses whom the residents depend on.

11. A Panel Member enquired into the steps that would be taken by the proposed appointee if they felt that the Commissioner was straying into operational policing. Mr de Meyer explained that there were three aspects involved in creating policing policy, which included the evidence base, professional judgement in interpreting the evidence, and representation of the public's voice (the PCC's role). He would give all three aspects appropriate value. There was a clear line in the legislation regarding the Commissioner's role and he would be comfortable asserting his authority if such an occasion arose.
12. In response to a question on responding to political pressure, Mr de Meyer explained that during the London Bridge project, he would have to dial in daily to COBRA meetings and brief ministers on the plan for the funeral. This involved challenging questions whereby he had to provide robust operational assurance to ministers. During his time at Thames Valley, their Commissioner had challenged the Force in respect of its performance to knife crime, especially in Milton Keynes where there had been a number of homicides. Mr de Meyer launched Operational Citadel which resulted in the Force improving its identification of habitual knife carriers and greater engagement with young people who appeared to be at risk.
13. The Chairman asked how the proposed appointee would work with the Commissioner to deliver her Police and Crime Plan objectives whilst maintaining the independence of the Force. Mr de Meyer explained that a relationship of trust would be required, as well as credibility, reliability, transparency, and selflessness. They shared a common purpose of the public interest, achieving value for money, and a focus on those most at risk.

4/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 4]

The Panel noted that its next meeting would be held on Friday, 3 February 2023.

5/23 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC [Item 5]

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

6/23 CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS PROPOSED APPOINTMENT TO THE ROLE OF CHIEF CONSTABLE OF SURREY POLICE [Item 6]

The Panel deliberated over the responses provided to their questions and then voted unanimously to recommend that Tim de Meyer be appointed to the position of Chief Constable of Surrey Police.

RESOLVED:

That the Police and Crime Panel recommend the appointment of Tim de Meyer as the new Chief Constable of Surrey Police.

Meeting ended at: 11.48 am

Chairman

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18 January 2023

Sent by email to Lisa.Townsend@surrey.police.uk

Dear Mrs Townsend,

Outcome of the Confirmation Hearing for the role of Chief Constable

In accordance with Schedule 8 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, I write to inform you of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel's recommendation with regard to the proposed appointment of Tim de Meyer as Chief Constable.

On the basis of the information provided by you, and the proficiency evident in his answers at the confirmation hearing on 17 January 2023, the Panel agreed that Mr de Meyer is an excellent candidate.

I am therefore pleased to inform you that following the hearing, the Panel unanimously agreed the following recommendation:

That the Police and Crime Panel recommend the appointment of Tim de Meyer as the new Chief Constable of Surrey Police.

On behalf of the Panel, I would like to thank Mr de Meyer for his attendance. We look forward to working with the new Chief Constable and wish him all the best in his new role.

At the request of your Office we shall forgo the suggested five working day delay between the hearing and publication of this information.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Mick Gillman, Vice-Chairman of Surrey Police and Crime Panel
cc Tim de Meyer

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CLlr Mick Gillman
Vice Chairman, Surrey Police & Crime Panel

Sent via email

18th January 2023

Dear CLlr Gillman,

Appointment of Tim de Meyer as Chief Constable of Surrey Police

Thank you for your letter confirming the Police & Crime Panel's recommendation that I should appoint Tim de Meyer as Chief Constable of Surrey Police. I am obliged by the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 to formally respond to this recommendation.

I would like to thank members of the panel for their constructive questioning at the hearing. I wholeheartedly agree that Mr de Meyer is an excellent candidate and he will, I'm sure, be an outstanding leader of Surrey Police.

Mr de Meyer will take up his post in early April, when current Chief Constable, Gavin Stephens leaves Surrey Police.

Yours sincerely,



Lisa Townsend
Police and Crime Commissioner

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