

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held at 10.30 am on 20 June 2024 at Woodhatch Place, Reigate, Surrey.

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

**Members:**

(\*Present)

- \* Ms Juliet Fryer
- \* District Councillor Richard Smith
- \* Borough Councillor Richard Wilson
- \* District Councillor Paul Kennedy
- \* Councillor John Robini
- \* Mr Martin Stilwell
- \* Borough Councillor Barry J F Cheyne
- \* Borough Councillor Ellen Nicholson
- \* Councillor Rebecca Paul
- \* Borough Councillor Shanice Goldman
- \* Borough Councillor James Baker
- \* Borough Councillor Mike Smith
- \* Borough Councillor Tony Burrell
- \* Borough Councillor Danielle Newson

**15/24 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN [Item 1]**

**Witnesses:**

Jake Chambers, Scrutiny Officer

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Scrutiny Officer outlined that one nomination for Chairman was received in advance of the meeting, with Cllr John Robini proposed by Mr Martin Stilwell and seconded by Cllr Barry Cheyne. No other nominations were received and Cllr John Robini was elected as Chairman by general assent.
2. The Chairman welcomed attendees to the annual Police and Crime Panel meeting and explained that apologies were received from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey ("the Commissioner"; "the PCC"). As a result, agenda item seven would not be discussed.
3. The Chairman noted that the council was in a pre-election period, and reminded the Panel that members should refrain from endorsing or referencing any candidates or political party

standing for election, any controversial political campaigns or any policies related to the election.

**16/24 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN [Item 2]**

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman thanked Mr Martin Stillwell for his term as vice-chairman. The Chairman outlined that one nomination was received for Vice-Chairman in advance of the meeting. This was for Ms Juliet Fryer, proposed by Mr Martin Stillwell and seconded by Cllr Ellen Nicholson. No other nominations were received, so Ms Juliet Fryer was therefore elected as Vice-Chairman.

**17/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 3]**

Apologies were received from Cllr Danielle Newson.

**18/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 2 FEBRUARY 2024 [Item 4]**

Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**19/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 5]**

None received.

**20/24 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 6]**

None received.

**21/24 INTRODUCTION FROM THE SURREY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER 2024-2028 [Item 7]**

Item removed from agenda due to apologies from the Police and Crime Commissioner for the meeting.

**22/24 SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024 [Item 8]**

**Witnesses:**

Jake Chambers, Scrutiny Officer

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report and asked the Panel to note this.

2. The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer stated that she believed that the legislation requires that the Panel should support and scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner, rather than “[.] *hold the elected Police and Crime Commissioner to account...*” as stated on page 16 of the report. The Scrutiny Officer agreed to reexamine the wording.
3. The Panel noted the report.

## **23/24 PCC DECISIONS AND FORWARD PLAN [Item 9]**

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman asked for an update on when the Panel would receive the PCC’s draft Police & Crime Plan. The Head of Performance and Governance explained the OPCC was working on a methodology for the consultation with stakeholders, due to take place in July to September 2024. The OPCC intended to return to the Panel with the outcome of the consultation and a draft plan for consideration.
2. The Chairman asked for a timeline. The Head of Performance and Governance explained the OPCC would need time once after the completion of consultations and would liaise with the Scrutiny Officer as to when to bring this before the Panel, though it would be towards the end of 2024.

## **24/24 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 10]**

The Panel noted the recommendations tracker and forward work plan.

## **25/24 RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMPLAINTS SUB-COMMITTEE 2024/25 [Item 11]**

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The following members were appointed to the Complaints Sub-Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year:

Cllr John Robini, Chairman  
Juliet Fryer, Vice-Chairman and Independent Member  
Cllr Barry Cheyne  
Cllr Shanice Goldman  
Cllr James Baker  
Cllr Rebecca Paul

2. The Panel noted the Terms of Reference for the Complaints Sub-Committee and the Police and Crime Panel Complaints Protocol.
3. The Chairman noted that the appointment of another independent member would be considered.

**26/24 RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FINANCE SUB-GROUP 2024/25 [Item 12]**

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Panel noted the Terms of Reference for the Finance Sub-group.
2. The Panel appointed the following members to the Finance Sub-group for the 2024/25 Council year:

Cllr John Robini, Chairman  
Juliet Fryer, Vice-Chairman  
Cllr Barry Cheyne  
Cllr Paul Kennedy  
Cllr Shanice Goldman

3. A Member noted that the Panel could benefit from appointing another member to the Finance Sub-group. The Chairman explained that new members would be reviewed, and interviews to appoint another independent member to the Sub-group would be held at a later stage.

**27/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 13]**

The next Police and Crime Panel meeting will take place on Thursday 26 September 2024.

**28/24 CONFIRMATION HEARING: APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR SURREY [Item 14]**

**Witnesses:**

Ellie Vesey-Thompson, Interim Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (OPCC)

Damian Markland, Head of Performance and Governance (OPCC)

Nathan Rees, Head of Communications and Engagement (OPCC)

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman welcomed the proposed appointee, Ellie Vesey-Thompson, Interim Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC). The Panel received formal notification of the proposed appointment on 3 June 2024.
2. The Chairman noted the Panel's responsibility to hold a confirmation hearing in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
3. The Chairman referred to the Surrey Police and Crime Panel Confirmation Hearing Protocol for the DPCC, included as Appendix C in the agenda.
4. The Chairman explained that once the Panel dealt with the remaining ordinary business of the meeting, a private, closed session under Part 2 conditions would commence to decide the Panel's recommendation to the Commissioner on the proposed appointment, which would subsequently be provided in writing to the Commissioner.
5. The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer provided a brief introduction on the proposed appointment of the Interim DPCC, who had worked with the Commissioner for the duration of the Commissioner's first term in office. The papers set out all the detail required to meet the Panel's statutory responsibility to consider the appointment.
6. A Member asked for the expected overall annual cost of appointing the DPCC, including areas such as salary, pension contributions, expenses and training. The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer explained that the detail of the DPCC's salary was set out in the report and, as the employer, the Commissioner was obliged to meet the costs of National Insurance contributions and pensions as any other employer would be. Those costs were factored into the OPCC's budget. Training or subscriptions required by the DPCC are budgeted within the OPCC's operating budget, allowing the DPCC to access training equal to other OPPC staff.
7. The Member asked what the current nature of the Interim DPCC's working arrangements were while awaiting confirmation of appointment and how the Interim DPCC would be remunerated for the interim period if the appointment was or was not made. The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer explained that the appointment of the DPCC could not be made until after the confirmation hearing process. To allow the Interim DPCC to

support the Commissioner during the first few weeks in Office, while setting out plans for the Police and Crime Plan and consultation during summer 2024, the Commissioner appointed Ellie Vesey-Thompson on an interim basis. The terms and conditions of this interim role remained the same as prior to the election.

8. The Member asked if the Interim DPCC would still be paid for what was done up until the conclusion of the confirmation process if not re-appointed. The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer confirmed that she would be.
9. The Chairman asked Ellie Vesey-Thompson, the Interim DPCC, to introduce herself, with the opportunity to present her understanding of the role before formal questioning. The Interim DPCC thanked Mr Martin Stillwell for his time as Vice-Chairman and welcomed new members to the Panel. The Interim DPCC outlined that the role of DPCC was to support the Commissioner. The way the roles were divided involved the Interim DPCC leading in the areas of children and young people, rural crime, and military and veterans. The Interim DPCC also supported more broadly in all aspects of the Commissioner's role, including public engagement.
10. A Member asked what the Interim DPCC felt were the key qualities required in the role of DPCC and what made her the best candidate. The Member also asked what the Interim DPCC had learned performing the DPCC role previously, specifically from mistakes made. The Interim DPCC stated that a key quality is working effectively alone and within a team and being able to speak to a range of people and communicate in an audience-appropriate way, and that patience and understanding had been important when speaking to officers and members of the public with concerns in order to understand people's frustrations. The ability to assess the value - or lack thereof - in proposals and decisions was also an important quality, such as in the case of long-term impacts of a decision. The Interim DPCC clarified that this is not always easy and would not pretend to always get this right - she added that it had been important to take a step back, to think about things and ask questions. The Interim DPCC referred to often being the only woman, and the youngest person, in a room and the importance of not allowing this to prevent her questioning things. She referred to the importance of striking a balance between confidence and arrogance by asking questions and not pretending to know more than she does. In terms of experience, the Interim DPCC referred to the fact that

she had performed the role of DPCC for three years. Given that the Commissioner was recently re-elected with a presumption the Interim DPCC would continue in her role as DPCC, the Interim DPCC stated that she interpreted this as a sign of confidence in the Commissioner and potentially also herself as the DPCC, and in their ability to deliver as a team. In terms of mistakes, she felt that there had probably been many and that she had learned it was important to admit mistakes to give others the opportunity to fix them and work out where things could be done differently.

11. The Member requested that the Interim DPCC give an example of one of the mistakes that she had made in the role. The Interim DPCC asked to return to this question later.
12. A Member asked what the Interim DPCC's understanding of the Commissioner's visions and priorities were, and what role she felt the DPCC should play in delivering the plan. The Interim DPCC explained the Commissioner's overarching vision was to be an accessible representative to the Surrey public and a critical friend to Surrey Police, supporting and holding them to account as appropriate. The Commissioner was passionate about bringing partners together to improve services and support residents. The Interim DPCC and the Commissioner have always been equally committed to being as publicly accessible as possible, such as through attending residents' meetings and events and introducing surgery-style appointments for residents in need of assistance. It has always been and would continue to be the Interim DPCC's role to support this. The Interim DPCC had worked hard to be available internally by spending time with officers and staff across Surrey Police which helped to ensure that herself and the Commissioner understood what was occurring on the ground, any impacts this would have on the public, as well as internally to the Force in areas such as morale. It was important that the Interim DPCC was able to lead on the areas delegated to her, such as children & young people and rural crime, to enable the Commissioner to focus on the other areas that she needed to.
13. The Member asked what the Interim DPCC identified as the single most important challenge faced by Surrey in next three years, and how the DPCC would be able to assist in addressing this. The Interim DPCC stated that finance and politics – taken as one, interrelated item - was the single most important challenge. The savings required by Surrey Police over the next few years were progressing well but remained challenging.

Politically, the change in government and the potential instability this could bring, with changed priorities and ambitions, could be difficult. Delivering on manifesto policies from all parties brought challenges, with a lot of manifesto pledges not accompanied by additional funding. Achieving the 20,000 uplift target required a big recruitment push, which was difficult to reach and had a knock-on effect in other roles across the force, such as staff and PCSO roles that transitioned into Officer positions, also creating a retention challenge. There had been smaller manifesto mentions around diverting funding away from Commissioners which caused concerns around services currently funded by the OPCC and the long-term impact this may have on the prevention of crime in Surrey. Rumours concerning the potential scrapping of the Commissioner role had caused uncertainty amongst partners and services commissioned by the OPCC which is unlikely to be resolved soon. The Interim DPCC felt that this anxiety would have implications for policing and partners. The DPCC's role would involve supporting the Commissioner to keep things steady, reassure and communicate with partners, and work closely with Surrey Police.

14. A Member referred to the last confirmation hearing in 2021, at which there were feelings among Panel members that the Interim DPCC would make an able assistant to the Commissioner, but did not have the experience to perform the role of DPCC. The Member asked if the Interim DPCC could point to any specifics that would allay those original concerns. The Interim DPCC asked for clarification of the difference between the role of an assistant to the Commissioner and a DPCC, and where the Interim DPCC's skills may be considered lacking. The Interim DPCC explained she had fulfilled the role for the past three years, had met the challenges presented to her, met with many residents, supported the Commissioner, and was yet to find an area that she was unable to do due to a lack of skills. The Member clarified that the reference was quoted from the letter that was sent to the Commissioner in 2021 on the appointment of the DPCC.
15. The Member referred to the Interim DPCC, in the role of DPCC, participating in the more detailed performance work, often in the absence of the Commissioner, stating that The HMICFRS PEEL Inspection Report (published December 2023) identified that 6 of 7 repeated areas had deteriorated since the previous inspection. The Member asked if the Interim DPCC felt any responsibility for the deterioration in those areas, while the Interim DPCC had presumably been overseeing performance monitoring in the



absence of the PCC. The Interim DPCC explained that the OPCC utilised various means of oversight with the Force but did not believe it was the case that she often represented the Commissioner in her absence. The Commissioner and Interim DPCC often both appeared at various meetings, both scrutiny and for supporting the force. The Interim DPCC may have covered for the Commissioner when the Commissioner was unwell or otherwise engaged, though this was not necessarily frequent. Many of the challenges outlined in the PEEL report were things the Force and OPCC were already aware of and were already addressing or starting to focus on.

16. The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (OPCC) added that the Interim DPCC had covered the role around performance and accountability comprehensively. The Commissioner and DPCC both attended accountability and oversight meetings and played an active role in pursuing any areas that may require closer scrutiny. She was not aware of the Interim DPCC substituting for the Commissioner at a great number of these meetings.
17. The Interim DPCC reverted to a Member's previous question on mistakes made during the Interim DPCC's term as DPCC. A mistake, particularly early in the role, was underestimating the challenge of getting partners to work together, assuming it would be easier, with everyone always willing to work towards the same goal, which was not always the case.
18. A Member asked how the Interim DPCC facilitated strong links between several different partner agencies as DPCC, and what plans the Interim DPCC had for partner working in the future. The Interim DPCC explained that she had facilitated and supported partnership work in a number of formats, including: co-chairing the Surrey Female Strategy Group which involved partners in the criminal justice sector, health, housing and more; representing the Commissioner and OPCC in the development stages of Surrey's Vision Zero Strategy, which worked with the Council, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, Highways, Surrey Police and others; leading on numerous focus groups with partners in the development of the first Police and Crime Plan; working with agencies in the youth sector to understand challenges, where more support was needed and to establish where the OPCC was best placed to support; sitting on the Civilian Military Partnership Board, which involved working with agencies to support defence personnel and help the OPCC achieve Silver level status in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, and; working with rural organisations such as the

National Farmers' Union to ensure that the Interim DPCC was an accessible point of contact for local representatives.

19. A Member asked how the Interim DPCC would describe a successful relationship between the OPCC and the Police and Crime Panel (PCP), and how she would work to develop this. The Interim DPCC explained that the relationship should be founded on mutual respect and professionalism. The Interim DPCC had always endeavoured to work cooperatively with PCP members, during meetings and elsewhere. The relationship should be apolitical, with the PCP scrutinising and supporting the OPCC. Recently, the Interim DPCC felt that the support aspect of this had been lacking, with instances of members seeking to undermine the post, such as by airing views like being supportive of scrapping the PCC post, which was felt was not apolitical. There was limitation in how much the DPCC felt she could develop this element but had worked to facilitate respectful and cooperative working. Mutual trust was needed, particularly on information requested by the PCP from the OPCC and the Force. Past issues, where certain sensitive information shared with the PCP had then appeared in the press, posed challenges for the OPCC's relationship with the Force. Nevertheless, the OPCC wanted to be as transparent as possible with the Panel, something she felt was evident from the Surrey OPCC's Data Hub, though the OPCC however need confidence that confidential information shared with the PCP would be treated appropriately. The Interim DPCC went on to refer to ongoing conversations around improving the public's awareness of the PCP, important to improve public accessibility to the PCP, encourage public questions and increase attendance.
20. A Member asked what the Interim DPCC's understanding was of the Commissioner's role and how the Commissioner should work with the Chief Constable to deliver an effective police service. The Interim DPCC explained that the Commissioner had to be a critical friend to the Chief Constable, to support and scrutinise where appropriate, and that the role of Commissioner involved communicating residents' concerns to the Chief Constable and sharing the Chief Constable's plans, as well as updates from and achievements of Surrey Police, with the public. She stated that honesty between the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the public is important. The Commissioner scrutinised decisions and plans for the public and works with the Chief Constable to ensure improvements to Surrey Police and that it delivered where necessary. Commissioner oversight of Surrey Police finances is also vital to ensure the Chief

Constable's plans offered good value for money, noting that if the Chief Constable requested an increase to the Council Tax Precept, the Commissioner has a role in ensuring that the options are scrutinised and implications are understood and communicated to the public. The Interim DPCC also commended the collaborative work done with the Deputy Chief Constable, and the quality of robust, frank discussions throughout the work of all four post holders.

21. The Member asked what the Interim DPCC thought the key factor for a successful relationship between the Commissioner/DPCC and Chief Constable was. The Interim DPCC explained there was often work between the Commissioner, DPCC, Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable at the senior level and was trust, confidence and professionalism in those relationships. The ability to agree, and agree to disagree, are important, with recognition that the same views would not always be shared. The ability to be honest with each other without misinterpretation or taking things personally was important. She added that it was important the Chief Constable appreciated that the Commissioner's role was to support Surrey Police but also scrutinise where appropriate, and that all wanted the best for Surrey Police and the public and were able to acknowledge the greater purpose of what all are working towards. She also clarified that understanding of each role was key to not hinder one another's ability to deliver in their different roles.
22. A Member asked for an example of where the Interim DPCC had disagreed the Commissioner and persuaded her to change her mind. The Interim DPCC explained that she did on occasion disagree with the Commissioner and feels this is healthy and felt that a key skill as the DPCC was to question when things did not feel right to her. Open discussions took place within the OPCC about different ideas and approaches to establish the best outcome for the public.
23. A Member referred to the Interim DPCC's comment that she felt that the re-election of the Commissioner was also a vote of confidence in herself as the DPCC. The Member asked if the Interim DPCC felt that the public effectively voted in the Commissioner and Interim DPCC as a ticket in the May 2024 Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner election. The Interim DPCC stated she did not think this and clarified that many people however have assumed that the re-election of the Commissioner meant that the Interim DPCC would remain in

post as the DPCC, as the role was tied to the Commissioner's level of success. If there were concerns from the public as to the Interim DPCC's capabilities as DPCC, it would have been raised during the election campaign, which she had not experienced.

24. The Member asked what experience the Interim DPCC had of organisational management and strategic decision making. The Interim DPCC explained that strategic decision making was required for political campaigns, which the Interim DPCC had experienced. The Interim DPCC's previous experience included working as a consultant contracted to scope out the broadening of a client-facing service within a company, work that involved leading the roll-out of a new branch of the company. This opened a new international client base and improved the company's position when negotiating during the COVID-19 pandemic. This project also involved the restructure of the entire company in some existing areas, as well as the management of recruiting new staff and project management spanning multiple countries. Over the past three years, the Interim DPCC had supported the Commissioner and the Chief Executive (OPCC) to change the OPCC's staffing structure, and had driven or supported in other key decisions, such as ring-fencing money for projects and services, specifically for children and young people.
25. A Member asked if the Interim DPCC could give examples of the DPCC role in managing change and inspiring colleagues to do things differently. The Interim DPCC explained that she had a lot of experience managing change, using the past three years as the DPCC as an example. The arrival of the Commissioner and herself as DPCC in 2021 brought a different dynamic to the OPCC, new ways of working, and new priorities. The Interim DPCC stated that she helped to inspire this change and encourage people to do things differently and had played a key role in helping the OPCC understand where they may need to be delivering differently to meet the Commissioner's requirements and needs more effectively.
26. A Member noted that the candidate suitability report referenced the Interim DPCC's work with young people. The Member asked the Interim DPCC to explain what improvements she had made in this area. The Interim DPCC explained she introduced the Youth Commission, which helped bring youth voice into policing and community safety in Surrey, and helped highlight learnings for the OPCC, Surrey Police and partners. The Youth Commission identified that adherence to understanding where someone needed more support when communicating with

emergency services due to a disability, mental health challenges or other needs, was lacking. As a result, this was being addressed through the re-launch of the Pegasus scheme, which was being broadened to support more people. A form of support was trialled in Guildford Police Station custody for young people that were receiving the designation 'NFA' (no further action). This support was previously only available for those that went into custody and received a tangible outcome, such as a criminal charge. The Interim DPCC felt that this missed an opportunity to prevent children and young people from reoffending, and this trial's outcomes were being assessed to see how best it could be expanded across Surrey in the future. The Interim DPCC referenced work to ensure the inclusion of young people as 'business as usual' and spoke about providing young people with opportunities, such as when the OPCC had supported Surrey Police's work experience programme. In 2023, the OPCC had three summer interns from the Royal Holloway University that supported on three different projects. The Interim DPCC also suggested the offering of the re-brand of the OPCC as a competition to young people looking for experience in graphic design, with the prize of work experience in a local design agency offered to the successful applicant. The local design agency worked with the successful young person to finalise the OPCC's rebrand. This young person was offered a full-time job with the company.

27. In reference to the candidate suitability report, the Chairman asked about the improvements made in the Interim DPCC's area of rural crime. The Interim DPCC explained that a change implemented since starting in the role of DPCC was a move to a more joined-up approach, regionally and nationally. Whilst this was still developing, the Interim DPCC was committed to ensuring Surrey had a strong regional and national voice. The Interim DPCC noted that she is a board member of the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN) and sits on the South-East Partnership Against Rural Crime (SEPARC) on behalf of the PCC and clarified that this joined-up approach was key in ensuring criminals were stopped rather than moved between force areas. It provided more support by working as teams with other forces to target specific groups and crimes - historically, the rural community was not as well served as it should be. Building relationships with the rural community, as well as rural police officers, is important to repair trust and confidence. The Interim DPCC attended the second of a new format of rural crime training days, led by a Rural Crime Officer, which were instrumental in developing greater understanding of rural crime across Surrey Police, helping to improve response to and handling of rural crime.

28. The Chairman asked if Surrey Police was now recording rural crime data properly, as there had been previous confusion over this. The Interim DPCC explained that there was still no specific flag on the national police system for rural crime, which is challenging, and that assurance that the right cases were identified and passed on appropriately was vital. They added that this process is not yet perfect but has improved significantly. The Interim DPCC is in regular contact with Rural Crime Officers, who receive more jobs than previously. The new rural inspector has committed that every farm across Surrey would have a visit from a Rural Crime Officer. Whilst this largely already occurred, the formal commitment helped ensure the provision of a point of contact. The Head of Performance and Governance added that there was no national methodology that could be easily referred to for rural crime. The level of rural crime therefore had to be determined locally, with data processed in a way that facilitates understanding of rural crime locally, ensuring that operational decisions were properly informed.
29. A Member referenced the 2022/23 draft annual report presented to the Panel last year and noted that it was necessary for the Commissioner to amend the annual report to include mention of rural crime after a member pointed out its omission; the Member asked why rural crime was not originally included in the 2022/23 draft annual report. The Interim DPCC explained that rural crime was sometimes assumed to be crimes with specifically rural characteristics, but there is a great deal of crime outside of these parameters that affects rural communities and is thus not necessarily labelled as such. The Interim DPCC shared that she is working on domestic abuse and the additional challenges that it can present when it occurs in a rural area. A rural-specific Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) had been introduced in Surrey, making it one of the first counties to do so. The Interim DPCC was promoting this work with her role on the NRCN. The Head of Performance and Governance added that when the annual report was put together the aim was to cover certain mandatory content. Regarding the omission from last year's annual report, the amalgamation process used to form the report had given too little focus to this area and was updated accordingly.
30. The Member asked if the Interim DPCC was fully involved in the preparations of the 2022/2023 annual report. The Head of Performance and Governance explained that officers put together the initial content of the annual report, with this draft then shared with the Commissioner and DPCC for feedback.

This ultimately informed the final version shared with the Panel and published.

31. A Member asked if the Interim DPCC could provide an explanation of her understanding of the term 'operational independence' and how it applied to the relationship between the OPCC and the Chief Constable, ensuring that the separation of powers was maintained. The Interim DPCC explained that the Commissioner was responsible for the totality of policing but could not interfere in the day-to-day operational delivery of policing, such as elements of recruitment, for instance. This was the responsibility of the Chief Constable and their team of Chief Officers. The Commissioner is held to account by the public for policing as a whole, and the Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account on the operational delivery of policing on behalf of the public.
32. The Member referred to a time when the Commissioner and Interim DPCC were distributing leaflets at a police surgery meeting, and whether they should in fact not have attended this given the separation of responsibilities. The Interim DPCC explained that both she and the PCC were unaware of the presence of other officers before attending and described the actions that they took to mitigate any risk of impropriety.
33. The Vice-Chairman asked if the Interim DPCC could provide assurance that her conduct, if politically active, would not affect the political independence of the Commissioner, with reference to the DPCC not being politically restricted. The Interim DPCC explained she had been in a politically unrestricted post for the duration of her previous term as DPCC and did not think this interfered with her ability to represent the Commissioner or support residents.
34. A Member asked, if the Interim DPCC participated in political activities after re-appointment to the role of DPCC, how she would ensure representation of all Surrey residents equally and without favour. The Member also raised that in the Interim DPCC's first confirmation hearing in 2021, she was questioned about her political activities for the Conservative Party, and justified attending Conservative Party Conference because the Conservatives were in government, and she felt that it was important that she speak to "decision-makers". The Member asked whether the Interim DPCC would therefore attend Labour Party conference if that party were elected to government in the forthcoming elections, in the interests of representing Surrey

residents. The Interim DPCC explained she was not planning to attend the Labour Party Conference, but would be attending the Conservative Party Conference, reiterating that the post of DPCC was not politically restricted. In terms of the Interim DPCC's ability to represent all of Surrey's residents equally, the Interim DPCC referred to her previous answer and explained that herself and the Commissioner would serve residents equally, whether a resident voted for the party the DPCC and the Commissioner are aligned with or not.

35. A Member stated that there were several occasions when an issue was raised to the OPCC and the Commissioner would sometimes visit a councillor's division in response. The Member then suggested that the Commissioner and DPCC favoured contact with councillors from the Conservative Party. The Member referred to one instance where they had to wait two months to speak to the Commissioner/DPCC, whereas the Commissioner/DPCC visited a councillor from another political party much sooner. The Member asked if the Interim DPCC was satisfied with this approach and whether they would speak to all councillors from a ward or area without differentiation. The Interim DPCC explained that questions about the Commissioner's approach could only be answered by them. Regarding the specific case raised by the Member, the Interim DPCC explained that this was probably planned in the diary some time in advance. There are often several months-long waiting lists for residents' meetings due to demand and the Commissioner and DPCC tried to spread their resources equally across Surrey. The Interim DPCC explained she had always engaged with members of all political parties. The Chief Executive explained that if a request came to the office for the Commissioner to meet with a local councillor and there was a particular issue in the area relating to policing or community safety, the Commissioner was always willing to consider the request, irrespective of political parties. Diary availability is often more relevant, with the Commissioner and DPCC having to cover 11 boroughs and districts. There was no filter in the OPCC in terms of political parties getting preference over another.
36. The Chairman thanked the Interim DPCC for answering the questions and asked if they wanted to clarify any answers provided during the hearing or voice any procedural questions concerning the next steps. The Interim DPCC did not.
37. The Chairman outlined that, in line with confirmation hearing protocol, the Commissioner would be contacted the next working



day with the Panel's recommendation regarding the appointment of the DPCC. The Panel would hold a closed session, under Part 2 conditions, to agree its recommendations on whether or not to appoint the DPCC. The Panel does not have veto power over this appointment. The Commissioner would have the right to accept or reject the Panel's recommendation and must inform the Panel of the decision. It was recommended that a period of five working days should elapse before the Panel's recommendation was made public, though this information could be released at an earlier stage if there was agreement between the Panel and the Commissioner.

11.54 am witnesses left and the Panel went into a closed session under Part 2.

#### **29/24 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 15]**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information) and, further, that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

While there may be a public interest in disclosing this information, namely openness in the deliberations of the Panel in determining its recommendation regarding the proposed appointment, it is felt that, on balance, this is outweighed by other factors in favour of maintaining the exemption, namely enabling a full discussion regarding the merits of the proposed appointment.

#### **30/24 CLOSED SESSION: TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR SURREY [Item 16]**

The Panel deliberated over the questions and responses provided and then voted, recommending that the Interim DPCC should be re-appointed to the role of DPCC.

*(Prior to the vote, the Chairman asked if there was any request for a recorded vote. Cllr Paul Kennedy made this request, supported by Cllrs Richard Wilson and Tony Burrell, thereby meeting the threshold of*

*three Panel members that is required to request a recorded vote - see paragraph 3.7 of the Panel's Constitution)*

The votes recorded were as follows:

Ms Juliet Fryer (Vice-Chairman) - Abstain

Cllr Richard Smith - For

Cllr Richard Wilson - Against

Cllr Paul Kennedy - Against

Cllr John Robini (Chairman) - For

Mr Martin Stilwell - For

Cllr Barry J F Cheyne - For

Cllr Ellen Nicholson - Abstain

Cllr Rebecca Paul - For

Cllr Shanice Goldman - For

Cllr James Baker - For

Cllr Mike Smith - Abstain

Cllr Tony Burrell – Abstain

A summary of Panel members' concerns and reasons for not recommending the appointment would be provided in the Panel's formal letter of response for consideration by the PCC by the following working day, in line with the below paragraph from the Panel's Confirmation Hearing Protocol:

*1.3 The Panel is invited to question the candidate in order to confirm they have the necessary professional competence and personal independence to carry out the role.*

The Surrey Police and Crime Panel thereby **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey does appoint Ellie Vesey-Thompson to the role of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey for a second term.

### **31/24 PUBLICITY OF PART 2 ITEMS [Item 17]**

#### **RESOLVED:**

Panel agreed that the items considered under Part 2 should not be made available to the press and public.

Meeting ended at: 12.44 pm

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**Chairman**

