

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

RECRUITMENT OF A NEW CHIEF CONSTABLE FOR SURREY POLICE

5 APRIL 2019

SUMMARY

The previous Chief Constable of Surrey Police, Nick Ephgrave QPM, left the Force in January 2019 to take up a new role as Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police Service. Following a fair, open and merit-based recruitment process to find Mr Ephgrave's successor, PCC David Munro has selected Gavin Stephens, currently Temporary Chief Constable of Surrey Police, as his preferred candidate.

As per the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police & Crime Panel must now review the proposed appointment and make a report to the PCC with a recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed. This report is intended to assist the panel in discharging its role.

The Commissioner must include the following information in the notification:

- a. The name of the person he is proposing to appoint
- b. The criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate for the appointment;
- c. Why the candidate satisfies those criteria; and
- d. The terms and conditions on which the candidate is to be appointed.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Police and Crime Panel recommend the appointment of Gavin Stephens as the new Chief Constable of Surrey Police on the terms set out in this report.

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the departure of Nick Ephgrave in January 2019, PCC Munro advised the Police & Crime Panel that he would begin a recruitment process to find Mr Ephgrave's successor.
- 1.2 A person specification and role profile was drawn up and the role put out to advert on 4 February, with a closing date of 8 March 2019.

2. The Appointments Panel

- 2.1 As per the College of Policing Guidance on Chief Officer Recruitment, PCC Munro put in place an appointments panel to assist with his selection process from the outset. This comprised Simon Edens QGM, QPM (policing advisor and former Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police); Dianne Newton (HR professional and independent member accredited by the College of Policing) and Dame Sarah Goad DCVO JP, former Lord Lieutenant for Surrey.
- 2.2 Ms Newton, in her capacity as independent member, was tasked with producing a report that expressly and explicitly addresses the appointment principles of merit, fairness and openness. This report must also detail the extent to which the appointments panel was able to fulfil its purpose of challenging and testing candidates. Ms Newton's report can be found at Appendix A.

3. The Recruitment Process

- 3.1 The OPCC closely followed the College of Policing's Guidance for Appointing Chief Officers (2018). It contains advice for PCCs on good HR/selection practice based on the principles of merit, fairness and openness.
- 3.2 The criteria used to judge candidates were set out in the role profile and person specification provided to candidates and which formed part of the application pack. The application material is attached at Appendix B and includes the advertisement, person specification, role profile and a letter from the PCC inviting applications.
- 3.3 The competencies for the role are based on those which are nationally set for Chief Officers as part of the College of Policing's Competency and Values Framework. These competencies were tested at each stage of the process in a range of ways as set out below.
- 3.4 Stage 1 – applications: Police Regulations specify that vacancies must be advertised on a public website or other form of publication which deals with police matters circulating throughout England and Wales. The vacancy was advertised via 'Chief's Net', which is a website available and

accessible to all Chief Officers, as well as via the Association of Police & Crime Commissioners and on the websites the Surrey OPCC, the College of Policing and the National Police Chiefs Council. In addition, the PCC wrote personally to Chief Constables in neighbouring forces, including the Met, to highlight the vacancy.

- 3.5 One application was received, from Gavin Stephens, current Temporary Chief Constable of Surrey Police. This is not an unusual situation when recruiting Chief Constables and not the first time that Surrey has attracted just one candidate. This is a problem across the country and one that various agencies have been attempting to tackle through measures such as direct entry to the service in lower ranks and opening up CC recruitment to overseas forces. The PCC's independent member has confirmed that she does not believe there is anything further the PCC could reasonably have done to increase this pool. The PCC formally considered extending the application deadline, but concluded that this would not yield further applications.
- 3.6 Lack of candidates aside, the PCC decided to progress with his selection process in the same shape and format had there been more than one candidate. This was in order to satisfy himself and his panel that the candidate was appointable and to give credibility to the process and to candidate, if successful.
- 3.5 Stage 2 – short-listing. This took place on 11 March 2019. Prior to the short-listing, panel members undertook training on the process from a Surrey Police HR professional. Members of the PCC's appointments panel assessed the written application against the competencies in the person specification. On this basis, the applicant was short-listed for interview.
- 3.7 Stage 3 – selection. The PCC held a selection day on Monday, 18 March. The candidate was assessed against the competencies set out in the person specification across three different activities, as well as being questioned on his views and ideas for the future leadership of Surrey Police.
- 3.8 Firstly, the candidate was asked to make a presentation to a panel of stakeholders. The presentation focused on the inherent tension between the public's demands for 'visible policing' and how these concerns can be understood and taken on board in an environment where any additional resource is needed to tackle less visible crime that takes place 'behind closed doors'. This panel comprised 9 representatives from a range of public sector, charity, voluntary and business organisations. Panel members were asked to assess the candidate's performance against specific competencies and provide feedback to PCC Munro.

- 3.10 Secondly, the candidate was asked to make a presentation to the PCC and his appointments panel on a topic given to him on the day of the interview, then answer questions that followed. This focused on the PCC's desire to improve Surrey Police's performance around 'positive outcomes', set against an increase in the volume and complexity of crimes in certain categories.
- 3.11 Lastly, during a formal interview, the candidate was asked a range of questions posed by the appointments panel, based on the required competencies and the feedback from the other exercises.

4. The preferred candidate

- 4.1 Gavin Stephens is currently Temporary Chief Constable of Surrey Police and has been in this role since early 2019. Prior to this, Mr Stephens has held the post of Deputy Chief Constable since October 2016. In this capacity, he has been part of the senior team that has put the Force on a more stable financial footing, on a trajectory of improvement in the eyes of the police inspectorate and with ambitious plans to ensure it is for the future. Mr Stephens has spent the majority of his policing career with Surrey Police and has been a Chief Officer since 2013.
- 4.3 The PCC believes that Mr Stephens meets the criteria for appointment, as set out in the person specification. Through all stages of the selection process, Mr Stephens demonstrated a real passion for policing and for the county of Surrey. He was able to articulate a compelling vision for the Force where he would seek to continue Surrey's strong tradition of creativity and innovation and 'punching above its weight'. In particular, the PCC, his panel and stakeholders were impressed with Mr Stephens' strong interest in neighbourhood policing and his approach to engaging and working in meaningful partnerships with a range of organisations.
- 4.4 Part I of Schedule 8 to the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 prescribes that a PCC must not appoint a person to the role of Chief Constable unless that person is, or has been, a constable in any part of the UK. Mr Stephens satisfies this criterion as he currently holds the substantive rank of Deputy Chief Constable.
- 4.5 Part 2 of Annex B of the Secretary of State's determinations, made under Regulation 11 of the Police Regulations 2003, states that a person may only be appointed to the rank higher than that of Chief Superintendent if they have completed the Senior Police National Assessment Centre and the Strategic Command Courses. Evidence of Mr Stephens completing these courses has been verified.

5. Terms and conditions of appointment

- 5.1 The summary of key conditions of appointment can be found at Appendix C. The majority of terms and conditions are standard for every chief officer across the country and some are applicable to every police officer. These are set out in the Police Act 1996, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Police Regulations 2003.
- 5.2 Chief Constable salaries are set in Home Office determinations using a 'spot rate' that varies between forces. Surrey's 'spot rate' is £145,896. This is calculated using a formula which takes into account the size of population in the force area and the type of policing challenges faced. The PCC has the discretion to offer a salary which varies no more than 10% upwards or downwards from the relevant spot rate.
- 5.3 The PCC has proposed that the starting salary for Mr Stephens will be at the spot rate. The term of appointment would be for five years.

6. Starting Date

- 6.1 Subject to the panel's consideration, the PCC is keen for Mr Stephens to begin as soon after 5 April as possible.

7. References

- 7.1 Two professional references have been sought: from the candidate's last line manager (Nick Ephgrave); and from Chief Constable Simon Cole who has worked with Mr Stephens on his national portfolio work.

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Appendices:

- A – Independent Report
- B – Criteria and Application Information
- C – Terms and Conditions Summary
- D – Surrey PCP Protocol

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