

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

RECRUITMENT OF A NEW CHIEF CONSTABLE FOR SURREY POLICE

17 January 2023

SUMMARY

The current Chief Constable of Surrey Police, Gavin Stephens QPM, will leave the Force in April 2023 to take up a new role as Chair of the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC). Following a fair, open and merit-based recruitment process to find Mr Stephens' successor, PCC Lisa Townsend has selected Tim de Meyer, currently Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing at Thames Valley Police, as her 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 she 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 Tim de Meyer as the new Chief Constable of Surrey Police on the terms set out in this report.

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the announcement in October 2022 that Chief Constable Gavin Stephens had been successful in the election to become Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, PCC Lisa Townsend advised the Police & Crime Panel that she would begin a recruitment process to find Mr Stephens' successor. Mr Stephens has served 26 years with Surrey Police.
- 1.2 A person specification and role profile was drawn up and the role put out to advert on 7 November, with a closing date of 2 December 2022.

2. The Appointments Panel

- 2.1 As per the College of Policing Guidance on Chief Officer Recruitment, PCC Townsend put in place an appointments panel to assist with her selection process from the outset. This comprised John Campbell QPM (policing advisor and outgoing Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police); Rt Hon Damian Green MP (former Minister of State for Policing & Criminal Justice); Jan Warwick (Chair of Surrey Heath Neighbourhood Watch) and Dianne Newton (HR professional and independent member). Ms Newton, who was previously unknown to the PCC, has considerable experience of senior officer selection processes including the Senior Command Course, Direct Entry Superintendent, Fast Track, and the High Potential Development Scheme. She is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- 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 the Appointment of Chief Officers (2021). It contains advice for PCCs on good HR/selection practice based on the principles of merit, fairness and openness.
- 3.2 Those responsible for selection and assessing chief officers must observe the three principles of merit, fairness and openness. The PCC must have confidence in what is being measured during the assessment process; that each candidate is being assessed in the same way; and that there are transparent and justifiable reasons why ultimately, the appointed candidate is the right candidate for the position. The PCC must also ensure that the process adheres to the requirements outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Prior to the shortlisting stage, the OPCC's Chief Executive, in consultation with the Independent Member, ensured that all members of the panel were

informed of these principles, as well as given clear instructions on the assessment methodology to ensure consistency and fairness. Separate training was not deemed necessary by our independent member, given the previous experience of our panel in senior level recruitment processes.

- 3.3 The recruitment pack (attached at Appendix B) described the role purpose, skills and education/experience required for the role. It also sets out a foreword from the PCC, describing her expectations for the next Chief Constable of Surrey Police. The application form was structured around the College of Policing's Competency and Values Framework and it was against those competencies that the applications were assessed.



- 3.4 Beneath each of the six competencies, the framework also details a set of behaviours and values that would be expected of a Chief Officer. The competencies were tested at each stage of the process in a range of ways as set out below.
- 3.5 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. We also promoted the vacancy via our social media channels.
- 3.6 It is not unusual for PCCs to receive low numbers of applications for Chief Constable roles, given a limited number of officers will have both passed

the Senior Command Course and also be actively looking for a new role, potentially in a different (and expensive) area of the country. In the past four rounds of Chief Constable recruitment, Surrey has never received more than two applications. For that reason, the PCC chose to involve the College of Policing's Leadership and Talent Development facility to ensure that those who were suitably qualified and potentially looking for a new role were proactively targeted. The PCC also met with the Chief Executive of the College to talk through the potential applicant pool.

- 3.7 The PCC was pleased to receive four applications.
- 3.8 Stage 2 – short-listing. This took place on 12 December 2022. Prior to the short-listing. Members of the PCC's appointments panel assessed the written applications against the competencies described in the recruitment pack. On this basis, four applicants were short-listed for interview, although one subsequently withdrew their application.
- 3.9 Stage 3 – selection. The PCC held a selection day on Thursday, 5 January 2023. The candidates were assessed against the competencies, as well as being questioned on their views and ideas for the future leadership of Surrey Police. All candidates completed two exercises: a stakeholder panel and a formal interview with the PCC and her appointments panel.
- 3.10 Firstly, the candidates were asked to make a presentation to a panel of stakeholders. The presentation asked candidates to consider how they would intend to address trust, legitimacy and confidence issues in the communities of Surrey, given the impact of various high-profile national incidents and reports which have had a detrimental effect on public confidence. This panel comprised 9 representatives from a range of public sector, charity, voluntary and business organisations and also included a Surrey Police Youth Cadet Leader and the Chair of Surrey Police's Association of Culture & Ethnicity. Panel members were asked to assess the candidate's performance against specific competencies and provide feedback to PCC Townsend, although the candidates' scores for this exercise did not form part of the formal scoring mechanism.
- 3.11 Secondly, during a formal interview, the candidates were asked a range of questions posed by the appointments panel, based on the required competencies and the PCC's requirements for the post.

4. The preferred candidate

- 4.1 Tim de Meyer is currently an Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) with Thames Valley Police. He began his police career in the Metropolitan Police Service in 1997 and joined TVP in 2008. In 2012, he was promoted to Chief Superintendent for Neighbourhood Policing and Partnership before becoming Head of Professional Standards in 2014. He was promoted to

Assistant Chief Constable for Crime and Criminal Justice in 2017 and moved to Local Policing in 2022.

- 4.3 The PCC believes that Mr de Meyer meets the criteria for appointment, as set out in the person specification. He scored consistently highly through all stages of the selection process and the decision to propose him as Chief Constable comes with the unanimous support of the appointment panel. Ms Townsend was particularly impressed with Mr de Meyer's clear focus and vision for Surrey to move it from a good to an outstanding force. He described a mission to engage widely, in order to inspire and galvanise colleagues and build a strong, crime-fighting workforce with high professional standards. Mr de Meyer recognised the importance of working with partners and also of bringing innovation from beyond policing, as he has demonstrated in his current role at TVP. He also set out his intention to look at productivity, ensuring the Force provides the greatest public value for money in order to both make savings and invest in critical infrastructure.
- 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 de Meyer satisfies this criterion as he currently holds the substantive rank of Assistant 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 Course. Evidence of Mr de Meyer having completed 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 £155,184. 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 term of appointment would be for five years.

6. Starting Date

- 6.1 Subject to the panel's consideration, Mr de Meyer will take up post when Mr Stephens leaves Surrey Police. This is expected to be on or around 1 April 2023.

7. References

- 7.1 Two professional references have been sought: from the candidate's current line manager (CC John Campbell); and from Mr Duncan Sharkey, Chief Executive of Somerset County Council and previous Chief Executive of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, who has worked with Mr de Meyer over a number of years, including on Operation London Bridge. The appointment will also be subject to usual vetting and health checks.

LEAD OFFICER: Alison Bolton, Chief Executive, OPCC

TELEPHONE: 01483 630 200

E-MAIL: Alison.bolton@surrey.police.uk