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Commissioner for Surrey

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Cllr David Reeve
Chairman of Surrey's Police & Crime Panel
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8th July 2021

Dear Chairman,

Appointment of Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner

Thank you for your letter of 1st July detailing the outcome of the Confirmation Hearing in respect of the appointment of Ellie Vesey-Thompson as Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner for Surrey. I note with genuine disappointment the recommendation of the Panel that Miss Vesey-Thompson is not appointed.

I have carefully considered the points raised in the letter by Members. However, I do not share the Panel's conclusion around Miss Vesey-Thompson's suitability for the role. It is unfortunate that, in the relatively short period of questioning at last week's Confirmation Hearing, Members were not able to see more clearly the qualities and attributes that I strongly maintain Miss Vesey-Thompson can offer as my Deputy. There is no prescribed job description for Deputy Police & Crime Commissioners - and rightfully so - as every Commissioner, and the areas they represent, face distinctive challenges. For Surrey, this is a new role and one where I believe Miss Vesey-Thompson can bring a different perspective, as well as her considerable energy and passion for public service, to complement my own experience.

As I explained at the Panel meeting, I intend to consult widely on the development of my Police & Crime Plan in the coming months across the broadest possible spectrum of residents, businesses, organisations and elected representatives. This will ensure that my Plan is truly informed by the views of those who live or work in the County. As the Plan begins to evolve and priorities emerge, I am confident that Miss Vesey-Thompson's role will evolve alongside it. With a clear idea of the policing and crime objectives for Surrey, I will be better placed to speak again with Members on how Miss Vesey-Thompson will be focusing her time.

I am both honoured and humbled that the public put their faith in me to be Surrey's Police & Crime Commissioner at the May elections and I will work diligently to repay their trust over the next three years. Having an effective Deputy is crucial for me, my Office and ultimately for those whom I represent. Therefore, the decision to appoint Miss Vesey-Thompson is not one which I have taken lightly. Miss Vesey-Thompson retains my absolute confidence as the right person for this role and I will therefore be rejecting the Panel's recommendation and proceeding with Miss Vesey-Thompson's appointment with immediate effect.

I do hope that I, Miss Vesey-Thompson and the Panel can now progress in a constructive way, working together for the benefit of Surrey Police and most importantly, for the people of Surrey.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Townsend

Lisa Townsend
Police and Crime Commissioner