



**AVON &
SOMERSET**
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER

**Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner
Appointment Process**

Independent Member Report
Councillor David Fothergill
Leader of Somerset County Council

14 April 2020

1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides information on the appointment process for the role of Deputy Police & Crime Commissioners for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset and in particular, it will comment on:

- how the process met the principles of merit, fairness and openness and
- the extent to which the Appointment Panel were able to fulfil their purpose, to challenge and test the candidate against the stated criteria.

1.2 It is for the Police and Crime Commissioner to decide how they wish to run their appointment process and which candidate they wish to appoint. The PCC involved an Independent Member at the earliest practicable point in the process.

1.3 The purpose of the appointment is to provide support to the PCC during the extension to her tenure as PCC following the postponement of the election due CoVid 19. The urgency in this appointment comes with the increased workload for the PCC role in scrutiny, community reassurance and partnership working arising from the current national health emergency.

1.3 This report is the Independent Member's Report (David Fothergill), relating to the appointment process for the role of Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner for the Police & Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset.

2. Aim

2.1 The aim of this report is to provide an assessment of the extent to which the appointment process has been conducted fairly, openly and based on merit. It will also comment on the extent to which the Appointment Panel fulfilled their responsibility to challenge and test the candidates' suitability against the requirements of the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner role.

3. Independent Member initial involvement in the Deputy PCC Appointment Process for the Police & Crime Commissioner.

3.1 I was invited to join the process by Sue Mountstevens, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the OPCC Interim Chief Executive Officer confirmed my appointment. I was sent the key documents for the post (role profile including job description and person specification). The OPCC demonstrated the good practice guidance by involving all Appointment Panel Members involved in all aspects for the process; this demonstrated an openness and transparency to the process.

4. Appointment panel

4.1 The Appointment Panel was convened by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

4.2 The purpose of the Appointment Panel is to challenge and test that the candidate meets the necessary requirements to perform the role and that the Police and Crime

Commissioner should select an Appointment Panel capable of discharging this responsibility.

4.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner should ensure that Appointment Panel members are diverse and suitably experienced and competent in selection practices and that they adhere to the principles of merit, fairness and openness).

4.4 The Appointment Panel appointed by the Police and Crime Commissioner were selected to provide an expertise and experience to test potential candidates at a policing executive level. I confirmed that the Appointment Panel had previously been involved in senior recruitment and panel participation at the beginning of the process.

4.5 There were three Appointment Panel members comprising of two male and one female members; I was the Independent Member.

4.6 **APPOINTMENT PANEL:**

- Sue Mountstevens, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner;
- Mark Simmonds, OPCC Interim Chief Executive Officer; and
- Councillor David Fothergill, Leader of Somerset County Council and Independent Member.

5. Role profile and attraction strategy

5.1 The role profile was based on the previous Deputy PCC roles provide by The Association of Policing & Crime Chief Executives (APACE) and with input from the PCC and the OPCC Interim CEO. The role profile reflects the PCC's priorities and local requirements.

5.2 The vacancy was advertised as follows:

- OPCC website jobs section
- Constabulary website jobs section
- PCCs LinkedIn corporate page
- Targeted advert on Facebook via our A&SPCC page
- Business crime forum
- APACE
- APCC
- Network of CEOs in Local Authorities

5.3 The post was advertised from 23 March to 9 April 2020 inclusive, which was exactly three weeks. The vacancy was advertised through a public website and other forms of publication that deal with policing and public sector matters'.

5.4 I am fully satisfied that the Police and Crime Commissioner advertised the vacancy openly to attract the best possible eligible candidate pool.

6. Shortlisting and Panel briefing

- 6.1 By the closing date, 9 application forms had been received for the role.
- 6.2 The short listing meeting was scheduled for 9 April via Skype due to the working from home restrictions.
- 6.3 The short listing process was based on the evidence provided in the application form and not on previous knowledge. This was to ensure fairness and transparency throughout all stages of the assessment. I am confident at this stage that there was nothing that would make the process unfair in terms of bias.
- 6.4 It is noted that 3 candidates who applied were known by Panel members. I am satisfied this aspect of the process was fair, having re-affirmed that this process was to be based on merit and on the evidence provided in the application form.
- 6.5 The Appointment Panel members individually assessed the application forms against the set criteria using the agreed rating scale. To ensure a fair, merit based and transparent assessment of the candidates, the scores from each Panel member were sought seeking clarification and evidence for the score given. At the request of the PCC, we alternated who gave their score first to ensure fairness; the Panel then agreed overall score per competency area for each of the 9 candidates.
- 6.6 Three candidates demonstrated in their application form clear evidence to enable them to be selected for assessment on 14 April 2020.

7. Selection

- 7.1 The Panel supported and agreed a robust and challenging process of:
 - a presentation, where the brief was provided in advance;
 - a competency based interview.
- 7.2 Two members of the Police and Crime Panel observed the interviews via Skype.

8 Assessment delivery and Panel briefing

- 8.1 On 14 April, the Appointment Panel met, via Skype, 20 minutes before the presentation and the interview to review and to confirm the questions and the process. Sue Mountstevens (PCC) reminded the Appointment Panel what she was looking for in the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner.
- 8.2 The Appointment Panel was chaired by the PCC and the questions were evenly asked by the Panel members.
- 8.3 The selection day process consisted of:

10 minutes	Presentation delivery
5 minutes	Questions from the Appointment Panel

40 minutes Competency based interview, with flexibility to probe

8.4 Assessment Decision Making

- 8.4.1 Each Appointment Panel were required to record and mark the presentation and the interview questions independently.
- 8.4.2 After the candidate had been assessed the PCC verbally gathered each Panel Members' individual scores. Collectively we ensured the consistency and justification of each score given.
- 8.4.3 To demonstrate a fair and transparent process, based on merit, the Panel agreed a score at which a candidate would be appointable.
- 8.4.4 The Appointment Panel unanimously supported Sue Mountstevens (PCC) in her recommendation to the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) scheduled for 23 April that John Smith, be the preferred Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner for the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 8.4.5 I am confident that the Appointment Panel appointed, performed their duty to challenge and assess the candidate in a manner that was fair, transparent and merit based.



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Independent Member

