



# Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

Hosted by Somerset County Council Democratic Services



## Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel

**31 March 2021 (10:00)** ('Remote' meeting held under the provisions of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

---

### **Present:**

#### **Local Authority and Independent Member Representatives:**

Chris Booth (Somerset West and Taunton Council), Richard Brown (Chair and Independent Member), Asher Craig (Bristol City Council), Franklin Owusu-Antwi (South Gloucestershire Council), Afzal Shah (Bristol City Council) Alastair Singleton (Bath and North East Somerset), Pat Trull (South Gloucestershire Council), Andy Wait (Bath and North East Somerset Council), Martin Wale (South Somerset Council), Richard Westwood (North Somerset Council), Roz Willis (North Somerset)

#### **Host Authority Support Staff:**

Scott Wooldridge – Monitoring Officer and Strategic Manager – Governance and Democratic Services

Jamie Jackson - Strategic Manager, Democratic Services

Pat Jones – Democratic Services Specialist

Andrew Randell - Senior Democratic Services Officer

Laura Rose – Democratic Services Officer

#### **Police and Crime Commissioner and Support Staff:**

Sue Mountstevens - Police and Crime Commissioner

Sally Fox – Candidate for OPCC Interim Chief Executive Officer

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received by Councillors Peter Abraham, Janet Keen, Heather Shearer and Josh Williams.

## **2. Public Question Time**

There were no Public Questions or statements.

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no additional declarations of interest.

An update was provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner around a recent series of protest events in Bristol. Police and City Leaders were engaged with and supported the actions of the officers involved. There was awareness of allegations relating to video content of police conduct on the night that was being investigated by ~~standards and the conduct of policing~~ the Independent Office for Police Conduct. More recent protests had taken place peacefully.

A further series of protests were planned around Academic Freedom and Hinkley Point along with further protests against the Police and Crime Bill. Modifications of the Covid-19 regulations had now enabled organisers to work with the police.

The Chair and the Panel passed their gratitude to those officers of Avon and Somerset Police on the frontline of the protests ~~and~~ for protecting the community and properties.

## **4. Confirmatory Hearing – Interim Chief Executive Officer**

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the item outlining the recruitment process.

Under the provisions of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police and Crime Commissioner is required to appoint 'a person to be the head of the Commissioner's staff' (Schedule 1, 6 (1)(a)). This report explained the process to be followed by the Panel in confirming the proposed appointment of the preferred candidate to the role of interim Chief Executive Officer in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Panel received notification from the Commissioner of the proposed appointment to the role of Interim Chief Executive on 19th March 2021.

It was subject to the public scrutiny that is required as part of a proposed senior appointment process set out in Schedule 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Two members of the Panel (Councillor Craig and Councillor Singleton) participated in the selection process and had previously reported to the Panel on their findings. Councillor Craig formed part of the selection Panel itself and Councillor Singleton observed the process.

Councillor Singleton also set out the arrangements for the selection process and recruitment panel and he confirmed that the scoring was conducted separately to ensure a fair and impartial process.

During the debate and considerations no comments and questions were raised around the selection process.

## **6. Panel Decision and Recommendation**

Following consideration of the Commissioner's verbal and written submissions and having due regard to the reports provided by Councillor Craig and Councillor Singleton, the Panel recommended Sally Fox should be appointed as the Interim Chief Executive.

## **8. Minutes of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**Resolved** – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **9. Panel Governance Review**

The Monitoring Officer for Somerset County Council provided an update around remote meetings and the change in legislation after 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021, requiring Local Authorities to consider how meetings could be supported in future whilst adhering to current and any future safety restrictions

The Panel then considered the Governance Review Report. The Chair reported that the Panel had taken the opportunity to review its governance documents to ensure that it runs as effectively as possible and continues to fulfil its statutory functions. A small sub-group of Panel Members had met on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to undertake the review (Councillor Shearer, Councillor Craig and Councillor Westwood) with the support of the Panel's Governance Specialist.

It was noted that the initial set up arrangements for the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel were overseen by a Joint Selection Committee of the Avon and Somerset Council Leaders (LJSC) and the Panel Operating Arrangements document emerging from these discussions was agreed by the LJSC on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and adopted by the Panel on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012. Attached as Appendix A to the report, the document was last reviewed in July 2020 to reflect the formation of Somerset West and Taunton Council (following the merge of West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council) and to address amendments required as a result of the pandemic and postponement of the PCC elections.

It was reported that in accordance with Schedule 6 Part 2 section 3 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Panel was required to seek the endorsement of the Constituent Authorities before any amendments to the document could be adopted.

The Panel noted that the Rules of Procedure (attached as Appendix B to the report) guide how business is conducted, ensuring that the Panel meets its statutory requirements. Unlike the Operating Arrangements, it was pointed out that the Panel can determine and make changes to this document, last reviewed on 13th December 2018.

The Panel's Complaint Protocol (attached as Appendix C to the report) was last reviewed on 13th December 2018. The Panel noted that the proposed amendment attempted to address the resource issue created by complaints/dissatisfaction with the PCC's failure to uphold a Police Complaint Review

Layouts and social distancing would be required to enable meetings in person to be carried out following the further relaxing of restrictions. Accommodating future meetings would need to be within government guidance. Members of the public would be able to attend in person currently after 21<sup>st</sup> June. It was noted that hybrid meetings were the preferred future option from the Panel which met Council ambitions around improving air quality and addressing climate change. Andrew – could we pls move this para so it doesn't break up the report ? Maybe to the top where Scott commented on meetings.

Following discussion, the Panel approved the proposed amendments to the following documents:-

1. Panel Operating Arrangements (Appendix A)
2. Panel Rules of Procedure (Appendix B)
3. Panel Complaints Protocol (Appendix C)

The Committee thanked Sue Mountstevens and Roz Willis for their continued participation and hard work since 2012

The Police and Crime Commissioner thanked the Panel for their support and participation during her time in office and wished her successor all the best for the future.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 (AGM)

(The meeting ended at 10.42)

Chair