



# Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

Hosted by Somerset County Council Democratic Services



## Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 10am Confirmatory Hearing – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

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### Present:

#### Local Authority and Independent Member Representatives:

Heather Shearer (Mendip Council, Chair), Chris Booth (Somerset West and Taunton Council), Asher Craig (Bristol City Council), Peter Crew (North Somerset Council), Jonathan Hucker (Bristol City Council), Julie Knight (Independent Member), Franklin Owusu-Antwi (South Gloucestershire), Alastair Singleton (Bath and North East Somerset Council), Pat Trull (South Gloucestershire Council), Andy Wait (Bath and North East Somerset Council)

#### Host Authority support staff:

Scott Wooldridge – Monitoring Officer  
Patricia Jones – Panel Lead Officer  
Pippa Triffitt – Panel Administrative Support

#### Police and Crime Commissioner and Constabulary/Support Staff:

Mark Shelford – Police and Crime Commissioner  
Alice Ripley – Chief of Staff  
Claire Hiscott - Candidate  
Marc Hole – Head of Commissioning and Partnerships  
Ben Valentine – Strategic Planning and Performance Officer

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Janet Keen (Sedgemoor Council), Gary Davies, Richard Brown, Councillor Lisa Stone and Councillor Neil Bloomfield.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

None.

## 3. Confirmatory Hearing – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

The Lead Officer outlined the Panel's responsibilities to review Senior Staff Appointments in accordance with Schedule 1 Part 10 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. At the request of the Chair, the Commissioner provided an overview of the recruitment process and the Panel noted the following:-

- a rigorous and transparent appointments process had taken place
- an Independent Member from a leading employment law and human resources service provider participated in the selection process. His endorsement of the appointment process was included in the papers
- Panel Members (the Chair and Richard Brown) participated as observers in the selection process to provide extra assurance and feedback on the candidates
- Attention was drawn to the role profile and the key requirements of the role
- All applicants were assessed against an agreed appointment criteria and scored against a rating scale

The Commissioner advised the Panel that the candidate demonstrated aptitude and skills in a range of areas and he had every confidence in her ability to carry out the role of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC).

In accordance with guidance, the Chair reported that the Panel had met in advance of the hearing to establish its questioning strategy and key lines of enquiry. A series of questions were then put to the Commissioner and the candidate in order to satisfy the requirement that the overall process had been properly conducted and that there was a sound basis for the establishment of the post. In direct questions to the candidate, the Panel pursued the two themes of professional competence and personal independence to ascertain if the candidate met the minimum standards to carry out the role. A copy of the questioning strategy is attached as Appendix 1 to the minutes.

## 5. Consideration of Panel recommendation on the appointment of Chief of Staff

**RESOLVED - that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).**

A closed session followed and the parties and press withdrew from the room. The Panel considered the candidate's performance and responses to the questions posed and the background information supplied by the Commissioner. All Panel Members gave their respective opinions on the Commissioner's preferred choice of candidate.

Following full and comprehensive discussion, there was unanimous agreement that the candidate had demonstrated both the professional competence to deliver the role of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and the personal independence necessary to exercise the role.

## **6. Panel Decision**

The parties re-joined the meeting.

**RESOLVED - that following full and comprehensive discussion and on being put to the vote, the Panel unanimously agreed to endorse and support the Commissioner's decision to appoint Claire Hiscott to the position of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.**

(The meeting ended at 10.30am)

Chair

**Confirmation Hearing for the role of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner**

**Panel Member Questions**

- 1) What do you see as the main challenges and opportunities in this new role of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner?
- 2) There will be occasions in this role when you have disagreements with people. How would you seek to resolve such situations? And how would you respond if you had a disagreement with the PCC?
- 3) Can you give us some examples of how you have specifically engaged diverse community groups?
- 4) How do you think you can bring added value to the role?
- 5) To what extent do you think your previous experience of ... ???, can help the Commissioner with his efforts to reach minority groups ?
- 6) With regard to your proposed community engagement and representative workforce role role, how can links with under-represented communities be improved?
- 7) As the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, how can you assist in ensuring the protection of those 9 characteristics laid out in the Equalities Act for the benefit of cohesiveness both in the force and the community?
- 8) Can you give us examples of how you have managed change by influencing partner agencies?
- 9) From your own experience, what are the key processes and attributes which organisations need to have in place in order to ensure sustainable improvements through performance monitoring?
- 10) Do you see any potential for your personal independence to be conflicted by certain aspects of this role and the specific topics on which you will be focussed?
- 11) What did you most relate to in the PCC's manifesto? And was there anything you would want to change?