

**REPORT TO THE ESSEX POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
BY THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER MR JOHN COOKE OBE
ON THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF ESSEX**

1. BACKGROUND & REGULATIONS

1.1 With the impending retirement of the current Chief Constable of Essex, Mr Barker-McCardle QPM, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr Alston CBE, is required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, section 38, and the regulations under Section 50 of the Police Act 1996 to appoint a suitably qualified Chief Constable. The appointment is subject to a public confirmatory hearing held in accordance with the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012. .

1.2 The Home Office Guidance on the appointment of Chief Officers is clear that in making appointments, provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 1988 must be complied with.

1.3 This report is provided by the independent panel member, Mr John Cooke OBE. I am currently an Independent Member from the list provided by the College of Policing. In order to become a member of this list I was required to undergo a fair, open and merit-based selection process. This process focussed on my suitability as someone skilled in assessment and capable of quality assuring assessment processes. I have undergone an induction to this role by the College of Policing and I am continually quality assured in my delivery of services as an Independent Member of Chief Officer Appointment Processes.

1.4 The role of the independent panel member is laid out in [Home Office Circular 20/2012](#) and is described more fully within the [Guidance on Chief Officer Appointments](#).

1.5 For clarity of the PCP, I became involved in the process at the shortlisting stage; hence, I was not involved in the initial work around role profiling and creating the job specification. However, I have been informed by the College of Policing that Mr Ian Drysdale MBA, Chartered FCIPD – Head of Human Resources for Essex and Kent Police – on behalf of the PCC, sought guidance and advice on the recommended processes required to ensure that the selection was based on fairness, openness and merit. Prior to shortlisting, and thereafter, I have provided advice and assistance to ensure that the assessment and selection of the preferred candidate is based on fairness, openness and merit. In particular, I provided advice on the need for a more diverse final selection panel that recognised the role of strategic partners. I am pleased to report that this advice was accepted and an additional selection panel member was appointed – see paragraph 3.2 for details. I also provided advice on the assessor rating scales for final selection and provided a number of supplementary questions based on the responses detailed in their applications forms that would provide substance within the competency based areas. These were then standardized across the candidates.

1.6 The Panel also included a Policing Advisor provided by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners who provided the PCC with expert advice and professional questions throughout the selection process. The Policing Advisor is a well-respected ex-Chief Constable and was a major contributor to the recently published College of Policing Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers and a member of the Police Advisory Board Recruitment Sub-Group that produced it.

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. In addition, it details the extent to which the panel fulfilled their responsibility to challenging and test the candidates' suitability against the requirements of the role.

3. SELECTION PANEL

3.1 The Shortlisting Panel comprised: Mr Alston CBE, Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr Paul West QPM, ex-Chief Constable West Mercia and an approved "Policing Advisor" and Mr John Cooke OBE and approved Independent Panel Member.

3.2 Post the Shortlisting it was agreed that the PCC would canvas for an additional panel member for the final selection process. Mr Alston managed to engage the services of Joanna Killian, Chief Executive Essex County Council, for the final interviews held on 13th February 2013. Pressure of work meant that Joanna Killian was unable to attend for the presentations and media assessments held on 12th February 2013. The Head of HR met with her, prior to the final selection process, to brief her role and on the guidance for Appointments of Chief Officers. The PCP should also be aware that all other panel members were briefed appropriately.

3.3 Résumés of the Selection Panel are at Annex A.

4. SELECTION TIMETABLE

4.1 The selection timetable is at Annex B.

5. SELECTION PROCESS PRE-FINAL SELECTION

5.1 At an early stage, the College of Policing was contacted by Mr Ian Drysdale to provide advice on the selection process including the preparation of an appropriate role profile (job specification) for the appointment. On the 17th December 2012 the PCC and his temporary Chief Executive, Mr Charles Garbett, met to produce the role profile detailed at Annex C. They followed the guidance laid down in the "[Toolkit for the Selection of Chief Officers](#)". The role profile detail and three competencies from the Police Professional Framework (PPF), considered essential by the PCC, were then used to inform the key questions on the application form. A rating scale was then used by the shortlisting panel to determine who should be called forward to the final selection panel. Copies of the application form and rating scale for shortlisting are at Annex D.

5.2 The post was advertised through Police Professional, including e-mailing to subscribers notifying them of the post, and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners website, with a cut-off for applications of noon, 14 January 2013¹. A copy of the advertisement and remuneration/benefits package is at Annex E.

5.3 Nine application packs, including biographical monitoring forms, were forwarded out to prospective candidates and six completed applications were returned (all male) for the shortlisting.

¹ There is no longer a requirement to advertise posts through national media as long as those eligible to apply would normally be expected to access the professional journals or associated websites.

5.4 On noting that the current DCC of Essex Police was a candidate the PCC offered all candidates, in keeping with the requirement of fairness, the opportunity to hold a one-to-one conversation with him. All candidates took up this offer.

5.5 On the day chosen for the shortlisting one candidate notified the selection panel that he had been confirmed as the new Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset; hence, the shortlist candidates reduced to five – details are at Annex F. After assessing all five candidates responses on the application form and a detailed and challenging discussion the panel agreed that all five met the shortlisting criteria and were duly notified that they would be called forward for the final selection process that would be held over two days – 12th and 13th February 2013.

5.6 In my opinion the preparation of the role profile, the advertising of the post, the selection of the shortlisting panel and the shortlisting were conducted openly, fairly, in accordance with all regulations and guidance and those candidates forwarded to the final selection process were forwarded on merit.

6. FINAL SELECTION

6.1 Prior to the final selection a “Force Briefing Day” was arranged on 28th January 2013 for all the candidates to be briefed by the chief officers of Essex Police, heads of departments and local authority officers. Four candidates elected to attend. The day was recorded digitally and the recording was offered to the candidate who could not attend on the day.

6.2 On 8th February 2013 Mr Drysdale was notified that one of the candidates had been confirmed as the new Chief Constable of West Yorkshire; this was the candidate who was unable to attend the briefing day mentioned at paragraph 6.1. The final list of candidates was reduced to four.

6.3 The final selection took place over 12th & 13th February 2013 and comprised: day one - a presentation with questions (total score available 20), on a pre-notified topic, and a no-notice media interview (total score available 12); day two - a formal interview lasting up to 60 minutes (total score available 20). Once again, Mr Drysdale consulted with the College of Policing in the design of the final selection process, in particular the media exercise. The candidates were assessed against the Police Professional Framework (PPF) for ACPO level officers against a four point rating scale to reduce middle tendency after taking advice from myself. The scores of the panel – three on day one and four on day two – were then aggregated for each exercise and each candidate. The final numerical outcome was then tabulated resulting in an order of merit. Details of the PPF, rating scale and tabulated scores are at Annex G. All candidates were asked if there were any outstanding personal or professional issues that the Panel should be made aware of. There were no outstanding personal or professional issues.

7. FINDINGS – FINAL SELECTION

7.1 Over the final two days of the selection process the candidates were thoroughly challenged through the range of assessment vehicles detailed at paragraph 6.3. In particular, candidates were tested in the key priority areas detailed by the PCC when advertising for the post. Additionally, the PCC wished to ascertain their competency in areas such as: strategic leadership, leading strategic change, serving the public, managing performance, professionalism, decision making, and working with others as detailed in the PPF. All panel members rated the candidate individually within each area; the ratings were then aggregated into an agreed rating for each area.

7.2 Throughout the final selection the candidates were treated equally and fairly and were assessed on the same rating scale throughout with no weighting given to any particular element of the selection process. I have no hesitation in confirming that the PCC's preferred candidate being forwarded to the PCP was selected on merit.

7.3 *The PCC's preferred candidate was Mr Stephen Kavanagh.*

8. FINANCIAL

8.1 The cost of the whole of the selection process cost approximately £6000, including fees, subsistence, advertising and cost of intellectual property. Final cost details should be available for the PCP confirmation hearing on 21st February 2013.

8.2 The basis upon which the Chief Constable's remuneration package is contained at Annex E. However, the final remuneration and benefits package will be subject to contractual arrangements and confirmation of appointment by the PCP confirmation hearing on 21st February 2013.

9. ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

9.1. There were no issues noted with the selection process. I have one observation. The PCC made a sound decision by inviting Ms Killian to join the final selection panel for her experience and expertise added another dimension to the Panel. The PCC might wish in future to consider bringing in a similar level of expertise at the shortlisting stage and ensure that the same Panel is retained throughout the process.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 From start to finish the selection process for the future Chief Constable of Essex was open, fair and met all the standards detailed in the regulations at paragraph 1. At a time when 18 other police forces were recruiting for chief constables the PCP would wish to know that the post attracted a substantial number of high-calibre candidates. The preferred candidate was selected on merit and was assessed by the whole panel as an outstanding candidate from a very strong field of applicants. The PCP may also wish to note that the two candidates who withdrew from the selection process have recently been appointed Chief Constables in other large police forces.

10.2 Finally, I would wish to personally thank Mr Ian Drysdale for his professional and dedicated work in ensuring that the selection process and administrative arrangements were of the highest order.



J A COOKE OBE

15th February 2013