

Appointment of Independent Members to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Reference number: EPFCP/12/20

Report title: Appointment of Independent Members to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Victoria Freeman, Secretary to the Panel	
Date: 4 June 2020	For: Decision
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County Divisions affected: All Essex	

Confidential Appendix

This report has a confidential appendix which is not for publication as it includes exempt information falling within paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

1. Purpose of Report

This report asks the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel to approve the recommendations of the Appointments Sub-Committee and appoint two Independent Members to the Panel. A summary of the process undertaken by the Sub-Committee is provided for information.

2. Recommendation

That the Panel agrees the appointment of John Gili-Ross and Sheila Murphy as Independent Members on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel from 1 August 2020 for a term of four years.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Panel is made up of fifteen councillors, one appointed by each of the fifteen councils in the Essex Police area, and two Independent Members who are appointed by the Panel.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 25 July 2019, the Panel agreed that the appointments of the current Independent Members be extended until 31 July 2020 to allow good time for an appointment process to be undertaken. The Panel also agreed the eligibility criteria to be used during this process. They agreed that the sub committee would comprise the Chairman, Vice Chairman and another member selected.
- 3.3 The Panel's Constitution sets out the process for the appointment of Independent Members. The relevant paragraphs are set out below for ease:

Independent Members

- 4.1 *The Panel shall appoint two independent members onto the Panel. Each appointment shall be for a term of four years or such other period as the panel may determine.*
- 4.2 *The selection process for co-opting independent members should include:*
 - a) *a reasonable period of advertising for the positions.*
 - b) *the closing date for the receipt of applications should be at least two weeks from the date the advert is first placed.*
 - c) *Information packs should be prepared and sent to those requesting application forms.*
- 4.3 *The applications will be considered against eligibility criteria agreed by the Panel. An Appointments Sub-Committee will be established by the Panel to consider applications and conduct the interviews of potential candidates.*

4. The Recruitment Process

- 4.1 A recruitment campaign began in week commencing 30 March 2020, with an advertisement placed on the 'Working for Essex' website and shared on Essex County Council's Democracy Twitter feed and the Commissioner's social media outlets (LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter). It was also included in the Commissioner's e-newsletter and was sent to Panel Members and all local authorities in Essex, who were asked to circulate the information.
- 4.2 Information packs were prepared and sent to those persons who had shown an interest in applying for the position. Applicants were requested to submit a supporting statement setting out how they met the criteria within the person specification, and their curriculum vitae. At the closing date for applications on the 17 April 2020, fifty-three persons had indicated that they may be interested in applying for the position, and thirteen valid applications were subsequently received.
- 4.3 In accordance with the Panel's resolution of 25 July 2019, an Appointments Sub-Committee was convened to shortlist and interview suitable candidates. The Sub-Committee consisted of Councillor Wendy Schmitt, Chairman; Councillor Malcolm Maddocks, Vice Chairman and Councillor Lynda McWilliams, Panel Member.
- 4.4 The Appointments Sub-Committee met remotely on the 21 April 2020 to assess the applications received against the Panel's agreed eligibility criteria, taking into consideration the skills, knowledge and experience of applicants, balancing these factors against those of the current membership of the Panel and how the new appointees may support the Panel in discharging its functions effectively.
- 4.5 The Sub-Committee agreed to shortlist eight candidates for the interview stage. Interviews were held remotely in May 2020. The Appointments Sub-Committee met again on 6 May 2020 following the interviews to determine the best candidates for the positions.

- 4.6 After careful consideration of the relative strengths and experiences of the candidates, as indicated by their curriculum vitae, supporting documentation and by interview, the Sub-Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to the Panel that John Gili-Ross and Sheila Murphy be appointed to the positions of Independent Members on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel. A copy of the curriculum vitae and supporting statements for the recommended candidates are attached as appendices to the report. Many members will know that John Gili-Ross has been an independent member of the Panel almost since its inception.
- 4.7 Both candidates meet the statutory eligibility criteria for co-opt in paragraph 22 of Schedule 6 to the Police, Crime and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

5. Appendices

Confidential Item 15 - Curriculum vitae and supporting statement – John Gili-Ross

Confidential Item 16 - Curriculum vitae and supporting statement – Sheila Murphy