



HAMPSHIRE &
ISLE OF WIGHT
POLICE & CRIME PANEL

**Thursday, 7th December, 2023 at 10.00 am
Held in the Chute Room, Winchester
(Hampshire County Council)**

Councillors:

Chairman

p Seán Woodward
(Fareham Borough Council)

Vice Chairman

p Vivian Achwal
(Winchester City Council)

a Tonia Craig
(Eastleigh Borough Council)
a Phillip Davies
(East Hampshire District Council)
a Jason Fazackarley
(Portsmouth City Council)
a Philip Lashbrook
(Test Valley Borough Council)
a Karen Lucioni
(Isle of Wight Council)
p Lesley Meenaghan
(Hampshire County Council)

a Simon Minas-Bound
(Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council)
a Alan Oliver
(Hart District Council)
a Martin Pepper
(Gosport Borough Council)
a Dan Poole
(New Forest District Council)
a Matthew Renyard
(Southampton City Council)
a Gwen Robinson
(Havant Borough Council)
a Maurice Sheehan
(Rushmoor Borough Council)

Co-opted Members:

Independent Members

vacancy
a Shirley Young

Local Authority

p Luigi Gregori
a Tony Jones
p David Podger

At the invitation of the Chairman:

Peter Baulf
Donna Jones

Kate Gunson

Legal Advisor to the Panel
Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire & the
Isle of Wight
Candidate

BROADCASTING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recordings for broadcasting purposes.

49. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

- Shirley Young (Independent Co-opted Member)
- Councillor Philip Lashbrook (Test Valley Borough Council)
- Councillor Alan Oliver (Hart District Council)
- Councillor Tonia Craig (Eastleigh Borough Council)
- Councillor Phillip Davies (East Hampshire District Council)
- Councillor Simon Minas-Bound (Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council)
- Councillor Ian Holder (Deputy) Portsmouth City Council
- Councillor Stuart Bailey (Deputy) Hart District Council
- Councillor Tom Hanrahan (Deputy) East Hampshire District Council

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were able to disclose to the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they may have in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest is not already entered in their appointing authority's register of interests, and any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that Members may wish to disclose.

Councillor Lesley Meenaghan declared a personal interest that the candidate was known to her due to working together, however that had been over twenty years ago.

51. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

No questions or deputations were received by the Panel on this occasion.

52. CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR THE ROLE OF CHIEF OF STAFF (OPCC)

Following notification from the Commissioner, to the Panel, of her intention to appoint a preferred candidate, Kate Gunson, to the role of Chief of Staff of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), the Panel held a Confirmation Hearing in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Members received a report setting out the powers of the Panel and the process to be followed in the Confirmation Hearing, as per the agreed 'Confirmation Hearing protocol'. The Panel noted the information provided by the Commissioner relating to the appointment, which included:

- Name of the preferred candidate
- Job Description for the role of Chief of Staff
- CV of the preferred candidate
- Report from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) stating why the preferred candidate meets the requirements of role
- Terms and conditions of appointment.

The Commissioner explained that the current Chief Executive would be retiring on 31 December 2023 after two years in post and a process to recruit a replacement had been initiated in October 2023 in order to avoid any gap in this key role leading up to the PCC elections in Spring 2024.

The Panel asked the PCC questions regarding the process undertaken in arriving at the proposed appointment and heard:

- This role was Chief of Staff and the previous role was Chief Executive. This reflected changes in the responsibilities of Police and Crime Commissioners since the roles were created, including the Finance Director and Head of Estates now reporting directly to the PCC instead of a Chief Officer.
- Consideration had been given to the approach taken by other forces and Thames Valley, Kent and Avon & Somerset had also changed to Chief of Staff. The salary level had been benchmarked against other force areas. Smaller forces paid their chief officers around £80,000 with larger forces paying up to £120,000. The PCC was content the proposed salary of £97,000 reflected the size of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight area.
- A transparent recruitment process had been undertaken with seventeen applications received with a range of backgrounds including military, local government and whitehall. When the role was last advertised eight applications had been received.
- The PCC worked closely with the candidate in her current role and was confident in her ability to step up to the Chief of Staff role.

The candidate introduced herself, providing an overview of her past experience relevant to the role. The Panel then asked questions of the candidate which related to her professional competence and personal independence, the answers to which enabled Members to evaluate Kate Gunson's suitability for the role. At the end of questioning, the Chairman thanked the candidate and provided an opportunity to clarify any responses given.

53. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information) and, further, that in all the

circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. While there may have been a public interest in disclosing this information, namely openness in the deliberations of the Panel in determining its recommendation regarding the proposed appointment, it was felt that, on balance, this was outweighed by other factors in favour of maintaining the exemption, namely enabling a full discussion regarding the merits of the proposed appointment.

54. **CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT TO THE ROLE OF CHIEF OF STAFF (OPCC)**

The Panel held exempt discussions which examined the evidence provided in the Confirmation Hearing session. The final report of the Panel is appended to these minutes.

The Panel agreed that:

- A transparent recruitment process had been followed
- The PCC had evidenced that the proposed salary was reasonable compared to other force areas
- The confirmation hearing process had highlighted how the candidate's skillset and professional values would meet the requirements of the role
- The candidate interviewed well and the Panel did not identify any weaknesses
- The candidate's approach appeared to provide a good balance to the Commissioners style
- The candidate demonstrated success in collaborative working which would be an asset in the proposed role

On the basis of the information provided by the Commissioner, and the discussions held in the Confirmation Hearing, the Panel agreed unanimously the proposed recommendation in relation to the appointment of the preferred candidate to the role of Chief of Staff.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed candidate, Kate Gunson, is recommended to be appointed to the position of Chief of Staff.

Chairman,