

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel Confirmation Hearing held on 6 January at 10:30 am in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, Ipswich.

Present: Members

Cllr Patricia O'Brien	Suffolk County Council (Chairman)
Revd Canon Paul Daltry	Independent Co-opted Member (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Mark Bee	Waveney District Council
Cllr Mary Evans	Suffolk County Council
Cllr John Field	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Albert Grant	Ipswich Borough Council
Cllr Peter Gardiner	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Brian Harvey	Forest Heath District Council
Cllr Colin Hedgley	Suffolk Coastal District Council
Cllr Diana Kearsley	Mid Suffolk District Council
Cllr David Rose	Babergh District Council

Other participants and local authority officers

Paul Banjo	Scrutiny Officer, Suffolk County Council
Susan Cassedy	Democratic Services Officer, Suffolk County Council
Chris Jackson	Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Sue Morgan	Head of Democratic Services, Suffolk County Council
Tim Passmore	Police and Crime Commissioner
Gareth Wilson	Temporary Chief Constable and Candidate

The Panel held a one minute silence at the start of the meeting in memory of Councillor Tim Marks, a member of the Panel and previously a member of the Police Authority, who died on Monday, 4 January 2016.

1. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Proposed Appointment of Chief Constable

At Agenda Item 4 the Panel undertook its statutory duty to hold a public confirmation hearing meeting to review and make a report to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on the proposed appointment of the Chief Constable (CC).

Decision: The Panel agreed unanimously to:

- i) recommend to the PCC that the candidate, Gareth Wilson, be appointed to the role of Chief Constable of Suffolk Constabulary;
- ii) to delegate to the Panel, preparation of a written report to the PCC, within four working days following the Confirmation Hearing, summarising the Panel's discussions during the hearing (report attached at Appendix A); and
- iii) publish the report to the PCC, and the PCC's response, when received, on the relevant part of the County Council website.

The Chairman considered that it had been a productive meeting exploring all concerns, thanked the candidate and the PCC for their responses to the Panel and commented that communication was vital. The Chairman congratulated the candidate on his appointment as Chief Constable.

Reason for decision: The Panel had received a detailed written report from the PCC regarding the appointment process, the criteria used, why the candidate satisfied the criteria, and the terms and conditions for the appointment. The Panel also received a written report from the PCC appointment panel's Independent Assessor, who concluded that it was a scrupulous, rigorous, open and fair selection process.

The Panel reached its decision after the questioning of the PCC and the candidate as follows:

Questioning of the PCC:

A Panel member asked if there had been any other interest received when the application pack was published. The PCC advised that there had been no other interest despite the post being advertised extensively and that it was not unusual to have only one applicant. The Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (CE of the OPCC) added that the website had received other 'hits' however they did not know who had accessed the page and no other enquiries were received with only one person requesting an application pack. In response to a follow up question from the Chairman, the CE of the OPCC advised that the post had been advertised on the PCC website and signposted on the Constabulary's website, the College of Policing website and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' website. There was also a link on the National Police Chiefs Council website which would have enabled international access. The PCC and the CE of the OPCC were both satisfied that this was beyond what was required by the College of Policing

A Panel member expressed concern about the speed of the appointment process and asked if it was ever considered to re advertise the post. The PCC explained that the post would have only been re advertised if there had been no suitable applicant. The PCC rebutted the comment regarding speed explaining that this was a very important post and that there had been a change in policing which needed a strong hand and also certainty and stability. He added that the pool of people would always be quite restricted due to the tight criteria. In response, the Panel member, in referring to Northants, asked if the PCC had looked at how its PCC had managed to get four applicants. The PCC advised that he had not done anything differently and that Northants was a more central location with a wider net. The CE of the OPCC advised that he was satisfied nothing more could have

been done to get eligible people to apply with the only other people eligible being those determined by the Home Secretary and if they had re advertised, the outcome would have been no different at all.

A Panel member asked if any consideration had been given to sharing a Chief Constable with another constabulary and if not, why not. The PCC advised that brief discussion had taken place at confidential briefings where it had been made clear that the change in crime, required a strong local police force, and that a strong robust police force with strong leadership for Suffolk was crucial in order to look after the interests of Suffolk. He advised that there was extensive collaboration with Norfolk and further afield with a large programme to look at other areas.

In response to a member noting that the Independent Assessor's report appeared to be a pro-forma as it referred to 'candidates' the PCC pointed out that the report had not been written by them and had come from the Independent Assessor. He advised that the process had been very vigorous and in no way was it a pro-forma. He informed the Panel that the Independent Assessor had written her own notes and had not had her independence compromised in any way and had been involved with the process from the beginning. The CE of the OPCC pointed out that due to there being only one applicant there had been even more importance placed on the process being scrupulous with no possibility of being challenged and as Monitoring Officer he had to be satisfied the process had been followed correctly. The Panel member subsequently raised his concern about the Independent Advisor not being present at the shortlisting. The CE of the OPCC advised that the number of Independent Advisors was limited. He explained that the Independent Advisor had been supplied with a copy of the application before shortlisting had taken place and she had been satisfied that the PCC could proceed and that her views were taken into account.

A Panel Member noted that the PCC had not involved a policing adviser and noted that involving one was good practice in order to protect against criticism. In response, the PCC advised that lengthy discussion had taken place and that there was no actual requirement to have a National Policing Advisor. The PCC informed the Panel that both the CE of the OPCC and the DCE of the OPCC helped to run and adjudicate senior command courses and he was not sure having a policing adviser would have added value. The PCC advised that the Independent Advisor had extensive knowledge as to what required. The CE of the OPCC added that the decision had been taken that it was not necessary to include a policing adviser and if at any stage during the process concerns had been raised regarding operational competence the PCC, at that stage, could have invited one in. The CE of the OPCC added that he had been a senior selection assessor for the police service, and the DCE of the OPCC was currently a senior selection assessor for the police service.

A Panel Member asked why the appointment process had not been delayed until after the PCC elections which were due to take place in May 2016. The PCC once again stressed that there had been a change in policing and added that the Police Federation had been very supportive of the decision to go ahead with the appointment process. The PCC considered that using the up and coming election as a reason to delay the process was a 'red herring' as the CC had independence and it would not be up to any PCC to interfere. The PCC considered it against Suffolk's best interests to delay the process for another five months as it had been over a year since there had been a substantive Chief Constable.

The PCC, in response to a Panel Member's question, advised that the unseen topic had been a question on looking forward to the change in demands and the challenges which would be faced and how the candidate would address those challenges. The CE of the OPCC advised that the candidate had talked for 25 mins when giving his response.

Questioning of the candidate, Gareth Wilson, Temporary CC:

The Chairman asked the candidate how he saw himself in the role and how he intended to communicate information about transformational change to the force whilst keeping up morale. The candidate advised that he had significant amount of experience in leading on transformation and change projects and he recognised the importance of communication. He advised that the recent reduction in funds was no longer entitled 'savings plan' but 'continuous improvement'. The candidate referred to the changes in policing with the emergence of crimes such as cyber-crime.

The candidate stated he was very much aware of the cultural differences between Norfolk and Suffolk and that they were two separate entities and that he saw the shared central space as a service unit for the two constabularies.

With regard to the PCC elections in May 2016, he was confident that he would get on with whoever 'walked through the door'.

A Panel member asked the candidate, in view of the amount of people coming into the country, if he planned to make any changes to policing in the county. The candidate replied by stating that Suffolk was really good at adapting to changes and the constabulary adapted its services to ensure it provided the best service to Suffolk's communities. In response to a Panel Member's question on his understanding of various ethnic communities, the candidate advised that people coming into the country were more likely to be victimised rather than experience crime and therefore he had very good relationships with mosques and churches who had made it clear that Safer Neighbourhood Teams played a very important pivotal role and the community network had a lively and active debate.

In recognising that the Muslim community were currently feeling under threat and in response to a question on how he provided reassurance about their safety, the candidate explained that the Assistant Chief Constable had responsibility for operational issues around such events as those which recently taken place in Paris and the constabulary had ensured that there was high visibility patrols and points of contact. He advised that there were currently two vulnerable groups, the Muslim community and the Jewish community and the Head of Gold Command oversaw the supporting of ethnic communities against extremism.

A Panel Member wished to know, with regard to devolution, how the candidate saw the Chief Constable's role adapting and changing. The candidate advised that, although some cuts had to be made, the SNTs were vital to how the constabulary operated and that there was an identifiable local police force. He questioned what could be devolved from central government but he assured the Panel that he would be working side by side with the local authority chief officers to ensure the constabulary was part of the discussions.

A Panel Member referred to Appendix C and noted that the candidate had attended a meeting of Clare Town Council and had won members' trust. She advised that a letter had been sent out from the Constabulary in mid-December on matched funding to PCSOs which had caused alarm. The candidate addressed in length the Panel Member's question on how he could now re build trust and that it was a lesson learnt. The candidate advised that he was convinced the new model would work and stressed the importance of the right workforce mix and how this was communicated and he would ensure communication would continue and highlighted the public webchat.

A Panel Member asked how the candidate would maintain and improve morale. The candidate advised that external scrutiny did recognise morale was an issue. However Suffolk's morale still remained higher than many other forces despite concerns about cuts. He explained that he had gone into the application process thinking that there would be a

tough few years ahead but he now saw it as a real honour to be able to revolutionise the whole organisation with continuous improvement and the ability to recruit. The candidate made a promise to the Panel and the PCC to ensure Suffolk had direction and leadership and that he would drive forward change. He also noted that after the Autumn Statement there would also be more stability.

The candidate advised that SNTs would remain as he had seen the absolute worth of SNTs. The PCC added that the SNTs were there to stay and the Chairman noted that partnership working was the key.

A Panel Member asked how the candidate would communicate with Parish Council's the message that car parking could be done in other ways as his parish was also unable to match fund PCSOs and were looking at hiring private security firms. The candidate stated that he did realise that communication had been poor however a letter was being sent out that afternoon explaining the situation. He wanted to ensure that the resources were being used effectively and provided reassurance that he was happy to work with parishes to ensure there could be provision if so desired. He added that he could not believe that the council still had police officers and PCSOs enforcing the Civil Parking Enforcement Policy however, he believed a solution was there and that a business case would be presented around civil parking.

4. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business reported.

5. Date and Venue of the Next Scheduled Meeting

Friday, 29 January 2016 - 10.30 am, Elisabeth Room, Endeavour House, Ipswich.

The meeting closed at 11.50 am.

Chairman

APPENDIX A



Suffolk Police and Crime Panel

Outcomes of Consideration of the Proposed Appointment of Chief Constable

The Suffolk Police and Crime Panel on 6 January 2016 held a Confirmation Hearing to consider a recommendation of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Suffolk regarding the proposed appointment of Gareth Wilson ('the Candidate') as the new Chief Constable for Suffolk.

Eleven Members of the Thirteen-Member Panel were in attendance at the meeting, as were the Candidate, the PCC, and the PCC's Chief Executive.

The Panel had received a detailed written report from the PCC regarding the appointment process, the criteria used, why the Candidate satisfied the criteria, and the terms and conditions for the appointment. The Panel also received a written report from the PCC appointment panel's Independent Assessor, who concluded that it was a scrupulous, rigorous, open and fair selection process. Copies of these reports are available on the Suffolk County Council website on the link given below:

[http://committeeminutes.suffolkcc.gov.uk/meeting.aspx?d=06/Jan/2016&c=Police and Crime Panel \(Joint Committee\)](http://committeeminutes.suffolkcc.gov.uk/meeting.aspx?d=06/Jan/2016&c=Police and Crime Panel (Joint Committee))

The Panel asked questions of the PCC in relation to the speed and timing of the appointment process, the efforts to try and attract more than a single applicant, the possibility of sharing a Chief Constable with a neighbouring force, the extent of the independent assessor's involvement in the process, and the decision not to use a Policing Advisor. With regard to the appointment process, and the single application that was received, the Panel members were significantly concerned with the speed of the process adopted.

The Panel asked questions of the Candidate in relation to leading transformational change, sustaining staff morale, the local policing model with Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT), communicating and building trust with parishes about changes to Police Community Support Officers (PCSO), supporting ethnic communities against extremism, and changes that could arise from the current devolution discussions.

The Panel noted that concerns regarding communication were a recurring theme and the Candidate expressed himself most effectively, addressing at length the questions raised about SNTs and PCSOs. The Panel noted the Candidate's emphasis on the local policing model, the importance of Safer Neighbourhood Teams, and the importance of good communication and collaboration.

The Decision of the Panel

The Panel agreed unanimously to recommend to the PCC that the Candidate, Gareth Wilson, should be appointed to the role of Chief Constable of Suffolk Constabulary.

The Panel also agreed to delegate to the Chairman the preparation and publication of this formal report to the PCC on behalf of the Panel.

The Chairman said that it had been a productive meeting exploring all concerns, thanked the Candidate and the PCC for their responses to the Panel, and congratulated the Candidate on his appointment as Chief Constable.

A copy of this report of the Panel will be put on the County Council's website on 8 January 2016.

Councillor Patricia O'Brien
Chairman of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel

7 January 2016