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**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**



MEETING OF THE HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Thursday 19th December 2024

Broxbourne Borough Council
Bishop's College
Churchgate, Cheshunt
Hertfordshire, EN8 9XQ

MINUTES

(Please note the minutes are a brief summary of the discussion and not intended to be verbatim)

Members Present:	Cllr A Curtis	Broxbourne Borough Council(Chair)
	Cllr Val Bryant	North Herts Council
	Cllr Aga Dychton	Watford Borough Council
	Cllr Reena Ranger OBE	Hertfordshire County Council
	Cllr Andrew Scarth	Three Rivers District Council
	Cllr Harriet Sherlock	St Albans City and District Council
	Mr Mark Jackson	Independent Member
	Dr Julian Hargreaves	Independent Member
	Dr Malcolm Ramsay	Independent Member(Vice Chair)

Also Present:	Mr Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Police and Crime Commissioner
	Ian Rooney, PCC Chief Financial Officer
	Mr Rafal Hejne, Interim Chief Executive
	Mr Nigel Atkins, Communications Manager
	Mr Andy Prophet, Candidate for Chief Constable position
	Mr Ibrahim Balta, Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel
	Miss Jessica Verdicchio, Interim Head of Legal- Broxbourne Borough Council
	Ms Sandra Beck, Deputy Chief Executive- Broxbourne Borough Council

1 WELCOME

Chair welcomed everyone to the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

Cllr Lynn Chesterman, Cllr Tom Plater and Cllr Christian Gray

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 21st November 2024

The minutes of the meeting on 21st November 2024 were agreed.

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None

5 CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF CONSTABLE REPORT ATTACHED AT APPENDIX 1.

PCC: introduced his report to the PCP in respect of proposed appointment of Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary. PCC has reported that his preferred candidate is Mr Andy Prophet.

Chair: invited the candidate-Mr Andy Prophet to introduce himself, Mr Prophet introduced himself and appreciated the opportunity.

Mr Prophet: briefly outlined his background and experiences (CV and covering letter attached). In summary, Mr Prophet stated Hertfordshire is great force it has a strong reputation and that has attracted him at the same time recognises the work that needs to be done.

His three main headings: leadership, prevention, and public trust and confidence.

Leadership- building on, top priority to lead 4300 people working in the constable, powering them on that mission, that will be my single and sole focus. Will be spending time talking to the front line.

Prevention- quoted Sir Robert Peel's ideas in policing and focusing on preventing crime. Catch crime and keep crime low. Believes vast majority of experience is to be a sergeant. Partnerships is important and is key. Understands that some of the underlying crime in Hertfordshire are complex. States that basics of policing, hotspots, visibility and doing the right things and arresting the right people.

Building trust and confidence- providing right service, when you call the constabulary will you get the right service. We need to be thoughtful on how we do that. Emphasised importance of conversation with community, councillors, lots of listening, lots of activity and telling what we have done to the community. Comes down to doing the job right, recognising different backgrounds, we need to understand that. Understanding different backgrounds. How we understand and how we train and equip officers is fundamentally important.

Commented on the HMIC report there are positive things in the report and it said some difficult things for example crime not recorded, that will change. The public needs to trust the police when they call the police, when we record crime is falling you will trust the integrity of the data of crime falling. Lots of things need to be done and training people on it is what we need to do.

Firmly believes that he will not be locked in a boardroom. He confirms that he will make honest decisions and sometimes difficult decisions. Focus will be given to get risk assessments right, deploying the right staff, building skills and competence, to get basic investigations right. Internally looking at things like representation, taking the right action and supporting people and providing opportunities all of those things have been done. I know constabulary does and it continues.

6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PANEL TO THE PROPOSED CANDIDATE/COMMISSIONER

Dr Ramsay: stated that it is important to talk on partnerships, diversity and ethnicity requested more information

Mr Prophet: parallels with being pro active on diversity and inclusion, recruitment and attraction. We are improving for example black and Asian minority doubled over 5 years. We have done that by reaching out to different communities. Another area is

disproportionality and improving on that, bringing different backgrounds, listening to concerns, looking at data, conscious bias training, checking whether the stop and search was done right way. Those combined things have increased trust and confidence, by no accident several years ago

Cllr Ranger: constraints by the budget, what experience do you have with dealing with budget?

Mr Prophet: had a programme of reorganisation structure using business intelligence and support people when going through those processes in a fair, lawful and humane way. Have been fortunate too about budgets. Notes that there is a budget gap the constabulary will be facing next year and we will be careful with some choices that will be made. At the heart of what I do, not a qualified accountant, I line manage the Chief Finance Officer and s.151 Officer so I understand long term investment and revenue capital and understand how things work in a constabulary.

Cllr Scarth: policing is about visibility, it's about people seeing policing, Hertfordshire is a very big area, what do you see your role being visible across all of Hertfordshire?

Mr Prophet: as a Chief Constable I need to be visible, I need to build relationships with community councils, Chief Executives, his role is also making sure constabulary is visible. Need to be seen by communities. Visibility needs to be worked smartly. Some don't see, we need to be evidencing, need to tell the story, take photos and tell people online and digital space.

Mr Jackson: building trust and confidence with business sector is challenging. What is your experience in businesses?

Mr Prophet: starts with relationships and strategic relationships. Invested in Town Centre teams, had officers in High Streets, finding out what is causing concerns and how do we get that right. Finding out how do we work closely with key businesses and local businesses.

Dr Hargreaves: recent polling in the county it looks like Anti Social Behaviour is probably the most single most driver making public feel unsafe, you led national initiatives national lead for tackling ASB. How will you join the dots taking ASB in the county, how did you deal at Essex and how here at Hertfordshire?

Mr Prophet: tackling ASB ranges from one incident of ASB to targeting drug taking, nuisance and other ASB activities. I believe the approach is simple understand where it is and have control that also recording. Tackling by knowing where it is happening. Use government targeted funded lighting, hedges, and visibility where it is happening. Perpetrator or victim which could provide significant indicator of risk. From control room repeat ASB is it police help or other help is needed and working out what is the underlying cause or who was causing that and how. We must understand it and tackle it.

Chair: personal independence question, if the Commissioner or his Dept if they asked you to lie would you use that. Is there anything we need to be aware, vetting questionnaire?

Mr Prophet: no concerns about values and integrity. No.

PCC: Passed vetting.

Cllr Sherlock: extremely conscious about mental health, how do you intend to balance, medical or social with mental health with other policing remit?

Mr Prophet: about 20% of calls have origins about mental health, there is so much policing can do around mental health. Professionals in the control room to assess and refer to mental health professionals to give that early advice, making sure that we have health partnerships.

Cllr Bryant: There is a perception that reporting violence against women and girls in Hertfordshire as a crime without punishment, what improvement can be made in this situation?

Mr Prophet: I am a husband and a father, one-fifth of all recorded crime were against women and girls last year nationally. I fundamentally believe in bringing more offenders into justice. There are structural challenges with CPS and courts. There are other challenges too but those things are known to victims, women and girls too often trust prosecution or don't support. What I can do is to make sure our single agencies practices, getting to domestic incidents. Referred to HMIC report domestic violence disclosure, let victims know if at risk. I will have a sharp focus on it, monthly performance report, understanding domestic abuse against violence against women and girls.

Cllr Scarth: commented on performance and mental health strain in the force importance that the force is cherished either by medals or a well done keep it up.

Mr Prophet: 100% agree, I want to work and walk alongside people, annual rewards events, senior officer certification and sometimes informal thank you. We need to look after the people who do amazing things they do.

Mr Jackson: mental health and partnerships, in terms of experience we keep touching on budgets, no matter which industry we are working in, experience of dealing with cash reluctant partners, core business I think we need to be creative and need to build relations.

Cllr Scarth: community think not loved by police, OWL and Herts connected support the police therefore spreading eyes and ears of police, evidence is so vital to be collected. Not a question, advised to make use of Herts connected and OWL.

Mr Prophet: if successful, happy to work.

Cllr Bryant: how will you lead Hertfordshire Constabulary misogyny

Mr Prophet: will go out to the whole constabulary and every team. Will look after each other, there will be some people that will not have those values. Has lead a professionalism campaign on how you learn, how you behave, zero tolerance for lying and abuse, no mistakes. General approach no acceptance of abuse, violence, we are here to uphold the law, they should. I will make my position very clear.

Mr Hargreaves: recent polling states that Hertfordshire public feel safe and some of the recent data show people feeling positive, but the national picture is declining year on year. But there is opportunity to build. What you might do to further increase policing in Hertfordshire?

Mr Prophet: looking at what the residents and the business say about you, general level of confidence is 78%, it can be higher, fundamentally high. County believes in what is being done need to keep up, it is about how you create an energy and sense in the community.

Cllr Dychton: candidate is keen to be visible, visibility provides security across whole lack of policing and visibility may be difficult on priorities how we will tackle that problem?

Mr Prophet: it is important to use huge range of protective orders in the constabulary and important to use those in a targeted way. In terms of visibility and dealing with vulnerability I need to look at operating model, check if the balance is right, is the focus right, budget. Sadly the reality is we need to make choices and hard choices. We will speak to the constabulary and how we get that balance right. I can use the budget I have.

Cllr Dychton: cyber security messages out to people regarding cyber security how to keep our data secure.

Cllr Scarth: referred to Herts connected for cyber security messages and telling people about it, and a message can be sent out.

Dr Hargreaves: on a practical everyday level how will he deal with a challenging situation or when you are challenged.

Mr Prophet: there is clear guidance and legislation which defines relationships. Right at the outset I will have a conversation, trust to have that conversation, sometimes it might be grey and overlapping if we fundamentally disagree we will work out the differences and differences of opinion and understand it, we will find a way through it. there is guidance of the legislation we will use that if we need to do that, we want the same thing Hertfordshire to be safe, great partnership, high public trust and confidence the intention is there.

Chair: making officers feel valued and feel appreciated for the work they do, retaining of officers what are your thoughts on that and what will you do to make people become police officers.

Mr Prophet: there is no shortage of people, the way we do is communicating what the constable do, creating internal advocates, the way I inspire is being visible. There are too many in my view who are getting 2-5 years working then leaving, sometimes its not a job for them and they decide to leave, feeling not supported, salaries or they find higher salaries in a different force, training and moving on. Hertfordshire is a special place, communities trust and have confidence. My biggest single thing is to inspire 4300 people and focus, primary focus is to make 4300 little bit better, then its better.

7 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business pursuant to Paragraph 3 of Part I Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

8 CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT TO THE ROLE CHIEF CONSTABLE.

Following notification from the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner of his intention to appoint to the role of Chief Constable, the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel to hold a closed session to agree its recommendations.

The panel members present unanimously agreed with the PCC's recommendations to appoint Mr Andy Prophet as the Chief Constable of Hertfordshire, a report to PCC will follow confirming the same formally.

9 AOB

None

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING 6 FEBRUARY 2025 – NORTH HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL

