



**Police & Crime  
Commissioner**  
FOR HERTFORDSHIRE



HERTFORDSHIRE  
CONSTABULARY

**12 December 2024**

**Chief Constable - Hertfordshire Constabulary**

**Appointment Process**

**Independent Member Report**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report provides information on the appointment process for the role of Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary, and it will comment on:

- how the process met the principles of merit, fairness and openness and
- the extent to which the Interview Panel were able to fulfil their purpose, to challenge and test the candidate against the stated criteria.

1.2 Home Office Circular 13/2028 outlines that it is for the Police and Crime Commissioner to decide how they wish to run their appointment process and which candidate they wish to appoint. However, they should involve an Independent Member as soon as practicable in the process: job specification, shortlisting and interviewing of candidates. The Independent Member should be independent of the PCC and the force and the guidance suggests, amongst others, that a chief executive of a local authority is the type of person that might be appointed. I was appointed early in the attending the shortlisting process on Wednesday 13 November and the assessment day on Wednesday 11 December.

1.3 This report is the Independent Member's Report of, Angie Ridgwell, Chief Executive at Hertfordshire County Council, relating to the appointment process for the role of Chief Constable for Hertfordshire Constabulary, which was the responsibility of the Police and Crime Commissioner Jonathan Ash-Edwards.

## **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. It will also comment on the extent to which the Interview Panel fulfilled their responsibility to challenge and test the candidates' suitability against the requirements of the Chief Constable role.

## **3. Independent Member Role**

3.1 The role of the Independent Member is laid out in Home Office Circular 13/2018. It is described more fully within the College of Policing's 'Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers.' This Guidance was produced in February 2024, so is fully up to date. It is written and maintained by the College of Policing in consultation with a wide range of stakeholder groups within policing including His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Association of Policing and Crime Commissioner Chief Executives, the National Police Chiefs Council, and the Home Office.

3.2 My particular skills and experience for this appointment include the fact that I have a long and successful career as a public servant. I have held the position of Chief Executive of two county councils and a unitary authority as well as the statutory chief finance officer role. I have also held two Director General posts in the civil service. I understand the requirements of senior leadership of large organisations, ethical and

governance standards required of public life, as well as the challenges of meeting public and political expectations within a constrained resource envelope. Through my career I have been involved in the recruitment of senior and statutory posts including Chief Constables in other constabularies.

#### **4. Independent Member initial involvement in the Chief Constable Appointment Process for Hertfordshire Constabulary**

4.1 I was invited to join the process before the Chief Constable post had been advertised with the associated job description, person specification and Candidate Information pack already developed and approved by the PCC.

4.2 With reference to the College of Policing Guidance, I understand that the PCC defined the requirements of the vacancy and identified who was to sit on the recruitment panel. I am also advised that he had taken advice before finalising these from the College of Policing and HMICFRS Chief Inspector.

#### **5. Recruitment panel**

5.1 I am advised that the Recruitment Panel role is set out in the Guidance on Chief Officer Appointments. This outlines that the Interview Panel should be convened by the Police and Crime Commissioner before any stage of the appointment process takes place and that consideration may be given to having Interview Panel members involved in helping to define the requirements of the role.

5.2 In addition, it states the purpose of the Interview Panel is to challenge and test that the candidate meets the necessary requirements to perform the role and that the Police and Crime Commissioner should select an Interview Panel capable of discharging this responsibility.

5.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner should ensure that Interview Panel members are diverse and suitably experienced and competent in selection practices and that they adhere to the principles of merit, fairness and openness (Principles of Appointment Section 3). It is also the Police and Crime Commissioner's responsibility to ensure that appropriate briefing/assessor training is undertaken by all Interview Panel members.

5.4 The Interview Panel appointed by the Police and Crime Commissioner was selected with guidance to provide an expertise and experience to test potential candidates at a policing executive level. All Interview Panel members were aware of the College of Policing Guidance on Chief Officer Appointments prior to participating on the recruitment process.

5.5 There were three Interview Panel members comprising of one male and two female members.

#### **5.6 INTERVIEW PANEL:**

- Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner.

- Angie Ridgwell, Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council, and Independent Member.
- Jo Shiner, Chief Constable of Sussex.

In addition, the panel had the benefit of a human resources advisor from the collaborated police HR function.

## **6. Role profile and attraction strategy**

6.1 I understand that the role profile was based on the College of Policing template but with Hertfordshire specific aspects, particularly related to responding to the recent HMICFRS PEEL inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary.

6.2 I am advised that the advertisement was placed on the Police and Crime Commissioner's website, Hertfordshire Constabulary's website and the College of Policing's website. It was also marketed to National Police Chief Council members through the NPCC website and by the Chiefsnet media group. An advertisement was also placed in Police Professional. The PCC wrote personally to a number of those in the region eligible to apply; this approach demonstrated an openness and created further opportunity for those suitable, to apply for the post.

6.3 The post was advertised from 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 and the deadline for applications was Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 inclusive which is the three weeks stipulated by the Home Office Direction. The thoroughness of advertising was to enable an inclusive and openness to attract the most eligible candidate pool of Chief Officers to apply.

6.4 I am satisfied that the Police and Crime Commissioner advertised the vacancy openly to attract the best possible eligible candidate pool.

6.5 The Office of the PCC was able to monitor the interest in the Chief Constable vacancy, as their details were advertised for potential candidates to contact for more information and I understand that a number took up this opportunity to speak with the office and have an informal discussion about the role with the PCC.

## **7. Shortlisting and Panel briefing**

7.1 By the closing date, five competency-based application forms with covering letters had been received for the role of Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary; I understand that there had been some additional interest for information throughout the process however these did not conclude in applications. The number is, I am advised, a good response to such vacancies as most recent advertisements have resulted in fewer applications being submitted. Included within the requirements of the candidates was for the candidate to reflect the impact they have had with particular reference to the College of Policing Level 3 Competency and Values Framework, 2024. This framework has three values, courage, respect & empathy and public service. It has 6 competencies: being emotionally aware, taking ownership, collaborating, supporting and inspiring, analysing critically and being innovative and open minded.

7.2 The short-listing meeting was held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and the full Interview Panel membership met remotely to complete this stage of the process. This stage of the process entailed separate evaluation of the applications submitted against the requirements in the recruitment pack. The applications were circulated a week before the meeting, so there was ample time to read and digest them and assess them against the recruitment criteria and eligibility requirements in the pack. At the meeting we discussed our assessments. During the discussions where appropriate members advised of any particular knowledge they had of the candidates. The discussion explored each member's assessment with active input from Jo Shiner as the policing advisor member and myself as Independent Member.

7.3 After our discussions, the recruitment panel unanimously agreed that 2 applications demonstrated that they fully met the requirements of the recruitment pack. The other 3 applicants while good applications were not as comprehensive in addressing all the points in the recruitment pack.

7.4 In preparation for the next stage, it was suggested that an additional element be added to the assessment to evaluate the candidates' abilities in a high-profile media scenario.

## **8. Assessment design**

8.1 The Interview Panel considered the merits of assessment through different lenses such as interview, presentation, media interview and internal and external stakeholder panels. The process adopted by the PCC included:

- A media response session on a policing topic to be filmed and presented to the panels on the assessment day to assess the response skills of the candidates. The media exercise consists of a short media interview which was filmed on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024. In advance of filming each candidate was provided with the same scenario (attached below) which is designed to test the candidates on their approach to a performance issue impacting the public, how they would show empathy in a case impacting an individual, how they address a wider high profile policy area (VAWG) and how they respond to the journalist inevitably asking challenging questions of the force and Chief Constable. Each of the candidates were informed of the scenario separately and in advance of the interview. The recorded media interview is approximately 5 minutes long and was filmed at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- A workforce panel with representatives from across the force, officers and staff, different ranks and grades, roles, and locations. The list of members of the workforce panel by current role and location is at Appendix A. The panel were selected by invitation to all the workforce to contribute a question, which they would present themselves, and give feedback on the responses of the candidates;
- a presentation, with the topic being provided only shortly in advance, and

- a competency-based interview.

8.2 The design aimed to evaluate fairly the qualities required by Hertfordshire Constabulary of their Chief Constable.

The media exercise was designed to test the values areas of:

- Courage
- Respect and Empathy
- Public Service

And also, the skills of presentation and reaction to questioning as well as the competencies of

- We are emotionally aware
- We take ownership
- We are collaborative
- We deliver, support & inspire
- We analyse critically

The Workforce Panel discussion was designed to test the value areas of:

- Courage
- Respect and Empathy
- Public Service

As well as the competencies of

- We are emotionally aware
- We take ownership
- We are collaborative
- We deliver, support & inspire
- We analyse critically
- We are innovative and open minded

The Presentation subject entitled: 'What are your priorities for your first year as Chief Constable' was designed to provide evidence for the competency areas of:

- Courage
- Respect and Empathy
- Public Service

As well as the competencies of:

- We are emotionally aware
- We take ownership

- We are collaborative
- We deliver, support & inspire
- We analyse critically
- We are innovative and open minded

The Interview measured the following competency areas:

- Courage
- Respect and Empathy
- Public Service

As well as the competencies of

- We are emotionally aware
- We take ownership
- We are collaborative
- We deliver, support & inspire
- We analyse critically
- We are innovative and open minded

## **9 Assessment delivery and Panel briefing**

9.1 On Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024, the full Interview Panel met 90 minutes before the presentation and the interview, to review and the questions and handling with the assessment interview.

9.2 The Panel had received written feedback on the NEO Psychometric and Personality profile for the candidates. I am advised that the candidate profiles were followed up by a conference call with The College of Policing including four key stages:

Stage One: College of Policing undertook an analysis of the role profile for the role to determine the facets of personality, which may be pertinent for the post of a Chief Constable.

Stage Two: after short listing, the candidate was requested to complete an online personality questionnaire, which was a self-report – a reflection of how they perceived themselves. The results of the candidate's report were analysed by the College and an initial 'generic' report was produced to facilitate a feedback interview session with the candidate.

Stage Three: College of Policing provided a telephone feedback interview to verify how the candidate's preferences affect the way they operate within the workplace. In addition, the feedback explored any counterbalancing strategies the candidate had in place to manage the less desirable impact of their preferred approach.

Stage Four: the production of a bespoke report on the candidate, which contained the candidates' personality profile, coupled by information gained from their feedback session, this was reported back to the Interview Panel.

9.3 The Interview Panel was chaired by the PCC and the questions were evenly asked by the Interview Panel members, with an ability to probe and seek further information. The ORCE (observe, record, classify, evaluate) approach to assessing was reinforced to ensure the Panel gathered evidence and a further confirmation of what each scale descriptor represented in terms of evidence observed and the resultant score between 1-7. This allowed us to compare and contrast the candidates in a fair, merit based and transparent manner.

9.4 The candidates took part in a:

- 90 minutes Workforce Panel
- 30 minutes Presentation delivery and follow up questions with the Interview Panel
- 75 minutes competency-based interview, with flexibility to probe

## **10.0 Assessment Decision Making**

10.1 Each Interview Panel member's folder enabled the Interview Panel to record and mark the media exercise, presentation, and the interview questions independently.

10.2 Collectively, we ensured the consistency and justification of each score given and demonstrating a fair and transparent process, based on merit.

10.5 The Interview Panel unanimously agreed the best performing candidate against the criteria, that they were suitable for the post, and supported Jonathan Ash-Edwards, the Police and Crime Commissioner in his recommendation to the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) scheduled for Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 that Andy Prophet be the preferred candidate for the role of Chief Constable for Hertfordshire Constabulary.

10.6 Based on my involvement in the process and the advice I have been given, I am satisfied that Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, fulfilled his responsibility to ensure the assessment process put in place was in accordance with the responsibilities listed in the College of Policing Guidance.

10.7 I am also satisfied that the Interview Panel appointed performed their duty to challenge and assess the candidate in a manner that was fair, transparent and merit based, following the College of Policing Guidance.

**Angie Ridgwell**

**Independent Member**

**12 December 2024**



## **APPENDIX A**

### **Workforce Panel Membership by Current Role and location**

- Detective Sergeant, Local Crime Unit – Stevenage
- Police Staff, Change Delivery Team – HQ
- Detective Inspector, Change Delivery Team – HQ
- Superintendent, Local Policing Command – Hatfield
- Detective Sergeant, Local Crime Unit – Hertsmere
- Police Staff, Change Delivery Team – HQ
- Police Staff Serious Fraud & Cyber Unit – HQ
- Police Staff, Intelligence Unit – Hatfield
- Police Sergeant, Positive Action – Hatfield
- Police Sergeant, Joint Protective Services – Dog Unit, HQ
- Police Constable, Intervention – Broxbourne
- Police Sergeant, Neighbourhood Policing Team – East Herts
- Police Community Support Officer, Neighbourhood Policing Team – Welwyn & Hatfield
- Police Sergeant, Intervention - East Herts
- Police Constable, Joint Protective Services Armed Response – Luton Airport
- Police Constable, Armed Policing Unit – Luton

