

Proposed appointment of Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary

Report to: Police and Crime Panel

Report of: Police and Crime Commissioner

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Purpose: For consideration and decision

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary, Andy Prophet, has formally requested the Police & Crime Commissioner's agreement to participate in the 'Retire and Rejoin' scheme.

1.2 In accordance with provisions in the Police Regulations 2003 and updated guidance from the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC), Association of Police & Crime Commissioners (APCC) and College of Policing, the scheme is open to all police officers in England and Wales who reach 30 years' service. It is designed to retain skills, knowledge and experience within the police at all ranks.

1.3 The scheme allows for any police officers (including a Chief Constable) to formally retire as an officer before being reappointed at the same rank. This process requires a break in service of at least one calendar month to ensure that pension entitlement can be abated without any impact on entitlement to lump sum or monthly payments. Participation in the scheme does not create any additional cost to the taxpayer.

1.4 It is not unusual for Police & Crime Commissioners to consider and approve these arrangements in relation to Chief Constables. In the current term of office, this has been the case in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Kent, North Wales, Northumbria, South Wales and Sussex.

1.5 The 'rejoin' element of the scheme constitutes an appointment of a Chief Constable by the Police & Crime Commissioner and is subject to a confirmation hearing by the Police & Crime Panel.

1.6 Mr Prophet was appointed as Chief Constable following a comprehensive, open and merit-based national recruitment process and started in office on 1st January 2025. His appointment was unanimously supported by the Commissioner's appointments panel, which included a professional policing advisor and independent member, and unanimously endorsed by the Police & Crime Panel at the confirmation hearing in December 2024.

1.7 Since taking office, Mr Prophet has provided highly effective strategic and operational leadership to Hertfordshire Constabulary, delivering significant improvements in performance and progress against the objectives in the Police & Crime Plan. The Commissioner is fully satisfied with Mr Prophet's performance in role and considers the retention of Mr Prophet's leadership as being in the interests of Hertfordshire Constabulary and the effective policing of Hertfordshire.

1.8 During the short period between retirement and re-appointment, continuity of operational leadership will be maintained through established arrangements with Deputy Chief Constable Andy Mariner stepping up to act as Temporary Chief Constable, who would in turn appoint a Temporary Deputy Chief Constable.

2. Confirmation hearing

2.1 Current guidance and precedent from other force areas requires the re-appointment to be considered by the Panel as a new appointment, falling within the scope of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSRA).

2.2 Section 38 of PRSRA specifies that a Police & Crime Commissioner for a police area is to appoint a Chief Constable of the police force for that area.

2.3 Schedule 8 of PRSRA requires the Commissioner to notify the Police & Crime Panel of the proposed appointment of a Chief Constable, with the following information:

- (a) The name of the person the Commissioner is proposing to appoint.
- (b) The criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate for appointment.
- (c) Why the candidate satisfies those criteria.
- (d) The terms and conditions on which the candidate is to be appointed.

2.4 The Police & Crime Panel has a statutory duty under PRSRA to hold a confirmation hearing for the appointment of a Chief Constable. The purpose of the confirmation hearing is to enable the Police and Crime Panel to review the proposed appointment and to make a report on it to the PCC. The report must state the outcome of the review by the Panel. In the case of the proposed appointment of a Chief Constable, these outcomes are either:

- (a) A recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed.
- (b) A veto of the proposed appointment, if supported by two-thirds of the Panel.

2.5 If the Panel vetoes the appointment, the Commissioner must not appoint the candidate as Chief Constable.

2.6 In response to the report, the Commissioner must notify the Panel whether they accept or reject the Panel's recommendation.

3. Consideration

3.1 The Chief Constable is responsible for the direction and control of policing operations. While operational independence is absolute, the Commissioner has a statutory duty to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force and to hold the Chief Constable to account for the exercise of their functions.

3.2 Mr Prophet was appointed as Chief Constable in December 2024 following a comprehensive, fair, open and merit-based national recruitment process conducted in accordance with College of Policing guidance and Home Office requirements. The process was overseen by a suitably constituted recruitment panel, including a senior policing advisor and an independent member, and resulted in unanimous support for his appointment from both the appointments panel and the Police & Crime Panel.

3.3 Re-appointment does not require a new recruitment process to be carried out, given that Mr Prophet is the existing office holder. The 2024 recruitment process determined that Mr Prophet best met the criteria for the role established by the Commissioner. The information provided to the Panel for the December 2024 confirmation hearing remains valid.

3.4 In addition, Mr Prophet now has one year and four months experience as Chief Constable and has consistently demonstrated his capabilities of performing the role to the standard required as well as bringing about rapid improvements in the performance of Hertfordshire Constabulary.

3.5 Mr Prophet is an experienced senior police officer with a policing career spanning more than 30 years. Prior to his appointment as Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary, he served for 28 years in Essex Police, from police constable up to the rank of Deputy Chief Constable with responsibility for overall force performance, public confidence, professional standards, and strategic change. He has previously served as National Police Chiefs' Council lead for tackling anti-social behaviour.

3.6 As Chief Constable, Mr Prophet has set the vision of providing an outstanding service for the people of Hertfordshire, by supporting, enabling and empowering the Constabulary's officers, staff and volunteers. The Constabulary's mission is to:

- (a) Prevent crime and harm
- (b) Catch criminals and solve crime
- (c) Protect victims and the vulnerable

4. Performance

4.1 It is the Commissioner's considered view that retaining Mr Prophet as Chief Constable is in the interests of Hertfordshire Constabulary and the policing of the county.

4.2 The Police & Crime Plan set out a number of performance objectives for the Constabulary, against which significant progress has been made under Mr Prophet's leadership.

Crime recording

4.3 The 2024 HMICFRS Cause of Concern regarding the accuracy of crime recording, graded 'Inadequate' at the time of inspection, was lifted in mid-2025. At inspection, crime recording accuracy was judged to be 82% and worse for sexual offences.

4.4 Monthly compliance for both all crime and sexual offences is now routinely at 92% or better (the standard for a Good judgement) and exceeds that in many months. The Constabulary is working towards a target of 97% accuracy.

4.5 These improvements have been secured by the introduction of a new Crime Hub, with specially trained officers and staff recording crime at source, better use of technology to quality assure recording accuracy, and specialist officers checking all sexual offences crimes for accuracy.

Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour

4.6 Despite the above increases in the amount of crime being recorded, there has been meaningful progress in reducing crime in Hertfordshire in a number of key areas less impacted by crime recording issues. In 2025/26:

(a) Burglary offences (business, community, residential and unconnected buildings) fell by 5.6%

(b) Robbery offences fell by 13.3%

(c) Shoplifting fell by 12.0%

(d) Vehicle crime fell by 8.9%

Solving more crime

4.7 Increasing the amount of crime being solved has been a key priority, to ensure more offenders are held to account and more victims see justice being done. In 2025, an additional 1,500 crimes were solved compared to 2024.

4.8 Performance in Q1 2026 was impressive, in line with the trajectory of improvement, with around 20% of crime being solved each month, putting Hertfordshire 9th best out of 43 police forces. This compares strongly to the 11.6% solved rate in 2024/25, when Hertfordshire was 37th best out of 43 police forces.

Protecting vulnerable people

4.9 Hertfordshire Constabulary has improved the use of protective powers such as Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DVPOs) and the use of the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law). These powers are critical to protecting vulnerable people from abuse and harm.

4.10 The rate of DVPO applications as a percentage of domestic abuse crimes is now the highest of Hertfordshire's 'most similar group' of forces.

4.11 In 2023/24, Hertfordshire was bottom in the country for its use of Clare's Law, but in the year to September 2025, has risen to 5th best nationally, with further improvements ongoing.

Responding to the public

4.12 Hertfordshire is now top quartile in its 999 and 101 performance, compared to bottom quartile in 2024.

4.13 The 999 call answering target of 90% in under 10 seconds is now routinely exceeded. Q1 2026 achieved 96% within 10 seconds and an average answer time of 3 seconds. The 999 target was not being achieved in 2024.

4.14 There is no national target for 101 calls, so call abandonment rates and average answer times are usually the key metrics. Call abandonment in Q1 2026 was 5% compared to 12% in Q1 2024. Average answer time is now under 60 seconds most months.

5. Strategic context, financial implications and transparency

5.1 Hertfordshire Constabulary and the wider policing system continue to face complex and evolving challenges, including high demand, workforce pressures, financial constraints, inspection and assurance activity, as well as future uncertainty caused by the police reform white paper.

5.2 Hertfordshire Constabulary will be due its scheduled inspection by HMICFRS in the second half of 2026/27 with the inspection report published in mid-2027.

5.3 Maintaining continuation of Chief Constable leadership for the next five years is therefore considered a key mitigation of operational and strategic risk.

5.4 There are no additional costs to the taxpayer from this proposal.

5.5 The Commissioner and Chief Constable will ensure that the rationale for the proposal and the associated governance arrangements is communicated clearly and transparently to the workforce and key stakeholders, supporting confidence in leadership and decision-making.

5.6 The Commissioner is satisfied that the proposed arrangement represents a proportionate, responsible and well-governed course of action in the public interest. It balances leadership continuity and organisational stability with accountability and openness. This report and the Commissioner's decision following the Panel's recommendation will be published, ensuring transparency and supporting public confidence in police governance arrangements.

6. Terms of appointment

6.1 The Chief Constable would be appointed on the same terms as previously agreed, in line with the nationally set pay scales for Chief Officers.

6.2 The salary of £188,656 is set by the Home Secretary following advice from the Senior Salaries Review Body.

6.3 Allowances and expenses are paid in accordance with the regulations and Constabulary policy.

6.4 Subject to the Panel's recommendation, the term of appointment is five years from 13th July 2026.

6.5 Mr Prophet retains vetting clearance at the required levels.

7. Recommendation

7.1 The Police & Crime Panel is asked to review and make a decision on the proposed appointment of Andy Prophet as Chief Constable and make a report to the Commissioner.

Background Information

Appendix A – Appointment report to the Police & Crime Panel, December 2024

- Report to Panel: [Report to PCP - Chief Constable 19.12.24.pdf](#)
- Independent Person report: [Independent Panel Member Report to PCP.pdf](#)

Appendix B – NPCC guidance on police retire and return arrangements

- Guidance Note: [Retirement-and-Re-Joiner-Guidance.pdf](#)

Appendix C – College of Policing guidance on police re-joiners and changes to Police Regulations

- Guidance Note: [Police rejoiners – guidance on changes to Police Regulations | College of Policing](#)

