
Independent Panel Member Report

Recruitment of Leicestershire Police Chief Constable

Introduction

This report has been drafted in accordance with requirements to appoint a candidate, as laid down in the College of Policing Guidance on the “Appointment of Chief Officers” Jan 2021 which includes the regulations for the appointment of Chief Police Officers. Key principles of the process include, advertising the role for at least three clear weeks, ensuring the decision to appoint is made on merit by conducting the process fairly and openly and that the independent member ensures the principles are followed throughout the selection and appointment process.

The information below is presented in accordance with the guidance. It contains my independent assessment of the process undertaken to appoint the Leicestershire Police Chief Constable. My comments are made in recognition of the importance of ensuring the entirety of the process complied with the principles of merit, fairness, and openness, in order that the public can have absolute confidence in the outcome.

An audit trail of the entire process was maintained by the CEO LLR Police and Crime Commissioner – (monitoring officer/observer).

Advertising and Search

The advert, recruitment pack and application form was made live on the 28th July 2022.

In order to attract a strong field and the broadest possible reach, the advert and information pack were placed in the following places: the front page of the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) website, the College of Policing Chief Officer Vacancies portal, and relevant social media – LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook, with a closing date of 23:59hrs on 15th September 2022. The range of sites utilised helped ensure openness, and transparency of the recruitment process as well as spread. Furthermore, the time the application far exceeded the mandatory 3 weeks.

Analysis of the statistics shows that social media advertising of the vacancy attracted the following interaction:

	Reach	Engagement	Link Clicks	RT's/Shares	Likes
Twitter	624	47	25	7	3
OPCC Website	1,252				
Facebook	123	0	1	1	0
Instagram	30	1	5		
	2,029	48	31	8	3

Briefing

Prior to the shortlisting panel session on 8th September 2022, a comprehensive briefing session held virtually on the morning, led by the CEO OPCC. The panel took turns introducing themselves and gave a brief overview of their background. Lizzie Starr took the panel through the appointment process reminding us throughout of our responsibility to be fair and open, and to shortlist and appoint on merit against the agreed criteria at this point she also ensured there were no conflicts of interest between any of the panel members selected by the PCC. Lizzie explained in detail the College of Policing Competency Value Framework on which 3 of the questions were linked. The Panel discussed in detail the types of phrases and themes they would consider a good answer to the final question in the application form. This criteria was agreed, again reinforcing the principles of fairness. All panel members attended the meeting.

Shortlisting

Following the closing date for applications, the interviewing panel was sent a shortlisting pack on 16th September 2022 which included shortlisting guidance, shortlisting matrix and also a copy of the role profile. Each panel member was given 6 days to read the application and submit individual shortlisting scores back to OPCC CEO who collated the individual shortlisting scores in preparation for the shortlisting panel on the 23rd September 2022 which was held virtually via MS teams.

The short-listing panel consisted of:

Mr Rupert Matthews – Police and Crime Commissioner – Chair

Mr Callum Faint – Chief Fire Officer – Independent Member

Baroness Nicky Morgan – Panel Member

Cllr Hemant Rae Bhatia – Panel Member

Mr David Woods – Panel Member

Mrs Lizzie Starr – CEO LLR Police and Crime Commissioner – Monitoring Officer / Observer

Prior to conducting the shortlisting Lizzie asked each panel member to declare any prior knowledge of the candidate now the names of the candidate was known. At this point all panel members declared knowing the candidate on a professional level however no conflict of interests was declared. Panel members declared any prior knowledge of the candidate.

Having only received one candidate, the application was fully assessed and considered to be eligible and a strong candidate. The candidate was consistently and objectively reviewed and scored against the predetermined assessment and eligibility criteria.

The criteria and rating scale guide assisted the panel to make a fair assessment of the likely performance of each individual in the role. Each question was individually discussed and scored by each panel member, and agreement reached utilising the collated evidence to determine if the candidate should go forward to the next stage of the appointment process.

Each panel member declared their individual scores using a rating scale 1- 6 based on the evidence provided in the application form. A composite score for each question was then agreed. A thoughtful and rational discussion took place during which each candidate was carefully considered. Evidence was extracted from application forms to justify comments made. The panel were unanimous in agreeing that the candidate should be invited for final interview.

I am content the panel undertook the shortlisting process rigorously and within the guidance laid out in the College of Policing Guidance. All panel members had carefully scrutinised the application forms and were able to speak authoritatively about the merits of each answer provided.

Testing and Assessment

Internal and external stakeholder interviews were held on 26th October 2022. Participants were asked to formulate their own questions based on a series of behaviours linked to the Competency Values Framework which was provided in advance.

The Monitoring officer held a briefing with both panel chairs prior to the stakeholder interviews to ensure both panels were provided the same information regarding the format, process and conduct to be followed throughout the process. Any queries about elements of the process for example, how follow up questions should be managed were discussed and agreed with the panel chairs and monitoring officer.

The Monitoring officer observed both stakeholder Interviews to ensure the same information was given to all participants and the panels were conducted fairly and professionally. I reviewed the comprehensive notes made by the OPCC of both interviews and can confirm that all Stakeholders fully participated, their impressions which were candid and supported by examples that were captured throughout the interview. All notes taken during interviews were collected at the end of the session in order for them to be securely dealt with according to GDPR.

Both stakeholder panel chairs conducted a debrief session with the panel participants to solicit feedback which was then collated into a report which was provided to the final interview panel to read and review as part of the final interview packs. Both panels were provided the opportunity to feedback to the final interview panel about follow up questions they felt the final interviewing panel could probe further.

Interview

Final interviews took place on Thursday 27th October 2022. The panel comprised the same individuals that attended the shortlisting meeting. As with the shortlisting panels each panel member was asked to submit a number of questions to the OPCC in advance of the interview which would form the question set. Following submission of our questions the OPCC collated and reviewed the questions with the College of Policing along with linking them to the CVF. These questions were then finalised and kept securely until the day of the interview.

The presentation topic was communicated to shortlisted candidates on October 20th.

The panel was provided a briefing prior to the interview by the monitoring officer, which included the feedback from the stakeholder panels. The Chair of the interview panel then took the panel through the questions and running order and the panel discussed and agreed the format of the interview.

Each panel member again scored the answers to each of the questions based on the evidence provided on the day by the candidate. The 1-6 scoring scale with a definition range of “Significantly below the desired standard” to “Excellent”, previously utilised at the shortlisting stage was used for each question and the presentation.

Following the interview each panel members individual scores were shared, together with the evidence panel members gleaned during the interviews to support judgements. A composite score was recorded for the candidate. A robust and thorough discussion followed during which the merits of each answer was discussed, as well as areas for potential future development. It was agreed the candidate was appointable after scoring 78%.

Summary

I confirm I am satisfied the entire recruitment process from the placing of the advert through to the outcome of the final interviews has been carried out according to the College of Policing Guidance for appointing Chief Officers. Importantly, I consider that requirements under the Data Protection Act and Equality Act have been respected, and that the process has been consistent, fair, open, and values based. Applicants were assessed against published criteria and a record made of all decisions. I am satisfied that the panels final decision was based on merit.



Callum Faint

Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service