

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL
REPORT TO THE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

15 AUGUST 2023

Report Title	Review of the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of an interim Chief Executive.
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The report is intended to set out the results of the review by the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire’s proposed appointment of an interim Chief Executive.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire must appoint a person to be the head of their staff, referred to as the Commissioner’s Chief Executive. When the Commissioner proposes to make an appointment to this position the Police, Fire and Crime Panel must hold a confirmation hearing to review the proposed appointment in order to make a recommendation on it. This report sets out the result of a confirmation hearing held by the Panel on 14 August 2023 concerning the proposed appointment of Mr David Peet as interim Chief Executive.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel recommends:
- a) That the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire appoints Mr David Peet as interim Chief Executive.
 - b) That the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner notifies the Panel of his decision whether to accept or reject its recommendation in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 schedule 1 paragraph 12(2).

- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendations are required to complete the Panel’s review of the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of a Chief Executive, in accordance with the Panel’s statutory responsibilities.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 schedule 1 paragraph 6(1)(a) specifies that a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) must appoint a person to be the head of the PCC’s staff, referred to as the PCC’s chief executive.
- 4.2 Schedule 1 paragraph 9 of the 2011 Act requires that a PCC must notify the relevant Police and Crime Panel of the proposed appointment of a chief executive. In such cases the PCC must also notify the Police and Crime panel of the following information:
- a) the name of the person whom the PCC is proposing to appoint (“the candidate”);
 - b) the criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate for the appointment;
 - c) why the candidate satisfies those criteria; and
 - d) the terms and conditions on which the candidate is to be appointed.
- 4.3 The Police and Crime Panel must review the proposed appointment at a confirmation hearing. A confirmation hearing is defined as: “A meeting of the Panel, held in public, at which the candidate is requested to appear for the purpose of answering questions relating to the appointment.”
- 4.4 The Police and Crime Panel must make a report to the PCC on the review. The report must include a recommendation to the PCC as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed.
- 4.5 The PCC may accept or reject the Police and Crime Panel’s recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed. The PCC must notify the Panel of their decision on the Panel’s recommendation.
- 4.6 The Police and Crime Panel must publish its report to the PCC, although it is for the Panel to decide the manner in which the report is published.

5. Review of the proposed appointment of an interim Chief Executive

- 5.1 The Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel met in public on 14 August 2023 to hold a confirmation hearing for the proposed appointment of Mr David Peet as interim Chief Executive. The proposed appointment followed the departure of the previous post holder.
- 5.2 The Panel was provided with information about the proposed appointment ahead of the confirmation hearing. This included the information referred to in paragraph 4.2 above.
- 5.3 At the confirmation hearing the Panel asked questions of Mr Peet, intended to enable Panel members to evaluate his suitability for the role. In accordance with relevant guidance these questions focussed on the areas of professional competence (: the candidate’s ability to carry out

the role) and personal independence (: the need for the candidate to act in a manner that is operationally independent of the PFCC). The questions covered the following areas:

- Mr Peet’s interest in the opportunity to carry out the role of Chief Executive on an interim basis.
- Perceptions of the priorities for the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in the immediate future and how Mr Peet could contribute to addressing these effectively.
- Experience of moving into a new role or organisation at a strategic level and quickly building an understanding of it in order to exercise responsibilities well.
- Experience that would support the delivery of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner’s strategic priorities relating to prevention and early intervention and to protecting and supporting those who are vulnerable.
- Approaches to providing constructive challenge to senior leaders and to encouraging high standards in the way that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and his Office operate.
- Approaches to building and maintaining productive relationships with partners.
- The future working relationship between the Panel and the Chief Executive.

6. Outcome of the Review

6.1 After questioning Mr Peet and taking account of the other information provided to the Panel, members commented that he was very well qualified for the proposed interim appointment given the amount of direct experience he would be able to bring to the role. Mr Peet’s service as the Chief Executive for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire from 2013 to 2021 and as the Chair of the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives were particularly highlighted in this regard. Members felt that Mr Peet’s answers to questions at the confirmation hearing also gave further confidence in his capabilities and in his readiness to deal with the priorities for the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in the immediate future. A member commented that the personal independence of the candidate and endorsements from previous employers were important considerations in this case in light of the circumstances that had created the need for the proposed appointment. The Panel was reminded that its focus should be on reviewing the appointment proposed by the Commissioner and that his Office was responsible for carrying out the selection process, including obtaining references and carrying out background checks. Members subsequently reiterated that Mr Peet would be able to bring strong experience and capability to the role of interim Chief Executive, with the additional advantage of being available immediately.

6.2 At the conclusion of discussion the Panel resolved:

To recommend that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire appoints Mr David Peet as interim Chief Executive.

7. Background Papers

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Police and Crime Panels Guidance on Confirmation Hearings Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny (August 2012)