



**July 2018**

**Chief Constable  
Cambridgeshire Constabulary  
Appointment Process**

**Independent Member Report**  
Carolyn Dhanraj MBE JP

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides information on the appointment process for the role of Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Constabulary and in particular, 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 20/2012 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.
- 1.3 This report is the Independent Member's Report (Carolyn Dhanraj), relating to the appointment process for the role of Chief Constable for Cambridgeshire Constabulary, which was the responsibility of Jason Ablewhite the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

## **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 20/2012 and HO 013/18. It is described more fully within the College of Policing's 'Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers'. This Guidance was issued in November 2012, and after a review a more practical guide was produced in April 2018. The guidance is maintained by the College of Policing in consultation with a wide range of stakeholder groups within policing including Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives, Senior Police Officers Association, Police Superintendents Association and the Home Office. This was produced under the direction of the Police Advisory Board England and Wales Sub-group on Chief Officer Appointments.
- 3.2 I am currently an Independent Member and a qualified Assessor appointed by the College of Policing, for which I was required to undergo a fair, open and merit-based selection process. This process focussed on my suitability as someone skilled in assessment and capable of quality assuring assessment processes; I had an induction to this role from the College of Policing and I am continually quality assured in my delivery of services as an Independent Member of Chief Officer Appointments Processes. Further details of my background are set out in the role profile in Appendix A.

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

- 4.1 I was invited to join the process by Aly Flowers (Senior Policy Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) in May 2018 to seek my participation and I was able at this early stage, to offer my advice and suggestions for the process. I advised on the steps that could be taken and recommended an early engagement and consultation with a range of statutory,

community and voluntary stakeholders, and further participation by way of Stakeholder Panel, to which I sent a briefing note with examples that had been used successfully in the past with other OPCCs in selecting a new Chief Constable.

- 4.2 We discussed that due to the limited number of eligible potential applicants, and the PCC's desire that the process be seen and indeed be open to all that were eligible to apply, they could be encouraged to apply in a fair and transparent manner via a letter or email from the Police and Crime Commissioner. Aly Flowers welcomed my input and this demonstrated an openness and transparency to the process.
- 4.3 At my request, a telephone conference was arranged as soon as practicable with Mr Ablewhite and this was an opportunity for me to discuss his approach and process; he confirmed and demonstrated a thorough understanding of the good practice guidance, and I was satisfied at this early stage that the process was fair and transparent as he had already consulted a range of stakeholders (45 in total), about the attributes, competencies and values that the new Chief Constable would need to possess to meet the challenges within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

## **5. Appointments Panel**

- 5.1 The Appointments Panel role is set out in the Guidance on Chief Officer Appointments (4.2.2 of the aforementioned Home Office Guidance and 1.3.1 of the 2018 College of Policing guidelines). This outlines that the Appointments 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 Appointments Panel members involved in helping to define the requirements of the role.
- 5.2 In addition, it states the purpose of the Appointments 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 Appointments' Panel capable of discharging this responsibility.
- 5.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner should ensure that Appointments 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 Appointments Panel members. It is suggested that an Appointments Panel of between three-five members is convened but this is at the discretion of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 5.4 The Appointments Panel appointed by the Police and Crime Commissioner were selected to provide an expertise and experience to test potential candidates at a policing executive level. I confirmed that all Panel members had read the College of Policing Guidance on Chief Officer Appointments prior to participating on the recruitment process, and each had previously been involved in senior recruitment and panel participation.
- 5.5 There were four Appointments Panel members comprising of three male and one female member; three white men and one minority ethnic women, who was also the Independent Member.

**5.6 APPOINTMENT PANEL:**

- Jason Ablewhite, Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough;
- Ray Bisby, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner,
- Chris Strickland, Chief Fire Officer, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, and
- Carolyn Dhanraj, Independent Member approved by the College of Policing.

**6. Role profile and attraction strategy**

- 6.1 The role profile was based on the College of Policing's national profile for Chief Constable and bespoke for Cambridgeshire to further reflect the PCC's vision and comments received from stakeholders, to ensure that the Candidate pack fully acknowledged the challenges that would face the new Chief Constable in relation to the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.
- 6.2 The advertisement was placed on the Police and Crime Commissioner's website, Cambridgeshire Constabulary website, twitter, Facebook and the College of Policing's website. It was also marketed to Chief Police Officer members by way of press releases in Police Professional and, Police Oracle. The OPCC also directly emailed a letter from the PCC to over 220 Chief Officers (Assistant Chief Constables, Deputy Chief Constables, and Chief Constables and equivalents). This approach demonstrated an openness and created further opportunity for those suitable, to apply for the post.
- 6.3 The post was advertised from Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 to Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018 inclusive which was three weeks and four days; the Home Office Circular and the College of Policing guidance point 5.3.3 states that 'the vacancy must be advertised for at least three weeks and must be advertised through a public website or some other form of publication that deals with policing matters'. 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 fully satisfied that the Police and Crime Commissioner advertised the vacancy openly (Guidance 3.4.1) to attract the best possible eligible candidate pool.
- 6.5 Please note to ensure absolute fairness, I checked that no direct approaches were made to eligible potential candidates by the Appointment Panel members, to encourage or highlight the Chief Constable vacancy.

**7. Shortlisting and Panel briefing**

- 7.1 By the closing date, two application forms had been received for the role of Chief Constable; there had been two additional requests for information throughout the process which did not result in an application. I am confident that the Chief Constable role had been advertised to enable the best possible pool of candidates to apply, and due process had been followed. It is worth noting, that this role attracted a similar number of candidates that other Chief Constable roles that have been advertised.
- 7.2 The shortlisting meeting was scheduled initially for July but this was rearranged for Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018; however due my pre-booked commitment to assess for

the College of Policing I was unable to attend the meeting; therefore, the application forms were securely emailed by the OPCC to me along with the shortlisting criteria template.

- 7.3 The day before the shortlisting meeting, I undertook the shortlisting process and telephoned Aly Flowers with my scores and comments on both application forms to be shared with the Appointment Panel; I confirmed that I used the agreed criteria and rating scale and further emailed to confirm the scores I had provided to Aly Flowers.
- 7.4 On the shortlisting day, Helen Slimmon College of Policing delivered a thorough briefing session to all the Appointment Panel members and oversaw the shortlisting process itself; it was emphasised that the shortlisting process and any further assessment should be based on the evidence provided in the application forms and not on previous knowledge.
- 7.5 The Appointments Panel members individually assessed the application forms against the College of Policing's set Competency and Values Framework (CVF) criteria using the agreed rating scale. The Panel then agreed an overall score per competency area for each of the candidates. My scores were provided by Ms Flowers and to ensure fairness, my commentary was also provided to evidence the reasons for the score. To ensure a fair, merit based and transparent assessment of the candidates, the scores were recorded by all the Appointments Panel members by Aly Flowers; both candidates provided evidence that gained identical scores at this stage of the process.
- 7.6 The two candidates each demonstrated in their application form clear evidence to enable them both to be selected for assessment on 10-11<sup>th</sup> July 2018. A Familiarisation day had already taken place on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and both candidates participated which included a one to one interview with the Police and Crime Commissioner. Mr Ablewhite was consistent in his message about what he was looking for and the challenges for the new Chief Constable for Cambridgeshire Constabulary. Both candidates also attended meetings with the Superintendents' Association, Police Federation and met with Alec Wood the current Chief Constable.
- 7.7 In preparation for the next stage, the PCC sought the candidate's reference from two referees per candidate, one of which was their current Chief Constable, to potentially highlight any areas that the Appointments Panel would need to probe through the assessment process.
- 7.8 I am confident at this stage, that the shortlisting process was fair, transparent and without bias. (Guidance 3.3.1)

## **8. Assessment design**

- 8.1 I had previously discussed with the OPCC the merits of assessment through methods such as interview, presentation, media scenario, stakeholder panels. I had previously provided the OPCC guidance on the use of stakeholder panels with an internal and external focus and the different assessment methods that could be deployed after the formal shortlisting meeting. I further advised on the questions, composition of the Stakeholder Panel and the following was agreed to ensure a fair and challenging process:
  - one external Stakeholder Panel (see Appendix B for list of participants);
  - media scenario with a professional journalist based on a partnership issue;
  - a presentation to the Assessment Panel where the topic was provided in advance and
  - a competency based interview.

8.2 It was confirmed that the competencies and the values pertaining to a Chief Officer could be measured fairly and with face and content validity through this assessment process.

8.3 The Stakeholder Panel (see Appendix B) comprised a presentation, which candidates were given 20 minutes to prepare for, and questions designed to explore the competency area of:

- We are Collaborative

The Media Scenario, for which candidates were given 15 minutes to prepare for, was designed to provide evidence for CVF values of:

- Integrity and Public Service

The Presentation (the title was provided with a week to prepare) delivered to the Appointments Panel was designed to provide evidence for the competency area of:

- Deliver, Support and Inspire and
- Values of Integrity and Transparency

The Interview measured the following areas:

Competencies:

- We take ownership
- We are innovative and open-minded
- We are emotionally aware

Values:

- Transparency
- Public Service

8.4 The remaining Competencies and Values had already been tested at the application form stage, and the PCC wished to test further the above areas, this was endorsed by the Appointments Panel.

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

9.1 The candidates followed the process of:

### **Day One**

#### **Stakeholder Assessment Panel**

20 minutes	Candidate preparation time
45 minutes	External Stakeholder Panel

#### **Media Exercise**

15 minutes	Candidate preparation
15 minutes	Media interview

## **Day Two**

### **Interview**

10 minutes

10 minutes

60 minutes

Candidate presentation to Appointments Panel

Questions on the presentation

Competency and values based Interview

- 9.2 The Stakeholder Panel and Media exercise activity took place on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018. Helen Slimmon briefed the Stakeholder Panel members on their role, the process and to emphasise that they were not the decision makers, but to provide valuable assistance to the PCC. I assured the Stakeholder Panel members that their views and any areas of concern would be used to probe the candidates through the rest of the process. I observed the Stakeholder Panels for each candidate, to ensure that it was fair and unbiased, especially as one candidate was known to some of the stakeholders. At the end of the Stakeholders Panels, on behalf of the Appointments Panel and the Police and Crime Commissioner I thanked them for their time and their vital contribution to the process.
- 9.3 On 11<sup>th</sup> July, the Appointments Panel convened 90 minutes before the presentation and the interview to review and to confirm the questions and the process. I invited Jason Ablewhite (PCC) to remind the Appointments Panel what he was looking for in the new Chief Constable and the challenges facing Cambridgeshire Constabulary.
- 9.4 I advised that the viewing of the Media exercise should be rescheduled to be viewed after the main presentation and interview, to ensure that no unconscious bias be introduced at this stage.
- 9.5 The Appointments Panel were briefed on the documentation contained in each Appointments member's folder, which clearly outlined the CVF competencies being tested. The College of Policing also provided feedback from the personality profile exercise each candidate undertook and also a summary of the feedback from the Stakeholder Panel. The Stakeholder Panel feedback enabled the Appointments Panel to shape some of their interview questions.
- 9.6 The Appointments Panel was chaired by the PCC and the questions were evenly asked by the Panel members. 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 1-5, once again this was beneficial as it ensured that we assessed the candidate in a fair, merit based and transparent manner.

## **10.0 Assessment Decision Making**

- 10.1 To demonstrate a fair and transparent process, based on merit, the Appointments Panel agreed to set a benchmark of at least 30 points out of 50 with no scores under three (satisfactory) for any competency area, for which a candidate would be considered for appointment.
- 10.2 Each Assessment Panel member's folder contained the documentation to enable them to record, assess and mark the presentation, interview and media exercise independently. The Appointments Panel went into different rooms for this task and did not share their scores until the end of the day, when all the evaluations had been completed.
- 10.3 To reinforce openness and transparency, I asked the OPCC to draw up a large grid with the candidate names and score grid for the Appointments Panel to view together, as we verbally gave our individual scores. The Chief Executive of the OPCC wrote down our individual scores and we openly challenged and confirmed from each Panel member the evidence they had gathered to justify the grades for both the Presentation, Interview and

Media exercise. Collectively we ensured the consistency and justification of each score given and agreed an overall score per competency and value being assessed, this was noted on the score grid.

- 10.4 The total scores for both candidates were calculated and Nick Dean scored higher in more questions than the other candidate, with a maximum score of five in three of the Value areas.
- 10.6 The Appointments Panel unanimously supported Jason Ablewhite (PCC) in his recommendation to the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) scheduled for Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018 that Nick Dean currently Deputy Chief Constable for Norfolk Constabulary, be the preferred Chief Constable for Cambridgeshire Constabulary.
- 10.7 I am wholly satisfied that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Jason Ablewhite, fulfilled his responsibility to ensure the assessment process put in place was in accordance with the responsibilities listed in the College of Policing Guidance.
- 10.8 I am confident that the Appointments Panel appointed by the PCC, performed their duty to challenge and assess the candidate in manner that was fair, transparent and merit based, following the College of Policing Guidance in a satisfactory manner.

Carolyn Dhanraj MBE JP BPS

**Independent Member, approved by the College of Policing**

**APPENDIX A**  
**INDEPENDENT MEMBER**

**CAROLYN DHANRAJ MBE JP**

Carolyn brings a breadth of experience, skills and enthusiasm to make a successful contribution in delivering transparent, fair and robust recruitment processes. She has managed several successful Executive Search and Selection recruitment campaigns and Assessment Centres for the appointment of central and local Government roles with OCPA and central government/sponsor department scrutiny. She is British Psychological Society (BPS) qualified and has worked in the private sector designing and running Assessment Centres and personality testing for senior local and central Government officers. Key clients have included the Home Office, Parole Board, ECHR Commission for Equality and Human Rights, Cabinet Office, Ministry of Justice.

Carolyn has over eight years experience as a College of Policing Non Service Member, assessing for a range of appointments from Senior Police National Assessment Centre (SPNAC) to Direct Entry. She has been a College of Policing Independent Member for eleven Chief Constables and Deputy Chief Constables and collaboration ACC appointments over the last six years.

Carolyn has also had a varied career within Local Government as a senior local government officer, focusing on establishing and embedding a range of effective Multi Agency Partnerships (Community Safety, Voluntary Sector & Diversity portfolio), with an expertise and skill in engaging with a range of stakeholders and community groups. She has a notable and substantial history of volunteering, including being the first Chair of Metropolitan Police Service Independent Advisory Group (IAG) on Rape and Sexual Assault – leading to the establishment of Project Sapphire and The Havens (SARCs); Member of the Stephen Lawrence Sub Group – Stop and Search, as Trustee of a National Domestic Violence charity and as a Magistrate for fifteen years.

Carolyn will offer you credible advice and guidance, she will support you in a practical way which will ensure the delivery of a bespoke recruitment campaign, reviewing with you the job description and personnel specification, discussing the best attraction strategy; she will train and guide the appointments panel members throughout the process, ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities to allow the recruitment process to be managed in an accountable, fair and transparent manner. Her firm but fair style of engagement is built on an ethos of openness, transparency and most importantly integrity and accountability.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER PANEL MEMBERS**

Jo Lancaster - Chief Executive, Huntingdonshire District Council  
Chair of Stakeholder Panel and Local authority and a County Partnership Board representative

Abdul Choudhuri - Leader of the Joint Mosques Group and the Fazina Mosque Peterborough  
Community Sector representative

Jenny Hopkins - Chief Crown Prosecutor, Crown Prosecution Service  
Criminal Justice representative

Paul Medd - Chief Executive, Fenland District Council  
Local authority representative

Bishop David Thomson - Bishop of Huntingdon  
Faith representative

Mark Turner - Chief Executive, Road Victims Trust  
Voluntary Sector representative