



Matthew Barber
Police & Crime Commissioner

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

RECRUITMENT OF A DEPUTY POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Background

Matthew Barber stated prior to the election that he did not intend to appoint a Deputy PCC. The Home Office have indicated that as part of the PCC Review they are likely to mandate the appointment of a Deputy PCC, although no timescale has been set for this requirement.

In the meantime governance arrangements remain resilient through the existing delegation powers to members of staff and the statutory arrangements that would come into force if the PCC were to be incapacitated or unable to fulfil his duties for some reason.

In the interests of transparency the recruitment process is being set out at an early stage. This will be presented to the Police & Crime Panel for information and comment, noting that it is not within the remit of the Panel to approve or reject the process. If the appointment of a Deputy PCC is mandated by Government in the future this recruitment process can be reviewed and implemented, ensuring a robust and transparent exercise.

Nature of a political appointment

Whilst the intention is to advertise publicly, shortlist and interview in the normal way, it should be noted that a Deputy PCC is a political appointment. It is not subject to the same employment rules as most roles. It is reasonable for the political affiliation and activity of a candidate to be taken into account in deciding whether to offer a position. The role of Deputy PCC is a political one and the recruitment process recognises this.

Job description, role requirements, remuneration and contract length

The job description is set out in Annex A to this document. A further document setting out the key requirements of the role is set out as Annex B. A determination would be made at the time of advertising whether a full or part time position would be appropriate depending on the OPCC structure, workload and statutory responsibilities at the time. Whether full or part time the remuneration would be set at 60% of the PCC's allowance (pro-rata). The PCC's allowance is set by the Home Secretary following recommendations by the Senior Salaries Review Body. The contract would be a fixed term until the date the PCC ceases to hold office at the next election.

Vetting arrangements

As a political appointment, similar to PCCs, Deputies are not required to be vetted, however best practice would be for a new Deputy to be vetted by Thames Valley Police and so any appointment would be subject to successful vetting.

Advertising

A press release would announce the opening of applications and the role would be advertised on the OPCC website, via social media and shared through other networks. The intention is to advertise the role for a minimum of 3 weeks, but this may be extended due to public holidays or similar considerations.

The Panel

The decision to appoint remains solely for the PCC, but the intention would be to assemble a panel to assist in the evaluation of candidates. A PCC from another area, plus a further independent member (such as a councillor from within Thames Valley) would be invited to join the PCC in forming a Panel of three to assess and interview candidates. They would be joined by an observer from the Police & Crime Panel who could offer assurance to the Panel that the process has been conducted fairly. It may be advisable to appoint two observers to ensure that someone can attend each stage of the process. The observer(s) would be joined by the OPCC Chief Executive in his role of facilitating the process.

Shortlisting and interviews

All applications would be subject to shortlisting by the three members of the Panel who will score candidates against the role requirements. At this stage all applications will be anonymised. Whilst Panel members will have access to applications in advance the shortlisting will be done collectively to seek to establish a consensus. Observer(s) will sit in on the shortlisting discussion.

The Panel will determine the number of candidate to be invited to interview based on the quality of the applications.

Interview candidates will be asked to make a presentation on a topic (to be determined) before being asked set questions by the Panel, along with other supplementary questions as necessary. Candidates will be scored by Panel members and the process observed by a member(s) of the Police & Crime Panel.

Whilst the final decision will remain that of the PCC, following the interviews the Panel will discuss their scoring and seek to reach a consensus on the best candidate.

Readvertising

Although undesirable it is possible that following interviews there are no candidates who are appointable. If this is the case this process would be reviewed before seeking to readvertise.

Approval by the Police & Crime Panel

Once a successful candidate has been identified their name will be submitted to the Police & Crime Panel who have the power to require the PCC to reconsider the appointment if they have concerns about the process, or the individual proposed.

The PCCs preferred candidate would also be submitted for vetting at the same time so that both process can take place concurrently in order to save time.