



Dorset Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of a meeting held at Dorset County Council, County Hall, Dorchester,
DT1 1XJ on 3 September 2013

Present:

Members

Borough Poole

Co-opted members:

Phil Goodall
Ann Stribley

Bournemouth Borough Council

John Adams (Chairman)

Co-opted members:

Malcolm Davies
Dennis Gritt
David Smith

Dorset County Council

Fred Drane
Ian Gardner

East Dorset District Council

Malcolm Birr

Christchurch Borough Council

Bernie Davis

Purbeck District Council

Ali Patrick

West Dorset District Council

John Russell (Vice-Chairman)

Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

Geoff Petherick

North Dorset District Council

Audrey Burch

Independent members

Iain McVie
Mike Short

Officer advisers to the Police and Crime Panel:

Chris Scally, Joint Commissioning Manager (Civic Society), Dorset County Council
Andy Frost, Strategic Manager DAT & Community Safety, Dorset County Council
Adam Richens, Finance Lead Officer to the Dorset Police and Crime Panel, Borough of Poole
Fiona King, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Dorset County Council

Also in attendance:

Richard Bates, Treasurer to the Police and Crime Commissioner
Martyn Underhill, Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Bryony Houlden, Chief Executive at South West Councils
Dan Steadman, Proposed Chief Executive to the Police and Crime Commissioner

Apology

47. An apology for absence was received from Judy Butt (Borough of Poole).

Code of Conduct

48. There were no declarations by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Minutes

49. The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June were confirmed and signed.

Confirmation Hearing for the Police and Crime Commissioner's Proposed Candidate for Chief Executive

50.1 The Panel considered a report by the Chief Executive, Dorset County Council, which outlined the appointment process for the selection of the Chief Executive of Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in Dorset. Bryony Houlden the Chief Executive from South West Councils was introduced to members, to help guide them through the process of the confirmatory hearing.

50.2 The Chairman explained that the confirmatory hearing for the appointment of the Chief Executive was required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) would be invited to speak to the Panel to introduce the candidate. The candidate would then have the opportunity to address the Panel, and then the Panel would ask questions of the candidate relating to professional competence and personal independence. The Panel would then go into exempt session to make its decision on whether to recommend the appointment or recommend against the appointment.

50.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced his preferred candidate to members, Mr Dan Steadman. Mr Steadman had been one of the 16 applicants for the post of Chief Executive.

50.4 Members received a report from the Independent Member of the Selection Panel, Susan Lee, which confirmed that a rigorous and robust selection process had taken place. She was satisfied that the principles of merit, fairness and openness on which public appointments were required to be based had been met.

50.5 The report informed members of the Panel that there had been three candidates shortlisted for interview. There had been unanimous agreement that Dan Steadman was the preferred candidate and the only appointable candidate based on the evidence provided during the selection day.

50.6 The Chairman advised members that Mr Iain McVie, one of the independent members, had acted as the silent observer in the shortlisting and interview process. He was able to update members on the selection process and noted that the PCC had ensured that the process was completely fair. All candidates had been given the opportunity to provide their best evidence.

50.7 Mr Steadman had achieved good marks in all categories, showed potential for the future and Mr McVie agreed with the Selection Panel that he was the best candidate for the post of Chief Executive.

50.8 The member from Purbeck District Council put the following questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner, who responded accordingly:

1. Can you explain how your process assessed the professional expertise of candidates?

Mr Underhill referred members to Ms Lee's report which addressed the candidate's professional expertise in full and commented that there were several procedures in the selection process to test the candidate's expertise from a number of different areas.

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2. Would you like to comment on the professional expertise of the proposed candidate?

Mr Underhill commented that the candidate had a good background and brought all the requisite skills for the role along with a strong potential for the future.

3. What do you see the candidate bringing to the role that will assist the effective relationship between you and the Panel?

Mr Underhill responded that the role had changed from previous times and felt that the candidate was best placed to broaden the role. Mr Steadman would be required to represent the PCC at stakeholder meetings and meetings with the public and he felt that he had the appropriate skill set and expert knowledge to be able to do this successfully.

4. Are there any ongoing issues relating to the previous unsuccessful appointment that could affect the new appointment?

Mr Underhill assured Panel members and Mr Steadman that there were no on-going issues that could affect this appointment.

50.9 One member from Dorset County Council put the following questions to Mr Steadman on his professional expertise, and he offered the responses below:

1. Please highlight for us the main areas of expertise you have which will enable you to undertake the Chief executive role effectively.

Mr Steadman responded that he has broad experience at a senior level across a number of industries especially with his previous role as Chief Executive at Sussex and most recently during the last few months as the interim Chief Executive for the PCC in Dorset. He felt he was results focussed and sensitive to the demands in the public sector.

2. In your role you will need to exercise a high degree of political sensitivity. Could you please briefly outline aspects of your experience that demonstrate this ability.

Mr Steadman advised that he has worked in a politically restricted position for the past 12 years and has worked with a wide ranging number of different people including elected members and members of parliament.

3. The introduction of the PCC and new structures is a major change. How will you ensure all the staff in the Office of the PCC understand the changes and adapt to the new working environment effectively?

Mr Steadman commented that he had inherited a small but strong team who were committed to supporting the PCC and he had already started to engage with staff in drafting a business plan.

4. As Chief Executive you have a very wide range of responsibilities (for example you will be supporting delivery of the PCCs vision and the Police and Crime Plan, you will be representing the PCC at high level meetings and you will also be the monitoring officer). How will you balance competing priorities and ensure nothing important gets overlooked?

Mr Steadman responded that he would be reviewing current systems in the office in order to meet all the changing priorities. He referred to his experience in the monitoring officer role and was confident in meeting that statutory responsibility. Mr Steadman felt that an essential element to the role was the personal trust between the Chief Executive and the PCC and believed that his relationship with the Commissioner was on a sound footing already.

5. How will you be able to ensure that the Dorset PCC is heard nationally on issues concerning policing and reducing crime?

Mr Steadman noted that the Commissioner had already found a voice on the national stage which was a very important asset for the residents of Dorset and he planned to continue to support this.

6. This is a busy role. How will you keep your skills up to date?

Mr Steadman responded that he possessed a strong personal commitment to personal development and had undertaken a number of private study courses. He believed in the investment in staff and noted the importance of having a team able to adapt to the challenges ahead.

50.10 One member from the Borough of Poole put the following questions to Mr Steadman on his personal independence, and he offered the responses below:

1. You will need a diverse range of key working relationships. How will you win the confidence of all partners whilst maintaining your personal integrity?

Mr Steadman advised members that he has a broad experience of forging strong working partnerships with a number of different partners/agencies. He had a solid reputation for empathy and honesty and planned to build on that experience within a continuous learning process.

2. The Panel is one of the key stakeholders who the PCC will need to engage and we will also be holding the PCC to account. How will you ensure a constructive relationship between the PCC and the Panel is maintained at all times?

Mr Steadman responded that he believed a strong professional relationship with the Commissioner and with members of the Panel was very important. He planned to continue that practice here in Dorset and was looking forward to meeting with members, in a more informal setting, when they visit their offices in October.

50.11 One member from Bournemouth Borough Council put the following questions to Mr Steadman, and he offered the responses below:

1. How would you approach a senior officer/member on an issue where you have had concerns around propriety?

Mr Steadman advised members that he was comfortable in a challenging role and always remained professional. He referred to an incident he had dealt with in the past about an officer's attitude when dealing with people with cultural differences. He believed himself to be open and honest with people and would explore further disciplinary action if necessary.

2. How will you go about guiding the Commissioner if you feel he is moving into operational issues inappropriately?

Mr Steadman explained to members that he had experience of this and that he was aware of the boundaries of legislation. Since his arrival in Dorset he had been made very welcome and felt that the relationship between the Commissioner and himself was working well and was confident that should tensions arise he was well placed to deal with it.

3. How will you ensure a safe environment for members of staff to express their professional opinion and be heard when it may conflict with the views or strategy of the PCC?

Mr Steadman felt it was essential to create innovation and that his good working relationship and mutual respect with the PCC would set the tone for the organisation. He believed he was non-confrontational and operated an open policy with the team to try to encourage innovation. He expected to build alliances with other partners in Dorset.

4. How do you demonstrate the standards you expect from members of your team in public service?

Mr Steadman responded that he would lead by example and was committed and energetic in the way he worked. He was already encouraging a strong sense of identity within the team.

5. The post requires dedication to the county of Dorset. What personal commitments have you made to deliver this dedication?

Mr Steadman advised members that he had already started the process of selling his house in Sussex and was currently renting a property in Dorset with a view to buying shortly. His wife was a teacher and would looking to work in the local area and they had already established their teenage children in local schools. The family were already enjoying living in the county.

Exempt Business

Exclusion of the Public Resolved

51.1 That in accordance with Section 100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting in relation to the business specified in minutes 52 - 54 because it was likely that if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

51.2 To preserve confidentiality of debate and decisions taken in private Session, the Panel resolved to exclude the press and public.

Panel Decision on the proposed candidate for the Chief Executive to the Police and Crime Commissioner (Paragraph 1)

52.1 All Panel members gave their respective opinions on the Commissioner's preferred choice of candidate.

52.2 There was general agreement that Dan Steadman was a strong candidate and that the appointments process had been very rigid, open and fair. The Panel therefore agreed to endorse the Commissioner's choice of candidate and recommend that Dan Steadman be appointed to the position of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Chief Executive.

52.3 The Commissioner returned to the room and was advised that the Panel supported his decision.

52.4 In response to a comment from a member from Bournemouth Borough Council about his career, Mr Steadman offered members a brief insight into his career to date.

Resolved

53. That following full and comprehensive discussion the Commissioner's preferred candidate of Mr Dan Steadman for appointment to the post of Chief Executive be supported unanimously.

Reason for Decision

54. To assist the Panel in conducting a fair review of the process followed by the Commissioner and the suitability of the preferred candidate.

Complaints Sub-Committee

55.1 Member received the minutes of the Complaints Sub-Committee meetings held on 3 July and 30 July 2013.

55.2 As a result of these meetings members were provided with a draft complaint form for complaints about the conduct of the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner. This aimed to make it clear to complainants the nature of complaints that fell within the remit of the Dorset Police and Crime Panel.

Resolved

56. Members supported the use of a complaints form and for it to be published on the Commissioner's website.

Reason for Decision

57. To assist the Complaints Sub-Committee in conducting a fair review of any complaints that were received.

Finance Update

58.1 The Treasurer to the Police and Crime Commissioner offered members a brief update on the current financial position. He advised members that there would be several opportunities for members to discuss the precept for the following year at future meetings of the Panel. Quarterly monitoring reports on the budget would also be brought to future meetings of the Panel.

58.2 The Treasurer circulated to members an update on the Comprehensive Spending Review 2013, the Police Formula Review and the Icelandic Bank Investments. He added that savings were currently projected for 2013-14 of around £1.3m on pay budgets, mainly due to staffing vacancies and additional funded secondments.

58.3 In response to a question from a member from Bournemouth Borough Council about the current PFI situation, the Treasurer advised that the Police had two projects in place which had both gone through the full business case approval process.

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Some of the assets were now only partly in use and the Estates Strategy was in the process of looking at this to ensure their best use.

58.4 Members were advised that the Commissioner and the Treasurer were in the process of preparing a series of presentations for members in readiness for their forthcoming tour of the Commissioner's offices at 1pm on Tuesday 15 October 2013.

Noted**Dates of Future Meetings and Programme of Future Business**

59. The Panel considered and agreed its work programme for remainder of the year 2013.

Resolved

60.1 That the next meeting of the Panel be held on Thursday 7 November 2013 at 10.00am.

60.2 The dates for future meetings be agreed as follows:

- Thursday 12 December 2013, 10.00am
- Thursday 6 February 2014, 10.00am
- Friday 21 February 21014, 10.00am (Reserve date)
- Thursday 5 June 2014, 10.00am
- Thursday 11 September 2014, 10.00am
- Monday 10 November 2014, 10.00am
- Thursday 11 December 2014, 10.00am

Questions

61.1 One member from the Borough of Poole asked the Commissioner that in the light of a number of recent accidents involving caravans would it be helpful if he prepared a list of safety issues to put into a leaflet for his office.

61.2 The Commissioner responded that it would be very helpful. He added that he was in the process of arranging meeting with a number of partners and agencies to look at a new strategy for road safety which was now his biggest priority at the present time.

Noted

Meeting Duration: 2.00pm - 3.40pm

