Selection of the Chief Constable for Gloucestershire Constabulary

Report for Police and Crime Panel

Introduction
This report covers the process followed, and recommendation for appointment to the position of Chief Constable for Gloucestershire Constabulary.

Legislative and best practice framework
Schedule 8 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 was the starting point for this appointment, and the College of Policing Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers has been followed.

Planning
Following the announcement of the retirement of Mick Matthews on 31st October, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), once elected, confirmed that a selection process for a new Chief Constable would begin as soon as possible.

The Chair of the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) was informed that there would be a selection process and that national guidelines would be followed.

The PCP was provided with a copy of the candidate information pack at the beginning of January 2013.

Development of the Role Profile
The job description was put together by the PCC in discussion with the Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). It was based on national standards with emphasis on three areas to reflect the specific needs of Gloucestershire.

A copy of the job description was in the pack provided to the PCP.

Key priorities
The PCC’s key priorities were fully reflected in the three main areas used as the anchor for the selection process:

- Serving the public
- Leading the workforce
- Working with others.

Key skills and qualities
The Person Specification was developed from the job description and from the personal qualities set out in the Policing Professional Framework. It was also based on national standards with amendments to reflect the specific needs identified above.

A copy of the Person Specification was in the pack provided to the PCP.

Job advert
The advertisement for the position was compiled by the PCC in consultation with the Chief Executive and others in the OPCC. It was placed on three websites, for 3 weeks, as is normal for such appointments:

- The Gloucestershire Constabulary
- The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, and
- ACPO.

A copy of the advertisement was in the pack provided to the PCP.

Information provided to prospective candidates
Prospective candidates had access to a comprehensive range of documents to support their considerations. These included information about the county of Gloucestershire, a letter from the PCC, information about the Chief Officer portfolios and the PCC’s manifesto.

Candidates were also offered access to the Constabulary. All shortlisted candidates spent time with key Constabulary personnel, enabling them to explore in more detail any issues they wished to.

A full list of items in the candidate information pack is at Annex 1.

**Statistics**

There were nine initial enquiries.

Eight completed applications were received, from a wide range of Forces. This was rather more than expected and provided a rich pool for shortlisting. The usual average for these posts is two or three completed applications. The anecdotal view amongst the Force was that the opportunity was genuinely open, with no preferred candidate/sitting tenant.

From the eight, four candidates were shortlisted for interview.

On the interview day (8th January) all four candidates turned up. Two candidates scored significantly higher than the other two, and from those one was recommended for appointment.

**Application form**

The application form used was based on those used nationally, with amendments to reflect the specific needs identified in the job description and person specification. As is common it was competency based.

A copy of the form was in the pack provided to the PCP.

**Appointments Panel**

The Appointments Panel comprised:

- Martin Surl (PCC);
- John Donlon (Policing Adviser);
- David Hagg (Chief Executive Stroud District Council);
- Shona Arora (Director of Public Health); and
- Pauline Dixon (Independent Home Office approved panel member), responsible for writing this report.

The panel was selected by the PCC in consultation with the Chief Executive of the OPCC. The aim was to ensure a balance representing key stakeholders. All panel members received a copy of the College of Policing Guidance Notes for the Appointment of Chief Officers, and all had previous experience of selection processes.

The panel met for the first time on 21st December 2012 and introduced themselves to their colleagues, outlining something of their background and experience. The panel members agreed that they were a fair and balanced mix.

**Shortlisting**

At their meeting on 21st December 2012, the Appointments Panel reviewed the applications against the role profile, person specification and key priorities.

The College of Policing had been approached to confirm that all those applying had the required qualifications for the role.

The Bramshill Rating Scale was used to assess candidates. The panel was given time individually to assess candidates against this scale, then scores were shared and
discussions followed to home in on those to be shortlisted. The panel was supported and advised on the day by Andy Champness, Chief Executive of the OPCC, and Raj Patel, Executive Manager, People and Community.

**Interviews and assessment**
On 21\textsuperscript{st} December, the Appointments Panel also reviewed the process for the interviews and agreed that there should be a mix of presentation by each candidate followed by questions aimed at testing the competences required. The theme of the presentation was chosen by the panel and a set of draft questions was discussed. Candidates were contacted the same day and invited to attend for interview. They were also given the theme for the presentation along with some briefing notes.

Interviews were held on 8\textsuperscript{th} January. The panel met an hour before the first scheduled interview to finalise the questions, agree detailed handling and determine the scoring system. The PCC also reinforced the competences, qualities and skills being sought. The panel was again supported and advised on the day by Andy Champness, Chief Executive of the OPCC.

A copy of a paper comprising the presentation theme and interview questions used by the panel is at Annex 2.

At the end of each interview, panel members individually assessed the candidates against the competences using the Bramshill Rating Scale. Scores were recorded privately at that point. At the end of all the interviews the panel shared their scores and explored differences. In practice, the panel was unanimous in its thinking about each of the candidates.

The two higher-scoring candidates were considered to be appoint-able so discussions focussed on the particular strengths of those two. Key to the decision was best fit for Gloucestershire at this time.

The preferred candidate fully demonstrated:
- A passion for, and commitment to, public service;
- Significant experience and a sound track record in leading the workforce and working with others.

In addition it was clear that the candidate:
- Fully understood all elements of the role and the new relationship with the PCC;
- Displayed an understanding of the needs of vulnerable groups;
- Recognised the importance of partnership working with other service providers; and
- Had clear ideas for ensuring effective high quality policing in Gloucestershire.

**The preferred candidate is Suzette Davenport** and she is recommended for appointment.

**Conclusion**
I am pleased to confirm that the process followed:
- fully met the principles of appointment on merit;
- was fair and open; and
- that the panel was able to fulfil its purpose of challenging and testing that the preferred candidate met the requirements of the role.

Pauline Dixon
Independent Panel Member
9\textsuperscript{th} January 2013