

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 3 September 2013.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Cllr R Turpin (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs A Blackmore, Cllr N Collor (Substitute for Cllr Mrs S Chandler), Mr G Cowan, Cllr G Galpin (Substitute for Cllr G Clarkson), Mr Gurvinder Sandher, Cllr P Todd and Cllr L Wicks

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs A Barnes (Kent Police and Crime Commissioner), Mr M Stepney (Chief of Staff) and Mr S Nolan (Chief Finance Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Campbell (Policy Officer) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

40. Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 June 2013

(Item 4)

1. The Chairman expressed his apologies for absence at the previous meeting on 26 June and his thanks to the Vice-Chairman for conducting the meeting.
2. In response to a question from the Chairman about progress with the independent review of the Youth Commissioner the Commissioner confirmed that a review was underway and it was hoped that the report would be ready by the end of September in time for the Panel's next meeting on 8 October.
3. In relation to the letter sent to Mr Vaz following the Home Affairs Select Committee report the Chairman confirmed that a very brief, unsatisfactory response had been received from Mr Vaz and that another letter would be sent to him and copied to all members of the Panel. The Commissioner confirmed that she too had received no response to a letter she had sent a month previously.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2013 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

41. Commissioner's Decisions

(Item B1)

1. The Commissioner had taken three key decisions in July 2013.
2. In response to a question on decision 2, the Commissioner confirmed that the Policy Officer position was temporary because the Officer currently in that role had moved over from the Police Force where she was on a temporary contract. The office was currently undergoing a restructure and positions would be confirmed following that process.

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the key decisions taken by the Commissioner July 2013.

42. Confirmation Hearing for Proposed Chief Finance Officer
(Item C1)

1. The Panel has a statutory duty under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and associated Regulations to:
 - Review and report on the proposed appointment of a Chief Finance Officer
 - Make a recommendation on the proposed appointment.
2. The Panel was provided with a report in advance of their meeting. That report set out the Commissioner's proposed job description and person specification for her Chief Finance Officer and explained the recruitment process. It advised the Panel that, at the conclusion of the selection process, the Commissioner proposed to appoint Mr Sean Nolan and set out the reasons for this proposal. The panel were satisfied that this report provided them with the information set out in Schedule 1(9) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
3. The Panel asked a number of questions about the selection process and, in particular about the fact that two of the originally shortlisted candidates had withdrawn prior to interview. Panel members asked how widely the post had been advertised and the Commissioner drew the Panel's attention to paragraph 5 of her report. Panel members expressed some surprise at the number of withdrawals and asked if the Commissioner was aware of the reasons. Panel members asked whether the fact that Mr Nolan was already doing the job on a temporary basis had influenced the decision of others to withdraw. The Commissioner explained that, in her experience of selection processes it was not uncommon for shortlisted candidates to withdraw for a variety of reasons and that she had not been given any explanation for these withdrawals. The Commissioner explained that the other candidate who was added to the shortlist had performed well and she assured the Panel that, had the other candidate performed better than Mr Nolan, she would have been appointed.
4. Panel members expressed their disappointment that it had not been possible to arrange for a panel member to observe the interview panel. A process had now been put in place whereby all correspondence between the Commissioner and the Panel would be emailed (and posted if required).
5. The Panel asked what financial advice had been available to the Commissioner during the selection process. The Commissioner explained that one of the Panel members was a former Police Authority member, and accredited independent assessor with an excellent knowledge and understanding of policing and police finances. The panel was satisfied with the Commissioner's response.
6. The Panel asked Mr Nolan to explain his experience and understanding of commissioning as this was an important part of the Commissioner's role. Mr Nolan provided evidence that, as a former Deputy Chief Executive and Finance Director in local Government he had been responsible for finance and

procurement and therefore felt he had a good understanding of commissioning. The Panel was satisfied with Mr Nolan's response.

7. The Panel asked the Commissioner about the staff support to be given to Mr Nolan. The Panel were advised that this was being reviewed both as part of the Commissioner's office structure and as part of the proposals for Stage 2 transfers of staff to the employment of the Chief Constable. The Panel were assured that Mr Nolan would be given sufficient support to enable him to do his job properly.
8. The Panel asked about the audit arrangements for the Commissioner. Mr Nolan explained that his role was to be "Head of Profession" for both the Commissioner and the Force's accounting and that robust audit arrangements were in place.

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel concluded that the Commissioner had undertaken a thorough recruitment process and that Mr Nolan was a suitable person to appoint as her Chief Finance Officer.