

North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held in the Brierley Room at County Hall, Northallerton on Thursday, 11th January 2024, commencing at 10.30 am.

Councillors Carl Les OBE (North Yorkshire Council) in the Chair; Chris Aldred (North Yorkshire Council), Lindsay Burr MBE (North Yorkshire Council), Tim Grogan (North Yorkshire Council), Rich Maw (North Yorkshire Council), Heather Moorhouse (North Yorkshire Council) and Peter Wilkinson (North Yorkshire Council).

Community Co-opted Members: Mags Godderidge and Martin Walker

Zoë Metcalfe (Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire)

Jonathan Dyson (Chief Fire Officer) (North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

Tim Forber (Deputy Chief Constable) (South Yorkshire Police).

Officers from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner: Michael Porter (Chief Financial Officer), Tamara Pattinson (Director, Delivery and Assurance), Jenni Newberry (Head of Commissioning and Partnerships), Amanda Wilkinson (Director of Public Confidence).

In attendance: Councillors Malcolm Taylor, George Jabbour and Kevin Foster (North Yorkshire Council); Maeve Chappell (North Yorkshire Police); Gwen Swinburn (public).

Officers present: Diane Parsons (Principal Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Fraser Forsyth (co-opted member), Councillor Michael Pavlovic (City of York Council) and Simon Dennis (Office of the PFCC).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

706 Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. It was noted that Jenni Newberry was attending in capacity as Acting Deputy Chief Executive to the Commissioner.

707 Declarations of Interest

Mags Godderidge declared that she is CEO of Survive; a charity which is commissioned by the OPFCC to provide services to survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Martin Walker declared that he is a Trustee of IDAS, which receives funding for its work from the OPFCC.

708 Minutes of the Panel Meeting Held on 12th October 2023

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2023, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

709 Consideration of Exclusion of the Public

Resolved –

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 7 on the grounds that discussion would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

710 Public Questions or Statements to the Panel

No public questions or statements were taken under this agenda.

711 Confirmation Hearing for Chief Constable

712 Confirmation Hearing for Chief Constable - Guidance note for the Panel

Considered –

The guidance note for the Panel briefing on the role and process at the Confirmation Hearing.

Diane Parsons outlined the process to be followed at the Hearing and the options available to Panel in considering their recommendation for the proposed appointment of Chief Constable. The Panel's role is to consider suitability of the preferred appointee, with any lines of enquiry to be framed around assessing their professional competence and personal independence.

Resolved –

That the Panel notes the guidance note provided regarding the Confirmation Hearing process and their legal remit.

713 Supporting Information from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Considered –

The information provided by the Commissioner in support of her proposed appointment of DCC Tim Forber as Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police.

The Chair invited the Commissioner to introduce her preferred appointee and speak to the range of information provided to the Panel.

The Commissioner highlighted Mr Forber's 27 years of experience in policing and that during the recruitment process he had demonstrated a clear commitment to collaboration and neighbourhood policing. Attention was drawn to the independent panel member's report which provided details of the rigorous recruitment exercise

undertaken and the extent to which Mr Forber met the criteria for the role.

In response to a query from the Panel, the Commissioner confirmed that she was very satisfied with the calibre of candidates that came forward during the process. The Panel also asked about the increased salary being offered to Mr Forber from that originally advertised. The Commissioner highlighted that the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police (“NYP”) is one of the lowest paid Chief Constables in the country and in fact Deputy Chief Constables (“DCCs”) are often paid more than this nationally. It is quite a small marketplace for recruitment but the Commissioner felt that with Mr Forber’s wealth of experience to the role she was happy to agree the increase.

Resolved –

That the Panel notes the information provided by the Commissioner in support of her proposed appointment for Chief Constable.

714 Independent Member's Report

Resolved –

The Panel noted the report provided by the independent panel member regarding the fairness, openness and rigour of the appointment process for Chief Constable.

715 Personal statement from the preferred candidate

Considered –

The personal statement provided by DCC Tim Forber in support of his application to the role of Chief Constable.

Mr Forber introduced himself, referring to his experience across four police forces and a significant track record of delivery, in particular serving at South Yorkshire Police which has seen significant improvements in recent years. He referred to the key elements which he sees as fundamental to having an exceptional force at NYP. These focussed on:

- Outstanding neighbourhood policing;
- Taking a preventative, whole-system approach to vulnerability and harm (including online spaces);
- Tackling crime and pursuing offenders, with excellent victim care.

The Panel then asked a number of questions of Mr Forber in order to be reassured that he would meet the standards required for the role as outlined by the Commissioner.

Question 1: Mr Forber was asked what qualities he can offer which makes him the best candidate to lead North Yorkshire Police.

In response, DCC Forber referred to his breadth of experience, his integrity and his philosophy of not accepting that things have to be the way they have always been. He felt that having such extensive senior leadership experience gives him an advantage in taking up a difficult, senior position. He referred to the challenges tackled in South Yorkshire and that a clear delivery plan is needed and a performance management framework.

Question 2: Mr Forber was asked what he sees as the biggest challenge currently facing North Yorkshire Police and what he will take from his previous professional experience to enable him to address this challenge effectively.

Mr Forber highlighted that public confidence in policing is the biggest challenge and that every force must be alive to this issue. This must be tackled through setting clear standards of integrity and ensuring a culture of being upstanders and not bystanders. Mr Forber felt confidence would be instilled through responsive policing and as such neighbourhood policing will be integral. The final challenge identified was ensuring a high standard of victim care in all circumstances.

Question 3: In view of the challenging financial horizon resulting from increased costs and the need for investment in key areas of operation, Mr Forber was asked what his spending priorities will be for the force.

In response, Mr Forber referred to the benefits of a priority-based budgeting model used in South Yorkshire which he would look to replicate. He felt more investment is needed around policing of online crime and challenges such as the dark web.

Question 4: There are considerable challenges in North Yorkshire around rural and wildlife crime, and Mr Forber was asked whether he had any relevant experience to help tackle this.

In response, Mr Forber referred to his previous experiences of dealing with rural communities and understanding the vulnerabilities of living in more isolated areas. In addition, he has extensive experience of dealing with organised crime and would look to target this.

Question 5: Mr Forber was asked about how he would ensure a culture that instils trust and confidence within NYP for both the organisation and the communities of North Yorkshire and York.

Mr Forber expanded on how he would ensure wellbeing and resilience. He felt a collegiate approach to leadership would be critical, to ensure that you bring people with you. It was acknowledged that NYP has a relatively young and inexperienced workforce and that practical leadership and training provision are needed.

Question 6: The Panel asked how equality, diversity and inclusivity will be embedded and what experience Mr Forber has from previous roles.

In response, Mr Forber spoke about the importance of the organisation reflecting the communities it serves, as well as thinking differently and challenging people to improve. He referred to a piece of work at South Yorkshire Police which brought together all staff networks under an equality hub sponsored by the Chief officer team and Chief Constable. At NYP, he would look to bring to the fore issues around unconscious bias and respecting difference, with sponsorship from the executive team.

Question 7: Mr Forber was asked about his understanding of the relationship of accountability between the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the Panel?

Mr Forber clarified that his role would be to have leadership of NYP and operational independence. However, the Commissioner will set him challenging priorities and hold him to account against these. The Panel helps to ensure that the Commissioner is doing her job effectively and the Panel does not hold the chief Constable to account. Mr Forber recognised that when attending Panel meetings he

would be doing so purely as the 'expert'. He acknowledged the importance of building relationships and would be committed to working with the Mayoral authority.

Question 8: The Panel asked Mr Forber how he would ensure that the force is accessible, engaged and responsive to local communities.

It was acknowledged, in response, that not every report can be investigated with a high level of resourcing but that context is important. Neighbourhood inspectors will be accountable for crime levels in their area. Prevention work and community partnership working can help tackle issues like graffiti and make environmental changes. Mr Forber is keen on community asset mapping as this can be used to help divert people away from crime. He gave an example of having reduced youth anti-social behaviour having worked effectively in partnership with local authority youth workers in Oldham.

Question 9: Mr Forber was asked which of NYP's values resonates most with him and why.

Mr Forber felt that 'integrity' resonates most with him as it comes back to the core principle that he holds as critical which is policing by consent. This has to be maintained at all costs.

Question 10: The Panel highlighted the 'hidden harm' of domestic and sexual violence in small, rural communities and asked about Mr Forber's approach to detect, prevent and police this.

Mr Forber referred again to his understanding, from experience, of the sense of isolation that can be felt in a rural community. He would look to work effectively with partners on support services.

The Chair than invited all parties, other than Panel Members and officers supporting the Panel, to leave and the Panel went into closed session.

After a period of time of discussion the Panel resolved:

Resolved –

That the Panel recommends the appointment of DCC Tim Forber to the role of Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police.

The meeting concluded at 11.50 am.
DP