

SIMON DENNIS

PERSONAL STATEMENT

16 March 2021

Chair, Members

Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer

Office of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (OPFCC)

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a personal statement in preparation for the forthcoming confirmation hearing.

I am delighted to have been selected as the Commissioner's proposed appointee.

With a breadth and depth of experience to offer, I am well placed to 'hit the ground running' in this vital role. I offer a strong record as a leader in North Yorkshire. I have a rich understanding of the PFCC's overall strategic programme. Some key current workstreams will extend beyond the current Commissioner's term and I am keen to play my role in ensuring they come successfully to fruition on behalf of the public. These include

- the NYFRS *Risk and Resource Model*;
- the *Early Action Together* NYP Target Operating Model;
- the *EnableNY* collaboration

I have highlighted in this personal statement, several of the overall key aspects of my application for the role and the experience which met the essential criteria.

Managing Change & My Experience of the P(F)CC Governance Model

I have worked at the heart of the development of the PCC model since 2011. I was instrumental in the work to prepare for Stage One transition at NYP and was responsible for putting in place the necessary governance environment. I proposed adopting a formal MOU setting out agreed working definitions and conventions to assist in delineating the concepts of police operational independence. I settled the terms of the document, meeting expectations of all parties and setting the foundation for joint corporate support services. Similarly, I co-chaired working groups throughout Stage Two transition. I brought to bear experience in scrutiny and performance management, ensuring that timely and high-quality work was delivered in relation to personnel, communications, risk and governance.

I have also led the OPCCs in both Cleveland and North Yorkshire, through the electoral cycle in 2016 when performing the joint collaborative Chief Executive role. I will bring this experience to bear throughout and beyond the election period in 2021.

Senior Management Experience

I currently lead and develop two separate OP(F)CCs. I ensure that they are highly motivated teams, focussed on effective service delivery and sound corporate governance.

Since 2003, I have been strategic advisor to three Commissioners, several Chief Constables, and legal advisor to the NCA Director-General in connection with an integrity investigation.

I established, from its inception, the first in-house legal function for NYP. I ensured that the team delivered the highest standard of casework, maximising in-house service provision and reducing reliance on external practitioners. I developed the team into a multi-disciplinary Directorate with responsibility for legal services, risk, insurance, information management and information security..

Leadership

In Cleveland and North Yorkshire, I am responsible for leading and developing each OP(F)CC whilst contributing as a leader and advisor at Executive Board level, including the equivalent Joint Strategic Board in Cleveland, positioning the Commissioners in each area to exercise oversight and direction and to foster a shared strategic dialogue.

I particularly value contributing as a member of the SLT at North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service. I welcome the opportunity to build on my role as PCCFRA Monitoring Officer and offering my distinct perspective, in that role, at SLT should I be confirmed by Members into the Chief Executive role. I have received feedback from the Chief Fire Officer that my contribution is appreciated, lends resilience to decision-making and identifies strategic risks and opportunities for NYFRS.

Planning, Performance

I have contributed to the development and refresh of several statutory Police & Crime Plans and have taken overall responsibility for ensuring their delivery.

I planned and managed the work in connection with Commissioner elections in both areas in 2016. I established exemplary approaches to transparency and information sharing, ensuring that candidates accessed objective information to understand the role; I personally dealt with issues arising in connection with campaign matters, building strong relationships with the PAROs.

I have planned, delivered and assured several successful processes for recruitment of operational Chief Officers, advising on procedural and ethical aspects of the process and acting as the key link for candidates.

Communication, Negotiation, Relationship Building

I have firm, established professional relationships of trust with the operational and enabling services senior leadership at North Yorkshire, upon which I would be well placed to build.

I have had significant involvement in regional collaboration and have chaired the regional Chief Executives meeting, established initially to respond to the pandemic, developing into a forum for pooling experience, sharing best practice and coordinating work for our Commissioners.

I was an initial proponent of the tripartite Evolve legal services collaboration, notable for its successful implementation across a period during which several operational collaborations have not endured. I currently perform the role of professional mentor to the Director.

Ethics, Integrity, Diversity

I have extensive Monitoring Officer experience. I construe the role broadly, with reach into the ethics and integrity agenda for the operational services, given the Commissioner's responsibility and accountability for those organisations.

In both North Yorkshire and Cleveland I designed, established and chaired an Appropriate Authorities forum for liaison and decision-making on integrity and legal matters - enhancing and formalising the link between Chief Executive and DCC, information sharing, risk management and promoting best practice.

As a legal advisor and as a Chief Executive, I have an extensive range of particular experience in the chief police officer complaints and conduct regime, as well as a career-long engagement with the police regulatory system overall. I am delighted to be offered the opportunity of appointment as Chief Executive in the only Office in the country to have established the Model 3 complaints reform system. The model is an important and highly successful reform and innovation, offering significant benefits in respect of early and lasting customer service resolution, as well as identifying and embedding important opportunities for organisational learning for the Force -features of the unique model which offer significant benefits for the communities of North Yorkshire and enhance overall public confidence in their police service.

Summary

At the same time as being proud of the accomplishments of the OPCC in Cleveland during my tenure as Chief Executive there, and for the opportunity to serve collaboratively across both of the neighbouring areas since 2019, I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve on an established basis as Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer to the Commissioner in North Yorkshire and to devote my focus to the delivery of the Commissioner's strategic policing, fire and crime objectives for the benefit of North Yorkshire's communities.

I have enclosed a copy of my CV for Members' perusal.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss my suitability for confirmation in role and I look forward to meeting with members at the hearing on 24 March 2021.

Yours sincerely

Simon Dennis

SIMON DENNIS

Profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/simonjadennis>

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR CLEVELAND

CHIEF EXECUTIVE & MONITORING OFFICER 2014 – CURRENT
(MIDDLESBROUGH, UK)

INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE & MONITORING OFFICER TO APRIL 2019 – CURRENT
NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER - & -
(HARROGATE, UK) APRIL – JULY 2016

Reports to: Commissioner. Cleveland Direct reports: 4. Indirect reports: 19.

Undertaking the duties of the Chief Executive appointed under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011; Head of Paid Service; and Monitoring Officer.

Providing leadership and effective, high quality guidance, advice and support to the Commissioner and staff within the OPCC. Leading, motivating and developing the OPCC as a team and as an organisation.

Ensuring that the Commissioner and the Office meet their statutory duties and strategic objectives ensuring legality, effective governance and the highest ethical standards. Acting as the Appropriate Authority delegate in respect of Chief Officer complaints and conduct.

Acting as the lead advisor to the Commissioner in the review, development and implementation of the Police and Crime Plan. Leading corporate programmes including transformative standards and ethics, equality and diversity change and joint project sponsor of the partnership Community Safety Hub.

Supporting and advising the Commissioner in the development of their strategic vision, strategy and plans, ensuring implementation and regular review.

NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE -&- NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

(NORTHALLERTON, UK)

FORCE SOLICITOR & HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES 2013 – 2014

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & COMPLIANCE SERVICES 2008 – 2013

Head of Joint Corporate Business Unit, latterly Deputy Monitoring Officer to Police & Crime Commissioner and attending Legal Advisor to the Joint Executive Board.

Provided strategic and policy-level legal/regulatory advice to Police & Crime Commissioner and Chief Officer Team, including delegated authority to act as general counsel on all civil legal claims asserted against the office of Chief Constable or Commissioner. Arranged and managed use of external legal services providers; oversaw PCC and Chief Constable litigation management and insurance arrangements. Led additional dedicated teams dealing with specific risk/compliance issues including: compliance risk management; business continuity; data protection; freedom of information; civil disclosure; and information security functions.

Reported to: Commissioner and Chief Constable. Direct reports: 3 principal officers. Indirect reports: 50.

- Provided authoritative legal advice to senior officers and Police Authority, successfully demonstrating the value of high quality advice on risk management and other high-profile matters.
- Acted in significant police legal and ethical issues, including a period advising the Director-General-designate of the National Crime Agency in relation to high-profile police integrity investigations.
- Key leadership and executive role in the change and transition processes in respect of the establishment of Police & Crime Commissioners; worked directly to Commissioner in respect of fundamental reform of the decision-making and scrutiny system.

HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES

2004- 2007

Established force's first in-house legal services function, incorporating risk management and business continuity functions. Supervised and motivated a specialist team of lawyers in relation to all aspects of civil law including: civil orders; licensing; police property law; employment law; police officer conduct; civil claims against Force; inquests; judicial review.

Reported to: Deputy Chief Constable / Chief Constable. Direct reports: 3.

- Successfully designed and implemented first in-house legal services function - establishing all functions and teams from scratch.
- Established and embedded risk management function as a key business discipline; recruited professional risk manager delivering management of business/enterprise risk, legal/hard risk and insurance management.
- Handled claims against the organisation in-house and at low hourly rates, outsourcing specialist contentious work only where appropriate.
- Established in-house insurance management service, replacing expensive external provider with in-house service and procuring a focussed external insurance brokerage partner.
- Developed business continuity strategy/policy in line with British Standard Quality Mark; resourced small function aligned with risk management to deliver programme of identifying critical functions and establishing business continuity plans.

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

(NORTHALLERTON, UK)

2003–2004

SENIOR LAWYER (LITIGATION)

Delivered legal advice on contentious legal matters to (a) the local police force/fire brigade, as external clients; and (b) the County Council's own departments. Led and developed litigation team. Member of Senior Staff Group.

Reported to: Principal Lawyer. Supervised reports: 4.

CHADWICK LAWRENCE SOLICITORS

(LEEDS/WAKEFIELD, UK)

1994 – 2003

Leading Yorkshire legal firm. Partners: 9.

EXECUTIVE / TRAINEE SOLICITOR / SOLICITOR

Provided timely, accurate legal advice and court advocacy covering general litigation, human rights, civil liberties, and domestic violence cases to a wide range of private and legally aided clients.

Reported to: Office Partner. Supervised Reports: 1

- Successfully continued development of firm's innovative human rights and judicial review department, providing publicly funded (legal aid) services in relation to criminal appeals, workplace rights, and claims against public authorities.
- Legal Aid Quality Mark Supervisor.

EDUCATION

PG Dip Legal Practice (LPC) with Commendation – Leeds Metropolitan University (2000)

PG Dip Law (CPE) with Commendation – Leeds Metropolitan University (2000)

Law/Legal Practice (Year 1 Law with Distinction) – Institute of Legal Executives (1995)

BA (Hons) 2:1 English – University College of Wales, Aberystwyth (1994)

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Solicitor of the Supreme Court (admitted 2002)

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Authorising Officer) – NPIA

Safety for Senior Executives – Institution for Occupational Safety & Health - IOSH

Extensive In-Year CPD Training (incl. delegate to annual APACE Seminars and APCC/NPCC Partnership Summits)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member – Association of Policing & Crime Chief Executives (APAC²E)

Member – Association of Police Lawyers (APL) including Police & Crime Commissioner Legal Advisor Network (PaCCLAN)