

Police and Crime Panel 7th December Report of Police and Crime Commissioner

Chief Executive Appointment

Purpose of Report

To consider the appointment of a Chief Executive by the Police and Crime Commissioner, further to the requirement of The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Schedule 1, paragraph 9.

Background

Following the election result on Friday 16th November, it was necessary to consider, very quickly and carefully, what staffing would be needed both to signal change, and to achieve my manifesto commitments in the context of very considerable public expectation.

I determined that I would need a Chief Executive with -

- 1) Ability to complement my own experience and background.
- 2) Shared values in respect of the role of the police service and its accountability to the community.
- 3) Considerable experience of community safety and partnership/wider criminal justice landscape.
- 4) Understanding of operating within a directly elected individual model environment.
- 5) Ability to begin immediately

In summary I believe I needed an experienced senior officer who could assist me in 'hitting the ground running'. I believe Ed Chicken fully meets these criteria for the following reasons -

1) Ed has considerable experience at the practical and policy level of community safety and its public interface. He developed the first major alleygate programme in the area, introduced street wardens, "talking CCTV" and a landlord licensing scheme, has chaired the Middlesbrough crime and disorder partnership etc etc. Together, and in partnership with Cleveland Police, we were successful in being awarded 'Beacon Status'. I require the support that this experience brings, to enable me to translate my manifesto commitments into action. I have worked with him for over 10 years and so know that we can work together successfully without risk. His working relationships with other key partners are invaluable.

2) Ed has managed large parts of a complex organisation (Middlesbrough Council) at a time of great change. His focus on performance and budget management is highly valued.

3) Ed has worked at a national level with the Home Office, initially in developing the "Respect" agenda to tackle anti social behaviour and more recently the "Troubled Families" programme.

4) Ed has worked alongside Cleveland Police for many years at both a local and Cleveland level, e.g. with regard to "Contest" and the Local Resilience Forum. This work has been recognised and commended.

5) Finally it is important to explain why I felt it essential to have a person I can rely on totally, in place from day one of my term of office; even though this meant displacing the Chief Executive of the former Police Authority. I do not wish to be critical of the former post holder but the post I have filled is different, its scope is far broader. It could be argued that the former post holder could develop and adapt – but time is pressing and there was too much risk associated with that approach. I am only too well aware that I must make some very significant decisions very quickly. The budget position is pressing and a restructure is needed that matches available resources to my priorities. A plan must be produced which you expect to see in January and a Chief Constable must be recruited. I therefore felt that the course of action I took was the only practical way forward. Indeed it is a very common approach taken by politicians entering office at a senior level.

Immediately following my election I negotiated with Middlesbrough Council so that Ed Chicken could be seconded for me under a one year contract. The remuneration is exactly the same as that of the previous post holder. Pension liabilities remain with Middlesbrough Council. A legal agreement is in place which may be terminated with 4 weeks notice.

There is a cost which arises from my decision to pay the previous postholder to the end of his contract. Though this could have been the subject of negotiation, especially as my action was taken within the first year of employment, I believed my action was right and within the value set that I wish to promote in the office of the PCC. I expect that savings will be found within the budget of my office to meet this cost.

The role of PCC is designed to be decisive, to cut bureaucracy, and to provide clear accountability. I believe that my actions have demonstrated this

Barry Coppinger
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland