

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Special Meeting of **Police and Crime Panel** held in **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Thursday 25 January 2024** at **1.30 pm**

**Present:**

**Councillor L Brown (Chair)**

**Durham County Council:**

Councillors D Boyes, L Hovvels, D Nicholls and K Robson (substitute for J Charlton)

**Darlington Borough Council:**

Councillors G Lee (Vice-Chair)

**Independent Co-opted Members:**

Mr N Hallam

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Charlton, R Potts and A Savory and Mr R Rodiss.

### **2 Substitute Members**

Councillor K Robson substituted for Councillor J Charlton.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **4 Confirmation Hearing - Proposed Appointment of Chief Finance Officer for the Durham Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Panel considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Clerk to the Panel. The report provided information on the process to be undertaken to hold a confirmation hearing for the post of Chief Finance Officer for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

The Panel also considered a report from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the proposed candidate for the post of Chief Finance Officer for the OPCC (for copy see file of minutes).

The Panel noted that the Clerk to the Panel had received formal notification from the PCC of the proposed appointment of Rachel Allsop to the role of Chief Finance Officer for the OPCC and that the procedure for the confirmation hearing as set out at Appendix 3 to the report.

The PCC noted the appointment of a Chief Finance Officer with s151 responsibilities was a legislative requirement. She added that over the last 10 years the role had been a joint post between Durham Constabulary and the OPCC, however, it was now to be a post for the OPCC alone, with Durham Constabulary appointing their own Chief Finance Officer.

The Chief of Staff, OPCC, Andrea Petty explained that the Chief Finance Officer position would now be line managed by her and noted it was felt the separate role would aid in better holding the Constabulary to account, while still maintaining close working relationships. She explained the position had been publicly advertised, with two applicants having their applications assessed against the job description and personal statement, with interviews were carried out with by the current Joint Chief Finance Officer/Assistant Chief Officer, a HR Manager and herself. Both applicants were asked to give a presentation on the importance of the Chief Finance Officer post, including the s151 role, and given the same question set and scored accordingly. She explained that, following that process, the position was offered to R Allsop, with arrangements then being made for the Confirmation Hearing for the Panel.

The Panel then questioned R Allsop around the following issues:

- The main areas of financial expertise that you have which will enable you to undertake the role of Chief Finance Officer for the PCC effectively.
- How would you ensure a constructive relationship between herself as Chief Finance Officer, the PCC and other colleagues to help deliver the strategy and aims set out in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.
- Who do you regard as the PCC's key stakeholders including financial stakeholders.
- Can you provide examples of how you have worked successfully with a range of organisations, partnerships and/or agencies.
- Can you give an example of when your personal independence has been put to the test and how you dealt with the situation.

R Allsop provided the Panel with responses to the questions asked. The Panel thanked R Allsop and the PCC for their attendance and informed them they would be notified of the Panel's decision in due course.

## **5 Exclusion of the Public**

### **Resolved:**

That under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following discussion on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

## **6 Confirmation Hearing - Proposed Appointment of Chief Finance Officer for the Durham Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Panel discussed the PCC's recommendation to appoint R Allsop as Chief of Staff for the OPCC. Upon a vote being taken it was:

### **Resolved:**

That the Panel endorse the appointment of R Allsop to the post of Chief Finance Officer for the Durham OPCC in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.