

Durham Police and Crime Panel

10 January 2022

Independent Co-Opted Members of the Police and Crime Panel

Report of Helen Lynch, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

None

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To propose the recruitment of an independent co-opted member of the Police and Crime Panel (the Panel).

Executive summary

- 2 The term of office for the two independent co-opted members of the Panel is due to expire on 30 April 2023.
- 3 For personal reasons one independent co-opted member has notified the Clerk to the Panel of their wish to bring their term of office to an end one year earlier.
- 4 A recruitment process to appoint a new independent co-opted member is proposed with the outcome of the recruitment be reported to the Panel on 7 March 2022 and the appointment to take effect from 1 May 2022.

Recommendation

- 5 The Police and Crime Panel are asked to:
 - (a) Agree the recruitment process as set out within the report for the appointment of an independent co-opted member;
 - (b) Agree the composition of an Appointment Panel to conduct the recruitment process; and
 - (c) Receive a recommendation of the Appointment Panel at a future meeting on the proposed appointment.

Background

- 10 The Panel membership is made up of 12 members, consisting of 10 elected members (3 Darlington and 7 Durham) and 2 independent co-opted members.
- 11 There is requirement under Schedule 6 of Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 for the Panel to have two non-political independent members.
- 12 The appointment of the two independent members provides the opportunity for the Panel, by carefully selecting individuals to complement the councillors nominated to the Panel, to satisfy the 'balanced appointment objective'. This requires the Panel to have a membership, which when considered collectively, which is geographically and politically representative, and includes the necessary experience, knowledge and skills to be effective.
- 13 The independent co-optees are full voting members of the Panel, who have the same responsibilities and duties, and access to the same level of support as elected members on the Panel.
- 14 The two current co-optees are Derek Dodwell and Nick Cooke, both have served on the Panel since 1 November 2014 with their appointment being extended on 5 January 2017.
- 15 On 22 October 2018 the Panel agreed the re-appointment of the two co-opted independent members be extended to expire on 30 April 2023, following which new appointments be made on a four-year basis.
- 16 The Clerk to the Panel has received notification from Derek Dodwell that for personal reasons he is unable to continue his role to the end of his term of office. Mr Dodwell has expressed his enjoyment of the role and has indicated a willingness to continue in the role until a suitable candidate has been appointed.

Recruitment Proposals

- 17 A recruitment process is proposed for the independent co-opted member. The proposal is based on the Local Government Association (LGA) guidance 'Appointment of independent co-opted members'.

- 18 The Panel arrangements require at paragraph 4.2 that:

The selection process for co-opting independent members should include a reasonable period of advertising for the positions. A closing date for the receipt of applications should be given of at least two weeks from the date the advert is first placed.

- 19 It is proposed that the Panel appoints an Appointment Panel from its membership to comprising at least one member of each of the constituent authorities to undertake the recruitment and selection after which the Chairman and Vice-Chairman will make a recommendation to the Panel on the appointment.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

- 20 There are restrictions on eligibility which are prescribed in law, the following persons cannot be considered for the role:
- anyone under 18 years old
 - the PCC or a member of their staff
 - MPs
 - members of the National Assembly for Wales the Scottish Parliament
 - members of the European Parliament
 - police officers
 - persons who do not live or work in the police force area
 - civil servants engaged in political activity.
 - local authority councillors.
- 21 LGA guidance has been used to prepare a draft advert which is shown at Appendix 2 and person specification shown at Appendix 3.
- 22 The person specification sets out the requirements for the candidate. However, in summary the Panel would be looking for someone of good character, have the ability to think strategically, to make good judgements, to be supportive, to scrutinise, to challenge, to be analytical and to communicate effectively.
- 23 The skills and qualities of team building, self-confidence, enthusiasm and drive, respect for others, integrity, and decisiveness are also required. It would be desirable for candidates to have experience of working in a similar role, e.g. public or advisory body, or to have worked in the community or voluntary work.

Advertising

- 24 It is proposed that in order for the advert to reach as many people as possible in County Durham and Darlington, a press release will be issued, together with the advert being published on the websites of the Durham Police and Crime Panel and both local constituent authorities.

Appointment Panel

- 25 It is recommended that the Panel agree an Appointment Panel to conduct the recruitment, consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair and the Clerk as Monitoring Officer to the authority.
- 26 Following the interviews the Appointment Panel will make recommendations to the Panel on the proposed appointment. The recruitment and selection will be based on the person specification.

Timeline

- 27 The proposed timeline for the recruitment of a co-opted member is as follows:

Date	Action
11 January 2022	Vacancy is advertised
8 February 2022	Closing date
21 February 2022 (w/c)	Interviews take place
7 March 2022	Recommendation on appointment presented to the Panel.
1 May 2022	Term of office commences for four years.

Conclusion

- 28 The Panel are asked to consider and agree the proposals on recruitment of an independent co-opted member of the Police and Crime Panel as detailed within the report.

Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Schedule 6 of Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires the Panel to have two non-political independent members.

Finance

This is an unpaid role however reasonable expenses are payable.

Consultation

None.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

This is a key focus of the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Police and Crime Panel.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

None.

Appendix 2: Draft Advert

The Durham Police and Crime Panel is looking to appoint a committed and enthusiastic individual to join them as an independent co-opted member.

On 6 May 2021, County Durham and Darlington elected Joy Allen as its Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). She is responsible for setting the priorities and resources for Durham Constabulary, as well as supporting broader community safety activities across the region.

The purpose of the Panel is to assist the Commissioner through providing independent challenge as a critical friend.

The Panel is made up of seven representatives from Durham County Council and three representatives of Darlington Borough Council and two independent co-opted members.

The PCC is required to consult with the Panel on her plans and budget for policing, as well as the level of council tax and the appointment of a Chief Constable. Independent co-opted Members, through their knowledge and experience, are expected to enhance the Panel's ability to play its role effectively.

The Panel is looking for a person from the areas of the Borough of Darlington or County Durham to serve as an independent co-opted member from 1 May 2022 for a four-year term.

The role of a Panel member is an important and demanding one. The typical commitment required from a member of the Panel is expected to average one day a month, including preparation time and attendance at meetings.

Meetings will generally be held during normal working hours at locations in Durham and Darlington.

All Panel members will be able to claim reasonable travelling expenses, and receive induction and other appropriate training.

A copy of the application pack is available by request from []. Should you require further information on the role or an informal discussion with the Clerk to the Panel, please contact [].

The closing date for applications is 8 February 2022.

The Panel wishes to reflect the breadth of communities in the Durham and Darlington area and welcomes applications from all eligible people.

Appendix 3 - Person Specification

For the appointment of independent co-optees, the Appointment Panel will consider potential candidates on their application and interview against the criteria set out below.

Candidates must be able to attend meetings of the Police and Crime Panel which take place at least four times a year, as well as attend any appropriate training sessions.

Abilities/skills

As well as being of good character, candidates will need to possess the following competencies:

- The ability to think strategically
- The ability to make good judgements
- The ability to be supportive
- The ability to scrutinise and challenge
- The ability to be analytical
- The ability to communicate effectively

Personal skills and qualities

It is expected that Candidates will be able to demonstrate the following skills and qualities:

- Team working
- Self-confidence
- Enthusiasm and drive
- Respect for others
- Integrity
- Decisiveness

Experience

It is desirable that candidates have experience of one or more of the following:

- working with other people on issues of mutual interest over a period of time (e.g. voluntary work)
- situations where they needed to compromise
- interacting or working with people of all ages
- interacting or working with people who have different political views and/or religious beliefs
- interacting or working with people who are physically and/or mentally impaired.

Eligibility

The Panel welcomes applications for all eligible people. There are restrictions prescribed in law on eligibility and the following persons are ineligible for appointment:

- anyone under 18 years old

- the PCC or a member of their staff
- MPs
- members of the National Assembly for Wales the Scottish Parliament
- members of the European Parliament
- police officers
- persons who do not live or work in the police force area
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- local authority councillors.