

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a **Special** meeting of the **Police and Crime Panel** held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Monday 25 September 2023 at 10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor L Brown (Chair)

Durham County Council:

Councillors S Quinn (substitute for D Boyes), K Robson (substitute for J Charlton), J Miller (substitute for L Hovvels), C Varty (substitute for D Nicholls) and A Bell (substitute for A Savory)

Darlington Borough Council:

Councillors G Lee (Vice-Chair)

Independent Co-opted Members:

Mr N Hallam and Mr R Rodiss

The Chair welcomed Joy Allen, Police and Crime Commissioner and Rachel Bacon, Applicant for the post of Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary to the meeting. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Clerk to the Panel outlined the process for the confirmation hearing.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Boyes, J Charlton, L Hovvels, N Johnson, D Nicholls, R Potts and A Savory.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor A Bell was substitute for Councillor A Savory, Councillor J Miller was substitute for Councillor L Hovvels, Councillor S Quinn was substitute for Councillor D Boyes, Councillor K Robson was substitute for Councillor J Charlton and Councillor C Varty was substitute for Councillor D Nicholls.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Confirmation Hearing - Proposed Appointment of Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary

The Panel considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Clerk to the Panel that provided information on the process to be undertaken to hold a confirmation hearing for the proposed appointment to the role of Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary. The Panel also considered a report from the Police and Crime Commissioner that provided details of the proposed candidate (for copy see file of minutes).

The Police and Crime Commissioner formally introduced her preferred candidate, Mrs R Bacon for the appointment of Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary and presented her report which provided details of the robust recruitment process and Mrs R Bacon's professional background.

The Panel then questioned Mrs R Bacon on the following issues:

- The main areas of expertise that would enable her to undertake the role of Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary effectively;
- Examples of how she had sought to reduce crime and increase detection rates;
- What she considered to be the key policing issues within County Durham and Darlington;
- Who she regarded as the Chief Constable's key stakeholders;
- Examples of how she had worked successfully with a range of organisations, partnerships and agencies;
- Examples of when her personal independence had been put to the test and how she dealt with the situation.

Mrs R Bacon provided comprehensive responses to questions from the Panel. The Chair then thanked Mrs R Bacon and the Police and Crime Commissioner for their attendance and informed them that 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 Constable of Durham Constabulary

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Clerk to the Panel reminded the Panel of the process and advised of the three options available to the Panel.

In response to comments regarding the limitations around the type of questions the Panel were able to ask, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Clerk to the Panel advised that the confirmation hearing process was to compliment the robust appointment process and the questions which the Panel had agreed in advance of the hearing were in accordance with the guidance. There would need to be legislative change to enable to Panel to take a more in depth role in the process.

The Panel discussed the Police and Crime Commissioner's recommendation to appoint Mrs R Bacon to the role of Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary. Upon a vote being taken it was:

Resolved:

- i) That the Panel endorse the appointment of Mrs Rachel Bacon to the post of Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary;
- ii) To respond to the Police and Crime Commissioner, endorsing the appointment in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.