

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

REPORT TO THE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

3 FEBRUARY 2023

Report Title	Review of the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of a temporary Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The report is intended to set out the results of the review by the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire's proposed appointment of a temporary Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire is responsible for appointing the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police. When the Commissioner proposes to make an appointment to this position the Police, Fire & Crime Panel must hold a confirmation hearing to review the proposed appointment in order to make a recommendation on it. This report sets out the result of a confirmation hearing held by the Panel on 2nd February 2023 concerning the proposed appointment of Dr Paul Gibson as temporary Chief Constable.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel recommends:
- a) That the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire appoints Dr Paul Gibson as the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police for the period from 27th February 2023 to 2nd April 2023 inclusive.
 - b) That the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner notifies the Panel of his decision whether to accept or reject its recommendation in accordance with the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 Schedule 8 Paragraph 7(3).

- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendations are required to complete the Panel’s review of the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner of a Chief Constable, in accordance with the Panel’s statutory responsibilities.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 Section 2 requires that each police force in England and Wales outside London has a chief constable. Section 38 of the 2011 Act specifies that the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for a police area is to appoint the chief constable of the police force for that area.
- 4.2 Schedule 8 of the 2011 Act requires that a PCC must notify the relevant Police & Crime panel of the proposed appointment of a chief constable. In such cases the PCC must also notify the Police & Crime panel of the following information:
- a) The name of the person whom the PCC is proposing to appoint (“the candidate”);
 - b) The criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate for the appointment;
 - c) Why the candidate satisfies those criteria; and
 - d) The terms and conditions on which the candidate is to be appointed.
- 4.3 The Police & Crime panel must review the proposed appointment at a confirmation hearing. A confirmation hearing is defined as: “A meeting of the Panel, held in public, at which the candidate is requested to appear for the purpose of answering questions relating to the appointment”.
- 4.4 The Police & Crime panel must make a report to the PCC stating the outcome of the review. In the case of the proposed appointment of a chief constable the Panel must make a recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed. Alternatively, the Panel may resolve to veto the proposed appointment, if at least two-thirds of the people who are members of the Police & Crime panel at the time vote in favour of making that decision.
- 4.5 The PCC may accept or reject the Police & Crime panel's recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed. The PCC must notify the Panel of their decision on the Panel’s recommendation. In the event that the Panel vetoes the PCC’s proposed appointment the PCC must not appoint that candidate. The PCC must then propose a reserve candidate, whose appointment will be subject to review at a further confirmation hearing.
- 4.6 The Police & Crime panel must publish its report to the PCC, although it is for the Panel to decide the manner in which the report is published.

5. Review of the proposed appointment of a temporary Chief Constable

- 5.1 The Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel met in public on 2nd February 2023 to hold a confirmation hearing for the proposed appointment of Dr Paul Gibson as the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police for a temporary period from 27th February to 2nd April 2023.

- 5.2 The proposed appointment of a temporary Chief Constable arises from the decision by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner on 13th January 2023 to appoint the serving Chief Constable, Mr Nick Adderley, to continue in the role on a new contract to commence on 3rd April 2023. Mr Adderley was originally appointed as Chief Constable in 2018 on a contract due to expire in 2023. Tax and pension rules mean that it would have been financially detrimental to Mr Adderley to extend his existing contract for a further term. The Commissioner therefore agreed that Mr Adderley could technically retire from the service on 26th February 2023 for the purposes of pension abatement before returning at the start of April 2023. The Panel held a confirmation hearing for this proposed appointment on 11th January 2023, which resulted in the Panel recommending Mr Adderley should be appointed. The Commissioner subsequently notified the Panel of the proposed appointment of a temporary Chief Constable to carry out the role during Mr Adderley's retirement period.
- 5.3 The Panel was provided with information about the proposed appointment of Dr Gibson ahead of the confirmation hearing. This included the information referred to in paragraph 4.2 above. It also included information setting out the reasons for the particular approach to the appointment proposed by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner in this case.
- 5.4 At the confirmation hearing the Panel asked questions of Dr Gibson, intended to enable Panel members to evaluate his suitability for the role. In accordance with relevant guidance these questions focussed on the areas of professional competence (: the candidate's ability to carry out the role) and personal independence (: the need for the candidate to act in a manner that is operationally independent of the PFCC). The questions covered the following areas:
- Dr Gibson's interest in the opportunity to serve as Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police for a temporary period and his priorities during this time.
 - Perceptions of the key challenges facing Northamptonshire Police and how these could be addressed.
 - Experience of moving into a new role at a strategic level and quickly building an understanding of the organisation concerned in order to exercise responsibilities effectively.
 - Contributing to the long term priorities and development of Northamptonshire Police.
 - Ensuring that Northamptonshire Police inspires trust and confidence amongst members of the public, reflecting current national concerns about standards in policing.
 - Working together effectively with the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner whilst reflecting the distinctions between their respective responsibilities.
 - Approaches to leadership that would inspire confidence and respect amongst Northamptonshire Police personnel.
- 5.5 The confirmation hearing was webcast live and the recording is available to view at the following link: [West Northamptonshire Council - YouTube](#).

6. Outcome of the Review

- 6.1 After questioning Dr Gibson and taking account of the other information provided to the Panel, members endorsed his suitability for the proposed appointment. Members felt that Dr Gibson's clear and precise responses to questions showed a good understanding of the position of Northamptonshire Police and how he could contribute to its continuing long term development. Members were confident that Dr Gibson would quickly be able to build relationships and would provide effective leadership: his focus on empowering individuals to engage in constructive challenge and to fulfil their potential was particularly commended in this context. Members noted that Dr Gibson had an excellent track record, which included experience of the latest developments in policing, of work in senior roles in different forces and of leading collaborative working at regional and national level. His current role leading the East Midlands Special Operations Unit already involved working with Northamptonshire Police. Members acknowledged that the need to appoint a Chief Constable for a temporary period represented a unique opportunity to get an outside view that could help Northamptonshire Police to develop and improve. Members felt that Dr Gibson was very well-equipped to carry out this role and that his appointment would produce a benefit even in a short period.
- 6.2 At the conclusion of discussion the Panel resolved unanimously:

To recommend that the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire appoints Dr Paul Gibson as the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police for the period from 27th February 2023 to 2nd April 2023 inclusive.

7. Background Papers

Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011

The Police & Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012

Police & Crime Panels Guidance on Confirmation Hearings Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny (August 2012)