

SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

**CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF THE CHIEF
CONSTABLE, SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE**

**HELD IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM, THE CIVIC, HANSON STREET, BARNSELY,
S70 2HZ**

11 JUNE 2021

PRESENT: Councillor R Haleem (Rotherham MBC) (Chair)

Councillor A Cherryholme (Barnsley MBC) (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: T Baum-Dixon (Rotherham MBC), R Davison (Sheffield City Council), P Garbutt (Sheffield City Council), S Knowles (Doncaster MBC), C Pickering (Barnsley MBC), G Weatherall (Sheffield City Council) and T Damms (Sheffield City Council)

Independent Co-opted Member: Professor A James

Dr A Billings (South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner)

M Buttery and F Topliss
(Office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner)

M McCarthy, J Field, L Noble and A Shirt
(Barnsley MBC)

Professor A Macaskill (Chair of the PCC's Independent Ethics Panel) and
L Poultney (Proposed Candidate)

Apologies for absence were received from
Councillor C Ransome (Doncaster MBC)

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was noted as above.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS IN RELATION TO
ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA**

None.

3 ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That the Confirmation Hearing be held in public with exception of the deliberation by the Panel in respect of the proposed appointment which would take place at the end of the Confirmation Hearing in the absence of the public and press.

4 PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF SOUTH YORKSHIRE

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner in regard to his proposed appointment of Ms Lauren Poultney to the post of Chief Constable.

The Chair, Councillor Haleem welcomed everyone to the Hearing. She reminded Members that the Confirmation Hearing process was a requirement under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, that the Police and Crime Panel holds Confirmation Hearings for the appointment of the Chief Constable, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, PCC's Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer.

Councillor Haleem outlined the process to be adhered to as stated in the LGA Confirmation Hearings Guidance document which had been circulated to all Members. Councillor Haleem informed the Panel that the meeting would be audio recorded and uploaded to the Panel's website after the meeting.

As stated in the LGA Guidance document, Councillor Haleem reminded the Panel that, this was not a re-run of the interview process, but an opportunity for the Panel to review the appointment and make their recommendation to the Commissioner.

Councillor Haleem invited the Commissioner to address the meeting to explain the recruitment process which had been undertaken to select his preferred candidate, Ms Poultney.

On behalf of the Commissioner, M Buttery provided the Panel with an overview of the recruitment and selection process that had been undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioner, conducted in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 (1) of the Police and Reform Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Home Office Circular 013/2018, and the College of Policing Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers (January 2021) to select Ms Lauren Poultney as his preferred and proposed candidate for Chief Constable.

The Panel also noted that the report provided by Professor Ann Macaskill (Independent Member of the Selection Panel), confirmed that, as a result of her observations in the way the recruitment and selection process was delivered, Professor Macaskill could confirm that, in her view, the recruitment and selection process had fully met the principles of fairness and openness, and the identification of the preferred candidate was based on merit.

Further details were presented in the report of the Independent Member on the Selection and Appointment Process for the role of Chief Constable of South Yorkshire, attached at Appendix A to the report.

Councillor Haleem thanked M Buttery for providing the Panel with an overview of the recruitment and selection process undertaken.

The Commissioner informed Panel Members that he had made it very clear what he was looking for in the next Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police at this present time.

He said that there was a different role to that facing the newly appointed Chief Constable in 2016. The Commissioner explained that he was looking for a Chief Constable to consolidate and build upon the improvements that had already been made over the last five years. Moving forwards there would be significant, different challenges for the new Chief Constable to address.

Members were informed that Ms Poultney was currently Deputy Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police, performing the duties of Chief Constable, following Mr Watson's departure on 16 May 2021.

The Commissioner gave a short overview of Ms Poultney's skills and experiences, which he believed made her the right choice for the role of Chief Constable.

The Commissioner added that, Ms Poultney had been part of a very successful Senior Command Team at South Yorkshire Police, who had been inspirational, motivational and had also boosted staff morale within the Force.

The Commissioner said that Ms Poultney understands the need for cohesiveness and for people to work together.

Ms Poultney also understands the style of policing to build a strong team, without the need for micro managing staff, to let them undertake operational work to the best of their abilities. Furthermore, Ms Poultney had detailed knowledge of both the Force and South Yorkshire's communities.

The Commissioner said he needed a Chief Constable who was good at reflecting and thinking, which were two important factors for the Commissioner as he selected a preferred candidate for Chief Constable.

The Commissioner informed Members that the challenge for Ms Poultney moving forwards would be very different after the Coronavirus pandemic. The Commissioner was unsure what these implications would be for the Force and its workforce.

The Commissioner was confident that Ms Poultney would provide suggestions for post-COVID policing and discuss those with him.

The Commissioner concluded that Ms Poultney was an excellent candidate and commended her to the Panel.

Councillor Haleem thanked the Commissioner for his overview.

Panel Members then asked questions of the candidate, Ms Poultney, which related to professional competence and personal independence. The answers to the questions enabled Members to evaluate Ms Poultney's suitability for the role.

At the conclusion of the Panel's questions and responses from Ms Poultney, Councillor Haleem thanked Ms Poultney for attending and answering questions from the Panel.

At this point in the Hearing, Ms Poultney, Dr Billings, M Buttery, F Topliss and Professor Macaskill, together with a member of the public, were asked to leave the meeting so that the Panel could deliberate its decision in private session.

5 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED - That, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest not to disclose information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

6 PANEL DELIBERATIONS ON THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF A CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Panel, having gone into private session, considered the statements and answers provided by Ms Poultney to their questions, in addition to the introduction provided by the Commissioner's Chief Executive and Solicitor and all relevant paperwork provided.

In light of the responses given relating to the professional competence and personal independence required of the post of Chief Constable, the Panel unanimously endorsed the Commissioner's appointment of Ms Poultney to the post of Chief Constable.

RESOLVED – That Members of the Police and Crime Panel:-

- i) Agreed that the proposed candidate – Lauren Poultney – is confirmed as the preferred appointment to the position of Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police.
- ii) Agreed to make a written report to the Commissioner on the proposed appointment of Lauren Poultney as Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police, in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 8 of the Act.

CHAIR