

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON
20 MAY 15:00 HOURS - VIRTUAL MEETING**

PRESENT:-

Cllr Safia Akhtar – Birmingham
Cllr Paul Bradley – Dudley
Cllr James Butler – Solihull
Cllr Ken Hawkins – Solihull
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal – Wolverhampton
Cllr Richard Jones – Sandwell
Cllr Abdul Salam Khan – Coventry
Cllr Narinder Kaur Kooner – Birmingham
Kristina Murphy - Independent Member
Cllr Suky Samra – Walsall
Cllr Farut Shaeen – Sandwell
Cllr Shafique Shah – Birmingham
Cllr Dave Tyler – Dudley
Lionel Walker – Independent Member

ALSO PRESENT:-

David Jamieson – West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner
Waheed Saleem – Preferred Candidate for Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Jonathan Jardine - Chief Executive, OPCC
Mark Kenyon – Chief Finance Officer, OPCC
Kevin O’Keefe – Chief Executive Dudley, Panel Lead Officer
Emma Williamson – Head of Scrutiny Birmingham
Sarah Fradgley– Panel Scrutiny Officer

NOTICE OF RECORDING

- 511 The Chair advised that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via Birmingham City Council's internet site (www.civico.net/birmingham) and members of the press/public could record the meeting except where there were confidential or exempt items.

APOLOGIES

- 512 Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillors Mike Bird and Yvonne Davies.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 513 The Chair and Cllr Tyler declared they were in receipt of police pensions. Cllr Kooner declared she was a co-founder of the Sikh Women’s Network that was in receipt of Victims Funding from the PCC.

MINUTES

- 514 The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEMBERSHIP

515 **RESOLVED:-**

- i. That in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020 appointments to the Police and Crime Panel be rolled forward until Councils held their Annual Meetings; and
- ii. The term of office of the current Independent Panel Members be extended until 31 October 2020 in light of the postponement of the recruitment process for the positions.

CONFIRMATION HEARING – PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

- 516 Following the receipt of notification from the Police and Crime Commissioner of his intention to appoint Mr Waheed Saleem to the role of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, the Police and Crime Panel held a Confirmation Hearing in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

The Panel noted the following report setting out the statutory duties of the Panel and the process to be followed during the Confirmation Hearing. The following information was also provided by the Commissioner relating to the appointment: -

- a. Notification letter from Police and Crime Commissioner
- b. Notice of Decision to appoint a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
- c. Job description for Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
- d. The written particulars of employment

(See document No.1)

The Chair invited the Commissioner to address the Panel. The Commissioner gave a brief background to the post and then outlined why he considered Mr Saleem suitable for the role. He spoke of his academic qualifications, work ethic and the range of previous positions held. He emphasised Mr Saleem's knowledge of the police service including oversight of the 2020 transformation programme, diversity issues, cyber-crime and support to victims of crime. He commended Mr Saleem's collaboration with the business community and regional criminal justice partners and his support in responding to the Covid-19 crisis.

Members asked the Commissioner about the appointment process. Some Members expressed concern about the lack of advertising and equality of opportunity for the high-profile salaried role and how this would be perceived by the general public. The Commissioner responded that normally he would have gone for a competitive process but in the current circumstances decided, following consultation with colleagues, to appoint in this way. He had made a difficult choice to balance an open and transparent recruitment with what was in the best interest of the community to quickly fill the position to respond to the Covid-19 emergency. Responding to further questions about the opportunities for others to apply, the PCC explained that he didn't think the short term, political appointment would be considered by officers at the OPCC. He reminded the Panel there was no requirement to advertise a Deputy

PCC position and he noted that Mr Saleem had previously taken part in competitive recruitment processes for other roles and as former Assistant PCC it was a natural progression to be considered for the Deputy position.

The Chair invited Mr Saleem to address the Panel. Mr Saleem summarised his professional experience gained through a range of senior management and non-executive roles and trusteeships. He outlined his breadth of experience in governance, strategic planning and insight into the causes of crime and interventions. He highlighted the broad range of responsibilities and accomplishments whilst supporting the Commissioner.

Panel Members then put a number of questions to Mr Saleem to establish whether he met the criteria for the post and possessed the necessary professional competence and personal independence to carry out the role.

Mr Saleem was asked if there was anything in his personal or private life that could bring the OPCC into disrepute. He was also asked to explain social media posts he made in 2017 and respond to points raised in a 2020 Times newspaper article. Concerns were expressed by some Members that certain tweets and retweets by Mr Saleem could be deemed as inflammatory. Members discussed the consequences for a serving police officer if making similar comments and they reflected on the integrity required for the high-profile public role that commanded the confidence of the both the public and across the police force. A further comment was made that similar mistakes has been made by others on social media.

In response Mr Saleem explained one tweet was a headline in the Guardian newspaper that he'd retweeted. His tweet referring to the lack of diversity in NHS management was a widely acknowledged issue. He stated that he had reflected on words used and how comments could be made in a different way.

Responding to questions about the content of The Times newspaper article, Mr Saleem explained that he'd made a mistake in 2002 as a newly elected councillor which he had been suitably punished for. He had learnt from this and hoped he had since demonstrated working with distinction in a number of positions, stressing his commitment to making a real difference to the people of the West Midlands.

Mr Saleem was asked about comments in The Times article relating to the reappointment of teachers at Park View School following the Trojan Horse incident. He explained to the Panel that the Department of Education, Ofsted and Peter Clarke would all testify that he had not been involved, and that he had been appointed by the DoE after the incident as Chair of Governors to help the schools recover. He explained that the head teacher had made the staff appointment decision.

The Commissioner commented that he considered the Times article to be very unfair and assured the Panel that he would not have appointed if he felt there was any substance affecting Mr Saleem's ability to do the job.

Responding to further questions about the challenges for the role of Deputy, Mr Saleem commented on the impact of Covid-19 on the police service, supporting police officers and the

risks faced by communities. He referred to the spike in domestic abuse, fraud and increased vulnerability of young people. As Chair of the Recovery Board for criminal justice he sought to address the backlog of court cases and interventions to stop reoffending. Following his victim review he would continue to hold the Force and wider criminal justice partners to account on supporting victims.

Mr Saleem spoke of his commitment to championing diversity and inclusion. He gave the example of challenging the Force on effective diversity in the recruitment of police officers resulting in a targeted advertising and communication campaign to reach communities with lower representation. He further advised how he had visited and engaged with range of communities, faith groups, young people, rough sleepers and the LGTB community.

Drawing the hearing to an end the Chair thanked Mr Saleem and the PCC for responding to the questions. Mr Saleem thanked that Panel for the searching questions and opportunity to put the record straight. The Chair explained that the Panel would deliberate in private and he would write to the PCC with the Panel's decision.

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

517 The Panel received a report on recent activity. The PCC and Mr Saleem responded to questions and made the following points: -

(See document 2)

- i. The PCC thanked the public for complying with the Government's Covid-19 rules but urged for clarity in instructions to ensure an effective police response. He praised police officers working in the difficult circumstances and assured the meeting that he was in regular contact with the Chief Constable. The Panel thanked all key workers for their outstanding work and collaboration during the crisis.
- ii. The additional support packages for staff and officers suffering from PTSD as a consequence of Covid-19 was welcomed and feedback from trade unions, the Police Federation and Staff Associations was positive.
- iii. The Force was taking tough action following damage to 5G masts.
- iv. The PCC congratulated the extensive advertising campaign to get the message to victims of domestic abuse in lockdown that support was still available for them. Further victims funding from the Ministry of Justice had been sought in anticipation of a possible surge in reported cases following the easing of lockdown. He thanked organisations providing support to victims.
- v. The PCC expressed concern that young people aged 11-14 out of school until September (or beyond) would be difficult to re-integrate into the rhythm and discipline of attending school. In addition, he feared the end of furlough and increased unemployment could result in young people turning to anti-social behaviour and criminality. He announced he was to publish a paper shortly on collaboration with the Mayor's Office and the Combined Authority to tackle this.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

518 Monday 20 July 2020.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

519 **RESOLVED: -**

That in view of the nature of business to be transacted which includes exempt information relating to an individual (as defined in Paragraph 1 – Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the course of the following item.

520 **RECOMMENDATION ON THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS**

The Panel examined the evidence submitted, both written and provided verbally by Mr Waheed Saleem in answering the Panel's questions during the Confirmation Hearing.

After a vote the Panel agreed by a majority to recommend that Mr Waheed Saleem should not be appointed as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands.

RESOLVED: –

- i. That the information provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the proposed appointment be noted;
- ii. The responses provided by the proposed candidate as a means of confirming his suitability for appointment be noted;
- iii. The Panel do not support the appointment of the proposed candidate to the position of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner;
- iv. A report detailing the reasons for the Panel's decision be submitted to the Commissioner; and
- v. The report provided to the Police and Crime Commissioner be published on the Police and Crime Panel website on 2 June 2020.

The meeting ended at 17:00 hours

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CHAIR