

Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey – Decision Making Record

Report Title: Appointment of Deputy Chief Finance Officer:
Reciprocal Agreement with Sussex PCC

Decision number: 024/2013

Author and Job Role: Alison Bolton, Chief Executive

Protective Marking: Part One

Executive Summary:

Every Police & Crime Commissioner is obliged to appoint a Chief Finance Officer (CFO) who is the PCC's professional advisor on financial matters. The statutory responsibilities of this role are set out in the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011(paragraph 6 of Schedule 1) and Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1998. The CFO must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced. In summary, the CFO is responsible for:

- ensuring that the financial affairs of the PCC are properly administered and that financial regulations are observed and kept up to date
- ensuring regularity, propriety and Value for Money in the use of public funds
- ensuring that the funding required to finance agreed programmes is available from Central Government, precept, other contributions and recharges
- reporting to the PCC, the Police and Crime Panel and to external auditors any unlawful, or potentially unlawful, expenditure by the PCC or his/her officers
- reporting to the PCC, the Police and Crime Panel and to external auditors when it appears that expenditure is likely to exceed the resources available to meet that expenditure
- advising on the robustness of the budget and adequacy of financial reserves
- ensuring production of the statements of accounts of the PCC
- ensuring receipt and scrutiny of the statements of accounts of the Chief Constable and ensuring production of the group accounts
- liaising with the external auditor

In Surrey, this role is fulfilled by Ian Perkin. The Chief Constable also has a Chief Finance Officer.

Appointment of a Deputy Chief Finance Officers

Certain duties of the PCC's CFO, as set out in Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1998, must be carried out by the CFO personally. Guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) states that a deputy should be appointed to carry out these duties in the event of the CFO's absence.

There are no other suitably qualified individuals in the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC) who could fulfil the role of CFO in the event of Ian Perkin's absence. It is therefore suggested that Surrey enters into a reciprocal arrangement with the OPCC for Sussex so that should either Surrey or Sussex's CFO be incapacitated, the PCCs would be able to call on each other's CFO to fulfil any pressing statutory duties. It is not envisaged that this arrangement would be used

with any regularity; rather in the unlikely event that either CFO is unavailable to discharge a time critical statutory duty. Given the close collaborative working relationship with Sussex, this presents a practical and cost effective approach.

Recommendation

That with immediate effect,

- i) The Chief Finance Officer for Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner be appointed as Deputy Chief Finance Officer for Surrey OPCC; and
- ii) That this appointment be made on the basis of a reciprocal agreement whereby the Surrey CFO is appointed as Deputy Chief Finance Officer for Sussex OPCC

Police and Crime Commissioner Approval

I approve the recommendation(s):

Signature: 

Date: 14/05/2013

All decisions must be added to the decision register.

Areas of consideration

Consultation

This matter has been agreed by the PCCs for Surrey and Sussex and discussed with the Chief Finance Officer for Surrey, Ian Perkin and Chief Finance Officer for Sussex, John Eagles.

Financial implications

None arising. It is not expected that either PCC would charge in the event that they call upon the services of the other's CFO.

Legal

N/A

Risks

This arrangement mitigates against the risk of the PCC being without a CFO to discharge necessary statutory duties.

Equality and diversity and human rights

N/A