



Chief Constable Andy Marsh QPM

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Sue Mountstevens
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner
Email Only

Our ref: AM/gk

Date: 19th March 2020

Dear Sue

Re Appointment of John Smith as CEO

I wanted to write to let you know that I fully support your decision to appoint a deputy (CEO) at this unprecedented time. I have faced many challenging times as a Chief Constable and as a police officer over the past 33 years. However I believe the situation around COVID-19 and the police's response to it, will test our resilience and resolve more than anything I have responded to professionally before. The UK's response to this crisis and how its public services work in partnership to protect its communities is of critical importance and significant benefits and consequences rest upon its effectiveness and the levels of public confidence in what we do to respond to their needs and keep them safe.

Therefore it vital for our civil contingency work to be overseen by an appropriate authority. The public require their police service to be effective and efficient and expect the OPCC to make sure there is public scrutiny, accountability and good governance.

This is not the time to stand still and wait for the storm to pass but a time to take swift action and make decisions which the public would expect their leaders to just get on and make. We must do our absolute best for our communities and protect the most vulnerable who are looking for their public services to work together seamlessly to deliver results. We are making decisions dynamically as the situation develops and if there is to be good governance then it needs to be able to keep pace with our response whilst fulfilling its other functions associated with policing, this crisis and our response to it. In many respects we are moving much more quickly than historic processes would have allowed and we would benefit from similarly dynamic governance to help ensure and assure we are doing the best possibly at all times in the public interest.

Having been a Chief for eight years in two police forces and worked closely with OPCCs, I have first-hand knowledge of the wide span of the work that needs to be undertaken. Quite simply a PCC without a functioning and effective deputy cannot keep pace with what needs to be done at the current time. I fully support your decision to appoint John Smith. Not only will he provide this additional capability to undertake work scrutinising contingency planning he has the knowledge and experience from his previous work with the Constabulary to be immediately effective.

Yours sincerely

Andy Marsh QPM
Chief Constable
Avon and Somerset Constabulary