



Chief Constable Andy Marsh QPM

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Sue Mountstevens
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner

Our ref: AM/GM

Date: 23rd March 2020

Email Only

Dear Sue

RE: Appointment of a Deputy PCC

Further to my letter of 19th March, I understand that there is now a plan to run a short open process over the next two weeks to appoint a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner. I write to confirm that I am supportive of this plan and the appointment of a Deputy PCC.

I have faced many challenging times as a Chief Constable over the last eight years in two police forces and as a police officer over the past 33 years but this is an unprecedented time. During my time as Chief Constable I have worked closely with OPCCs and I have first-hand knowledge of the wide span of the work that needs to be undertaken. A PCC, however capable and experienced without a functioning and effective deputy would find it difficult if not impossible to keep pace with what needs to be done at the current time.

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, good governance and then effective communication.

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 and communication then it needs to be able to keep pace with our work whilst fulfilling its other functions associated with policing, this crisis and the 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.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Marsh QPM
Chief Constable
Avon and Somerset Constabulary