

KEY DECISION

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR BEDFORDSHIRE

Title and Reference – PCC.D.142

Subject: To appoint Garry Forsythe as Chief Constable

Report of: Police and Crime Commissioner

Date: 18/06/2019

Summary

Bedfordshire's Deputy Chief Constable, Garry Forsyth, has been chosen as the candidate to become the county's next Chief Constable by PCC Kathryn Holloway after one of the most testing and transparent selection processes in policing - subject to confirmation by Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Panel. (Confirmed on 18/06/2019)

Mr Forsyth emerged as the front runner across all sections of the tough assessment day, which included a presentation of his vision for the Force in front of a live audience including members of the Bedfordshire workforce, the Police Federation, volunteers from Neighbourhood Watch, councillors and faith and community group representatives; after volunteering via Eventbrite. The event was live streamed on the PCC's Facebook page, with both the online audience and audience in the room contributing assessments of the strengths of the three candidates and areas for development.

Mr Forsyth said: "I am absolutely delighted to be selected as the PCC's preferred candidate to become the next Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police. It was an extremely challenging and demanding process with strong competition from two excellent chief officer colleagues, so to come out as the successful candidate is a hugely proud moment for me both personally and professionally."

The selection day opened with interviews with the PCC, assisted by Britain's most experienced Chief Constable - Andy Marsh of Avon and Somerset Police - Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Chief Paul Fuller, the politically independent Chair of the Police and Crime Panel Paul Cain and Bedfordshire housing developer Steven Smith, representing the business community. It was followed by two demanding mock media interviews on an emerging scenario; as a live down the line interview by earpiece to an unseen interviewer and a recorded television interview, face to face.

"I'm absolutely delighted to select Garry as my choice to be the next Chief Constable of Bedfordshire, subject to confirmation by the Police and Crime Panel, as the law requires. He was outstanding throughout the entire process and it's hugely important to me that the public and the Bedfordshire Police workforce know that their next Chief is being selected entirely on the basis of his own merit.

“That’s why this had to be such an open and transparent process, with the public involved and the widest possible audience, all able to assess the candidates for themselves. A Chief Constable needs exceptional social skills - hence the one to one interviews at the start - and these days needs to be able to think strategically and assess business cases, which is why a representative from the business world was essential. He or she also needs to be able to communicate with all our communities equally, as a credible spokesperson, which is why the media testing was also necessary.

“Garry was the leader when marked by all of the assessors in the first two stages, as well as in feedback from the public and partners when judged as a whole, but all the candidates will get the benefit of taking part as they have been promised a Personal Development Plan which I have offered to discuss in detail with them afterwards, including with the new Chief Constable,” said Commissioner Holloway.

The appointment is now subject to a confirmation hearing before the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel, with the date to be set following a report on the selection process from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Once confirmed, the successful candidate will succeed current Chief Constable, Jon Boutcher, who is stepping down in July.

“It’s a real privilege to be successful in the selection process for Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police and I am excited at the prospect of leading this fabulous Force to continue the success we have seen in recent times,” Mr Forsyth said.

“There is still a lot to do, and I am committed to working closely with colleagues across Bedfordshire Police, our communities and with partners to strive to deliver the policing service our residents want and deserve.”

“For me, the privilege has been to represent the public in Bedfordshire to select the candidate who I genuinely believe will build on the incredibly strong foundation of improvement, public engagement and diversity in our workforce of Jon Boutcher and I am so looking forward to working with Garry as we move forward,” said Commissioner Holloway.

The entire selection process was subject to independent assessment of its fairness by Montell Neufville of Bedfordshire’s Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel who will submit a report to the Police and Crime Panel. Mr Neufville attended all stages, including a Familiarisation Day which had been offered to all candidates.

Recommendation

To note decision

**Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner
I hereby approve the recommendations above.**

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. ...', with a horizontal line underneath.

Date 18/06/2019