

## Decision Note – Chief Constable Contract

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### REQUEST FOR DECISION BY THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

	Policing:	Crime:	Fire & Rescue:
This decision relates to:	X		

#### APPROVAL (for completion by Staffordshire Commissioner only)

##### Rationale for approval

During the last 2 years under Chris Noble’s excellent leadership, significant improvements have been made, resulting in Staffordshire Police being removed from the ‘engage’ process on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024. Whilst this is excellent news, there is still much more to be done, as the force embark on the next phase of their journey to become an outstanding Local Police Service. I have therefore taken steps to secure and extend the tenure of the Chief Constable, Chris Noble, to December 2028, which will provide the stability required for Staffordshire Police to continue their journey at pace.

**STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER**

Signature Date **09/08/2024**

Date decision required by:
If an urgent approval is required, please state reasons:

**For completion by Staffordshire Commissioner’s Office only:-**

Decision Number: SCP/D/202425-004		
Date Received: 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2024		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Has the required decision been considered under the guidance of the Staffordshire Commissioner’s Decision-Making Policy?	x	
Has the required decision been deemed to be a Key Decision as defined within the Staffordshire Commissioner’s Decision-Making Policy?	x	
Who is empowered to make the required decision? <b>Staffordshire Commissioner</b>		

<b>Title</b>	<b>Chief Constable Contract Extension</b>
<b>Summary:</b>	
<p>The current Chief Constable of Staffordshire, Chris Noble, took up the post on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021. His term of office was for a 5 year period and is due to end on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2026. In considering the extension of tenure, the Staffordshire Commissioner has taken account of the successful leadership demonstrated by the Chief Constable since coming into post, and the achievements of both Staffordshire Police and Chris Noble personally during this time.</p>	

**Recommendation:**

The Staffordshire Commissioner -

- Extends by agreement, Chris Noble's tenure as Chief Constable of Staffordshire, for a further period of 2 years, taking his tenure to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2028.
- Sets Chief Constable Chris Noble's pay at £188,670, with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

**Chief Executive**

I hereby approve the recommendation for consideration.

Signature



Date 09/08/2024

## REPORT AND ADVICE TO THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

### 1. Introduction and background

The Chief Constable of Staffordshire Police, Chris Noble, was appointed by the Commissioner in September 2021, and moved to Staffordshire to take up the role of Chief Constable on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021. This was at a time when confidence in Staffordshire Police was low and concerns regarding the performance of the force had been highlighted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

In January 2022 HMICFRS raised significant concerns during their Victim Service Assessment, and applied a number of Accelerated Causes of Concern to the force in March 2022. Following the publication of the full inspection report in June 2022, HMICFRS placed Staffordshire Police in to the enhanced monitoring process called 'Engage'.

The Commissioner set the Chief Constable the task of turning the force around taking account of the priorities and aims of the Commissioner's Local Police and Crime Plan 2021 - 2024.

During the last 2 years under Chris Noble's excellent leadership, the force has successfully implemented a new Police Operating Model, made substantial investment in IT and technology, developed a performance led culture within the organisation, and made significant improvements to how it responds to 999 calls. Chris Noble has built a new executive leadership team of the highest calibre, which has been instrumental in turning the force around.

On 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024, HMICFRS announced that Staffordshire Police had been removed from the engage process with immediate effect. This decision was taken in consultation with other police stakeholders, including the Home Office, the National Police Chief's Council and the College of Policing, and in recognition of significant improvements in force performance.

The latest HMICFRS PEEL inspection is due to be published this September, and will demonstrate further improvements in all areas of force performance. However, it will also highlight areas that require continued attention, such as the 101 non-emergency service.

The Commissioner recognises that this is a crucial time for Staffordshire Police, and that significant challenges remain, as the force embark on the next phase of their journey to become an outstanding Local Police Service.

The Commissioner is concerned of the growing national trend of a shortage of experienced and proven Chief Constables. Notably in the last 12 months a number of forces have been unable to recruit a new Chief Constable, and most recently one outstanding force received no applicants. This is a worrying trend, which is likely to be further exacerbated as more senior officers reach 30 years' service and the new government consider potential changes to pension taxation, both of which could make it more difficult to retain talented and experienced individuals.

Chris Noble's success and outstanding leadership skills have been recognised nationally, and there is a high probability that Chris Noble will be approached by other larger forces or Policing organisations, offering a more attractive salary and longer term contract. Such moves are actively encouraged nationally and there is nothing within Chris Noble's contract that would stop him from leaving Staffordshire. Chris Noble's current contract expires before he would be able to draw down an optimal pension, and therefore it may be personally and financially more attractive to consider a move that would allow him to negotiate a new increased salary and a full five year term, thus taking him to retirement age.

Therefore the Commissioner has taken proactive steps to secure the tenure of Chris Noble as Chief Constable of Staffordshire. Discussions between the Commissioner and the Chief Constable opened in June 2024, and have concluded with the Commissioner making the following decisions in order to provide certainty and stability of leadership for the force:

- Extends by agreement, Chris Noble's tenure as Chief Constable of Staffordshire, for a further period of 2 years, taking his tenure to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2028.
- Sets Chief Constable Chris Nobles pay at £188,670, with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

The Commissioner believes these decisions provide the commitment and assurance to Chris Noble from a personal and financial perspective. Whilst the Commissioner acknowledges there is no guarantee that Chris Noble will stay for the full term of the extended contract, it substantially reduces the likelihood of him feeling that in order to secure more beneficial terms of employment he must consider opportunities elsewhere, regardless of where he may prefer to work.

The Commissioner believes that these decisions will receive widespread local support from the public, partners and from the officers and staff of Staffordshire Police. This decision provides stability, enabling Staffordshire Police to continue at pace with its journey to become an outstanding Police force and deliver the priorities of the Commissioner's next Local Police and Crime Plan 2024 – 2028.

**2. Issues for consideration**

- Significant risk that the Chief Constable could be approached by larger forces / policing organisations offering more beneficial terms of employment
- National shortage of proven and experienced Chief Constables
- Critical time for Staffordshire Police, as they embark on a journey to become an outstanding Police force

**3. What other options have been considered?**

The Commissioner could choose not to extend the Chief Constable's contract, however there is a significant risk this may result in an early departure and necessitate the need to undertake a protracted and costly recruitment process.

**4. Consultation and Engagement undertaken**

Contract discussions between the Staffordshire Commissioner and Chief Constable Chris Noble started in June 2024. The outcome of these discussions are reflected in this report.

**Report Implications****5. Monitoring Officer comments:**

Advice has been provided regarding changes to a serving Chief Constable's contract, for the Commissioners consideration. This is a decision to be undertaken at the sole discretion of the Commissioner.

Signature



Date 09/08/2024

**6. Section 151 Officer comments:**

The annual cost of the Chief Constable's increased salary is £188,670.

Including oncosts, the total budget quantum required is £280,995.


Signature



Date 15.10.2024

	Yes	No
Has legal advice (outside of that provided by the Monitoring Officer) been sought on the content of this report?	X	
<b>7. Legal Comments:</b> N/A		
<b>8. Risks - please give the details of any operational or strategic risks that are affected by this decision (add risk reference number and title below)</b> N/A		
<b>9. Equality Comments – please attach the completed EIA</b> There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications in the making of this decision.		
<b>10. Background/supporting paper</b> N/A		
<b>Please answer the following questions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>11. Public access to information?</b>	X	
<b>12. Does this decision involve the processing of personal data? (If yes please attach a completed Data Impact Assessment)</b>		X
<b>13. Is the publication of this form to be deferred? (If yes approx. how long?)</b>		X
<b>14. Does this form contain commercial or operationally sensitive information which is to be redacted? (If yes, please provide details with the submission of this note)</b>		X

**15. ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:**

<b>Author</b>	Louise Clayton
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	09/08/2024