

**Press Statement by Marc Jones, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire
Recruitment Process for New Chief Constable 2020**

APPENDIX B

BEGINS

"I am not surprised, but am satisfied, I have been cleared of wrongdoing by the investigation. I was always confident I acted in the best interests of the people of Lincolnshire.

"I co-operated fully with inquiries into the historic appointment process for the Chief Constable dating back to 2020 which was halted before any appointment took place.

That process pre-dated the recruitment of the current Chief Constable for Lincolnshire Police.

Both morally and procedurally every step I have taken, and every decision made, since taking office has been to ensure residents have the most effective and efficient force possible with the funding available to keep our communities feeling and being safe.

The circumstances leading up to the halting of the appointment in 2020 were very particular and I am confident they could, and would, not be repeated. I never wavered in my aim to keep the names and interview performance of those who took place in the process private - which is the standard that anyone applying for a role would expect - and regret that the Independent Office For Police Conduct (IOPC) involvement has, in part, not respected that.

Having now experienced first hand the IOPC process, I am clear in my mind that they are not suitable to handle matters, often political, relating to publicly elected and accountable Police and Crime Commissioners. They were, after all, created to deal with issues pertaining directly to operational police officers not elected public representatives and this has definitely proved problematic from my perspective. This is not the fault of the IOPC but I do believe that change is needed to ensure democratic processes are not confused with operational policing.

There is also a wider debate to be had as to how best to handle, in a timely and appropriate way, complaints against policing in general as many believe, as I do, that the current processes take far too long and do not deliver the best possible outcomes for the public or policing.

I naively approached the review into the 2020 process openly and with the expectation of a significantly more assuring process than the one I encountered. The report is still largely silent on the whole first day of a two day process, omitting statements from some key respected figures involved who do not appear to fit the narrative created.

The report, I believe, contains subjective interpretations, misunderstanding and bizarre omissions. Surprisingly, not everyone listed in the report was even interviewed during the years spent looking into this matter.

The report does rightly make it clear that a PCC is responsible for deciding how to run the appointment process, is solely responsible for who they propose appointing; and are entitled to consider all the information gained throughout the whole process, including whether a candidate is a good 'fit' generally.

Taking significant professional and legal advice, that is exactly what I set out to do and delivered and I am confident that residents would expect nothing less.

I have already raised my wider concerns regarding these processes with Ministers and will continue to work to see this vital element of policing standards reformed for the benefit of all.

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It is simply not right that officers can be suspended from duty, often for years on end pending the outcome of investigations where that can be avoided. This is a denial of justice for all involved and the public as well as policing deserve much better.

As far as I am concerned this matter is now concluded and I look forward to carrying on the important work of keeping the communities of Lincolnshire safe.”

ENDS