

**LINCOLNSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
21 February 2024**

**ITEM 4 – Confirmation Hearing for the Chief Constable of
Lincolnshire**

Questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner

Q1. Please can you inform the Panel how the candidate satisfied the essential criteria for appointment and the Policing Competency and Values Framework?

The Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) Response – It is important to note that the framework we follow is an important element but not the total piece of the interview process. The interview was a single day process and prior to that a stakeholder panel was held. All that information came together to form final deliberations.

There was a series of questions asked that were agreed by the interview panel in advance and these were collated following work with the College of Policing's Chief Psychologist and information was assessed from the psychometric testing along with the initial applications. The questions were created to enable the best possible answers and to give the candidates the best chance when responding to fulfil obligations around the framework. Over the course of the questioning and testing those elements, the level of experience and the ability to project the necessary requirements to operate at the higher level of Chief Constable became clear. The interview panel were collectively satisfied that all those requirements were met.

Q2. How was that criteria marked and what weight was given to each separate criteria?

The Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) Response – A scale of four points was agreed on by the interview panel, with four being the highest and one being the lowest. This enabled us to fairly assess each question. At the end of the interview, we compared and discussed our assessments before the collective scores were agreed. This ensured that everyone was satisfied and that the various elements had been covered and openly discussed.

Q3. Why do you believe that Mr Gibson is the best person to lead Lincolnshire Police as its Chief Constable?

The Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) Response – I wanted someone who understands Lincolnshire and someone who cares passionately about the county and will demonstrate a commitment to it. They need to be resilient and in addition to keen intellect they need to

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demonstrate that they can assess problems and deliver thoughtful solutions that are in the interest of the public. In the recruitment pack sent out to candidates I was clear what I was looking for and it was not revolution but more evolution on what has come before. We have had a really excellent outgoing Chief Constable who has worked very hard to deliver on the aims and objectives that we agreed and those which we are now looking to build on.

We are looking for someone that is community focused and is outward looking at the same time as protecting the organisation. Those qualities are what I set out to find and have shone through both from the Stakeholder Panel's feedback and through the interview process. There is no doubt in my mind that a Chief Constable must be the right fit and I am absolutely convinced that we have excelled in that ambition.

Questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Preferred Candidate, Mr Paul Gibson

Theme: Professional Competence

Q1. What qualities do you offer which make you the best candidate to lead Lincolnshire Police?

Mr Gibson's Response – I believe there are four main areas that I can offer. First and foremost, is my heritage as I was born in this county and I have spent time living in Lincolnshire and it genuinely feels like home. I have always had an aspiration to run Lincolnshire Police as the Chief Constable and I have had the fortune of being Chief Constable in Northamptonshire for a short period of time where I have worked with some fantastic people. I always feel that I want to lead and please in a county where I have a vested interest.

Secondly, my experience and skills which I have gathered over the years and it comes from a degree of humility. If you agree with me undertaking this role within Lincolnshire Police, you and the organisation will require me to learn and develop. I have worked in four different police forces as an Executive Officer and I have worked on a national programme. I also hold two significant national portfolios both in forensics and digital forensics which has been a massive learning curve. It is a piece of work that I have led on for several years.

The third area that I would like to speak on is my values and leadership style. Over my years of policing, I have been very clear where my values sit and can pinpoint where they have developed and grown. I have realised that living to those values in both public and private is hugely important for me to be the best person that I can be, and these values will never waiver. Fairness, integrity, compassion, altruism, dogged determination and a commitment to duty are some of my values. Before coming to policing I completed a PhD in medicine and there was a strong sense of public duty behind changing to a policing career.

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The final and fourth area is that I have a plan and I strongly believe in attacking criminality, protecting the vulnerable and protecting victims. I am passionate about growing our organisation and what surrounds all of that is that the confidence of the public remains paramount. I believe Lincolnshire Police needs to be seen as the capable and trusted guardian, and in order to do that consultation, engagement and communication with the public is very important. I think that is a strong trait that I can bring. Should you agree to support my appointment, I would look forward to beginning in earnest and really applying my commitments and determination to that.

Q2. Can you provide an example that demonstrates your ability to manage change in an innovative way and how you inspired colleagues to follow your lead and do things differently?

Mr Gibson's Response – Innovation to me is a very important part of policing. If you take my current role which is East Midlands Special Operations Unit, I look after special services for the five forces of the East Midlands. Innovation is central to the vision of the five forces and it is one team collaborating and innovating to protect the communities of the East Midlands.

I feel that the police service needs to innovate quickly to maintain at the pace at which criminality is developing. We especially cannot be left behind when facing criminals who have ultimate monetary value and great intent and ingenuity. As part of that role, innovation includes everything from developing novel techniques to dealing with the most serious criminals or through utilising technology to the best of its ability.

For example, I am the National Lead for Digital Forensics, a role which I have had for 3 and a half years. Two years ago when I took on that role, it occurred to me that the way we are delivering digital forensics including examining phones and hard drives is very diverse in policing. It is a post code lottery and my question was what can we do nationally to enhance this for the benefit of policing and ultimately the public.

With colleagues and other stakeholders, I led the bid to the Home Office through the comprehensive spending review and gained £35m to deliver a novel digital forensic solution across policing across the country. Without going into any complicated detail, it was guided by policing in order to deliver what policing wanted and involved initiatives such as automation. For example, it looked at how we can use automation to look at child abuse images with artificial intelligence rather than having people doing that and the benefits associated. It also involves being able to selectively extract information from sexual offence victims' phones where we do not revictimize them by taking their phones away from them, instead it only extracts the relevant information at the time. Also, work around accreditation to make sure that our digital forensics solutions are reliable and consistent to stand up to the court of law are involved. The work is

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ongoing, and we are a year and a half into that programme with pilot studies having been delivered across the country.

The important ingredients for innovation are not about the hero leader who knows everything as I clearly do not know everything. It is around galvanising and galvanising people to utilise the great abundance and skill that they can bring. We have also utilised the national forensic community to use their skills to create an innovation network to come up with solutions. It has been to the Chief's Council, and they are very supportive of the direction of travel and I look forward to seeing what benefits come forward as they will greatly add to a better service to the public and to victims of crime.

Theme: Serving the Public

Q3. Lincolnshire is made up of rural, coastal, and urban communities with large seasonal population fluctuations. What personal qualities and experience would you bring to the role to ensure that policing meets the needs of our local communities across Lincolnshire?

Mr Gibson's Response – I have spent 18 years in Lincolnshire Police and believe I have worked in nearly every part of the geography and every rank up to Assistant Chief Constable. I have got a great fondness for the county and it is something that is very close to my heart. In considering diversity in demography and geography, I have gained great experience from working with Derbyshire Police as an Assistant Chief Constable. Both our areas have similarities and also spending time as Chief Constable at Northamptonshire Police has enabled me to experience further and very diverse set of geography.

Should you agree for me to become Chief Constable in Lincolnshire, first and foremost I bring experience. Whilst I do not pretend to know everything, my style of leadership would lend itself to three phases.

The first is to look, listen and learn. How long that takes depends on what you find, and the best evidence must be collected to understand what is required. For me that is around looking upwards and outwards, using lots of public engagement and utilising many different internal and external engagement techniques to understand what the culture really feels like. Despite being an analyst and a scientist by trade, I have realised that when you deal with policing and when you deal with people and culture it is far more about feel and intuition that you can back up with quantitative evidence, and that would be my first phase.

The next phase would be moving to clarify. To assess what plans are already in place, what does the threat and risk assessment say, what do our victim confidence surveys say. These allow us to triangulate the perception with an evidence base.

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My third phase would be to set the plan, and the most important point is around neighbourhood policing which is the blanket that covers all aspects of our geography. The current Neighbourhood Policing Strategy is going to be assessed in terms of its efficiency and effectiveness and for me the strategy should have allocated individuals that know their area. They should know the profiles of their neighbourhoods and who the important people to influence and contact are.

It is really important that innovation is utilised to make sure that we can actually reach our communities. It is also very important that an open communication strategy is based upon a formula and has science behind it so that we can understand where that information goes and what impact that has so that we can achieve the best outcome. Returning to values, in Lincolnshire Police I would look to embody that strong level of duty in public service and that no matter the geography we must always communicate that we are servants of the public, do the best we can and explain to them when we cannot deliver.

Q3. (a) Supplementary Question – Do you also feel that community contact and getting out to talk to people is of equal or greater importance?

Mr Gibson's Response – When you look at the ways that we communicate with the public, it has to be through multiple channels and on multiple occasions. There are no open-source data around transparency in public crime levels. There are face to face meetings from various local authorities and community networks and advisory groups, so there are a lot of channels we can use to communicate with the public. It is vitally important to ensure public confidence and where resources are available to provide that in every part of the county. Face to face interaction can also be achieved through virtual technology.

In my role as Assistant Chief Constable in Derbyshire we had frequent engagement with parish councillors using remote technology. I also introduced Derbyshire Talking which was an alert system with a survey tool. The survey tool allowed different parts of the community to express what was important to them and that was hugely valuable. In another campaign called Reform and Engage, we pushed that alongside precept funding which introduced a number of community-based roles within Derbyshire. Over a period of three months more than 32,000 people had signed up to engage.

I believe we have to manage the expectation of what we can do and be innovative and creative in making sure we are reaching as many people with the right information at the right time by using as many channels as we possibly can.

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Q4. The recent PEEL inspection - 'Police performance: Getting a grip' July 2023 highlighted that all too often and in too many forces, the public is being failed. Either at the first point of contact in the response to a call for help; or in the service that a victim of crime receives. What steps would you take to tackle this issue?

Mr Gibson's Response – I believe the starting point for the ingredients of a good organisation is that it welcomes scrutiny. That can be all forms from academia to working with private industry, and to inspectorates. It is important to have an opportunity to have a good look at ourselves and not be defensive, we both want the same thing which is to best serve the public.

In terms of the July report on policing, I have read it in detail and the perspective gained is that we need to get back to the basics. That is to say the front door, the communications room is the largest channel and any kind of information that comes into policing is usually important. Are we responding in terms of 999 and 101 call times or to backlogs and are people vacating and not staying on the phone. I think we need to do better and that is not to criticize the good people that do this work because we know demand is rising.

When I narrated my vision to the Commissioner and the interview Panel a few weeks ago, the communications room is a very important point to understand that it is the initial front door into policing and we are doing what we need to do. I would look outwards and upwards to make sure that we are looking at best practice elsewhere and utilising the best technology to make sure we are doing all that we can.

Another point that I would raise, is the importance of effective investigations. The vision that I took is that the public want to see activity and a reaction when they report issues to the police. I do have to balance that with resource because we cannot do everything all of the time, therefore prioritisation is important to work through.

Northamptonshire gave some great experience of that with an initiative called master of priority. It was essentially a ten-week cycle where they introduced a threat every week, not necessarily a high threat, but this included things areas such as shop theft or car theft whilst balancing that against serious violence or domestic abuse. That initiative was really well received.

It is just as important to get the basics right. Policing in Lincolnshire and elsewhere is governed by many forces from the Commissioner up to National arrangements, the Home Office, the College of Policing, Ethical Standards and everything in between. If my appointment is agreed, I believe it is my role to distil all that complexity into something simple that people can understand, and it is very important people can get behind a vision that they can understand. For me that involves taking decisions in

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good faith, taking responsibility, being professionally curious and to challenge inappropriate behaviour. All these fundamental principles can grow and deliver against some of the higher-level plans. In conclusion, we need to be clear on our priorities and how to deliver them against the expectations of making sure we do them in the interest of the public.

Q4. (a) Supplementary Question – I am pleased to see you have mentioned academia. Do you envisage working with the University and utilising the resources that it has?

Mr Gibson's Response – I certainly have past links with the University and have been involved in multiple projects when I was in Lincolnshire in 2017 and prior to that. I have also worked very closely with academia in Derbyshire in relation to direct entry and building and delivering the different recruitment routes. I would say that obviously I have got an academic background, and I also lead on the East Midlands Police academic collaboration which is hugely important because it gives us some great links into universities. This has been utilised for example in terms of leadership development in EMSOU where I currently work and using a company called JumpThink where academics and sports scientists have helped to create high performing teams and other initiatives such as Clear, hold, build which is a framework for targeting serious and organised crime. We have been heavily involved in that from an academic collaboration point of view in terms of assessing and analyse the results on behalf of the Home Office. I am a huge believer in evidence-based practice and my natural way of thinking is in the longer term. This lends itself to an academic discipline that allows use to use good evidence to analyse and utilise those who sit out of policing to inform how we should police most effectively.

Q4. (b) Supplementary Question – Returning to what the public expect from the Police Service. How as our Chief Constable would you respond to a local community publicly expressing concerns about a lack of police visibility and response (particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour), to the extent that they declare that their community no longer has confidence in Lincolnshire Police?

Mr Gibson's Response – To get to the point where a community declared that it no longer has confidence in Lincolnshire Police would be hugely concerning. The determination for me would be to wind back from that question and address those issues in advance of being in such a dramatic position. As previously mentioned, it is hugely important that we engage and we must listen, be open to challenge and be in a position where sometimes we need to apologise because we do not always get it right. Policing is a tough industry, and we are beholden to the public and need them in order to police as effectively as we can.

Our dedicated neighbourhood policing officers and PCSOs are volunteers who are keyed in as best as they possibly can with the resources they

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have to understand those community profiles where there are issues of concern. I believe that gives an opportunity to take charge of the issues before they grow into something more concerning and dent public confidence. That situation should be avoided at all costs and is not good for policing.

Additionally, there is the question of prioritisation and not being able to deliver what everyone wants all of the time. I do think it is important that if there is something we cannot do, we must explain the rationale as to why and we must also explore alternative methods about how we could work in partnership, both with the community and also with our other partners and stakeholders within Lincolnshire.

In terms of liaison, as experienced within Derbyshire as the Assistant Chief Constable people are quite rightly raising concerns all of the time. What we must do is make sure that we do our best to deal with those, but if we cannot then we should explain why.

Theme: Working with others

Q5. Partnership working is now commonplace between public sectors and the Government. What experience would you bring to the role which would enable you to work collaboratively and innovatively to bring about further efficiencies and greater effectiveness between partners?

Mr Gibson's Response – The best example that I can give is the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU) where we are a collaboration of five forces. We also collaborate on counter terrorism, serious and organised crime, homicide, forensics and legal services. So that of course involves lots of connections with other partners within national policing and many stakeholders.

My time in EMSOU has been phenomenal and I have enjoyed every minute of it. It has equally been very challenging as I have had ten bosses, fire Chief Constables and five Police Commissioners, and quite rightly every force wants something different. I believe the collaborative approach has been hugely important in order to forward that.

To me the important ingredients are building credibility and making sure that you are working with your partners. I would seek very quickly to come out and spend time with partners to understand any concerns and refresh my knowledge and make new connections. I believe that proximity is very important and that refers to maintaining regular contact and being there when needed. It is great to pick up the phone and pick up a relationship where you left it, that involves building trust, helping each other out and seeing each other's perspectives. From a collaborative point of view, it is really important to make sure you have a plan and deliver at a pace.

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My involvement in community safety arrangements in Lincolnshire back in 2017, and later within Derbyshire around county community safety, showed that it was really important to corral people together to look at a shared endeavour that benefits everyone and especially the public.

In my current role, the most important aspect of collaboration for me has been ensuring that you are communicating regularly, that you have a plan and know what you are delivering against. The learning point for me is that you are not always right, and it is really important to listen and gather other people's perspectives.

In terms of the best solution for everyone, the EMSOU is a £42m endeavour and there has been many discussions in order to determine how best we can collaborate to get to a point where that funding envelope is agreed and we are directing our resources at things that are most important to the forces. I am a big fan of collaboration and I think projecting forward it must have a purpose. It has to be something that benefits the public and collaboration for collaboration's sake is probably not the right idea, but if it delivers against collective objectives then I think it is really important that you nurture those relationships and that is certainly what I would seek to do.

Q6. Can you tell us about a time when you have had to deal with a new threat or public safety concern, and how you went about strategically planning for this?

Mr Gibson's Response – The best example would be the work that I am doing at the moment around our operating model, so as I have mentioned the East Midlands Special Operations Unit deals with serious and organised crime as well as other areas. I believe historically our focus has been on guns, gangs and drugs which are hugely important to our forces, but what that does not do is address on behalf of our forces with the powers and resources we have against vulnerability threats. For example, child sexual abuse and exploitation, modern slavery, human trafficking and organised immigration crime. Over the past six months I have been working to make sure that we are taking the evidence-based approach to look at strategic threat and risk. The task is then to work out where we deliver against that threat and risk and where each of the forces deliver against that and to identify where there are gaps or duplications and how we can then respond accordingly.

Without getting very technical. We have worked very closely with all forces and we have a stakeholder group that works upon moulding the operational model and we are now in a position where we have introduced new ways of working against these new threats.

Believe it or not, fraud is our highest threat in the East Midlands and we have introduced a proactive fraud and economic crime team which is 30 officers and staff who are making some real inroads into the higher level of risk based fraud. We have also utilised our undercover online team and

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these are the people that pretend to be other people online. We have worked very hard at being very proactive and are now in the top quartile within the country around safeguarding children and the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The other area to touch upon is modern slavery and human trafficking. Again, we have introduced a much stronger intelligent insight to understand where modern slavery is taking place which enables a team of specialists to draw intelligence and respond accordingly to people that have been exploited and vulnerable people that have been abused in terms of either sexual or commercial gain.

That operating model change is in flow and we have introduced many new resources and new ways of working and what we are seeing in terms of national delivery is a much greater exploitation and disruption of these different types of behaviour. I think that is a good example of how we have responded to different criminal threats and moved away from the traditional methods.

Theme: Personal Independence

Q7. Can you explain your understanding of the terms 'operational independence' and 'personal independence', and how these apply to the role of the Chief Constable?

Mr Gibson's Response – Thank you for the question and I think this is hugely important because the independence of the Chief Constable is a cornerstone of British policing. When considering operational independence and the advent of the Commissioner system, that is when the legislation and the protocol was introduced, it is quite binary in terms of what relationship and whose role is what. It is usually important that policing is not impacted by political sway, but that said the Commissioner is of course there to represent the public in terms of holding the Chief Constable to account and to deliver against what is important to the public.

I believe in making sure that the Commissioner and Chief Constable work very closely together. And, as I have said before we both want the same thing, that is the best possible service to the public. That said, it should never be a cosy relationship, it should be a relationship that is based on being able to be honest, being able to disagree and being able to be in a position where sometimes a position of operational independence takes priority. What I would always look for is making sure that you work collegiately and being very open in terms of decisions and rationale.

Operational independence is usually important and needs to be backed up by a strategic planning cycle, which requires good evidence based upon consultation with the public to develop your priorities. I think it requires a robust and evidence based financial planning cycle so that you are meeting your medium-term financial plan and ensuring that you are using

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good science to make sure that the public finances have been well managed.

On the back of that, it is important to understand your demand and project what demand is coming over the hill to ensure that you can morph and mould your organisation in the years ahead according to where the threats are coming. It is also important to have a performance framework that gives a good objective understanding of the performance of your organisation. So, in terms of Operational Independence, it is usually important to make sure of that high level of evidence basis and that you are delivering according to your objectives and your brief. You need to be making good objective evidence-based decisions on how you run the organisation.

In terms of personal independence that talks to me much more around a wider connotation and links back to the values I alluded to at the beginning of the session, which, as I have said was fairness and integrity and is absolutely unwavering for me.

In terms of resilience that is dealing with the ups and downs of policing, and I find that leading by integrity is always the best way to get the outcome. It may be difficult at the time, but being aligned to your values is hugely important in terms of making sure you are taking the best decisions for the right reasons with the information known at the time.

Personal independence I think requires that integrity but it also requires that commitment and dogged determination that it requires, for example to make a quick intervention at times when it requires a decision to be made which way we are going, which is what a good leader should do, but when that is required, I think that personal independence is really important to guide that.

Q8. How will you work with the Commissioner to deliver their Plan, whilst also ensuring that Lincolnshire Police continues to perform well and maintains the independence of the Constabulary to reduce crime and make communities safer?

Mr Gibson's Response – I have probably covered part of that question in the previous question, but as I have mentioned the Commissioner develops the Police and Crime Plan and this is something that we should take into cognizance when delivering the police plan that should align with it. From everything I have seen so far, it certainly does align for the right reasons and objectives. In terms of working together I am a great believer in being very open in policing, it is not a dark art and some of it is obviously confidential but most of it we should be transparent and open and be prepared to talk about it and be able to give our rationale and considerations. So, I would certainly take that principle to the relationship with the Commissioner and his team and ensure that we are communicating regularly and we are in regular proximity.

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We are working across the force and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, so there is alignment in terms of understanding roles, responsibilities and also where it is required if there is disagreement and ideally that is behind closed doors where you can actually work through and find the best solution on behalf of the public.

The best example that I could give is when I worked with the Commissioner as Chief Constable for Northamptonshire Police. It was a short period but I was given a very clear steer that the Commissioner wanted me to come in and give a fresh pair of eyes to how the organisation was developing against both culture, HMICFRS progress against the Inspectorate and to give a general viewpoint on what someone different thinks. That is to question what the reality is and to do some testing in terms of how that happened and being very open talking to people, building trust and being able to get to the position where you are understanding what is really happening under the surface. That gave a great opportunity to work with the Commissioner and be very open and considered how I saw the force without being an expert.

I thought the relationship worked really well and I built that relationship based upon the principles we have just talked about. When I left Northampton, I was really pleased that the Commissioner was very open in his praise of the way the force had been run. It was not all down to me, but clearly I had a reflection upon the leadership approach that I took.

Theme: Respect for diversity

Q9. How will you ensure that Lincolnshire Police takes into account and engages the needs of diverse and hard to reach communities across Lincolnshire to produce tangible results?

Mr Gibson's Response – Again, a hugely important point. I think you know if I extend the point to diversity, inclusion, difference. You know it is clear to me that in the teams I must work with, diversity is almost infinite and it brings great abundance if you use the different skills, abilities, experiences and characteristics that you know folks will work together and bring.

In policing, have we developed well enough against the diversity agenda? I think we have made some progress, but frankly I do not think we have probably progressed enough. I think our focus has been on attraction, recruitment, retention and attrition. It is not to say they are unimportant, but I think there are some fundamental issues that you need to be addressed before you can actually consider the measurement of that as a success of good equality, diversity and inclusiveness approach.

There are really four areas that certainly I focused on in EMSOU and I will give a quick example afterwards, but first and foremost it has to be culture. Is the culture inclusive and can people come to work and safely

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be themselves? I could give a really long answer around how I think that you build culture in order to create that environment, but essentially, it is hugely important that we build our leadership, our team ethic, our continuous professional development, our values, our vision and the Chief Constable and other senior leaders need to be a kind of role model for that, but it is building an environment where people can be themselves.

I think the second element then is having a representative workforce, that is around reaching out, positive action and being in a position again where you are taking away any barriers for people entering the service, whether that is neurodiversity or people that come from different cultures, backgrounds and demography.

The third area for me, I think is really important is that the police need to be seen as a trusted and proportionate deliverer of policing services. I think that is the only way you can properly engage with communities that have a lack of trust with policing, and this involves everything from use of police powers to neighbourhood policing strategies so that you are actually knowing where your hard-to-reach communities are and you are engaging in the right way. Again, I think it is hugely important that if you take it up to the highest level, there is a role within policing in the larger strategy around that cycle of continued discrimination and lack of opportunities for people of difference, and of course that ranges from education to environment and everything in between.

I think the police service has a part to play at the table to actually start to address that within policing. To address your specific point around engaging diverse communities, I think all of those four things need to come together in order to build your best success of being able to identify, understand and engage in a two way process with those communities.

Again, very briefly within EMSOU which is a specialist unit, so it is slightly different to the neighbourhood policing approach, but that is something that we have done across all of those four areas. Keeping the answer fairly short, in 2021 we won the Black Police Association Force of the year, not a force but that was the title of the award. That was not just on the back of me, but actually engaging people with lived experience of difference and bringing them together to actually build a strategy, not just a glossy brochure, but a strategy that really worked around raising awareness, positive action and being in a position where we are going out and actually looking for people of difference and being able to propose and accentuate the benefits of the organisation.

The action plan was long, and I will not go through it, but I think that was a real reflection of the fact that people are our greatest asset. I know it is cliché but they are and if we can build teams where people have flourished and where people have not flourished you will know the reasons why. Buildings the ingredients where teams can flourish allows a much greater kind of extension into the community where justice is much more

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prevalent and therefore people of difference are more likely to engage. I hope that covers a summary of it.

Q9. (a) Supplementary Question – How would you intend to make contact with communities that are very rural and isolated such as Holbeach St Marks?

Mr Gibson's Response – I think very relevant to Lincolnshire, certainly it was very relevant to my experiences in Northamptonshire and Derbyshire, what I would go back to is the importance of your neighbourhood policing plan. And, I keep mentioning neighbourhood profiles, but neighbourhood profiles are consistent ways of being able to ensure you have a very clear plan for that area that you look after and that it involves good communication. As we have mentioned around technology, face to face is also really important as well. I do take your point that it is usually important that we need to reach as many people as we possibly can and to return to some of the communication questions that were raised earlier, I certainly recognise that the rural community in that isolation is an element of difference as well.

Q10. How would you encourage the recruitment of police staff and volunteers from minority sections of the community? In Lincoln we have seen a good positive increase in the Pride events each year and with a new Bishop the Cathedral has become far more engaged in that area too.

Mr Gibson's Response – In terms of considering the roots of entry for people into policing for people of difference whether visible characteristics or others, then I think that it is really important for you to be able to remove the blockages that sometimes get in the way because for some sections of our communities, the way that we recruit is not helpful. It does not necessarily give them the best chance of success, so I certainly think that positive action where we are engaging with different types of our communities in order to be able to create a level playing field where everyone has a good change of entry based on merit. Things like flexible working is usually important to consider as part and parcel of the offer to attract difference.

I have certainly been involved in recruiting internships within EMSOU, for example trying to gain very specialist skills in some of our technical services. Then we are bringing in internships from universities and part of the gap year they quite often stay with us after they finish their degree. Again, they are bringing a great deal of difference not just in terms of their technical ability, but they are a different generation. I always smile when I sit with them and say come into our organisation, have a look and say what you think and be prepared to challenge because I come from a very different generation to you. It is important they continue to be themselves and actually bring the skills that they have to us.

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In the past I have also worked on something called Police Now which is essentially an accelerated way of bringing specialists into policing which is essentially raise through a recruitment process by a private company that then come into policing. We have certainly done that around detectives and specialists, but I think that you need to spend time with your communities to know what your demography is, to identify where there is a difference and to give opportunity of a sight of what we do, to build trust, I think with the communities to make it much more likely that they see policing as an aspiration and ensuring that we continue to follow up on that and engage all the different things that I spoke about in the last answer to make sure that actually when we attract and recruit difference, we retain them and make the best use of the difference they bring.

Theme: Understanding police accountability

Q11. What for you is the importance of the Policing protocol in terms of policing accountability?

Mr Gibson's Response – I think we have seen over the recent past, frankly horrendous issues within policing and the Baroness Casey Review is probably the most relevant and pertinent example of that, that is recent and shows and abhorrent abuse of trust which should never be allowed within policing. Now I know that is focused on the Metropolitan Police, but of course there is no doubt that there will be in part reflective policing overall and of course we reflect the society we draw and recruit from. So, in terms of accountability and responsibility, and in terms of my leadership style you know mentioned around high expectation and high expectation has to be unwavering. I think there is a difference between accountability and responsibility, I think accountability is being held to account for your part of the process, so it is task focused. Responsibility for me has been held to account for the overall delivery of what you do and being an ambassador for your organisation, which I think is an important point that you need to imbue.

On the positive side, in terms of allowing people to be the very best versions of themselves and delivering against the objectives, then my leadership style would say take decisions in good faith, be bold, take responsibility and you know be prepared to get it wrong sometimes, and actually I will back you in good faith. The counter to that is if we are talking around people who have been reckless, who are being intentionally wrong and if they are taking decisions that are putting the reputation of the police service into disrepute, I would have no hesitation to remove them from the organisation. Beyond that we should have a fervent and proactive approach to making sure we are actually rooting out the wrong types of behaviour because of the impact on the public, a) because of the impact upon the public and b) to also give the opportunity to other people that do have public service and duty in their hearts and want to deliver on behalf of the public.

Appendix A

I have done that before following the case review I was actually Chief in Northamptonshire and that was really important then to go out and be visible and we utilised video and virtual communication to really make it clear what the expectations are. According to the kind of leadership expectations I have just expressed, I also set up an operation there and certainly looked after an operation while there around a more proactive approach to anti-corruption, the review of past cases of concern and ensuring again that we utilise the code of conduct to root out those people who frankly have no place in policing. So, I think you know my point around genuine support and then nurturing people to do their best. It is usually important but the flip side of that is actually the expectation that you live to the code of ethics and to the Nolan Principles. You live to the public values and if you do not do that from my perspective, they have no place in Police.

Q12. What steps would you take if, hypothetically, you felt the Commissioner was preparing to do something you felt strayed into operational policing?

Mr Gibson's Response – Without revisiting the sort of principles about how I would propose to work with the Commissioner, I think it is important to have a professional but healthy relationship, but one that clearly is based upon accountability and based upon the need to deliver the best service to the public. As I have mentioned, the policing protocol and what strays into operational territory and no operational territory is not quite as binary as it presents itself within legislation. There is a grey element, but what I would say is having that healthy working relationship and being clear on objectives. Frequent communication allows the build-up of that understanding and that sort of approach between the Chief and the Commissioner and how we work together.

If we were in a position where I thought operational independence was being encroached, then I would have no hesitation to raise that with the Commissioner in the right way. Although I would not want to get there, I would hope not to get to that position, but would take the independent decision that would need to be taken on behalf of the force to make sure that I am maintaining the role and the responsibility that I have as Chief Constable.