



What is the role of the Police & Crime Commissioner's Chief of Staff and why you should do it?

Why is this role being advertised as *Chief of Staff*?

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 describes the Head of Paid Service in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner as the *Chief Executive*. It is important to understand however that this role is slightly different to most Chief Executive positions and is therefore better described as a *Chief of Staff*.

In most organisations the Chief Executive directs the day to day running of the operation under the strategic leadership of a Chair and a Board or a local authority or some other structure. In these situations the Chief Executive would hold significant executive powers by virtue of their own appointment.

In this case however, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is the Executive. In law, the PCC is a corporation sole which means that they embody the position and the organisation. Corporation soles are not common creations within the United Kingdom, possibly the most famous one will be the Archbishop of Canterbury.

It is therefore important that any applicant understands these legal arrangements and the nature of the role.

Why should I apply to be Chief of Staff?

Any successful applicant for this role will need to work closely with the PCC. Their primary role is to manage and support to ensure that the objectives set out in the Police and Criminal Justice Plan are achieved. To do this the Chief of Staff will need to be strong in the following areas:

1. Be an excellent Chief of Staff of the OPCC team.
2. On behalf of the PCC, influence, persuade and manage the Force to meet the strategic objectives set out in the Police and Criminal Justice Plan and assist the PCC in ensuring that they do so.
3. Advise the PCC on all matters. PCCs need advice. This advice is not political but is within a deeply political arena. It focuses on what is the best way to achieve goals and objectives; what areas might be being neglected within Thames Valley; what areas might benefit from injections of scarce commissioning money. The key thing is being able to make the relationship with the current PCC work.
4. The legal aspects of the role as Monitoring Officer also require a good Chief of Staff to act independently and with integrity and to identify and mitigate potential difficulties.

In short, the role of the Chief of Staff is simple if you focus on two things:

1. Support the PCC in achieving their goals and objectives.
2. Support and challenge the Force to make them provide as good a police service as possible.

Being involved in policing is a rewarding and fascinating business. Everyday officers and staff in Thames Valley Police help people, sometimes they will save lives but more often their impact will be life changing by stopping people causing harm or keeping people away from it. To be a part of that system, and to seek to improve it is to take on a challenging role that can be incredibly fulfilling.