Report and Recommendations to Mr John Campion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, on the Appointment of Richard Cooper as Chief Constable of West Mercia Police

The West Mercia Police and Crime Panel met on Wednesday 19 March 2025 and carried out a confirmation hearing of the recommended appointment of Richard Cooper as Chief Constable of West Mercia Police. The members present were:

Councillors:

Barry Durkin (Chairman) – Herefordshire Council

Rob Adams (Vice-Chairman) - Wychavon District Council

John Gallagher – Malvern Hills District Council

Nigel Lumby – Shropshire Council

David Munro – Redditch Borough Council

Chris Rogers – Wyre Forest District Council

Vivienne Parry – Shropshire Council

Colin Taylor – Shropshire Council

Richard Udall – Worcester City Council

The Panel had before it the report of the Chief Executive Officer of The Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office which included the report of the Independent Person who oversaw the recruitment process, the role profile and person specification.

The Panel heard from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) about the recruitment process and the PCC drew attention to the Independent Member Report. He also set out the experience and competencies of Richard Cooper that he considered made him the right candidate for appointment as Chief Constable.

Cllr Barry Durkin

Chairman, West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

c/o Legal and Governance

Worcestershire County Council

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Spetchley Road

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The Panel then asked questions of Richard Cooper. Areas covered by their questions and his responses included:

* Given his recent experience in the role of Temporary Chief Constable, what he identified as the key challenges and priorities for improvement to be addressed within the Force
* How he intended to operate strategically with key stakeholders across West Mercia to ensure co-operation across a range of complex issues
* How he would effectively communicate and engage with all levels of staff throughout West Mercia Police, create stability within the Force and involve staff in its future direction
* His experience of handling major critical incidents effectively and how he supported Officers in the aftermath of such events
* What his vision was for the Force’s role in tackling and preventing the growing problem of cybercrime

In accordance with the requirements of Schedule 8 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Panel agreed unanimously that the PCC should be recommended to proceed with Richard Cooper’s appointment. The Panel was impressed by Richard’s level of competence and thorough knowledge and understanding across all areas of policing in West Mercia. They also felt that he displayed strong leadership skills and would create stability within the Force which would be greatly beneficial moving forward.

Signature of the Panel Chairman

Barry Durkin

Chairman of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

21 March 2025