

Police commissioner accused of cronyism over £65,000 jobs



Adam Simmonds with Kathryn Buckle, who was his election agent in November's police poll

Sean O'Neill Crime Editor

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A Police and Crime Commissioner is under fire for sitting on the interview panel that selected two of his election workers for £65,000-a-year jobs.

Adam Simmonds, the Conservative commissioner in Northamptonshire, took an active part in the selection process that led to the appointment of his election agent and former press spokesman as assistant commissioners.

The pair had attracted controversy before when given temporary jobs but they have now been appointed on full-time contracts. Kathryn Buckle, who was Mr Simmonds's election agent in November's police poll, has been made Assistant Commissioner for Governance. Peter Heaton, his former spokesman, is Assistant Commissioner for Public Involvement. The appointments, and the manner in which they were made, attracted fierce criticism.

Three assistant commissioner jobs were advertised only on the careers section of the Northamptonshire Police website and received 13 applicants. Nine were shortlisted for interview by a panel of three people, including Mr Simmonds. The third post went to Iain Britton, a long-serving member of staff in the former police authority which was replaced by the office of the commissioner last year.

"The PCC is bringing his office into disrepute with this sort of behaviour," said Brendan Glynane, a Liberal Democrat member of the county's Police and Crime Panel. "Ministers said they did not want this role to be political but Mr Simmonds has made it political."

He added that Mr Simmonds had appointed "his cronies" to well-paid posts for which they lacked the requisite experience.

Mr Simmonds said that the appointments procedure had been "open and rigorous" with a three-stage process that led to the appointment of "the best people for the job". A spokesman said that his critics were "town hall mud-slinging" and added: "He is the person employing these staff, so he needed to be on the interview panel. But he was not choosing them exclusively."

In West Yorkshire, the job of deputy PCC is being advertised only among members of the local Labour Party.

17 comments

Michael Daventry

3 people listening



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A HOARE

4 days ago

Whose's surprised.

Recommend Reply



LBeagle

4 days ago

And add to this the number of Chief Constables who have been sacked/suspended/charged.....and one wonders that any crime is ever solved..

Recommend Reply



Peter Evans

4 days ago

@LBeagle And resigned or not wished to fill the insecure top post.

Recommend Reply



Neil Wilby

4 days ago

West Yorkshire PCC already has his publicist in place as £41k per year "Research Director". His election agent (whom he shares with Ed Balls) is favourite to take the Deputy PCC role. The most powerful Labour Councillor in Yorkshire (not just West Yorks) chairs the PCP Panel.

The Deputy appointment will take West Yorkshire PCC staff complement up to an astonishing 30, including the highest paid Chief Exec in the country.

Recommend Reply



Peter Evans

4 days ago

@Neil Wilby The Times came out strongly and persistently in favour of commissioners in spite of warnings it published to the contrary.

3 Recommend Reply



Peter Evans

4 days ago

"**Richard Ford** Home Correspondent Last updated at 9:54AM, December 7 2012

"Police and crime commissioners were embroiled in "cronyism" rows last night after appointing close friends to lucrative jobs as their deputies.

"Sixteen commissioners have appointed deputies on salaries of up to £65,000 without any formal appointments process. The Tory commissioner in Northamptonshire has published plans to hire 17 people, including four assistant commissioners, to help him."

I hope Cameron's adviser on the police will tell him to stop the rot.

Recommend Reply

Peter Evans

4 days ago

Will Cameron pay mortgage deposits for any of them?

Recommend Reply

Cerise Pink

4 days ago

'In West Yorkshire, the job of deputy PCC is being advertised only among members of the local Labour Party.'

Get a grip Cameron for goodness sake!

These are the sort of jobs which add little or no value and are paid for by taxes.

7 Recommend Reply

Graham Blake

4 days ago

It just goes to show that you can't trust Politicians. Lets get rid of them all and go to a dictatorship, that way we will save lots

of money on not having elections. And the police will be able to save money by not having to investigate MPs.

2 Recommend Reply



Tacitus

4 days ago

@Graham Blake I think there is much to be said for a benign dictatorship.

4 Recommend Reply



Ian Chaplin

4 days ago

@Tacitus @Graham Blake as long as I'm the dictator ...

1 Recommend Reply



Spike

4 days ago

@Ian Chaplin @Tacitus @Graham Blake No i want to be dictator. It's my turn.

Recommend Reply



A HOARE

4 days ago

@Tacitus @Graham Blake

Has there ever been a dictatorship that remained benign? I shared your thought when I was 17 but came to realise that "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely"

Try looking at the Catholic Church which operates in many countries as a virtual dictatorship. Benign?

Recommend Reply



Tacitus

4 days ago

@A HOARE @Tacitus @Graham Blake I aim for Utopia!

Recommend Reply



David Harris

4 days ago

I detect some deft use of the Thesaurus when they "invented" these job descriptions. :-).

2 Recommend Reply



Hugh McKenna

4 days ago

Didn't take long for them to get their snouts in the trough!!

12 Recommend Reply



Ayo O Odelusi

4 days ago

@Hugh McKenna And, sadly, this, coming in the wake of another reported similar appointment, is only the beginning.

8 Recommend Reply

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