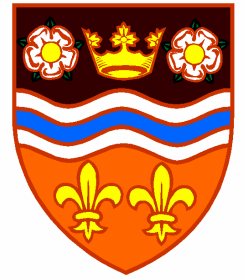


PRESS INFORMATION

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HUMBERSIDE
POLICE AUTHORITY

At the Sharp End

“I was looking for a new challenge,” explained Kevin Sharp, the new Chief Executive of HumberSide Police Authority.

He has certainly found his challenge. The Police Authority is the body that oversees local policing delivery, ensuring its efficiency and effectiveness.

As the spearhead of the organisation that holds the Chief Constable to account, this former Divisional Commander for HumberSide Police in North East Lincolnshire aims to use his acknowledged leadership skills to help the Police Authority drive further improvements in local policing.

“The improvements that we’ve witnessed over the last few years in police performance don’t just happen by chance,” he said. “They’ve been driven by a strong Police Authority, which repeatedly set very challenging targets for the Force - and they are the result of a lot of hard work and strategic planning.”

The Police Authority believes that this is a unique opportunity to have a Chief Executive with an exhaustive understanding of policing at all levels – and one who has come to the other side of the table to assist the Authority scrutinise force performance, set policing priorities and ensure that policing delivery meets the expectations of the public.

Alene Branton MBE, Chair of the Police Authority, said that the Authority felt that he was an outstanding candidate for the role. “It’s quite simple,” she said. “We’ve got the very best person for the job.”

George Krawiecs, the former Chief Executive of North East Lincolnshire Council, added: “Kevin Sharp has a distinguished record in policing, particularly in A Division in North East Lincolnshire, where he was instrumental in pushing forward the partnership working that now exists. He has complete integrity and will be a splendid asset to the Police Authority.

“Kevin thoroughly understands policing and will enable the Police Authority to give even more added value to the Community Safety agenda in HumberSide.”

After 32 years with Humberside Police, starting as a Police Cadet in 1976, Kevin Sharp's aim has always been to help keep the public of Humberside safe - and confident in the service that they receive.

"The aim hasn't changed," he explained. "But my job most certainly has. The biggest single challenge we face at the moment is public confidence. The significant improvements in policing performance prove that people are safer in the area policed by the Humberside Force, but the public's level of confidence in local policing doesn't mirror the facts."

"We need to understand why that is, so that we can do something about it!"

Looking to the future, there are some other significant challenges to be faced, where his managerial experience will undoubtedly bring dividends.

"I believe that my experience will help the Authority make sure that the Force keeps an appropriate balance between the number of police officers and police staff as the workforce modernisation programme develops. Our job is to ensure that the people of Humberside receive the very best possible police service within the resources available to us.

"To help us stretch those resources further, we need to explore collaboration opportunities with the other forces in the region," he added, "But we must also keep local policing just that – local – and responsive to the needs of local people.

"To do this, we need to understand what the public want from their police service; and I mean everyone, not just those with loud voices. The Authority is the link between communities and the police force. I think that we can do more to involve all our different communities in our decisions and to check that they are satisfied with the service they receive. If they're not, we can address those issues, but we can only do that if we know what the problems are.

"Then there are the Government's proposals for policing which, if they become law, will give the Police Authority even greater responsibilities. It's certainly an exciting time to be involved in policing, even if the challenges of complexity, uncertainty and needing to meet public expectations surround us every day".

One thing that Mr Sharp wants to see change rapidly is the visibility of the Authority itself.

"The Humberside Police Authority does make a real difference to policing in our area," he said. "For example, thanks to the financial support from the Authority, Neighbourhood Policing Teams have the buildings and resources to continue to being a highly visible success. The Authority also, and quite rightly, demanded improvements to the call handling facility – and these have been delivered.

“Credit where credit is due. While the Authority is supportive of the Force, it is not afraid to challenge it, to seek further efficiencies and to call for improvements – particularly in areas that really matter to local people.

“It’s important that people understand the Authority is a totally independent organisation. The word ‘police’ in our name does not mean that we are an extension of the Force. While operational policing is the responsibility of the Chief Constable, the Authority’s role is to make sure the Force continues to deliver an efficient and effective policing service through listening to what the public say and influencing those strategic decisions that enable better policing to take place.

“While my experience as a Police Officer, with the last seven years leading and directing the policing operation in North East Lincolnshire, will help me understand the issues in my new role, my boot is now certainly on the other foot!”

Ends

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