

**EXTRACT FROM HOME AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT**  
**POLICING FOR THE FUTURE**  
**PUBLISHED 25 OCTOBER 2018**

**Chief Constable recruitment**

- 208 Sir Thomas Winsor highlighted that there has been greater “churn” at chief constable level in recent years, and that fewer applicants are coming forward for open positions. He suggested that the introduction of PCCs might be having an impact. Following their evidence to us in June, the three policing leaders (Chief Constable Sara Thornton, Commissioner Dick and Lynne Owens) wrote to us regarding their concerns on this issue. They told us that over half of chief officers appointed in 2015 were the only candidate for the job, with a national average of just 2.21 applicants per vacancy. Interviews with retired chief constables, serving PCCs, HMICFRS and Home Office officials, along with a survey of serving assistant chiefs and deputy chiefs, identified a number of issues:

*The pressure and scrutiny from the IOPC [Independent Office for Police Conduct], HMICFRS and PCCs were cited by retired officers and were highlighted as greater disincentives for those considering applying for the top jobs within policing. While relationships between PCCs and chief officers vary enormously across the country there is a general concern that the policing protocol does not set out the responsibilities as clearly as it might which can cause difficulty. [ ... ] Officers who have not reached pensionable service are concerned about their vulnerability to dismissal using s.38 (Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011) and many are concerned about the isolation of the office.*

209. The survey of assistant chiefs and deputy chiefs found that the most significant considerations were the perceived reputation and challenges associated with the local PCC, the distance from home, and whether an internal applicant was applying for the role. Personal and financial considerations were also cited by many potential candidates, and their perception was that there was “little financial incentive for promotion”, with the complexity of pension and taxation rules causing “confusion”. Proposals being considered by the leadership of the service include support for the College of Policing’s new leadership hub, to assist with the appointment of chief officers; recommending that former police officers should not be allowed to stand as PCCs; and “an increased role for Police and Crime Panels in dismissals using s.38”.
210. We welcome the focus by the leaders of the police service on problems with chief officer recruitment, including the very low number of applicants for each role. We urge the Government to undertake a review of the relationship between chief officers and PCCs, to identify issues on either side. It should also eliminate bureaucratic obstacles to promotion, addressing any problems with pension and taxation rules, to ensure that capable candidates are not disincentivised from taking on the enormous responsibility of running a police force.