

Dear Keane

I refer to your telephone call to me on 24 September 2023.

As you will know, when you first intimated that you wished to speak to me I discouraged you from doing so and explained (in line with the content of this letter) that it would not be appropriate for us to have a discussion about this topic. Since you chose nonetheless to contact me, I extended you the courtesy of taking your call.

I would like to reiterate for the avoidance of doubt, my stance on this topic. It is as follows:

1. As the published statement dated 22 September 2023 makes clear, the Chief has announced that she'll retire on 31 March 2024, well in advance of that date. No vacancy arises for the time being, so no decision about succession arrangements is necessary or appropriate at this early stage.
2. My responsibilities are governed by detailed legal provisions. In any case, as I'm sure you will understand, as the holder of the public office of PFCC I can only discuss the topic of succession arrangements with those who advise me professionally. This includes my statutory officers but also national police inspection, oversight and governance bodies.
3. I do, though, of course understand why you might have felt it appropriate to contact me. The fact remains though, even if I could depart from the above approach and have a detailed substantive discussion with you about this (which I can't) if I was to discuss the topic with one prospective candidate for Mayor I would have to discuss it with all. I am sure you would agree that this would be neither practicable nor appropriate.
4. As the published statement on 22 September 2023 makes clear, the decision on appointment arrangements for a successor Chief Constable is for me as the holder of the office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. My decision will follow shortly, and an announcement of that decision will be made in due course.

On a separate note, which I do not propose to amplify in this letter (because it is written by me in my role as office holder) I propose to raise the appropriateness of your decision to approach me - and specifically and separately, the oppressive content and tenor of your remarks - via Conservative Party channels under separate cover.