

Home Affairs Committee

Pre-appointment hearing: His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities

First Report of Session 2026–27

HC 514

Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies.

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The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

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Appointment of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

1. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspects, monitors and reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of the police and fire and rescue services with the aim of encouraging improvement. Through its programmes of inspections, it assesses what is working well and what needs to improve the service provided to the public locally and nationally; and provides information to allow the public to compare the performance of their police force and fire and rescue service against others. HMICFRS also inspects law enforcement arrangements in British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, as well as non-territorial services, specialist agencies and international police forces. HM Inspectors are appointed by the Crown and are independent of government, the police and fire and rescue authorities.
2. The Inspectorate receives most of its funding from the Home Office, but also receives funding for inspections commissioned by others (such as the National Crime Agency). The vast majority of the Inspectorate's expenditure (83.6% in 2023/24) is on staffing costs.¹ The workforce of HMICFRS is comprised of inspectors, civil servants, seconded police officers and staff, and secondees from fire and rescue services. In 2023/24 HMICFRS had a total workforce of 274, the majority of whom were permanent staff, with the balance largely comprising secondees and fixed-term appointments.

¹ His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, [State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2024–25](#), 10 September 2025

The role of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities

3. His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities (HMCI) is personally responsible for ensuring the inspection of police forces and fire and rescue authorities, and reporting publicly on their efficiency and effectiveness. The HMCI's detailed duties are set out by the Home Office in the job description for the role, which is appended to this report.² The core duties are:
- **Complying with the statutory duties of the HM Chief Inspector**—including preparing an inspection programme, submitting annual reports, chairing disciplinary panels in respect of senior officers accused of misconduct or gross misconduct, and considering and investigating super-complaints under the Police Reform Act 2002;
 - **Leading HMICFRS as its most senior appointee**—including chairing the HMICFRS Strategic Board, leading organisational development, raising the profile and media presence of HMICFRS to improve the public's understanding of the organisation and what they do, and protecting the integrity and independence of HMICFRS; and
 - **Acting as the senior spokesperson and visible leader for HMICFRS**—including setting the strategic direction of the organisation, briefing Ministers, giving evidence to Parliamentary Select Committees, and collaborating with external stakeholders.

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is supported by four Inspectors, each with regional responsibility for police and fire and rescue services plus Senior Responsible Owner roles for national programmes.

The recruitment process

4. The recruitment process to find a new HMCI was launched on 9 March 2026, with a closing date for applications of 7 April 2026.³ The interview process identified two appointable candidates,⁴ and the government named its

2 Appendix 2

3 [Appointment details: His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities](#), gov.uk, accessed 9 July 2026

4 Appendix 1

preferred candidate for the role—Sir Andy Marsh QPM—on 7 July 2026.⁵ Further information about the recruitment process for this role is appended to this Report.⁶

5. Former HMCI Sir Andy Cooke QPM DL announced in October 2025 that it was his intention to step down in March 2026.⁷ As the recruitment process to appoint his successor was still underway when he left his role, to ensure continuity of leadership for HMICFRS, one of the current inspectors, Michelle Skeer OBE QPM, was appointed as ‘interim HMCI’ for a period of six months, while the permanent competition was undertaken.⁸ It is unclear why the Home Office did not launch the recruitment process to identify a new HMCI until the month Sir Andy was leaving his post. In future, the Home Office should time recruitment exercises for important public appointments such as this so as to avoid the need for interim appointments.

The person specification

6. The person specification for the HMCI recruitment is as follows:

Essential Skills and Experience

- Leadership: Successful track record of strategic leadership of a large, complex, delivery organisation.
- Experience of working in or with the most senior levels of government or public sector services.
- Judgment: Ability to make sound, clear judgments and to get to the heart of forces’ performance and outcomes for the public. The capability to carry out rigorous inspections informed by robust big data analytics and evidence-based decision-making is also key.
- Communication: A first-class communicator—orally and in writing—with the confidence, authority and interpersonal skills to secure and retain the confidence of a wide range of stakeholder groups.
- Strong relationship management skills, including the ability to build constructive relationships and effectively challenge and influence stakeholders, whilst maintaining impartiality and the independence of HMICFRS.
- Knowledge of policing and/or fire and rescue services.

5 Home Office, ‘[Sir Andy Marsh announced as preferred candidate for HM Chief Inspector](#)’, 7 July 2026

6 Appendix 1

7 HMICFRS, ‘[Sir Andy Cooke has confirmed he will leave office next year](#)’, 6 October 2025

8 Letter from the Minister of State for Policing and Crime to the Chair regarding notification of interim HMCI, [19 March 2026](#)

- Flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances in an environment of regular scrutiny by the public and others.

Desirable Skills and Experience

- Experience of media handling;
- Previous inspectorate or regulatory experience; and
- Previous Chair or Non-Executive Board Member experience.

The full job advertisement for this role is appended to this Report.⁹

Consultation on draft person specification

7. In advance of launching the recruitment for a new HMCI the Home Secretary consulted us on a draft role and person specification.¹⁰ Unlike previous recruitments, the person specification referred to integrity, but not impartiality. Given the political environment in which the Chief Inspector must operate, we recommended that the specification be amended to make it clear that candidates be able to demonstrate their impartiality.¹¹ We also recommended that—as responsibility for fire and rescue services was moved from the Home Office to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in April 2025—the Home Office should consult the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee on the proposed role and person specification for this recruitment. The Home Secretary agreed to include a reference to impartiality in the final role specification and the Housing, Communities Local Government Committee was consulted on the draft recruitment materials.¹²

The government's preferred candidate

8. The government's preferred candidate for the role of HMCI is Sir Andy Marsh QPM, who is currently Chief Executive Officer of the College of Policing. Sir Andy joined the police in 1987, rising to the rank of Chief Constable of both Avon and Somerset Police (2016–21) and Hampshire Police (2012–16). He has also held a number of national roles for policing bodies. Sir Andy's CV is published with this report.¹³ To help inform our pre-appointment

9 Appendix 2

10 Letter from the Home Secretary to the Chair regarding the recruitment of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, [13 February 2026](#)

11 Letter from the Chair to the Home Secretary regarding the recruitment of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, [24 February 2026](#)

12 Letter from the Home Secretary to the Chair regarding the recruitment of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, [10 March 2026](#)

13 Appendix 3

hearing, Sir Andy was asked to respond to a candidate questionnaire, with questions about his motivations for applying for the role, and priorities should he be appointed. His response to this questionnaire is published with this Report.¹⁴

Pre-appointment hearing

9. Since 2008 select committees have held pre-appointment hearings to scrutinise the government's preferred candidates for a variety of public appointments. They provide an opportunity for:
 - scrutiny of the quality of ministerial decision-making;
 - public reassurance, in addition to the processes of the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments, that those appointed to key public offices have been selected on merit;
 - public evidence of the independence of mind of the candidate; and
 - enhancing the appointee's legitimacy in undertaking his or her function, including providing the public with an insight into the candidate's views on policy issues related to the role.
10. The Liaison Committee has published guidance for committees about the conduct of pre-appointment hearings.¹⁵ While committee findings on a candidate's suitability are not binding on Ministers, it is expected that the appointing Minister will consider a committee's views before deciding whether to proceed with an appointment.
11. There are two ministerial appointments for which the government invites the Home Affairs Committee to undertake formal pre-appointment scrutiny.¹⁶ These are:
 - Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration;
 - HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary and HM Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services.

14 Appendix 4

15 Liaison Committee, Third Report of Session 2017–19, [Pre-Appointment Hearings](#), HC 2307, Annex

16 Cabinet Office, [Cabinet Office Guidance: pre-appointment scrutiny by House of Commons select committees](#), published November 2013, last updated 5 May 2026

Our hearing

12. Our questioning was designed to test Sir Andy’s competence and personal independence, as recommended in the Liaison Committee’s guidance on pre-appointment hearings.¹⁷ During the pre-appointment hearing we questioned Sir Andy about his independence and professional competence to execute the key responsibilities of the role. We also discussed key issues facing the police and fire and rescue services—including the government’s planned reforms of policing, and the granting of new powers to HMICFRS—which are likely to affect the Inspectorate’s work. The transcript of our hearing is published with this Report.¹⁸

Conclusion

13. **CONCLUSION**
We are satisfied that Sir Andy Marsh QPM has the professional competence and personal independence required for the post of HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Chief Fire & Rescue Inspector. We therefore support the proposed appointment by the Home Secretary and wish Sir Andy success in his new post.

17 Liaison Committee, Third Report of Session 2017–19, [Pre-Appointment Hearings](#), HC 2307, Annex, para 20

18 [Qq 1–60](#)

Appendix 1: Information provided by the Home Office about the preferred candidate and recruitment campaign

Information on the preferred candidate

Name of the preferred candidate	Sir Andy Marsh QPM
Their current CV (redacted for publication)	As attached (Appendix 3)
Declaration of relevant interests made by the candidate	Sir Andy Marsh QPM provided a full declarations statement at application. As discussed with the Advisory Assessment Panel, Sir Andy declared that his wife is the Chief Fire Officer for Northampton Fire and Rescue Service, which is a body HMICFRS inspect. At interview, the Panel noted it would be straightforward to deconflict HMICFRS decision making in respect of that service should Sir Andy be appointed, and he would formally recuse himself from any contact with or input into any inspection reports into the work of the Fire Service of which his wife is the Chief Fire Officer.
Declaration of relevant political activity made by the candidate required under paragraph 9.2 of the Governance Code on Public Appointments	None.

Proposed terms of appointment and remuneration (if any)	Five years, £226,289 per annum.
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Campaign information

Campaign Launch Date	9 March 2026
Campaign Closing Date	7 April 2026
Reason for any changes in timetable to that originally published	N/A
Advertising strategy	The role was advertised via the Public Appointments website and inclusivity related publications to attract a broad and diverse range of candidates. These included: Guardian Jobs online HO LinkedIn Public Chairs Forum and Association of Chief Executives Inclusivity channels Emails to potential candidates across a range of relevant sectors
Advisory Assessment Panel	Richard Clarke, Director General, Public Safety Group, Home Office (Panel Chair) Peter Lee (Director of Fire, Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government) Michael Fuller QPM (Senior Independent Panel Member) Olivia Grant OBE (second Independent Panel Member)
Number of applicants	23
Number of candidates invited to interview	6
Number of candidates found appointable	2

Diversity data

Table A: Gender

	Percent Male	Percent Female	Percent Identify another way	Percent Not declared
Applicants	57%	43%	N/A	N/A
Shortlist (applicants invited to interview)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table B: Ethnicity

	Percent White	Percent Ethnic minority	Percent Not declared
Applicants	65%	30%	5%
Shortlist (applicants invited to interview)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table C: Disability

	Disabled	Non-disabled	Not declared
Applicants	9%	91%	N/A
Shortlist (applicants invited to interview)	N/A	N/A	N/A

* In line with ONS guidelines, data redacted where less than 5 individuals are recorded in a category. Applicants could identify as Male, Female, 'Identify another way' or 'Not Declared'.

Appendix 2: Job advertisement

About the appointment

Introduction

About His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services inspects, monitors and reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of the police and fire and rescue services with the aim of encouraging improvement.

The Inspectorate also gives advice to the police and fire and rescue services, using experienced subject-matter experts who identify the best practice from which all forces and fire and rescue services can learn to improve their performance. The Inspectorate encourages operational excellence and a good deal for the public in terms of value for money.

In 2017, Parliament passed legislation establishing a new inspection regime for fire and rescue authorities. The existing inspectors of constabulary were appointed inspectors of fire and rescue authorities in addition to their police appointments. To reflect this new role, the Inspectorate's name changed to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

The Inspectorate provides authoritative information to allow the public to compare the performance of their police force and fire & rescue service against others. The evidence gathered is used to drive improvements in the services they provide to the public.

In preparing its reports, the Inspectorate asks the questions that citizens would ask, and publishes the answers in an accessible form, using its expertise to interpret the evidence and make recommendations for improvement.

Independence

HMICFRS is independent of government, the police and fire & rescue authorities:

- HM Inspectors are appointed by the Crown. They are not employees of the police service, fire & rescue authorities or the Government.

- In the dual role of HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary and HM Chief Fire & Rescue Inspector for England, the Chief Inspector reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of police services in England and Wales, and on the efficiency and effectiveness of fire & rescue authorities in England.
- HM Inspectors may be called to give evidence before committees of Parliament and must also account for their actions to the public through the media. As is the case with all public bodies, HM Inspectors are also susceptible to judicial review.
- Although HMICFRS's budget is set by the Government, and the inspection programmes require Secretary of State approval, no Minister, chief constable, police and crime commissioner, mayor or fire and rescue authority can interfere with the contents of an HMICFRS report or the judgment of HM Inspectors.

Police inspections

HMICFRS' annual inspection programme for police forces in England and Wales is subject to the approval of the Home Secretary under the Police Act 1996.

The Home Secretary may also require HMICFRS to carry out further inspections of police forces, beyond the terms of the annual inspection programme. Police and Crime Commissioners may also commission HMICFRS to undertake inspections in their force areas, although HMICFRS is not required to accept any such commission.

HMICFRS may also carry out inspections of police forces on its own initiative if it considers that the performance or circumstances of a force merit it.

In devising its policing inspection programme for the Home Secretary's approval, HMICFRS considers the risks to the public, service quality, public concerns, the operating environment, the effect which inspection may have on a force and the benefits to the public of improvements which may follow inspection.

Fire and rescue authority inspections

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Inspectorate to inspect and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England. This is principally focused on the fire and rescue services that those authorities oversee.

The programme is subject to the approval of the Secretary of State at Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), who may also require HMICFRS, at any time, to carry out further inspections of any or all fire and rescue authorities in England.

Powers

HMICFRS is an inspectorate, not a regulator. Regulators have powers of intervention, direction and enforcement. Inspectorates have powers to secure information, but no powers to give orders for change. Recommendations are not orders. However, the government has committed to providing HMCI with additional powers of intervention in the case of serious failings of a police force that are not being adequately addressed.

It is for chief constables (whose operational independence is a cornerstone of British policing), police and crime commissioners and fire and rescue authorities (both of whom have powers to set local priorities and budgets) to take action in response to HMICFRS's recommendations.

In exceptional circumstances, the Home Secretary (for policing) and the Secretary of State for MHCLG (for fire and rescue) may intervene. For fire, these powers are set out in Section 23 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and are exercised in accordance with the Intervention Protocol, which makes clear that intervention should only be used as a last resort typically where there is serious failure or risk to public safety, and after local improvement efforts have been exhausted.

Police and crime commissioners are required to publish their comments on each HMICFRS report within 56 days of its publication and must include an explanation of the steps to be taken in response to each HMICFRS recommendation or an explanation of why no action has been or is to be taken in that respect. Similarly, the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England require fire and rescue authorities to give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS and—if needed—prepare, update and regularly publish an action plan detailing how the recommendations are being actioned.

For more information on the work of the Inspectorate please visit the [HMICFRS website](#).

Role description

Job Title: HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCIC), HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Authorities in England (CIFRAE)

Commitment: Full time public appointment.

Remuneration: £226,289 per annum

Appointment: This is a fixed term appointment for a period of up to five years.

Location: Your place of work will be defined as England and Wales; the head office of the Inspectorate is in Birmingham, with offices in London, Salford and Leeds.

Reporting to: HMCI is a principal independent advisor to the Home Secretary, and will advise the Secretary of State for MHCLG on FRS. Some Ministerial responsibilities in respect of HMICFRS may be delegated to Permanent Secretaries (e.g. performance management)

Purpose:

HM Chief Inspector (HMCI) is a role combining two separate Crown Appointments:

- His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary; and
- His Majesty's Chief Fire and Rescue Inspector for England.

Their purpose is to ensure the inspection of police forces and fire & rescue authorities, and report publicly on their efficiency and effectiveness.

This exciting opportunity comes at a crucial moment in policing history as the Government has set out its ambitious agenda for Police Reform through its 2026 White Paper which includes a new model for policing to ensure policing in this country is fit for the modern world. The new HMCI will lead the response from HMICRS, playing a pivotal role in ensuring local police forces are equipped to make their local communities safer.

Key responsibilities of the HMCI:

HMCI is appointed under the Police Act 1996 and the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004. The primary duties of the role include:

- Complying with the statutory duties of the HM Chief Inspector:
 - Prepare, and submit to the relevant Secretary of State, an inspection programme and framework to facilitate the inspection of the efficiency and effectiveness of all police forces in England and Wales, all fire and rescue authorities in England, other bodies set out in legislation, and broader or thematic inspections;
 - Submit to the relevant Secretary of State annual reports on the carrying out of inspections and lay the reports in Parliament;
 - Chair disciplinary panels in respect of senior officers accused of misconduct or gross misconduct, or nominating another HMI to do so;
 - Discharge functions as the principal body considering and investigating super-complaints under the Police Reform Act 2002;

- Discharge functions in respect of the compulsory retirement or removal of chief constables by local policing bodies, as required by section 38, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011;
- Carry out other duties for the purpose of furthering efficiency and effectiveness of police forces and fire and rescue authorities as directed by the Secretary of State; and
- Participating in other duties of an HM Inspector.
- Leading HMICFRS as its most senior appointee:
 - Lead HMICFRS in line with the Seven Principles of public life and the principles set out in the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies 2019;
 - Chairing the HMICFRS Strategic Board, the collective decision-making mechanism for the leadership of the Inspectorate;
 - Working in tandem with the Chief Operating Officer (COO) to oversee organisational governance, ensuring the Inspectorate is operating effectively, demonstrates best practice and with appropriate transparency;
 - Alongside the COO, lead HMICFRS organisational development;
 - Supporting the COO, who leads the day to day running of the organisation including the delegated finances, operational risks and overseeing HMICFRS's operational programme of inspections;
 - Lead HMICFRS in its response to Police Reform, ensuring local police forces are equipped to make their local communities safer.
 - Implementing a future focussed approach to the organisation's work—identifying key trends and future likely risks to policing and fire and rescue services;
 - Undertaking cross-cutting work with the Criminal Justice Joint Inspection programme, to effect strategic and substantive change across the criminal justice landscape;
 - Raising the profile and media presence of HMICFRS to improve the public's understanding of the organisation and what they do;
 - Protecting the integrity and independence of HMICFRS, championing the Inspectorate with government (central and local), the forces and authorities being inspected, Parliament and others;
 - Sitting as a member of the National Policing Board;

- Allocating to individual HMIs their regional responsibilities and the national and thematic inspections for which they will be responsible;
- Undertaking the annual performance appraisals of the other Crown-appointed HM Inspectors and supporting their professional development; and
- Supporting the COO in their own appraisal and professional development.
- Working with the relevant Government Departments to improve the performance of police forces and fire and rescue services.
- Acting as the senior spokesperson and visible leader for HMICFRS:
 - Setting the strategic direction of the organisation, overseeing the publication of inspection reports and representing these reports publicly and in the media as required;
 - Being a credible independent voice, briefing Ministers, giving evidence to Parliamentary Select Committees and replying to policy and Parliamentary consultations as appropriate, drawing on evidence gathered during HMICFRS inspections;
 - Collaborating with external stakeholders, maintaining professional relationships with sector stakeholders including the National Police Chiefs Council, National Fire Chiefs Council, Independent Office for Police Conduct, College of Policing and other inspectorates and regulators.

Person specification

Essential criteria

It is essential that you provide in your supporting statement evidence and proven examples against each of the selection criteria in the person specification, in so far as you are able. These responses will be further developed and explored with those candidates invited for interview.

Essential Skills and Experience

- Leadership: Successful track record of strategic leadership of a large, complex, delivery organisation.
- Experience of working in or with the most senior levels of government or public sector services.

- Judgment: Ability to make sound, clear judgments and to get to the heart of forces' performance and outcomes for the public. The capability to carry out rigorous inspections informed by robust big data analytics and evidence-based decision-making is also key.
- Communication: A first-class communicator—orally and in writing—with the confidence, authority and interpersonal skills to secure and retain the confidence of a wide range of stakeholder groups.
- Strong relationship management skills, including the ability to build constructive relationships and effectively challenge and influence stakeholders, whilst maintaining impartiality and the independence of HMICFRS.
- Knowledge of policing and/or fire and rescue services.
- Flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances in an environment of regular scrutiny by the public and others.

Desirable Skills and Experience

- Experience of media handling;
- Previous inspectorate or regulatory experience; and
- Previous Chair or Non-Executive Board Member experience.

Appendix 3: Curriculum vitae for Sir Andy Marsh QPM

2021 to present	Chief Constable, Chief Executive, College of Policing	Responsible for reforming the CoP following a Fundamental Review of its work. Led the College's mission to strengthen standards, leadership and professionalism across policing. Drove improvement to enable CoP to host for NCVPP, AI Centre, Oscar Kilo and Police Productivity Centre. Delivered system-wide performance improvements with HMICFRS. Proposed and hosts Review of Police Leadership. Have been at the forefront of Police Reform work, comprehensively using College levers and influence to drive reform. Leading a behavioural science approach tackling poor culture in pilot across multiple forces.
2016–2021	Chief Constable, Avon and Somerset Police	Pioneered data integration to create a suite of AI, and robotic tools that touched every corner of the force which transformed the service to become one of the highest performing, best value forces in E & W. Demonstrated outstanding policing and communication skills to respond to a number of globally reported incidents such as the Bristol riots (2021) and the toppling of the Colston statue (2020). Line managed Somerset Fire Chief in an 18-month project to deliver Home Office sponsored data-integration to improve public services and performance.

2012–2016	Chief Constable, Hampshire Police	Led structural modernisation and regional collaboration creating joint IT, Operations and Call Handline capability with Thames Valley Police. Founded a multi sector back-office capability, which improved efficiency, and service delivery supporting over 100K staff and officers. Fully digitally mobilised the workforce and pioneered use of BWV globally. These transformations positioned the force as high performing/low cost. Initiated 'Op Hampshire' to tackle assaults on officers and staff. Adopted nationally and the catalyst for the OK Wellbeing service.
2010–2012	Deputy Chief Constable, Hampshire Police	Improved force performance of a previously mid to lower table force achieving top quartile status across the spectrum of performance measures.
2009–2010	Assistant Chief Constable Avon and Somerset Police	Responsible for crime and operations as well as leadership of the Regional CT capability. Initiated and delivered the first SW Regional Crime Unit. Created tri-force major crime investigation team which endures today across ASC, Glos and Wilts.
2007–2009	Assistant Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police	Sole ACC for all operational matters in Wiltshire. Led performance improvement moving the force out of special measures oversight by the Home Office Standards Unit.
2006–2007	T/ACC Avon and Somerset	Responsible for crime and specialist operations.
2004–2006	Chief Superintendent, Somerset East BCU	Led full spectrum of police resources to transform both local policing and work to tackle rural serious and organised crime.
2002–2004	Chief Superintendent, South Bristol BCU	Took command of a City BCU following dismissal of predecessor for misconduct. Transformed both performance as well as local trust and confidence.
2001–2002	Head of Anti-Corruption, Avon and Somerset Police	Established only the second anti-corruption unit outside of the Metropolitan Police. Piloted complaints recording and appeal processes on behalf of Sir Alistair Graham on transition of the Police Complaints Authority to the IPCC.

1999–2000	Chief Inspector, Somerset East	Uniform Ops.
1998–1999	Staff Officer to Chief Constable	Staff officer to CC Steve Pilkington.
1987–1988	Detective and uniform roles at each rank	Variety of roles including responsibility for drafting Force murder investigation manual.

Regional and National Responsibilities

2015–2021	NPCC Lead: International Coordination	Responsible for coordinating international policing. Initiated and launched the Joint International Policing Hub supported by Sir Brandon Lewis. Engaged cross government to meet HMG Global Britain Strategy. Oversaw and supported British Officer deployment globally including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Coordinated and led significant UK deployments to respond to Hurricane Irma in 2017
2012–2018	NPCC lead: BWV	Responsible for leading NPCC policy guiding roll out of cameras and their use across E & W in so doing brokered agreement with IOPC and CPS. Advised globally on technical, operational and ethical use of BWV including to the Obama Administration when the US rolled out 50K cameras to US policing in 2014.
2009–2016	ACPO/ NPCC lead: Firearms and Explosives Licensing	As national lead took substantial steps to substantially improve public safety. Established a 24/7/365 continuous risk management framework as opposed to managing risk on five-year renewal cycle. Secured the first fee increase since 2001. Negotiated an agreement with the NHS and BMA to create a national medical marker alert system. Introduced national consistency through new APP and training.
2011	Riots	Deployed to ACPO HQ and oversaw resourcing of response to summer riots which at its peak saw up to 15k officers deployed daily nationally. Represented ACPO at COBRA. This work was the catalyst and forerunner of NPoCC.

2015–2021	NPCC Lead: International Coordination	Responsible for coordinating international policing. Initiated and launched the Joint International Policing Hub supported by Sir Brandon Lewis. Engaged cross government to meet HMG Global Britain Strategy. Oversaw and supported British Officer deployment globally including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Coordinated and led significant Uk deployments to respond to Hurricane Irma in 2017
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Relevant Professional Courses and Qualifications

Strategic Command Course 2006	Essential gateway qualification for Chief Officer roles. Secured three outstanding grades
Strategic Firearms Commander	Accreditation for armed policing
Strategic Public Order Commander	Accreditation for public order operations. Oversaw the transformation of the policing of Glastonbury Festival to make it the biggest and safety open air festival in Europe
CT Firearms Commander	Graduate of the first cohort of CT firearms commanders
Scimitar–Management of Linked and Serious Crime	Officer in overall charge of cross border crime

External Roles

University of Chicago Crime Data Lab, Police Leadership Academy	Associate advisor for programme delivering police leadership training to 15 major US forces
Non-Executive Director Southwest Ambulance 2021–2023	NED with specific focus on leadership development and data driven performance

Appendix 4: Candidate questionnaire

Motivation

1. What motivated you to apply for this role, and what specific experiences would you bring to it?

My motivation is to use the influence and role of HMICFRS to improve both fire and policing services through stronger performance and greater trust. As a Chief Constable since 2012, I have led organisations of national scale through transformation and reform. At the College of Policing (CoP), I inherited an organisation with low confidence and ambiguous purpose. Following completion of a Fundamental Review, through decisive yet inclusive leadership, I re-established the College transforming it to be a credible, outward-facing body delivering with a mission of, 'Leadership, Standards and Performance', laser focussed on improved policing for the public.

As Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Police (ASP), I stabilised the force after becoming the sixth Chief / T/Chief in four turbulent years punctuated by internal and external critical incidents. Leading 6,000 staff and officers through digital and ethical reform, HMICFRS graded the force as step changing from 'requiring improvement' to 'good and outstanding' across all areas in their 2020 assessment. This was significantly enabled by a harnessing of data unrivalled in British policing enabling the use of both robotics and AI.

As Chief Constable of Hampshire Constabulary (HC), I overhauled the structure and performance of the force leading it to become the fourth lowest cost per head of population yet consistently top quartile performing in all domains. I digitally mobilised the workforce and pioneered the use of Body Worn Cameras as both the national lead but also as the chief of the first large force globally to personally issue BWV.

2. How were you recruited? Were you encouraged to apply, and if so, by whom?

I saw the advertisement on the Public Appointments website having it drawn to my attention by the former Chief Inspector Sir Andy Cooke.

3. If appointed are there specific areas within your new responsibilities where you will need to acquire new skills or knowledge? If so, how will you go about this?

As the longest service Chief Constable in the UK, and head of the standard setting body I possess a deep operational and strategic knowledge of policing, as well as emergency service strengths and systemic challenges. However, I do not have direct experience or working within Fire and Rescue so will need to acquire new skills and knowledge of this sector. I will go about this by visiting Fire and Rescue Officers and Staff, engaging with governance leads and at every level across England and Wales.

Personal Background

4. Do you currently or potentially have any business, financial or other non-pecuniary interests or commitments, that might give rise to the perception of a conflict of interest if you are appointed? How do you intend to resolve any potential conflicts of interests if you are appointed?

No business financial or other interests. However, my wife, Nikki Watson is currently the Chief Fire Officer in Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service. If appointed I will make a written commitment not to be personally involved in any inspection judgement of the Fire and Rescue Service she leads.

5. If appointed what professional or voluntary work commitments will you continue to undertake, or do you intend to take on, alongside your new role? What is the time commitment for any professional or voluntary work commitments you will continue to undertake, and how will you reconcile these commitments with your new role?

I propose to focus entirely upon this role.

6. Have you ever held any post or undertaken any activity that might cast doubt on your political impartiality? If so, how will you demonstrate your political impartiality in the role if appointed?

As a police officer I have not undertaken such a role or post and I am politically impartial.

7. Do you intend to serve your full term of office? Would you seek reappointment?

I intend to serve the full term of office and am open minded to reappointment.

The role

8. If appointed what will be your main priorities on taking up the role?

If appointed as HMCI, I would put data and evidence at the heart of HMICFRS's purpose ensuring independence, rigorous and fair inspection as well as clear communication to the public. I would focus inspection on the issues that matter most to communities which includes strengthening public confidence by driving lasting improvement to performance and standards through transparent, evidence-led leadership.

9. What criteria should the Committee use to judge your performance over your term of office?

My performance should be judged by the quality and insight of our Inspection reports and the way in which they are communicated. They should play a role in improving services to the public as well as building legitimacy through their fair, transparent and objective factful content. Under police reform particularly the Inspectorate has a direct role to play supporting the improvement of police performance and services.

10. How will you protect and enhance your personal independence and the institutional independence of HMICFRS from the Government?

I will protect and enhance the independence of the role and the institution by the way in which I conduct myself and the way in which I will expect those I work alongside to conduct themselves. Through the highest of standards, independent by both word and action. Our reports will carry authority through their quality, thoroughness of analysis and rationality of conclusions. Our processes must be readily understood and our decisions both consistent and fair.

11. What is your view of the public profile and reputation of HMICFRS?

HMICFRS is a respected and established independent watchdog. Its reports are widely viewed as rigorous and thorough, making it a trusted voice whenever failings are identified.

12. What risks do you think HMICFRS will face over your term of office? How do you intend to manage them?

Both Police and Fire sectors are in the process of working through much needed reform to their services and this will substantially change the landscape HMICFRS works within. Local government reform will also bring changes to the governance both sectors are scrutinised and held to account within. Taking this into account HMICFRS will need to adapt to inspect effectively and meaningfully for the public.

The operational risks and context within which both Fire and Rescue and Policing operates continues to change dramatically placing additional demands and new burdens upon both. In a changing and uncertain world, emergency services need to be ready to respond to this as well as dealing with any threats to resilience. I will assist policing, fire and rescue respond to these changes and challenges by ensuring that HMICFRS are relevant, independent and influential.

Formal minutes

Tuesday 14 July 2026

Members present

Dame Karen Bradley, in the Chair

Lewis Atkinson

Paul Kohler

Robbie Moore

Chris Murray

Peter Prinsley

Bell Ribeiro-Addy

Appointment of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities

Draft report (*Appointment of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 13 read and agreed to.

Appendices agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

Adjournment

Adjourned till Tuesday 1 September 2026

Witness

The following witness gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 14 July 2026

Sir Andy Marsh QPM, Government's preferred candidate for the role of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Authorities

[Q1-60](#)

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Session 2026–27

Number	Title	Reference
1st Special	Combatting new forms of extremism: Government Response	HC 311

Session 2024–26

Number	Title	Reference
8th	Mandatory to manageable: the government's plans for digital ID	HC 986
7th	Combatting new forms of extremism	HC 903
6th	Earned Settlement: Examining the Government's proposed reforms	HC 1409
5th	Maccabi Tel Aviv fan ban	HC 1553
4th	The Home Office's management of asylum accommodation	HC 580
3rd	Tackling violence against women and girls: funding	HC 741
2nd	Police response to the 2024 summer disorder	HC 381
1st	Appointment of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration	HC 713
4th Special	Maccabi Tel Aviv fan ban: Government Response	HC 1859
3rd Special	The Home Office's management of asylum accommodation: Government Response	HC 1642

Number	Title	Reference
2nd Special	Tackling violence against women and girls: Funding: Government Response	HC 1352
1st Special	Police response to the 2024 summer disorder: Government Response	HC 1099