



Further stability for Devon & Cornwall Police as Chief Constable to stay until 2027



The interim Chief Constable of Devon & Cornwall Police has agreed with Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez to stay on in the top job for another 16 months.

Chief Constable James Vaughan QPM was appointed in December 2024 following the suspension of the then Acting Chief Constable Jim Colwell.

And now, following the recent retirement of substantive Chief Constable Will Kerr, the Commissioner has extended Mr Vaughan's contract to January 2027.

Devon & Cornwall Police was last week removed from the Engage stage of monitoring – also known as special measures – by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

Commissioner Hernandez said the force and the residents of Devon, Cornwall and the

Isles of Scilly would now benefit from a much-needed period of stability, and she was looking forward to seeing further improvements under Mr Vaughan's leadership.

She said: "I have been really pleased to see how Chief Constable Vaughan has tackled head-on several legacy issues from the period of unstable leadership that preceded his appointment.

"In particular, I have welcomed his decision to reduce the number of senior ranks to enable more officers to be out in the community where council taxpayers can really feel the benefit and get better value for their money.

"It's so important that Mr Vaughan and I take a unified approach in delivering my Police and Crime Plan priorities. I have been delighted to work closely with him and stand side by side at events including my recent VAWG Disruptive Ideas workshop that aims to tackle violence against women and girls, and Councillor Advocate seminar on the serious violence work taking place across the peninsula.

"I look forward to the coming 16 months which I am confident will see more good work and continued improvement under Mr Vaughan's experienced leadership."

Chief Constable James Vaughan said: "It is a personal privilege to be asked by the Commissioner to stay on in my role. I have really enjoyed leading this fantastic organisation for the last eight months and seeing the great work officers, staff and volunteers do every day to keep our communities safe.

"Despite some challenging times we have made considerable progress over the last few years and that is testament to the hard work of everyone in the Force. Working closely with the PCC and our partners I am confident that we will continue to improve the service we offer across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly."

Mr Colwell has returned to his substantive role as Deputy Chief Constable and has resumed his duties.

The process to recruit a substantive Chief Constable is due to begin in the summer of 2026. You can find out more about this here <https://devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/clarification-over-how-police-crime-commissioners-appoint-chief-constables>