

Surrey PCC candidate: Paul Kennedy - Liberal Democrat Party

20 April 2024

I came a strong 2nd in the last PCC elections with over 112,000 votes across Surrey; and with Epsom & Ewell constituency now a Liberal Democrat target for the general election, I've already spoken to many of you with our inspirational (ex-military police) parliamentary candidate Helen Maguire.

You've told us you want action on antisocial behaviour, drugs, shoplifting, burglaries and vehicle crime. You're fed up with paying the highest council tax in the country for policing yet feeling less safe. You're appalled our Conservative PCC has expanded their own budget by 70%, while forcing Surrey Police to cut staff - with 6 of the 7 common performance assessments in the latest PEEL inspection having deteriorated since 2021.

Personally, I'd scrap PCCs tomorrow. But we're stuck with them for now, and whereas the current PCC previously worked for Conservative MPs, I'm professionally qualified for the job. I'm a former barrister, accountant and actuary with experience in private and public sectors; for 10 years I've overseen public interest bodies on a non-political basis; I'm a local councillor and serve on Surrey's police and crime panel.

Here's what I'd do:

- scrap the deputy PCC role, cut the PCC's bloated office budget and bring back community policing instead;
- serve one 4-year term only, to focus on improving police performance, not campaigning for re-election. I'd set Surrey Police challenging targets, and give you fair and balanced reports, not a list of my own "achievements";
- drive accountability down to local level. I'd tell Surrey Police to work with local communities, not just me.

We've a historic opportunity in Surrey to replace the Conservatives' failed top-down model of self-serving PCCs - with a professional, ambitious, community-based approach to policing. But only I can do that. Voting for anyone else just helps the Conservatives.

Paul Kennedy.