

REPORT OF POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

The latest meeting of the Police and Crime Panel for Avon and Somerset Constabulary took place, face-to-face on Tuesday 28 June. I've included a link to a BBC local news report on the meeting (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-61974749>) as it illustrates beautifully, the relationship the Panel has with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Mark Shelford, and his relationship with Avon and Somerset Constabulary. (And the understandable confusion some members of the public may have, as to the borders between the interlocking roles each of the above three, plays!)

Putting it briefly a group of around 20 people, called 'The Lloyds Bank Complainants', who attended the Panel meeting, were correctly told their issue fell outside the remit of the Panel, and were then referred directly to Mark Shelford, who was present; he then spoke to them, at length, later that day.

It's not often that the Panel is able to do its job and have such an immediate effect!

The other main item of non-routine Panel business, was the receipt of an excellent and innovative report on 'Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System'. This was presented by the Independent Chair of the review group into Disproportionality: Desmond Brown.

This report is available via the OPCC website and makes for fascinating reading.

Desmond Brown praised the current and previous Commissioners for their support and encouragement; and also Avon and Somerset Constabulary for their welcoming and supportive attitude. He furthermore commented favourably on the data driven and data interrogating operational style of Avon and Somerset, in contrast with...not so much of that in some neighbouring forces.

Council – 04 July 2022

Which brings us to a general comment on the current state of the governance of policing in Avon and Somerset. The Commissioner, is, in my opinion, taking his local and national commitments very seriously: he is the national lead Commissioner for Fraud and Cybercrime; and his discomfiture at the Home Office recently seeking to discount Fraud and Cybercrime completely, from the statistical record, was almost palpable.

Having said that, in comparison with other neighbouring constabularies (Gloucestershire and Wiltshire are in so called, 'Special Measures') Avon and Somerset are rated 'Good', overall, with an 'Outstanding' for Efficiency, in the latest national league tables.

So, in many ways the Commissioner has had the privilege of taking over the governance of what was always a 'going concern'!

Richard Westwood