**Notes of public presentation from Mark Shelford (MS)– Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner**

**Held on Monday 14th November 2022 in Holford & District Village Hall at 19:00**

MS introduced himself and gave a brief summary of his past working life that led to him obtaining this post.

He is the single point of Democratic Policing & Crime. The front-end to Criminal Justice, Courts, Jail and Probation.

He has written a legal document – A Policing Plan that the police have to deliver. Once written, he had to find the funding to deliver it. 50% comes from the Government and 50% from the precept (an element of the Council Tax).

He has a legal duty to hire, scrutinise and then fire the Chief Constable.

He also has to provide a contribution to the national police needs, for instance Avon and Somerset police provided some of the police presence required when the late Queen Elizabeth was lying in state this year.

The Policing Plan contains 4 quadrants:

1. Prevent and fight crime
2. Engage & support partner organisations
3. Leading the police to be effective
4. Increasing confidence in the police and criminal justice system.

There are several worries (MS called them worry beads):

1. Drugs – they are becoming more dangerous, and the Government have a 3 phase strategy
   1. Education
   2. World class treatment (at present jails just stabilise, they do not treat)
   3. Hard enforcement.
2. Domestic Abuse – there were 22.5k reported incidents of violence 2021 in Avon & Somerset. Predominately male abusing female. In general a female only reports the abuse after 50 incidents.
3. The effect of the Ukraine war on the rural environment. An element of the issue is that the supply of agricultural equipment and the spare parts has dramatically reduce. This has resulted in the prices increasing on the black market and they are expecting a bow wave is on its way.

The good news – there will be 450 new officers.

999 response is the best in the UK which now means that we have to cover other areas such as the MET (one day a week) and other surrounding forces on another day a week. But 101 is struggling under the volume.

**If you need to report a non-emergency, please use the online reporting facility.**

**Q –** During the last big recession, the army were working with the police on the Quantocks – is there a plan to avoid that during the coming recession?

**A -** We are currently working with the Rangers, Special Constables and the Devon and Cornwall forces. It is a struggle due to lack of reporting. It may not include working with the army.

A feature of a recession is illegal money lending – if we become aware of it locally, please report it.

**Q –** The speed of traffic through the village on the A39 is an issue. We have an active Speed watch group but we are trying to arrange for police officers to help by stopping and issuing fines. We are also trying to obtain a body cam to be used by the speed watch team together with authorisation to have an NPR (number plate recognition) SID (speed indication device).

**A –** MS supports the speed watch initiative, however, there are not enough police officers to help with stopping the vehicle and issuing a fine. For finance towards the cost of providing equipment, please look at the ‘Road safety Fund’.

**Q -** We get a text about the successes of rural crimes, would it be possible to add the results of the speed watch as well?

**A –** Good news stories are put out by the rural affairs team on Facebook and Twitter.

The following are issues raised by the speedwatch teams

The Stogursey speedwatch enforcement team are having trouble getting the police to engage in a particular site which is important. Also the speedwatch team do not receive any feedback on whether they are doing it correctly or even reporting the number plates correctly.

Holford and Kilve have had 2 fatal accidents in the last year and it appears that there is a lack of co-ordination between the police teams and the Council.

**Q –** Stag hunting, what are the rules?

**A –** Katie Mann (KM) explained that it was too big a question, we need to narrow it down such as issues with quad bikes or vehicles on the land.

KM explained the situation in respect to the Rural and Wildlife Unit and local PCSO. There are 29 hunts in Avon and Somerset and only 4 polic(KM) e officers. In order to tackle the issues, KS is part of a national working group which has produced a letter of engagement to help the hunts understand the behaviours and offences that they may be committing unknowingly.

KM asserted that all illegal hunting of any type will not be tolerated – however, it needs to be reported.

Zack Howe (ZH) confirmed that they do have the current map detailing the areas that the hunt are allowed to access in the Quantock Hills.

KM will advise the call handlers of the current issues and ensure that the map is accessible.

Quantock Staghounds have produced a leaflet as they believe that they stay within the law.

Quantock Staghounds confirmed that some landowners had not updated their permission to allow the hunt on their land. This is being addressed and the map will be updated.

**Q -** Holford Village is bisected by the A39 and there is an issue of excessive speed here which makes it difficult for people to cross the road safely. Is there any support in our discussions with Highways for measures to reduce the speed?

**A -** MS confirmed that he will support. MS suggested that it may be worth inviting the cabinet minister for Highways to visit. **Action 141122: KH to take forward.**

MS explained that there is a councillor crime forum held every 8 months.