

## **CLEVELAND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 9 NOVEMBER 2021 ITEM 5 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**The following public question has been submitted by Cllr Louise Baldock for response:-**

“The Cleveland Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2020/2021 contains a membership list and photos of existing members on page 6. I note there are 14 members, including 2 independent appointments. Of these 14, only one is a woman.

Women make up more than 50% of the population of Cleveland; they also suffer from some crimes in much greater numbers than men do, so their voices in terms of some of the objectives of the PC is particularly important. There is for instance currently a nationwide focus on violence against women, particularly since the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer; a big rise in domestic violence, accelerated by the corona virus pandemic; and a woeful conviction rate for rape. Women are also disproportionately represented in the numbers convicted for shop-lifting where poverty is a key driver.

Whilst the existing panel members are undoubtedly capable of undertaking the work, this lack of diversity will mean that certain experiences and voices are largely missing from the panel during their scrutiny work.

(I note there would be similar arguments for ethnicity representation that accurately reflected Cleveland's population that someone from those communities could make better than me. While disability and sexuality are often hidden so the panel may be much more representative for those than one could see by looking at the photographs in the report. I confine myself to the point about gender).

What steps does the panel intend to undertake to ensure that future panels are more representative of the population they serve? Has the panel considered introducing gender balanced nominations from local authorities? Or using the opportunity to appoint independents to aim for better diversity? Or co-opting individuals who occupy relevant roles in relevant organisations? In the meantime, how is the panel undertaking training and awareness-raising to ensure that existing members are best able to consider women's experience and concerns in the round?”