

21/12/2022  
MS/CON-033585/BM

Via email: [Darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:Darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk)

Dear Darren,

**PCC Reply – Ref 33585 – Covert surveillance at Stoke Lodge**

Thank you for your email dated the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and for copying me in on the attached letter sent from yourself to Ms Butler the Headmistress of Cotham School. In your letter you write to Ms Butler raising your concerns that CCTV has been installed at Cotham School without any public notice and this has caused concern amongst your constituents who believe they are being secretly filmed. You proceed to write that Ms Butler stated that she was advised by Avon and Somerset Police to install these covert cameras. You have asked me to establish what Avon and Somerset Constabulary advised Ms Butler to do, so that you can communicate this to your constituents.

Firstly apologies for my delayed response. I do concede that whilst there have been a lot of correspondence back and forth between my office and the Police regarding this matter, a letter has not been drafted conveying this information to yourself as promised. I am grateful for your patience and I will seek to address your question here.

Whilst this is an operational matter and therefore falls under the remit of the Chief Constable, I will always seek to query or question the actions of Avon & Somerset Police on behalf of our communities where appropriate and I have followed up this matter and received an update from Deputy Chief Constable Nikki Watson.

As part of her enquiries DCC Watson has liaised with the Neighbourhood Police Team Inspector and Beat Manager for the area.

DCC Watson has advised me that in response to the school being a repeated victim of crime, the police gave crime prevention advice and advised the school how CCTV might be used as part of a problem-solving plan, i.e. in a way that is overt and accompanied by appropriate signage. The police also pointed out that as a public body the school were responsible for their own due diligence and complying with legal requirements. The erection of a fence around the school parameter as well as the use of CCTV has angered many in the community, however, the police have remained impartial throughout and continue to try to keep the peace.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Mark



**AVON &  
SOMERSET**  
POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER

2254

**Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner**