

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 24 April 2017

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 2 and 3 on Monday 24 April 2017 at 7.00 pm

Present: Dr D James (Chairman), Mr M Payne, Mrs A Cray, Mr T Walker, Mrs E Cross, Mr C Ellis, Mr A Fear, Mrs S Porter, Mr R Hermans, Mr P Cashmore, Miss N Hill, Mr S D'Arrigo, Mrs T Farwell

Also Present: Mr C Pipe, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Mr A Harrold, Director of Operations, OPCC
Mr T Smith, Interim Governance and Contact Manager, OPCC
Mrs Y Fenwick, OPCC
Miss A Pyke, Governance Officer, OPCC
Mr K Edwards, Custody Support Officer
Chief Inspector G Shimmons
Mrs J Steadman, Head of Criminal Justice

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mr M Underhill, Ms J Fraser, Mrs B White, Mrs I Why, Ms N Reynolds, Mrs J Bradbury and ACC M Cooper.
- 1.2 Introductions were made by Miss A Pyke, Governance Officer, and Mr T Smith, Interim Governance and Contact Manager. The panel were also informed of the return of Mrs Y Fenwick.
- 1.3 The Chairman advised that Mrs L Hayward had resigned from the scheme and the panel recorded their thanks for her input into the scheme. It was also noted that new recruits Mr M Smith and Miss L Fitzpatrick had made the decision they will not be progressing with the role. Mrs S Porter will be stepping down in June and this will be her final meeting, thanks were recorded for her input to the scheme.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2017 were approved and signed as a true record.

Action Log

- 2.2 Language Questionnaire – It was raised that although marked as closed on the action log this is still an issue. This is to be reopened and Mrs Y Fenwick along with Mr K Edwards and Mr G Shimmons will explore other possibilities.
- 2.3 Booking in Process – CI Shimmons confirmed that officers have been reminded that the default approach is for the visitors to be able to view this process.
- 2.4 First Time in Custody Leaflet – CI Shimmons confirmed that officers have been reminded that it is a requirement to provide this whenever it appropriate.

- 2.5 Mental Health – CI Shimmons confirmed that in these cases they are waiting on external agencies.
- 2.6 Bridport Custody Suite – Bridport custody suite has now been officially closed
- 2.7 Custody Video – Video shown during visitors pre-meeting.

CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

- 3.1 The report to the panel showed that a similar number of detainees were accepting visits, 94% of those offered accepted the visit. Visits were a good spread across the days of the week but no visits were undertaken in the 10pm-1am slot this quarter. It was agreed that a section would be added to the contact sheet to indicate who was available for visits during unsociable hours so people were aware when they were paired together. The chair stated that she was impressed with the speed of entry into the suites, of which 100% were in 5 minutes or less. It was noted that this quarter there were a handful of longer visits, this was attributed to working with the new visitors.
- 3.2 Visit to Bournemouth on 7 January 2017. This highlighted the issue around the method of use of the translation document and the fact that stickers are not practicable. This needs to be looked at again
ACTION: Mrs Y Fenwick
- 3.3 Visit to Bournemouth on 17 January 2017. It was noted that there was an error on the report and that where it reads 'week' it should read hour.
- 3.4 Visit to Bournemouth on 22 January 2017. With this visit there was a detainee suffering mental health issues who had been detained for a significant period of time. It was noted that the sergeant has put an exceptional amount of effort into getting a hospital bed for this detainee. CI Shimmons confirmed that with this case there had been issues with external agencies around the detainee being sectioned and a secure ambulance. He also stated that with a large number of detainees having mental health or other medical requirements the detention staff are becoming more experienced. Questions were raised around the number of detainees with mental health issues in Dorset; CI Shimmons offered to provide figures for the group.
ACTION: CI Shimmons
- 3.5 Visit to Bournemouth 30 January 2017. Detainee was taken straight to hospital and never entered the custody suite and another detainee had extensive care notes on their log. It was detailed that all detainees were dealt with well. Mr K Edwards noted that there was a detainee who had been in custody for 20 hours and had refused food. He asked in such instances the provision of alternatives and reason behind refusal should be queried. CI Shimmons will feedback the positives from this report.
- 3.6 Visit to Bournemouth 10 February 2017. Visitors highlighted that mental health issues dealt with well on this visit. Mr K Edwards noted remark about the lack of towels and along with Mrs J Steadman was able to confirm that 100 new towels were on order.
- 3.7 Visit to Bournemouth 16 February 2017. It was noted that there was an error on the report, where it reads panicked it should read pointed. Visitors were impressed with the care of a very challenging and ill detainee who was waiting for a secure mental health bed for a long period. They also noted that they had seen good use of the first time in custody leaflet about which a detainee had been very positive.

3.8 Visit to Bournemouth on 23 February 2017. It was noted that there were abbreviations in the log that were not in the material provided by the OPCC and not easily explained by escorting staff. CI Shimmons will discuss with staff and provide an updated list for distribution. It was noted that the escorting officer was particularly helpful and assisted greatly on a first visit. CI Shimmons will feed this back. Mr K Edwards noted the crutch in a cell and explained tha the detainee was well known and a full risk assessment had been made. Visitors stated the reasons behind this being in the cell were explained at the time

ACTION: CI Shimmons

3.9 Visit to Bournemouth on 5 March 2017. Detainees had been returned from court when HMP Winchester had been unable to receive them, "lock outs". Mr K Edwards explained that Dorset Police custody suites will receive such detainees when it is required. These detainees are afforded the same welfare rights and entitlements as PACE detainees but are not afforded the additional rights under prison rules. Mr K Edwards recalled there having been 2 'lock out' incidents in the past 5 month, and that each time roughly 3-4 detainees were held. He confirmed that this is used only in exceptional circumstances. During this visit there were complimentary comments made by detainees about their treatment and it was noted that the officer was keen to resolve any issues raised. CI Shimmons noted that officers were working on skills around de-escalation and that this can be seen in the positive comments given.

3.10 Visit to Bournemouth 24 March 2017. Visitors noted that they were impressed with the treatment of some very difficult detainees. They noted they were unable to visit the detainee with mental health issues as they were in interview.

3.11 Visit to Weymouth 7 January 2017. The visitors were impressed with the treatment of some difficult detainees. They also highlighted that positive comments were received from the young person who was visited.

3.12 Visit to Weymouth 28 January 2017. It was noted that there were minor cracks seen in some tiles in some cells. Mr K Edwards confirmed that a review was being done of the cells in the autumn but they will be replaced earlier if needed. An update will be provided on this.

ACTION: Mr K Edwards

3.13 Visit to Weymouth 13 February 2017. It was noted that the visitors arrived during change over and that the staff were very understanding and accommodating. It was also noted that there was no documentation around whether showers had been offered. Mr K Edwards will consider the comments but confirmed that showers should be offered to any detainee who has been held overnight who is not due for imminent release.

3.14 Visit to Weymouth 10 March 2017. It was noted that there were a few detainees who requested fresh air, but custody staff addressed all issues. It was questioned whether an appropriate adult was required for the elderly person presenting as frightened and confused. Mr K Edwards noted that ICVs can question this at the time and at the time of this visit CJLD would have been in the suite.

- 3.15 Visit to Weymouth 27 February 2017. There were several challenging detainees in custody at this time but staff dealt with them all well. One issue concerned gender identity but staff were aware of the situation and dealt with it well. Concerns were also raised around the amount of time it had taken to get an appropriate adult for one of the detainees. CI Shimmons explained that appropriate adults are provided by an external service so the delay between the time contact was made and the appropriate adult allocated was not under the control of custody staff. He agreed to review this case. It was also noted that an input on appropriate adults will be provided for visitors on the next training day.
- 3.16 It was noted that there has been a rise in the use of voluntary attendance. This is where someone has been asked to attend the police station on a voluntary basis to be interviewed with regard to an offence rather than being detained. These interviews are 100% voluntary and the participant can choose to leave at any time. These do not happen in custody and do not include custody staff so are currently not in the remit of the custody visitors. The increased use in voluntary attendance is occurring nationally and is being monitored to ensure any necessary improvements to monitoring are made.
- 3.17 The key themes from this quarter's visit reports were around mental health and access to beds, the requirement and availability of appropriate adults and lack of towels which has now been dealt with. There were a significant number of positive comments about staff and suites from ICVs and particularly around the care of detainees with mental health issues.

ANNUAL REPORT

- 4.1 Apologies were made Mr A Harrold, scheme manager, for this being late. It was noted that plans were in place for the next annual report and it has been put on the agenda for the October meeting.
- 4.2 Mr A Harrold asked the group if there were any issues with the report, none were forthcoming, and it was agreed to publish the report.
- 4.3 Mr A Harrold asked that if anyone had any ideas or feedback for the next annual report if they could please raise these with the OPCC. It was also noted that photos for the report would be taken during this meeting and a group shot will be taken in the next meeting.

ICVA CONFERENCE

- 5.1 The Chairman explained that the matters discussed at the ICVA Conference would be covered in the next training day. This will be in the form of a presentation on appropriate adults.
- 5.2 The Chairman shared there was an emphasis on vulnerable detainees and the role of custody visitors in monitoring the detention of those with mental health problems and the use of appropriate adults. This can be seen in the Dorset Scheme and will need to be continued.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 6.1 Detainees held in custody when 'locked out' of HMP Winchester was covered previously.

Young persons rights and entitlements

- 6.2 CI Shimmons explained that a leaflet on this has now been produced and is in use across Dorset. The leaflet is now handed out to all young people along with the standard rights in custody leaflet. There is a focus on keeping young people out of custody in Dorset with an approximately 60% decrease in young people in custody.
- 6.3 Copies of the leaflet now in use were passed to the group.

Training

- 6.4 There will be training for all visitors on 13 May 2017 from 9.30am until 1pm, at Dorset Police Headquarters. This will cover mental health and have an additional input on appropriate adults. The OPCC representative on the day will be Mrs Y Fenwick.
- 6.5 Refresher training is being organised for October 2017. This will also include an input on diversity which is currently being created.
- 6.6 The Chairman noted that she and Miss A Pyke will be attending an ICVA 'Train the Trainer' session at the end of May 2017. This will cover the provision of ICVA "bitesize" training.

Recruitment

- 6.7 A recruitment campaign will be undertaken this year, toward the end of the summer, with the aim of recruiting between 5-8 new visitors. It was also noted that the OPCC will be looking at the frequency of recruitment with the intention of having smaller more frequent recruitment.
- 6.8 Mr A Harrold attributed the success of the last campaign partly to the use of media in promoting it. There was discussion that an updated video would be required for the new campaign and Mr A Harrold asked if anyone would be willing to take part to contact the OPCC

Other Business

- 6.9 Mr M Payne raised an issue where a detainee had offered to shake the hand of an ICV and asked for confirmation of how to deal with this situation appropriately. The Chair confirmed that Scheme policy is that there is no physical contact and ICVs maintain a distance from detainees to protect both detainees and ICVs so this should be politely declined. It was noted that this is a recurring issue and whilst covered in induction training it will be revisited in refresher training.
- 6.10 Questions were raised about the vetting process and length of residence within the UK. It was explained that the vetting procedure for custody visitors is the same as for Dorset Police, if a person has not been resident in the UK for 5 years or more they will not pass the vetting procedure. It was agreed that this should be made clearer when advertising the new roles.

ACTION: OPCC

Meeting ended at 8.00pm