

**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 20 July 2015**

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 1, 2 and 3 on Monday 20 July 2015 at 7.00 pm

**PRESENT:**

Mrs K Emery (Chairman),  
Mr Salvatore D'Arrigo, Mrs C Bishop, Mrs H Downton,  
Mrs L Hayward, Mr R Hermans, Dr D James,  
Miss E Kochanovskye, Mrs C McCormack, Mr M Payne,  
Mrs S Porter, Mr R Shore, Mr T Walker, Mrs I Why

**Also Present:**

Mr D Steadman, Chief Executive, OPCC  
Chief Inspector S Derbyshire, Crime and Criminal Justice  
Mr K Edwards, Custody Support Officer  
Acting Inspector D McKerl, Crime and Criminal Justice

**ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

1. It was agreed that Mrs K Emery be elected Chairman for the year 2015/16.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. Apologies were received from Assistant Chief Constable D Lewis, Mrs B White, Mrs A Cray, Mrs T Farwell, Mr E Holloway, Mr R Kerr, Mr C Worsfold and Mrs Y Fenwick.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

3. Chief Inspector Derbyshire introduced Acting Inspector Derek McKerl who was working temporarily as Custody Inspector at Bournemouth.

**ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

4. It was agreed that Dr D James be elected Vice Chairman for the year 2015/16.

**MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2015 were approved and signed as a true record. Mr K Edwards reported on matters arising from the minutes.
- 5.2 The refurbishment of Blandford custody suite was nearing completion and would be up and running during August, slightly later than anticipated.
- 5.3 The Panel was advised that Sherborne and Shaftesbury custody was open for now. Bridport was also open and would remain open.

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- 5.4 Mr Edwards referred to concerns about the quality of the translation from a Lithuanian/Polish interpreter who was not translating from his own tongue. Following a discussion with the manager of Language Line, Dorset Police was satisfied that a robust selection system was in place with strict annual assessments. However, visitors were encouraged to report any further concerns with the quality of translation, at which point a complaint would be submitted.

### CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

- 6.1 The report to the Panel showed that of 189 detainees held, 127 (67%) had been offered a visit, of which 119 (94%) had accepted. The spread and timing of the visits had been good with visits made on every day of the week. A number of visits had been completed between 10.00 pm and 1.00 am and between 7.00 am and 10.00 am. The Chair thanked visitors and welcomed further visits during unsocial hours.
- 6.2 The Chair was pleased to report that entry had been gained to custody suites within 5 minutes for 100% of the visits.

### Visits

- 6.3 During a visit to Weymouth on 22 May 2015, visitors had expressed their concerns with regard to a distressed 15 years' old detainee who had been held in custody over 10 hours without access to an Appropriate Adult. Chief Inspector Derbyshire confirmed that the situation was unacceptable and could not continue. Dorset Police was raising it as a service failure each time. On this occasion, two social workers were covering Dorset, dealing with many very difficult and different situations, and this was not considered a high priority for them. Mr Edwards reported that the law allowed them to approach a range of suitable adults if an Appropriate Adult was not available but in this case a social worker was needed. Chief Inspector Derbyshire reported that the problems were being monitored and taken to the Safeguarding Children Board.
- 6.4 The possibility of ICVs also being Appropriate Adults, which could only occur on separate visits, was again discussed. The Chief Executive agreed to review local guidance.

### **ACTION: Chief Executive**

- 6.5 Whilst visiting Weymouth on 26 May 2015, visitors had questioned whether it was usual for a review to take place so quickly, ie less than 1.5 hours after entering custody, and whether this would extend the time before the next review took place, meaning a gap of up to 13 hours. A/Insp McKerl explained that this would not be the case. The six, nine and 12 hours review times were guidelines and the next review would fall due within nine hours of the previous review.
- 6.6 During the same visit, visitors noted there were no cereal bars available to detainees and biscuits had been supplied. Mr Edwards confirmed that he had followed this up with Weymouth and cereal bars would be supplied as per the contract.
- 6.7 Visitors had also been advised by staff at Weymouth that it was difficult to see anything on the outside cameras when dark. Mr Edwards confirmed that the issue with the cameras was now resolved.
- 6.8 During a visit to Bournemouth on 7 April 2015, a detainee could not recall whether he had requested a solicitor. Visitors confirmed that they had advised him he could request a solicitor or change his mind if he had previously said no.

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- 6.9** On a subsequent visit to Bournemouth on 9 April 2015, visitors noted that a thermometer had been placed at the back of the fridge beneath sandwiches and it was likely that any reading would be inaccurate. The fridges had built in thermometers which were not working and Mr Edwards would check whether Gingsters had resolved this issue.

**ACTION: K Edwards**

- 6.10** Staff had experienced some difficulty in printing sheets on entry during a visit to Bournemouth on 11 May 2015. It had been dealt with efficiently but staff were uncertain what to print. Mr Edwards confirmed there was a guide available to staff.

- 6.11** On arrival at Weymouth on 2 April 2015, visitors had been briefed on a detainee who was in a highly emotional state and did not want to have contact with anyone, including custody visitors. The Custody Sergeant had guaranteed the detainee's anonymity and custody visitors were taken to another room when the detainee was moved. Visitors confirmed they had not checked the log as the detainee had not given his permission. Mr Edwards advised that if a detainee was incapable of giving permission, for whatever reason, then the default was to check the log. ICVs discussed the position when the detainee was capable and refused to see ICVs to discuss consent and it was confirmed by Mr Edwards that the log could not be accessed then.

- 6.12** A visitor highlighted a visit to Poole where a detainee had been taken to hospital and the visitor had been refused access to his log. Visitors were advised that they could call the hospital to see if the detainee was capable of being seen by a visitor. If not, then the log could be viewed. If he was capable, then it was up to the visitors whether they visited the detainee in hospital.

- 6.13** During a visit to Weymouth on 13 June 2015, staff had advised visitors that a detainee's glasses had been removed to reduce the risk of self-harm. It was noted that the reason for this action being taken should have been recorded on the log.

- 6.14** During a visit to Weymouth on 20 June 2015, a juvenile detainee was upset and said he suffered from claustrophobia. The sergeant confirmed that the detainee would be moved to a CCTV cell as soon as one was available. The visitors thought it would be helpful to have a cell door with a clear window as at Bournemouth. Mr Edwards advised that it was necessary to strike a balance with privacy.

- 6.15** During a visit to Poole on 27 May 2015, visitors had noted that the flooring in the kitchen behind the waste bin was still broken. Mr Edwards had been advised that there was some wetness there but it was not clear where this was coming from and there was no risk to anyone. Inspector Kynaston was addressing this issue.

- 6.16** During a subsequent visit to Poole on 16 June 2015, visitors noted that a bowl clearly marked for washing hands and feet was being kept in the kitchen and it was considered more appropriate for this to be stored elsewhere. Mr Edwards would arrange for the bowl to be moved immediately.

**ACTION: Mr K Edwards**

- 6.17** Later the same month, visitors reported the return of green mould on the floor of the exercise yard at Poole. This was being investigated and visitors were encouraged to continue to report.

- 6.18** During a visit to Sherborne on 15 June 2015, visitors noted various housekeeping issues: bins not emptied recently, Ventolin inhaler and GTN spray not locked away, Ventolin out of

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date, no underwear or shirts in the store cupboard, and no hand wash solution in the medical room. Mr Edwards advised that this had been noted and a Sergeant had been nominated to carry out weekly and monthly checks. He assured the Panel that these issues would be addressed and monitored.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

#### **Visit Procedure**

- 7.1 A Panel member asked whether the reserve visitor could be advised when a visit had been arranged. It was agreed to continue arrangements as they were without putting the onus on visitors to contact the reserve if they were not required.
- 7.2 Following a question from a member of the Panel, the Chair advised that there was nothing in the guidelines to say that refreshments should not be accepted during visits but visitors were asked to bear in mind that they were attending in a professional capacity.

#### **Appreciation**

8. Chief Inspector Derbyshire recorded her appreciation to visitors for the valued work they carry out, such as the recent highlighting of the youth detention issue. This was her last meeting before returning to CID. The Chair and the Chief Executive thanked Chief Inspector Derbyshire for her work in custody over the last 18 months. Chief Inspector Guy Shimmons would be taking over the role.

#### **Visitors Celebration Lunch**

9. The Chair circulated a location map for the Celebration Lunch on Sunday 2 August. Attendees were asked to arrive for 1230 hrs with lunch at 1300 hrs. Dress code was smart casual. The Chief Executive, Police and Crime Commissioner and Lord Lieutenant were attending and it was hoped that Mrs Pitt-Rivers would be able to join the celebration.

*Meeting ended at 7.55 pm*