

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL****Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 27 April 2015**

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 1, 2 and 3 on Monday 26 January 2015 at 7:00pm

PRESENT:

Mrs K Emery (Chair),
Mrs C Bishop, Mrs A Cray, Mrs H Downton, Mrs T Farwell, Mr R Hermans,
Dr D James, Mr R Kerr, Miss E Kochnovskyte, Mrs C McCormack,
Mr C Pipe, Mrs S Porter, Mr R Shore, Mrs I Why, Mr T Walker

Also Present:

Mrs J Steadman, Head of Criminal Justice
Mr K Edwards, Custody Support Officer
Sgt D McKerl, Criminal Justice Projects Officer
Mrs Y Fenwick, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies were received from Mr D Steadman, Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Constable D Lewis, Chief Inspector S Derbyshire, Mrs L Hayward, Mr S D'Arrigo, Mr M Payne, Mrs B White and Mr C Worsfold.

MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2015 were approved and signed as a true record. Mr K Edwards reported on the matters arising from the minutes.
- 2.2 With regard to minute 16.5 as previously explained by Mr Thorneycroft, Dorset Police now operate a traffic light system to prioritise detainees with mental health issues. Whether to make a referral on would be the decision of the healthcare professional. He went onto advise that there had been a meeting with the Immigration Service who informed Dorset Police that they would be responsible for any belongings of an immigration detainee (minute 16.7).
- 2.3 Mr Edwards confirmed that there had been an instruction to all custody staff that there would need to be a justification for a decision to not provide a detainee with a spork (minute 16.8) and that it would not be appropriate to only provide them with a choice of sandwiches. He added that he was satisfied that detainees were getting offered appropriate meals.
- 2.4 Minute 16.9 had highlighted the problem with a thermometer in the fridge in Bournemouth custody. The provider had responsibility for the provision of a fridge with a built in thermometer which would be expected to be delivered in due course. As an interim solution a digital thermometer had been provided.
- 2.5 The Commissioner had previously asked to be kept informed if there had been any ongoing issues with Language Line (minute 16.10). Mr Edwards advised that he had spoken with the custody sergeants and they had no further issues to report. In relation to

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the silencing of buzzers (minute 16.11), Mr Edwards reiterated that if a decision had been made to mute a buzzer then there must always be a rationale recorded. Bournemouth custody buzzers had an auto switch on after 4 minutes, so reinstatement would not be recorded on the log.

- 2.6 On a previous visit to Poole (minute 16.13) visitors had noted that the transfer from Bournemouth to Poole had appeared to be disorganised. Mr Edwards advised the visitors that a sergeant had now been appointed to take responsibility for Poole custody and would make a weekly visit to ensure that the suite was ready for use. Mr Edwards added that only the high risk rip stop blankets were now available in custody.
- 2.7 In relation to minute 16.16, Mr Edwards stated that full fire drills had taken place at Bournemouth and Weymouth and that they had been pleased with the outcome. He added that phone chargers would be available in all suites (minute 16.17).
- 2.8 With regard to Blandford (minute 16.18), Mr Edwards advised that the refurbishment of Blandford had an expected finish date of 1 July. Once completed the intention would be to close the custody suites at Shaftesbury and Sherborne. It had been agreed to put a hold on all visits to Blandford until the refurbishment had been completed.

CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

- 3.1 The report to the Panel showed that of 193 detainees held, 138 (72%) had been offered a visit, of which 128 (93%) had accepted. The spread and timing of the visits had been good, with visits that had taken place on every day of the week. The Chair thanked those visitors who had conducted an early hours and late night visits to Weymouth. She asked for visitors to consider anti-social hours visits to Bournemouth.
- 3.2 Entry had been gained to the 24 hour custody suites within 5 minutes for 94% of the visits.

Visits

- 3.3 During a visit to Bournemouth on 10 February 2015, visitors had been confused by entries which appeared to contradict themselves. Mr Edwards confirmed that the detainee had asked to see the Health Care Professional (HCP) but that request had not been recorded in the log. Custody staff had been reminded that such requests must be recorded in the log.
- 3.4 During the same visit it had been noted that a detainee had been advised that his partner could not be contacted as she had been abroad. Mr Edwards advised that whilst it would not be possible to dial outside of the UK on the normal telephone system, there were procedures officers could follow to allow calls to be made to locations outside of the UK. He added that the call had been made but that the log had not been updated.
- 3.5 Whilst visiting Bournemouth on 6 March, visitors had waited for 15 minutes before they had been granted access to the custody suite. The Chair asked visitors to ensure that they receive and report a full explanation for any delay in accessing the suite.
- 3.6 On the same visit visitors reported that a detainee had required assistance from Language Line, but the interpreter provided hadn't spoken his language sufficiently well enough to interpret accurately when it became complex.
- 3.7 On 10 January a visit had been made to Weymouth, it had been reported that the log had shown that a detainee had been tasered on arrest, but had not indicated that he had been

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seen specifically by the HCP in relation to this.

- 3.8** Mr Edwards updated the visitors with regard to the window ledges at Weymouth. He advised that work on the window ledges and other areas such as heating and panic buttons would be undertaken in June/July during which Weymouth would be closed. Dorset Police would work closely with the Home Office advisor to ensure that all custody suite windows were acceptable.
- 3.9** During a visit to Poole on 1 January 2015, visitors had noted that some of the cells had felt cold. Mr Edwards asked that when visitors felt cells could be too cold, if they would ask for the temperature to be taken.
- 3.10** Whilst on a viewing visit to Poole on 30 January, visitors had reported a number of issues. Mr Edwards confirmed that work had been undertaken since then and all issues had been rectified.

OTHER MATTERS

- 4.1** The Chair shared the plans for the Visitors Celebration Lunch on 2 August. Further details would follow but she extended the invitation to the custody management staff and the staff of the OPCC who had been involved with custody visiting.
- 4.2** Thanks were conveyed to Colin Pipe for his time as an ICV and wished him luck for the future.

Mrs Steadman advised that Chief Inspector Derbyshire would be transferring to another position within the PPU and her replacement would be identified in the near future. The Chair extended her thanks to Sarah for her hard work and assistance.

Meeting ended at 20:00 hrs