

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 21 July 2014

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 1, 2 and 3 on Monday 21 July 2014 at 7pm

PRESENT:

Mrs K Emery (Chairman),
Mrs C Bishop, Mrs A Cray, Mrs T Farwell, Mr Salvatore D'Arrigo, Mrs H Downton,
Mr K Gooding, Mrs L Hayward, Mr R Hermans, Mr E Holloway, Mr R Kerr,
Miss E Kochanovskye, Mr H Masters, Mrs C McCormack, Mr M Payne, Mr W Penzer,
Mr C Pipe, Mrs S Porter, Mr D Sandever; Mr R Shore, Mr T Walker,
Mr C Worsfold, Mrs I Why

Also Present:

Chief Inspector S Derbyshire, Crime and Criminal Justice
Mr K Edwards, Custody Support Officer
Sgt G Tansill, Crime and Criminal Justice
Mrs J Steadman, Head of Criminal Justice
Mrs Y Fenwick, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Miss A Williamson, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

1.1 It was agreed that Mrs K Emery be elected Chairman for the year 2014/15.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies were received from Mr M Underhill, Assistant Chief Constable D Lewis, Dr D James and Mrs B White.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

3.1 It was agreed that Dr D James be elected Vice Chairman for the year 2014/15.

MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2014 were approved and signed as a true record.

4.2 The Chairman welcomed the newly recruited visitors to the Scheme and the meeting and praised the recruitment campaign.

CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

5.1 The report to the Panel showed that of 151 detainees held, 98 (65%) had been offered a visit, of which 88 (90%) had accepted. The spread and timing of the visits had been good. In the last quarter visits on Wednesdays and Thursdays seemed popular. The Chairman thanked those who completed a visit in unsocial hours, with particular thanks to Mr Kerr,

Mrs Bishop, Mr Payne and Dr James.

- 5.2** It had been noted that entry had been gained to the custody suites within 5 minutes for 100% of the visits. It was also noted that 14 (48%) of the reports had no issues to raise and that 73% of the visits had been conducted within 1 hour.

Visits for Noting

Bournemouth

- 5.3** During a visit to Bournemouth on 6 May 2014, visitors were told one thing by the detainee and then another by the Officer, this was verified by the Custody Log. Visitors also raised the issue of detainees not being offered a shower; this was later discussed in depth at the panel meeting.
- 5.4** Whilst conducting a visit on 19 April 2014, a detainee informed visitors that a relative had not yet been informed of his detention. Subsequently, this had been raised with the Custody Officer and the appropriate action taken.
- 5.5** Following a visit on 29 May 2014, visitors noted the strong smell of drains in the far side of the building near the M cells. The Custody Sergeant had made enquiries with Estates and Building Services to see if this could be rectified. As it had been felt that this would be an ongoing issue visitors had been asked to record any future problems.
- 5.6** On a visit on 10 June 2014 visitors noted there had been only 1 size of male underpants available. Mrs Steadman advised that from 21 July 2014 a member of staff had been given the responsibility of checking the stock inventory.
- 5.7** During a visit on 17 June 2014, visitors reported that a detainee had requested a shower but there was no record this had been provided. The detainee had since left the suite. Sgt Tansill advised the Panel that detainees who attended court that morning would be prioritised for showers. Other detainees would be offered a shower as soon as staff were available, he added that generally they would be showered by lunchtime.
- 5.8** During the same visit, visitors had noted that the beans and wedges ambient meal had been changed and now contained mushrooms, which some people could be allergic to. Mrs Steadman advised that any allergies would have been covered by the custody officer during the risk assessment.
- 5.9** Whilst visiting on 29 June 2014 visitors had been concerned about a delay in obtaining an appropriate adult for a juvenile detainee who had been in detention since midnight.
- 5.10** As the detainee's parents could not attend, contact had been made with Social Services to arrange for an Appropriate Adult to attend from the Emergency Duty Team, unfortunately there had been no one available.
- 5.11** During the same visit a detainee informed the visitors that it had been their first time in custody but that no information had been offered. Mrs Steadman would remind Custody Staff that information must be provided to first time detainees.
- 5.12** During the same visit, visitors reported that a custody log had not been updated. The detainee had been on Level 1 observation (hourly) at 21:57 this changed to Level 4 (close proximity) at 22:28. Although a member of staff was in close proximity with the detainee there was nothing recorded on the log during the period of close proximity. Sgt Tansill explained that a hard copy log form should be used by the officer with the detainee which

should then be scanned and attached to the detention log.

- 5.13** Custody Visitors were reminded that this may not print with the custody log and if they spotted this then they should ask the Custody Sergeant for a copy.

Weymouth

- 5.14** During a visit on 3 May 2014, visitors noted that there had not been a nurse on duty Weymouth in 3 days. Mrs Steadman was acknowledged there had been difficulties due to sickness but a doctor would be on call in such circumstances.
- 5.15** Visitors reported that a detainee's custody log had been incorrect. The custody log stated that the detainee had spoken good English but this had not been the case. It had been decided that this detainee's rights would be translated through Language Line to ensure that they understood.
- 5.16** There had also been a concern regarding a detainee's facial injury, as the injury had not been recorded on the custody log. The Custody Sergeant would update the log and arrange for a nurse to see the detainee.

Blandford

- 5.16** Mrs Steadman informed the Panel that some refurbishment would take place at Blandford Custody Suite.
- 5.17** On a visit to Blandford on 15 May 2014 visitors again reported one of the toilets had been either stained or possibly dirty, this appeared to be more problematical when permanent staff are not there to monitor.
- 5.18** Visitors had also highlighted a ligature point. Mr Edwards had investigated this and reported it to be borderline, however, this would be addressed in the refurbishment.
- 5.19** Visitors were asked to check that the blue copy page of the report had been directed to Mr Edwards.

Verwood

- 5.20** Mrs Steadman advised that Verwood Custody Suite would be closed in the near future. Once the date had been confirmed she would ensure the Scheme Manager was informed.

OTHER MATTERS

Visit Procedure

- 6.1** When visitors were speaking with a detainee, the escorting officer should ideally be within sight but out of hearing distance. There had been concern that escorting officers were either too far away or too close. It would be left to visitors to communicate with the escorting officer at the time of the visit in order to resolve this.

Glasses

- 6.2** Following a query by a member of the Panel, Mr Edwards advised that the removal of a detainee's glasses would be risk assessed and decided by the Custody Officer.

- 6.3 If a detainee required glasses each suite held a supply.
- 6.4 Following a question from a member of the Panel, Chief Inspector Derbyshire advised that she would look into the possibility of contact lens cases and solution being made available to detainees.

ICVA Conference

- 6.5 The Scheme Manager updated members of the Panel on the ICVA Scheme Administrators Conference she had attended in Birmingham. Discussions at the conference had been focussed on how ICVA can provide more support, the move towards a national report form and national scheme, how Schemes could be improved and the changes to the Codes of Practice.

Regional ICV Meeting

- 6.6 Following the South West Regional Meeting, Scheme Managers had agreed a regional role description for Independent Custody Visitors and had decided to work towards a regional ICV Scheme. Visitors had been invited to advise the Scheme Manager if they wished to be involved with this, 3 visitors would be selected from those who had volunteered.

ICVA National Conference

- 6.7 The ICVA National Conference would take place on 22 November in Birmingham. Visitors interested should advise the Scheme Manager. This would be a good opportunity for visitors to share information and experience.

Annual Reviews

- 6.8 The Scheme Manager thanked all visitors for their positive feedback during their annual reviews.

Thank You

- 6.9 The Chief Executive expressed his thanks to all the visitors for their dedication and commitment to the ICV Scheme.
- 6.10 Mrs Steadman also thanked the visitors for their comments, which all helped in the improvement in facilities for detainees.

Meeting ended at 20:45 hrs

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Chairman

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Date