

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL

Draft Minutes of meeting held on Monday 22 July 2019

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 1, 2 and 3 on Monday 22 July 2019 at 7pm

Present: Mr A Bamgboye, Mrs C Brace, Mr P Cashmore, Mr C Ellis (Chair), Mrs C Etienne, Mr A Fear, Miss C Hall, Mr R Harlow, Miss N Hill, Miss A King, Mrs H Latimer, Mr M Payne, Dr D Ridd, Mr K Skerman, Mr T Walker, Mrs A White, Mrs I Why.

Also Present:

CI Claxton, Custody Manager, Dorset Police
Mr K Edwards, Custody Support Officer, Dorset Police
Mrs A Giles, Governance Officer, Dorset OPCC
Mr A Harrold, Director of Operations, Dorset OPCC
Mrs J Steadman, Director of Criminal Justice, Dorset Police

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 Apologies were received from PCC M Underhill, ACC J Fielding, Ms J Bradbury, Mr J Neely, Mr G French and Mr A Zakrzewski.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2019 were approved as an accurate record.
- 2.2 It was noted that the minutes of the previous meeting suggested that a reminder would be sent to custody staff around the recording of handcuff removal. ICVs commented that they had since noted several occasions where the removal of handcuffs had not been recorded. It was confirmed that after a conversation with PCC Underhill the advice to record this had been rescinded. This was due to there being no formal requirement to do so and it not being seen as best practice nationally. It was also noted that this would be recorded within the Use of Force form which ICVs do not see and is likely to have been recorded on body worn video.
- 2.3 Action 20 related to late reviews. It was discussed that ICVs continued to monitor the timeliness of reviews and were still seeing significant delays. The chair reminded ICVs to only report on significant delays and that delays of 10 minutes should not be recorded. The cause of delays was discussed and it was noted this was a staffing issue, with delays mainly occurring at night. It was agreed that ICVs would continue to monitor this situation.
- 2.4 Action 23 related to delays in the provision of Appropriate Adults. It was noted that a formal review of Appropriate Adult provision in Dorset is now underway, being led by staff within the OPCC. The ICV team will receive further updates as they become available.
- 2.5 Action 26 related to the bridge at Weymouth custody suite. It was confirmed that a new bridge will be put in at Weymouth during the next maintenance shut down.
- 2.6 Action 27 related to the force open day. It was noted that Mrs Fenwick had been unable to complete this action due to other commitments with the Police Cadets. Apologies were given for this. It was agreed that, as the force open day had passed, this action was to be closed.
- 2.7 It was noted that all other actions were complete.

CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

- 3.1 It was highlighted that none of this quarter's visits had taken place on a Sunday. The panel were asked to be mindful of this and take steps to ensure a good spread of visits across the times of the day and days of the week. The panel were reminded that the ICV secure section of the OPCC website provides information on the current spread of visits.
- 3.2 It was noted that in 100% of visits ICVs had been allowed access to the suite within five minutes. ICVs passed their thanks to the custody teams for their continuing commitment in this area, especially at busy times.
- 3.3 It was noted that there had been some longer visits, spanning over three hours. However, it was discussed that this was due to the time spent reviewing logs with trainee ICVs and had minimal impact on the suite or staff.
- 3.4 Bournemouth – Report 2516. Late reviews had been noted on this visit. It was discussed that there were welfare concerns around a non-English speaking detainee. However, these were elevated on the arrival of the interpreter. It was also highlighted that a detainee had been in custody 15 hours before being given a 'first time in custody' leaflet. Custody staff were unable to determine the reason for this delay.
- 3.5 Bournemouth – Report 2517. It was noted that there was a major incident within custody, however ICVs had not been kept waiting. ICVs expressed their gratitude for this.
- 3.6 Bournemouth – Report 2520-2. It was noted that this was a long visit due to a delay in starting and time spent reviewing the logs. It was noted that medical conditions had been disclosed to ICVs which had not been disclosed to custody staff. It was questioned what ICVs ask and whether custody staff should bring their questions in line with them to prevent these situations arising, however it was noted that the questioning is already very similar.
- 3.7 Bournemouth – Report 2623-4. It was noted that the Quran had not been stored in its protective covering, however this was remedied prior to ICVs leaving the suite. It was also noted that the reviews had been conducted three hours early and ICVs questioned why this would have happened. CI Claxton confirmed that reviews may be conducted early if it is known there will be demand at a later stage. However, he could not see a reason why reviews would need to be completed this early and that this is not acceptable practice. It was noted that if a review is completed early it does not extend the time between reviews but rather brings all subsequent reviews earlier.
- 3.8 Bournemouth – Report 2525-6. ICVs noted that a detainee required an Appropriate Adult and there was no note on the log of this being identified or requested. CI Claxton confirmed that this had been identified and requested and that the Appropriate Adult attended shortly after ICVs left the suite. However, this has not been recorded on the log. The panel were told that custody staff had been reminded of the importance of an accurate custody log. ICVs commented that, in contrast to this, another detainee, who had been held for an extended period of time, had a detailed and extensive log.
- 3.9 Bournemouth – Report 2531. It was noted that the regular suppliers had failed to supply any food to custody around this visit and staff had been out to source alternatives. It was confirmed that this was a one off due to a member of the supply team suffering a bereavement. Praise was given to the custody team for the prompt and professional way in which they dealt with the matter. The report also noted a broken door and a broken toilet. The panel were updated that these had both now been fixed.
- 3.10 It was highlighted that, according to the custody log, it appeared that a detainee on 30 minute observations had not received a visit for an hour and a half. The response at the

time of the visit was that they believed this was missed on the log but were satisfied this would have taken place. It was questioned whether this was an acceptable response to the issue? CI Claxton responded that there had been an hour between recorded visits rather than an hour and a half. ICVs had seen it as longer due to a flaw in the system and confirmed that it was not acceptable that this hadn't been recorded and reiterated that a reminder had gone to staff regarding the importance of keeping accurate custody logs.

- 3.11 Weymouth – Report 2453. It was noted that a detainee had been particularly concerned around the care of his children. ICVs had been given an update on the situation at the bridge. However, it was questioned whether the detainee would have received the same update. It was confirmed that any update would be given to the detainee unless the children were involved in the case. During the visit, the safety implications around the use of plastic cups were raised. However ICVs noted that this issue appears to have been resolved. It was questioned why this had been raised with ICVs and not a manager within the suite and ICVs confirmed this came up in conversation and was not stated out of the blue.
- 3.12 Weymouth – Report 2455. It was noted that ICVs had been refused access to the custody log of a sleeping detainee due to a difference of opinion on vulnerability. It was noted that custody staff had been informed that ICVs were to be permitted access to the custody log of sleeping detainees. However this visit had taken place before this instruction was given.
- 3.13 Weymouth – Report 2459. ICVs noted they had concerns around a deaf detainee and had noted significant difficulties in sourcing a sign interpreter. ICVs commented that custody had made every effort to source an interpreter, but there appeared to be a flaw in the system.
- 3.14 Weymouth – Report 2460. ICVs noted late reviews during this visit. It was also discussed that custody staff had raised that they believed the washing up facilities to be insufficient. It was again questioned why this had been raised to ICVs rather than a manager within the suite and ICVs confirmed that this came up in conversation and was not stated out of the blue. It was confirmed that this has been looked into and the facilities were found to be adequate.
- 3.15 Weymouth – Report 2464. It was noted that the suite had been extremely busy, meaning custody staff were unable to accommodate an ICV visit. ICVs had observed the detainees via CCTV. However it was noted that it had since been fed back that this was not appropriate. ICVs commended custody staff for their particular sensitivities around CCTV during a strip search.

ICV ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

- 4.1 It was noted that the ICV Annual Report for 2018-19 had been produced and circulated to the team. It was confirmed that this would be available online from 23 July and it was asked that ICVs share and promote the report.
- 4.2 The report noted an improvement in the demographics of the ICV scheme, which is not in line with ICVA expectations. It was highlighted that 105 visits had taken place and 373 detainees were interviewed by ICV over these visits. This compared with the previous years figures of 102 visits with 463 detainees interviewed.
- 4.3 A good spread across the days of the week and times of the day had been maintained throughout the year, however the 6pm-9pm slot appeared to be the most common.
- 4.4 It was noted that two recruitments had taken place in this time and the scheme had been awarded a Gold standard on the ICVA Quality Assurance Framework. ICVs were thanked for the hard work and commitment they gave to these projects.

- 4.5 The key issues within custody over the last year were noted as Appropriate Adult provision, suite temperature and the 'first time in custody' leaflet. It was noted that two of these were resolved with the third being under review currently. The force were thanked for their continuing support in making these changes.
- 4.6 The year ahead was discussed and the panel were informed the key priorities would be reviewing the induction and mentoring process, ICV recruitment and the exploration of digital reporting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 5.1 It was raised that PACE appeared to give preference to reviews being completed via live link rather than telephone. It was questioned whether live link facilities were available in Dorset and, if not, were there any plans to introduce it. It was confirmed that there are live link facilities available in all Dorset custody suite and that these are often used for court appearances. It was noted that the use of live link for reviews places a considerable burden on the staff to organise and therefore this is not used very often. It was noted that reviews do happen via skype but often it is not practicable to accommodate this and therefore reviews are conducted via telephone. It was noted that face to face reviews are always preferable, however it is often the case that circumstances do not allow for this.
- 5.2 It was noted that it was CI Claxton's final panel meeting. The Chair expressed his thanks, on behalf of the Panel, for the ongoing support and cooperation received from CI Claxton and his wider team.

Meeting closed 20:00