

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL – 23 JULY 2018

DETAINEE DIGNITY

REPORT BY THE OPCC GOVERNANCE OFFICER

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide the Panel with an update on the national work being completed by ICVA, focusing on the dignity of detainees held within police custody.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A letter was received from ICVA with regards to the work they are undertaking on detainee dignity.
- 1.2 ICVA became aware of issues relating to detainee dignity when exploring the sanitary protection issue. As a result, ICVA conducted a review of 29 inspectorate reports from 2015–2017 to investigate the nature and scope of the potential problem. This report will highlight the key areas to note from this letter and the wider work of ICVA on this subject.

2. DETAINEE DIGNITY

- 2.1 ICVA noted a pattern of occurrences within the inspectorate reports which could be seen to jeopardise the dignity of detainees. These included:
 - detainees left naked in cells;
 - clothing removal and/or strip searches taking place with members of the opposite gender present;
 - clothing removal and/or strip searches taking place able to be viewed on CCTV;
 - The inappropriate removal of clothing and use of anti-rip clothing.
- 2.2 There were no less than eight incidents where a detainee was seen by the inspectorate to be left naked in a cell, with reports indicating that this was in response to the risk of self-harm.
- 2.3 Concerns were noted around the potential effect these incidents may have on the dignity and mental wellbeing of detainees.

- 2.4 The inspectorate report for Dorset was mostly positive with no evidence of poor practice. However, there was a concern around the unauthorised use of strip search.
- 2.5 The over use of anti-rip clothing has been reported by the HMICFRS to the PACE Strategy Group.
- 2.6 ICVA has raised the issue of detainee dignity with the NPCC Lead for Custody, ACC Nev Kemp and it was also considered at the most recent National Custody Forum.
- 2.7 Additionally, ICVA has responded to consultations, by both HMIP and the Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorates, asking the monitoring bodies to undertake a piece of work regarding the issues outlined.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Visitors are asked to note the contents of this report and the attached letter.

Anna Giles
Governance Officer

Appendices

Appendix 1 – ICVA Letter to Martyn Underhill