

## OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

### INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL

#### Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 23 January 2017

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 2 and 3 on Monday 23 January 2017 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Dr D James (Chairman), Mrs I Why, Mr M Payne, Mrs A Cray, Mr T Walker, Miss E Kochanovskyte, Mr C Ellis, Miss C Hall, Mr A Fear, Mrs S Porter, Miss L Fitzpatrick, Mr R Hermans, Ms N Reynolds, Ms J Bradbury

**Also Present:** Mr M Underhill, Police and Crime Commissioner  
Mr A Harrold, Interim Deputy Chief Executive, OPCC  
Mr K Edwards, Custody Support Officer  
Mr M Cooper, Assistant Chief Constable  
Chief Inspector G Shimmons

#### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

1. Apologies were received from Mr S D'Arrigo, Mrs B White, Ms J Fraser, Mr P Cashmore, Mrs T Farwell, Mr M Smith
- 1.2 The Chairman introduced Mr Underhill to the meeting. For the benefit of new ICVs, he explained why the ICV scheme is an important area for him. Visiting is a crucial element to ensure transparency and ensure detainees are treated with dignity and respect. He reflected on when he took part in a custody visit, and since then has seen changes happen as a result of issues raised. Mr Underhill represents ICV on a national level as Chairman of ICVA. Mr Underhill confirmed he would be attending the next panel meeting in April.
- 1.3 Introductions were made by Mr Harrold, Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Scheme Manager, Chief Inspector Shimmons, accountable for Custody and Mr Edwards, Custody Support Officer.

#### MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 The minutes from the meeting held on Monday 17 October 2016 were approved and signed as a true record.

##### Action log

- 4.2 Booking in process – CI Shimmons to ensure custody staff are aware that ICVs are allowed to be present for the booking in process.

##### Update on recruitment

- 4.3 Ten new ICVs have completed the vetting process, training and are beginning to undertake visits. Those who have not undertaken a visit will do so by June 2017.

## APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIRS

- 5.1 The Scheme Manager, Mr Harrold asked the meeting if there were any visitors who would like to be considered for role of Chair and Deputy Chairs. No visitors expressed an interest. The appointments were confirmed as the current positions, Dr D James as Chair and Mrs I Why and Mr M Payne as Deputy Chairs.

## CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

- 6.1 The report to the Panel showed that of 228 detainees held, 147 (64%) had been offered a visit, of which 111 (93%) had accepted. Waiting times were good, with 96% of visits commencing within five minutes. The spread and timing of the visits had been generally good with visits every day of the week. However, no visits had been undertaken between 1 am and 7 am and visitors were asked to consider making a visit within this timeframe during the next quarter.

6.2 **Report no: 2069/70 – Poole 11 November 2016**

Concern was raised regarding a detainee who was waiting for a psychiatric secure bed. Issues regarding detainees with mental health needs have been raised previously; an update was given and can be found on the action plan. Visitors were asked to continue to report cases they find.

6.3 **Report no: 2075 – Poole – 3 December 2016**

Mr Payne commented on how well staff had dealt with a volatile situation during this visit. This was the first visit for Ms Fraser which gave her good insight in to the situations that can take place. The custody suite had difficulties with their new computer system during this visit and it was recognised that staff coped very well with the situation.

6.4 **Report no: 2326 – Bournemouth – 12 October 2016**

Two detainees volunteered how good their care had been.

6.5 **Report no: 2337 – Bournemouth – 23 December 2016**

A number of detainees were complimentary of their treatment. The visitors were pleased to see a vegetarian meal had been provided.

6.6 **Report no: 2338 – Bournemouth – 30 December 2016**

This visit was lengthy and highlighted many complex needs. The visitors were very impressed with how the staff dealt with these examples of mental health needs. Mr Edwards commented that a detainee had raised concerns about a dog they were responsible for. An extra question has been incorporated in the questionnaire which detainees complete on arrival in custody. It now asks if there is anyone or any animal for which they are responsible.

6.7 **Report no: 2074 – Poole – 25 November 2016**

It was highlighted that a detainee who had been very distressed due to mental health issues had been very well cared for. Another detainee wanted his sister to be informed however this was not recorded in the notes. The escort was excellent on this occasion.

6.8 **Report no: 2125 – Weymouth – 5 November 2016**

An issue was raised regarding visitor access to detainee logs for those who are either asleep or being interviewed. This is a matter being reviewed by ICVA. At the moment visitors do not have access. Mr Edwards added showing of a log is purely in the interests of ensuring the person's welfare needs are taken care of and Dorset Police do not have confidentiality concerns.

6.9 **Report no: 2131 – Weymouth – 5 December 2016**

This was the first visit for Mr Ellis. There was a medical emergency occurring when they arrived which they felt was dealt with very well. The Inspector on duty was very helpful; Mr Ellis noted he had been given a good introduction.

6.10 **Report no: 2133 – Bournemouth – 23 December 2016**

On arrival the visitors were given incorrect print outs, which included detainee names. It was confirmed before the visitors left custody that staff were made aware of how to print them correctly. It was agreed that instructions on print outs to be sent to new visitors.

**ACTION: OPCC**

6.11 **Report no: 2253 – Bridport – 19 November 2016**

CI Shimmons informed the meeting that Bridport was no longer receiving detainees. It is technically functional however no staff will be located there. The meeting discussed whether visits should still take place as the building is still functional however the reality is that no detainee would be taken there. It was agreed that no visits should be undertaken as the issues being raised would not be relevant. Mr Edwards confirmed that if the situation were to change, the visitors would be informed as a priority.

**ACTION: Mr Edwards**

**PROGRESS UPDATE ON HMIC / HMIP JOINT INSPECTION OF POLICE CUSTODY**

7.1 CI Shimmons informed the meeting that he has put together a short video of adverse incidents including violent and medical issues that have occurred in custody which he would be happy to show at the next meeting. It will give an oversight of the incidents which are dealt with in custody which visitors may not usually see. It was agreed that an edited version will be shown at the pre meeting in April.

**ACTION: CI SHIMMONS & OPCC**

7.2 HMIC inspect every 5 years. Dorset was inspected in March 2015 and an action plan is published from that process to ensure Dorset Police move forwards. A re-visit is due in the next 6 weeks. HMIC grade responses at 3 levels,

- areas of concern
- areas of recommendation
- areas of improvement.

Dorset were graded with 1 recommendation and 12 areas for improvement. To put the review into context with others around the country, CI Shimmons shared that Lancashire have 3 areas of concern and 33 areas for improvement. Dorset is well placed in comparison to others.

- 7.3 The main area of recommendation is that Dorset Police should engage with their counterparts in the local authority to instigate an immediate review of the provision of local authority accommodation for children under section 38(6) PACE 1984, and monitor performance data to ensure that children are not detained unnecessarily in police cells. This theme has come up in many reviews across the country. If a child (17 and under) is charged with a severe criminal offence they are remanded but held in custody. The Act says that a child should be moved out of custody and into the care of out of hours social services, to place them in an emergency foster placement. Their duty of care is to provide a placement and take that child to court the next day.
- 7.4 Dorset Police are reliant on partners for this to happen therefore a lot of work is going on around this area. Staff ensure that everything is recorded correctly and elevate matters but it ultimately comes down to funding. There is only one child placement in Dorset. There is a lot of work still to be undertaken and this is not complete but it is confirmed it is being worked towards.
- 7.5 In terms of other recommendations there are 12 minor areas for improvement. CI Shimmons confirmed that all of these actions are complete, and they achieved everything that HMIC wanted. CI Shimmons shared that he is very comfortable with where Dorset are in terms of provision and around the safety of detainees.
- 7.6 CI Shimmons informed the meeting that Dorset Police are working with the Samaritans to ensure those who need help and support have a service to support them. In Bournemouth custody a call can be put through to the cell and they can have a call in the cell to manage their concerns and issues directly. Only Dorset Police are currently doing this. ICVs were pleased with this. Currently Weymouth does not have the technology to do this.

## **ICVA UPDATE**

- 8.1 Mr Harrold gave an update from ICVA. There is a new strategic board of Directors to help the overall running to improve the service nationally.
- 8.2 A training review has taken place, more will be explained in months to come, however it is intended that it will be in 'bitesize' chunks, which should be more beneficial rather than half day sessions.
- 8.3 A consultation will take place regarding membership fees. A flat fee has been proposed and there will be discussions held at the January Board meeting.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

- 9.1 March ICV conference. A reminder has been sent out to ICV visitors. Any expressions of interest to attend the meeting should be sent to Mr Harrold by 31 January 2017.
- 9.2 Mr Walker commented there was a lack of towel at Bournemouth – DI Shimmons confirmed that this has been reordered.
- 9.3 The kennel at Bournemouth custody is out of order. Weymouth is operational. DI Shimmons confirmed the matter is in hand.

Next meeting 24 April 2017 6pm for pre-meet and 7pm for the Panel meeting

The Chair asked if there were any other issues to be raised, there were none.

*Meeting ended at 17:10*