

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL

Draft Minutes of meeting held on Monday 16 October 2017

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 1, 2 and 3 on Monday 16 October 2017 at 7pm

Present: Ms J Bradbury, Mr P Cashmore, Mrs E Cross, Mr S D'Arrigo, Mr C Ellis, Mrs T Farwell, Mr A Fear, Miss C Hall, Mr R Hermans, Miss N Hill, Dr D James (Chair), Mr M Payne, Ms N Reynolds, Mr T Walker, Mrs I Why

Also Present:

Mr A Harrold, Director of Operations, OPCC
Mrs Y Fenwick, Governance and Contact Manager, OPCC
Mrs A Giles, Governance Officer, OPCC
Mrs J Steadman, Head of Criminal Justice
Mr K Edwards, Custody Support Officer
Inspector L Fry, Dorset Police
Mr A Zakrzewski, Member of the Public
Ms C Etienne, Member of the Public
Mr K Skerman, Member of the Public

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mr M Underhill, Assistant Chief Constable Fielding, Chief Inspector Claxton, Mrs A Cray and Mrs B White.
- 1.2 Mr Zakrzewski, Ms Etienne and Mr Skerman were introduced to the Panel as three of the six successful candidates selected following the recent recruitment process.
- 1.3 The Panel were informed that Mrs Fraser had resigned from the Scheme.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIRS

- 2.1 Dr D James was elected as Chair for the period October 2017 to July 2018. Mrs I Why, Mr M Payne and Mr C Ellis were elected as Deputy Chairs for the same period.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 were approved and signed as a true record.

Action Log

- 3.2 Cracked Tiles – Inspector Fry advised that maintenance work is underway in Weymouth Custody. However, the cracked tiles would not be addressed on this occasion, as although there was a visible crack there were no ligature points and he felt there was minimal risk, although it would continue to be monitored.

CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

- 4.1 The report showed that 89% of those detainees offered accepted a visit. Visits were well spread across both days of the week and times of the day. There had been an increase in 'unsociable hours' visits and the Chair thanked the Panel for their efforts. It had been noted that one visit had been over 3 hours. The Chair asked visitors to be mindful of the impact that could have on custody staff and advised that ideally, no longer than 40 minutes should be spent interviewing detainees to avoid delaying the Escorting Officer away from their post and detainees should be prioritised accordingly.
- 4.2 The Panel noted that there had been a delay gaining access to one suite, however this had been due to the increased security levels which followed the terror attack in London the day before.
- 4.3 Visit to Bournemouth on 25/09/2017. The report had noted that a detainee had not been subject to the correct observation visit, however, it had been acknowledged that this had been an oversight on the part of the ICVs. Mr Edwards advised that the 'clock' related to observations would have been reset at the point of charge, hence the confusion. Mr Edwards informed the Panel that not all allergies would be recorded on the white board outside of each cell, the focus would be on information the custody staff would need to know. Medical staff would have separate notes related to detainee's allergies. Allergy information would be shared with custody staff during the handover period. Following receipt of this report, the Custody Support Officer had ordered magnetic white boards to be added to the doors of the vulnerable cells.
- 4.4 Visit to Bournemouth on 05/07/2017. It had been noted that there had been two prison 'lock outs' reported on the visit. Mr Edwards confirmed that this would continue to be monitored.
- 4.5 Visit to Bournemouth on 11/07/2017. The ICVs and a detainee had been complimentary of the staff on this visit.
- 4.6 Visit to Bournemouth on 18/08/2017. During this visit, custody staff had some difficulty locating a detainee, but this had been dealt with at the time.
- 4.7 Visit to Bournemouth on 24/08/2017. It had been recorded that a detainee had stated that he could not use the water in the cell as there had been faeces around the sink. Mr Edwards advised that the detainee had been moved to an alternative cell and a deep clean carried out. The visitors were concerned that the detainee had not been moved sooner as the Detention Officer appeared to be aware of the situation. Inspector Fry confirmed that there would be a limit on the number of times detainees who made a 'dirty protest' would be moved to an alternative cell, as cells required a deep clean which cannot be achieved immediately.
- 4.8 Visit to Bournemouth on 04/09/2017. Visitors reported they arrived for the visit during handover, and had been advised that it was inconvenient. They observed the handover which had been carried out efficiently and although staffing levels had been reported as low, the detainees had been well managed. Mrs Steadman reminded all visitors that arrival during handover could delay the start of the visit. Visitors had been aware and would be happy to wait. Mr Edwards would remind custody staff that visitors should be permitted to observe the handover.

- 4.9 Visit to Weymouth on 16/07/2017. Visitors had reported that nursing staff had not been available until midnight. Mrs Steadman informed the Panel that there had been a staffing issue which had since been resolved. Mr Edwards added that in an emergency the detainee would be taken to hospital. Dr James queried the use of plastic cups to hold doors open on the exercise yard. Inspector Fry reported that it was a cost effective solution and it remained easy to shut the door quickly if required.
- 4.10 Visit to Weymouth on 23/07/2017. It was noted that there were multiple compliments made about the custody staff by detainees, which had been passed on to the staff at the time of the visit.
- 4.11 Visit to Weymouth on 29/07/2017. There had been a delay in commencing the visit, but to avoid waking detainees unnecessarily visitors had made the decision to wait until the observation visits had started.
- 4.12 Visit to Weymouth on 21/08/2017. Visitors reported that the towel stocks had been low. Inspector Fry explained that following a change in supplier for towels and rip proof clothing a few difficulties had been experienced but had been resolved. Stocks were managed across all three suites, transferring to alternate suites when required.
- 4.13 Visit to Weymouth on 17/09/2017. It had been noted that there had been no ambient meals available for a few days. Mr Edwards stated these would be ordered from Bournemouth and staff had been aware to contact him if they experienced delays.
- 4.14 Visit to Poole on 08/09/2017. It was noted that this report form was yet to be received. However, visitors confirmed that there had been no concerns.

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

- 5.1 The Panel had been provided with a copy of the Scheme Annual Report for 2016 - 2017. The report showed that during this period 67% of detainees held at the time of a visit had been seen by visitors, 94% of those offered a visit accepted, an average of 4.7 detainees had been seen per visit and access had been gained to the suite within 5 minutes for 94% of the visits undertaken. It also showed a good spread of visits over all times of the day and days of the week. The Scheme Manager thanked visitors for their commitment and dedication to the role.

IPCC DEATHS IN CUSTODY REPORT 2016-2017

- 6.1 The Panel had been provided with a copy of the IPCC Deaths in Custody Report for 2016-2017. This has been provided for information only. Inspector Fry added that any death in custody would be daunting for custody staff but through their excellent care and diligence and that of the visitors, there had been no deaths in custody during that period.

ICVA AGM SUMMARY

- 7.1 A summary of the ICVA Annual General Meeting was provided to the Panel for information. The Scheme Manager highlighted the changes that had taken place in recent time to ICVA and Schemes now had increased contact, improved training and involvement in Schemes.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Recruitment

- 8.1 Following the recent recruitment campaign, 12 applicants had been interviewed and six offered positions, subject to the usual security clearance.
- 8.2 Induction training had been scheduled to take place on the 2 December with visit commencement in early December for four visitors and the remaining two to start in by April 2018.
- 8.3 The Scheme Manager thanked visitors who assisted with the recruitment process.

Thanks

- 8.4 On behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Senior Management Team, Mr Harrold expressed his thanks to the Panel for their continuing support and dedication. He added that although Mr Underhill had reduced his national portfolio he would continue as Chair of ICVA.

Samaritans

- 8.5 Mr Edwards advised the Panel that arrangements had been made for the Samaritans to come into Bournemouth Custody up to twice a week and that plans were being made to extending this to Weymouth Custody.

Suites Closed For Maintenance

- 8.6 Weymouth Custody had been closed for maintenance and detainees transferred to Poole. Bournemouth would undergo maintenance work in November and Poole reopened for detainees during that period.

Weymouth Bridge

- 8.7 Work was underway in Weymouth to improve the custody bridge to bring it in line with those in Bournemouth and Poole. The work is expected to be completed by March.

Observation Visits

- 8.8 The Panel asked for their thanks to be passed to custody staff in relation to the recent observation visits that had taken place. Custody staff had been helpful and accommodating and had been clearly passionate about their roles. Visitors reported that the visits had helped them understand the processes behind detention.

Staffing

- 8.9 Mrs Steadman advised new custody staff had been appointed and asked visitors remained patient whilst they trained.

Meeting ended at 8.00pm