

**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 29 April 2013**

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 1, 2 and 3 on Monday, 29 April 2013 at 7.00 pm

**PRESENT:**

Mrs V Grier (Chairman),  
Mr J Baylem, Mrs C Bishop, Miss R Coleman, Mrs A Cray,  
Mrs T Farwell, Mr K Gooding,  
Mr E Holloway, Dr D James, Mr R Kerr, Mr M Payne,  
Mr W Penzer, Mrs S Porter, Mr T Walker, Mrs I Why

**Also Present:**

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable M Hiles  
Chief Inspector S Thorneycroft, Crime and Criminal Justice  
Mr K Edwards, Crime and Criminal Justice  
Mrs Y Fenwick, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

6. Apologies were received from Mrs K Emery, Miss C Freestone, Mr R Hermans, Mrs A Middleditch, Mr D Sandever, Mr R Shore and Mrs B White.

**MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING**

7. Subject to an amendment at paragraph 4.12 to read Mr Edwards added that a standing instruction was in place which advised staff that detainees 'coming down' must not be placed in a cell registering below 19 degrees, the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2013 were approved and signed as a true record.

**CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS**

- 8.1 The report to the Panel showed that of 194 detainees held, 120 (62%) had been offered a visit, of which 107 (89%) had accepted. The spread and timing of the visits was good. It was pleasing to note that one visit had been made between 1am and 7am. The Chairman thanked the visitors involved for conducting those visits.
- 8.2 It had also been noted that 9 (30%) of the reports had no issues at all and that 64% of the visits were conducted within 1 hour.
- 8.3 The Chairman asked visitors to ensure that ethnicity was recorded on the report forms, the information would be available from the summary print provided to visitors at the beginning of the visit.
- 8.4 Visitors were reminded to record any reasons for delay in entering the custody suite as two reports with delays of 10-15 minutes had not detailed the reason for the delay.

**Issues Raised for Discussion**

**Bournemouth**

- 8.5 On a visit to Bournemouth on 16 February, the visitors had reported that a detainee with language difficulties, although apparently relaxed and smiling, they had been unsure about whether they had consent to check the log. Mr Edwards reiterated that language line could always be used especially if visitors were concerned about a detainee.

## Issues Raised for Noting

### **Bournemouth**

- 8.6** During a further visit to Bournemouth on 1 January, visitors had been advised that the custody suite had been short staffed. Mr Edwards advised that there had not been a staff shortage, although it had been accepted that the suite had worked to capacity that evening. He added that staffing would be mapped out for the Christmas/New Year period with the option to open Poole Custody if required.
- 8.7** On 1 February, a visit had been made to a detainee who reported that he had been told that he could not have an additional blanket as 'it was too expensive to clean them'. Mr Edwards informed the Panel that the procedure regarding the provision of blankets had once again been reiterated. It had been noted on the same visit that detainees had not been aware that they could be provided with a pillow. Mr Edwards advised that the 'First Time in Custody' sheet would be updated to reflect what could be provided.
- 8.8** Following a visit to Bournemouth on 12 February, it had been noted although only six detainees had been held the suite had been busy with other visitors, with a number of staff taking part in a training session the same day. Mr Edwards advised that the Force had tried to arrange the training over split shifts but had decided that staff would be rostered onto training next year. The visitors advised that although there had been a delay entering the suite, it had been sufficiently explained.

### **POOLE**

- 8.9** During a visit to Poole on 5 March, the visitors had noted that although the exercise yard had been cleared of algae, nothing had been done to rectify the gaps in the rain cover. Mr Edwards confirmed that communication continued with the PFI and the situation would be managed until it had been fully resolved.
- 8.10** Following a further visit to Poole on 21 March, visitors reported that a juvenile detainee had requested a call to be made to the Youth Offending Team, at the time of the visit attempts to contact that appropriate person had been unsuccessful. It had been confirmed that attempts would continue. Following a question from the Panel, Mr Edwards confirmed that the Force would continue to offer an Appropriate Adult to any vulnerable detainee irrespective of age.

### **WEYMOUTH**

- 8.11** Following a visit to Weymouth on 19 February, the visitors had been concerned about a detainee who appeared vulnerable. The custody sergeant consequently advised them a mental health assessment had been arranged.
- 8.12** It had been noted on a visit to Weymouth on 4 March, that visitors had been asked to wait out of view of the booking in desk and had been left unsupervised during the visit. The officer had been advised by colleagues with regard to the correct procedure. Mr Edwards confirmed that the procedure had been reiterated to the detention officer concerned.
- 8.13** During the same visit, a detainee had reported that they were lactose intolerant, so had consequently claimed to have gone 10 hours without food. Offers of food had not been recorded on the log. Staff had been aware of the detainee's issues and advised visitors that in such circumstances it would be possible to return to ambient meals or to go out and buy food if necessary.
- 8.14** On a further visit on 15 March, visitors had received an incorrect version of a detainee's log which had contained the detainee's name. Mr Edwards acknowledged that this had

been a learning point for staff, but the Panel accepted that on some occasions names may appear on logs and should just be ignored.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

#### **Estates**

- 9.1** Mr Edwards advised the Panel that Wareham had now been taken off line as a custody facility and other sites would be reviewed in the future. He added that Weymouth and Bournemouth suites would undergo a deep clean on an annual basis. During those periods it would be likely that the Poole facility would be used.
- 9.2** Chief Inspector Thorneycroft thanked the visitors for their positive comments and highlighting issues to be addressed.

*Meeting ended at 19.50 hrs*