



To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 27 February 2014

CAMBRIDGESHIRE CUSTODY – RESPONSE TO 2011 HMI INSPECTION AND ADDITIONAL UPDATES

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to summarise the progress made since the 2011 HM Inspectorate of Prisons and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC/P) re-inspection on police custody suites. This re-inspection followed an initial inspection in 2009 which identified significant concerns with regards to custody provision.
- 1.2 The paper will also assess the current position with regards to custody in relation to the most recent national guidance.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Board are invited to note the report.

3. Background

- 3.1 In November 2008 the Constabulary's custody suites were inspected by HMIC/P. At that time the force had eight designated custody suites, although only four were used as routine: Peterborough Thorpe Wood, Parkside, Huntingdon and Wisbech.
- 3.2 The inspection was significantly critical and a total of 77 recommendations followed for improvement. The report concluded:

“There were considerable shortfalls in many aspects of strategic management and service delivery. Urgent improvement is required to bring these suites up to a satisfactory standard.”
- 3.3 In June 2011 HMIC/P carried out a follow-up inspection. Each of the 2008 recommendations were examined and assessments made in relation to improvements made. The inspection team concluded:

“We were pleased to find that the force had taken our previous recommendations very seriously and we identified significant improvement in many areas, although some where we still had concerns. Overall, provision of police custody in Cambridgeshire was much improved from our previous inspection.”

4 Progress made since the 2011 HMI Inspection specifically

- 4.1 The 2011 inspection provided 39 new recommendations covering: (a) Management (b) Strategy (c) Treatment and Conditions (4) Individual Rights, and (5) Health Care.
- 4.2 The Office of the PCC has access at any time to the force action plan that evidences progress against each HMI recommendation and has reviewed them prior to this BCB meeting.
- 4.3 In summary, 34 recommendations have been fully met or surpassed and 5 recommendations (2 main and 3 minor 'housekeeping') are in progress:
- Collating use of force custody data (7.7): Generally 'use of force' data is obtained via self-reporting by individual officers, which in turn is then recorded by a number of different depts. This does not allow for inclusive collation of custody specific data for routine examination by the Custody Managers or other performance groups. As such custody managers rely on exceptional reporting only and may therefore not be best placed to identify emerging trends or other concerns. This gap in management information is being addressed via the newly formed Use of Force Monitoring Group.
 - Fire practice evacuations (7.10): Whilst procedures are up to date, fire drills have not been conducted for some considerable time. This is being addressed with full drills arranged for 17/02 at Parkside and 03/03 at Thorpe Wood.
 - The three minor 'housekeeping' recommendations: For each, interim solutions have been implemented and action to achieve full adoption is in hand. The recommendations are: (7.29) 'covering: the temperature of microwave meals should be checked and recorded' (7.35) 'patient information leaflets should be available in the clinical rooms', and (7.36) 'loose medicine tablets and blister packs should be disposed of'

5 Position against Authorised Professional Practice (APP)

- 5.1 APP brings together, refreshes and revises all previous national guidance from ACPO / NPIA / other relevant bodies into one electronic repository. APP now represents the primary central guidance for policing matters nationally, with an expectation of adoption by all forces.
- 5.2 'Detention and Custody - Principles of safer detention' is the specific APP relevant to custody. Within the APP is a section focusing on 'Senior Management Considerations' which provides 16 recommendations or controls covering: (a) Chief Officer focus (b) Management structure (c) Oversight (d) Quality assurance, and (e) Use of force.
- 5.3 In summary:
- a) We can demonstrate working practices and governance structures that positively reflect each of the APP senior management considerations.
 - b) In operational practice custody managers and staff refer to, and comply with, the APP as routine. However, over 100 existing Cambridgeshire custody guidance documents and procedures now require reviewing against the latest APP, which itself consists of over 300 sections. The force's CDD is aware of this force wide issue of policy replacement by APP and is considering tri-force approach. In the interim, clear warnings to staff re

necessity to refer to APP before policy and if in doubt to contact a member of the custody management team have been promulgated.

6 Additional information

- 6.1 An initial assessment of the Constabulary's position against the findings in part 4 (arrest-disposal process) of HMIC / HMCPSI 2013 report 'Stop the Drift 2' is included within the action plan. A key observation focused on the advantages gained by the centralisation of resources within 'super custody suites'. The report concluded that modern, purpose-built custody suites with increased cell capacity had resulted in better facilities for detainees, staff and other users.
- 6.2 Cambridgeshire custody developments support that observation; as a partner in the Cambs / Norfolk / Suffolk Police Investigation Center (PIC) super-suite at Kings Lynn.
- 6.3 Also with detainee numbers reduced by 40% since 2011, we are now able to concentrate our resources and skills toward the two largest suites within the force boundaries: Thorpe Wood and Parkside. This again reflects the 'centralisation' thinking in the Stop the Drift report.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 It is submitted that significant improvement in Cambridgeshire custody provision, practice and management has been achieved since the original 2008 HMI inspection and further to the 2011 revisit. The Board is invited to note that progress and conclude that future inspections would now result in far more positive assessments.
- 7.2 Whilst it is observed that there has been significant progress it should be noted that police detention and custody is an inherently higher risk area of police business. The Constabulary will not be complacent and will continue to monitor and inspect custody provision to manage the risk in this area of business.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 The Board are invited to note the report.