

Cambridgeshire Independent Custody Visitors' Group Meeting

Date: Monday 12th September 2016

Time: 7.00 pm – arrival from 6.15 for an informal network opportunity

Location: Conference Room, Monks Wood

Minutes

Attendees

ICVs	Others
AW	Andy Coles – DPCC
PR	Insp Iain Moor – South Custody Manager
BE	
GW	Catherine Kimberley – OPCC
JL	Carla Walker – OPCC (note taking)
JB	
JT	
FC	
JC	

Welcome, introductions and apologies

JT chaired the meeting and welcomed the ICVs who introduced themselves.

Apologies were received from:

- AL
- CM
- ME
- CI Ian Simmons
- AD
- GR
- PH
- GR
- LS
- Insp Alex Wood-Davis

Minutes and actions of previous Cambridgeshire ICV Meeting on 13th June 2016

There was only one action from the last meeting which is still carried over:

- CK to establish progress on a digital version of the form – CK updated the group that development is being completed by Hertfordshire with Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire to use across the 3 forces. Herts have developed a draft form, which JT and AW have commented on – awaiting an updated version to share wider.

Current performance & matters arising from visits

Summary of visits (from June 2016)

CK introduced herself as the new Scheme Manager, replacing Hannah Watson.

CK presented the summary visit report. AW remarked that there are a number of visit forms missing on the report so CW will liaise with the Constabulary to locate these: 1 visit to March on 26th July, and a second visit to St Neots on 20th July; two visits to Thorpe Wood: 22nd June and 21st August; and a visit to Huntingdon on 10th August. CK will circulate the updated summary once the forms are received.

- CK remarked that custody staff have welcomed a variation in visit times. Two major issues remain: access to Appropriate Adult Support in the south of the county and access to Health Care Professionals across the north and the south. Both of these issues will be raised at the OPCC/Constabulary Governance meeting on 11th October. The HCP contract is currently under review and as it covers seven forces, there are lots of discussions taking place. CK went on to thank the ICVs for their support in evidence gathering – it is extremely helpful for both the Commissioner and the Assistant Chief Constable to have case study material.
- JT commented that whilst the ICVs are not social workers for staff there is a general feeling of low morale.
- IM replied that staff morale is challenging at present with all the changes that are occurring with the new shift patterns and that custody staff will say they are short staffed however they are aware of the protocol if they feel they need support. AWD emphasised this procedure at a meeting recently held with custody staff. A new shift pattern is due to start in Jan 2017 and adverts placed for new staff.
- JT thanked IM for his comments.
- JT asked if custody staff have been consulted.
- IM replied that a consultation is taking place and they are looking at ‘four on four off’ shift pattern.

Feedback from recent training opportunities

CK provided feedback from a six-week training course held over the summer for custody staff. Feedback was largely very positive with lots of comments on how professional ICVs conduct visits: there is also better understanding of the pressures in custody.

- “ICVs help make things happen.”

- “Friendly professional and focused.”
- “Concentration on welfare as well as environment.”
- “More understanding of busy periods/handovers.”

CK remarked that there were a few comments about awareness amongst ICVs regarding self-harm: both in recognising the signs and in terms of personal security. CK asked if some self-harm training would be of use given the growing trends in this area. It was agreed that this would be helpful. **ACTION for CK to organise for next meeting. CK will also look into providing a personal security update at the next meeting.**

ICVA are in the process of changing their training offer and are redeveloping the ICVA website. There is an online library <http://icva.org.uk/publications>. ICVA have approached Scheme Managers and asked for feedback on e-learning opportunities.

- AW commented that he doesn't feel people would get much out of online training without the opportunity for peer discussion: attending an actual course would be more beneficial for people.
- JT remarked that having both e-learning and physical training opportunities would be the best way forward.
- JB commented that the recent Autism training organised by Bedfordshire was superb and provided helpful tips in knowing what sort of language to use when questioning people with autism.
- Everyone agreed that they would like another session of the Autism training. **ACTION for CK to organise another date.**

CK mentioned that custody staff have welcomed the changes in the times visits are taking place. AW thanked IM and his officers for this feedback.

Update from the OPCC

CK welcomed Andy Coles, Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner. Both Andy and Jason have had a busy few weeks out and about across the county with engagement activities, including both 'shadowing' an ICV visit with AW. CK thanked AW for accommodating both Andy and Jason.

Jason and team have been busy preparing his Police and Crime Plan, a draft of which is now live on the PCC website for feedback and comments. http://cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/police-crime-plan-2017-2020/?preview_id=7013&preview_nonce=4c1db17cdd&preview=true

ACTION ALL.

The Police and Crime Plan is categorised into four themes: victims, offenders, communities, transformation: in a straightforward layout – 'Plan on a page'. The Plan will be going to the

OPCC/Force Business Coordination Board meeting in December and will be published in February 2017.

CK issued a case study press release on the role of ICVs during June's Volunteer Week but there was no take up from local media. CK is always looking for opportunities to raise the profile of volunteering as a Custody Visitor and may approach you for feedback.

Andy Coles introduced his background and role as Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner. With more than thirty years in the Metropolitan Police Force, Andy became a Peterborough City Councillor last year concentrating on Peterborough so is very experienced on local issues. His main focus will be on the vulnerable and how the Force are dealing with such people.

CK said that Jason Ablewhite has appointed a new Engagement Officer. Sarah Morgan will be based in Huntingdon but will cover the whole county.

Update from Cambridgeshire Constabulary

JL asked IM what is happening with the Virtual Courts progress.

IM said that provisions are stalled with the virtual court at Parkside however it is still planned for installation – there are currently IT issues.

JL asked whether Virtual Court staffing means custody staff would have more capacity.

IM said that custody staff would not have more capacity as the virtual court would be run by staff within custody although discussions need to be held.

IM remarked that St Neots Custody Suite is now permanently closed for good and will not be used again.

IM attending a meeting with Lee Adamson of the YMCA who runs the south Appropriate Adult scheme. The contract is up next year so discussions are ongoing about extending this to a 24 hour service. As the contract is currently Council run, discussions are being held about funding.

CK mentioned that Lee Adamson would be happy to organise a meeting for ICVs about the Appropriate Adult Scheme.

JT said that would be welcome. **ACTION – CK to circulate a new date.**

IM said that there has been a noticeable decline in underage DPs being held overnight.

JL asked whether this would have an impact to vulnerable adult access to Appropriate Adults.

IM said that these people are not generally held overnight as HCP or LADs would have supported.

Any other business

AW raised an issue that during a visit a male detainee was in need of a shower and there was only female staff on duty therefore the detainee was unable to shower. Also during another visit, a female

detainee was in need of a shower and some female sanitary products, however the detainee claimed that these were not offered.

IM said that he would look in to this through CCTV as those things should have been offered.

AW asked if the sanitary packs were always offered and if so, by a female member of staff. If not, do male staff call for someone to be available?

JT remarked that these are questions that should be asked during the booking process. If the shift is all female staff and a male detainee requests a shower, should a male officer then be requested to attend?

IM said that that wasn't the case however if it was challenged it may change.

BE agreed that this was something that should be provided by custody staff.

IM stated that custody staff are aware of the process and should make sure all ICVs are aware.

BE asked if ICVs could be made aware if detainees had autism or other learning difficulties as on a recent visit this information was not provided.

IM will find out if this information that can be shared with the ICVs as it could be a medical disclosure issue. **ACTION – IM**

JT remarked that the current cleaner at Parkside was fantastic - could this feedback please be passed on to him?

IM will pass it on.

GW thanked CK/AW for passing on information from ICVA however the document regarding the European Convention on Human Rights was 152 pages! This is far too much so please be wary of the size of documents shared.

CK confirmed that there are monthly bulletins from ICVA so she attempts to cherry pick certain articles of interest.

BE asked if there is a way to access a closed social group so the ICVs can communicate.

BE remarked that it would be good for sharing ideas and documents. **ACTION: CK to look into this.**

Date for next meeting: 5th December 2016 Location: Cambridgeshire Constabulary HQ, Huntingdon.