

Independent Custody Visitors North Panel Meeting

Date: Monday 8th December 2014

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Conference Room, Thorpe Wood Police Station

Minutes

Attendees – Panel Members

(JB)

(JC)

(FC)

(AD)

(JD)

(RH)

(RP)

(PR)

(CS)

(GW)

(AW)

Attendees – other

Sgt Glen Alderman (GA) – Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Nicky Phillipson (NP) – Strategic Advisor, OPCC

Hannah Watson (HW) – Volunteer Co-ordinator, OPCC

1. Welcome & introductions

AW opened the meeting, welcomed and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Apologies received

Apologies were received from CI Iain Clarke, CI Andy Gratrix, Insp Angus McNeil, OM, JM, and JR.

3. Minutes of previous North Panel meeting held 22nd September 2014

JC identified that at the last meeting, the panel discussed that previous minutes uploaded to the OPCC website still contained full names. This was not recorded in the minutes.

Action: HW to update previous minutes to reflect this discussion.

FC commented that the fobs allowing access to parking at Copse Court were a welcome addition.

Action: HW to establish an action log for future meeting.

- HW to establish if names would be released under a FOI request - Email sent to ICVs 26/09 stating that *“as a rule, we would not provide names of volunteers in response to an FOI request as we would err on the side of caution. In addition, concerns were raised that a panel document with names still existed on the PCC website. I can confirm that this document has now been removed from the website. We are aware that this has left a Google trace which we are now working to remove from the Internet. We have also contacted the ICO to inform them that this has happened and obtain their guidance on whether or not this constitutes a breach.”* Subsequent update: The Google trace has been removed and we have had an update from the ICO who have made a decision *“for no further action”*
- AM to chase as there should be a separate document - completed
- HW and AM to establish system for ensuring issues raised at Thorpe Wood that cannot be easily addresses / fixed are recorded and monitored (possibility of using one note) – completed. HW and GA have a shared spreadsheet on OneNote where issues raised by ICVs are added. GA updates with actions and time-scales. ICVs are encouraged to check the spreadsheet and will ensure that you are aware of ‘on-going’ issues like

maintenance which you then don't need to report each visit (Custody staff will be able to access it.)

- AM to ensure current Halal certificate is displayed in March – RH confirmed that on a visit on 27th October, it was displayed.
- AM will remind staff to offer DPs the opportunity to have a wash and brush teeth – GA informed the panel that this has now been included as part of the fixed hand over process and everyone in over 8 hours will be offered. Staff will add to the Custody Record when detainees are asked.
- IC will distribute January and June Custody Sergeant training dates for ICVs to attend, if they wish – January course has been postponed. *[Post meeting update – course will commence on 9th February for 3 weeks. IC will distribute timetable once agreed and ICVs are welcome to attend any session.]*
- HW to share ICV annual report when finalised by the Custody Visitor Panel – completed and it will be sent out with minutes. Waiting for Sir Graham to return from holiday on 16/12/14 to approve before it will be published on website.
- HW to suggest 2015 meeting dates once all ICVs have been consulted – completed, most people were happy with a Monday meeting. AW suggested the following dates:
 - Monday 23rd March, 7pm, Thorpe Wood
 - Monday 29th June, 7pm, HQ, Huntingdon
 - Monday 28th September, 7pm, Thorpe Wood
 - Monday 14th December, 7pm, Thorpe Wood

Action: HW to book rooms and confirm dates.

4. Current performance & matters arising from visits

Summary was shared which will be attached to minutes. **Action: HW to share summary when agenda sent out so people have an opportunity to look at it before the meeting.**

HW's reflections - another good quarter so thanks to everyone involved.

Encouraging to see that the waiting time (time from reporting to reception to entering custody) has reduced considerable so thanks to Custody Staff to responding to ICVs quickly. HW thanked JC and RP for highlighting a young man who had been kept beyond his PACE clock. They acknowledged that the custody staff had made a good decision to keep him in custody as a safeguarding concern. The OPCC has followed this up and praised the custody staff involved.

Unfortunately, there was a missed visit in September. AW confirmed that it is a joint responsibility to organise visits, so asked ICVs to be mindful of when visits are taking place.

OPCC missing forms for visits to Huntingdon in September and November.

Action: GA to send on missing report forms to OPCC

JD and AW reported that at a recent visit to Huntingdon, the escorting officer was unable to find the keys for some cells at Huntingdon. **Action: GA to arrange for the cells at Huntingdon to be unlocked.** Furthermore, they had problems exiting the Custody area as they had been locked in by swipe access door. **Action – GA to look into an exit procedure for ICVs at Huntingdon.**

One ICV reported difficulties viewing CCTV and gaining access to the kitchen area. GA updated the panel that custody staff have recently been reminded about detainees privacy and have been asked to challenge staff accessing CCTV unnecessarily. However, ICVs must have access to CCTV and kitchen areas during their visits. **Action: GA to remind custody staff that ICVs are able to check CCTV and kitchen**

GA reported that in the last 3 weeks, Thorpe Wood has taken a new delivery of towels. Privacy screens will be added to showers in next few weeks and a line will be added to the floor at the booking in desk.

5. Update: Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

HW informed the panel that the OPCC has been re-writing the policy and procedures for Independent Custody Visiting. This is to ensure compliance with the Home Office Codes of Practice, but also reflect good practice both in Cambridgeshire and elsewhere. HW will circulate for a 4 week consultation and encouraged everyone to respond.

HW reminded ICVs of the event on 27th January – formal invites will follow. Hoping this will be an annual event – an opportunity for us to thank you for your contribution, celebrate your achievements and plan for the future. The programme is still be drafted so if you'd like any particular input (about Independent Custody Visiting or the wider OPCC / Constabulary work) then please let HW know.

HW is now the Eastern Region representative on the ICVA Management board.

Volunteer Police Cadets – a uniform youth group for 13 -18 years old is now up and running in Peterborough at the Thomas Deacon Academy. The scheme aims to promote a practical understanding of policing and encourage the spirit of adventure and good citizenship through volunteering in the community. 33 young people have started in Peterborough and at least third come from a crime vulnerable background.

6. Update: Cambridgeshire Constabulary

GA reported that custody is undergoing a lot of change and particularly how collaboration will affect the way they work. In addition, they are looking at how

compliant the custody facilities are with European Convention on Human Rights so the Chief Constable (CC) has commissioned a piece of work to look at this. There are concerns, for example that the Constabulary could be open to complaints of torture as some of the cells do not have natural light. It is likely that a number of cells will be placed out of use. In addition, privacy screens will be added to the booking in desk.

Parkside is closing for 3 weeks on 19 January 2015 so improvements can be made. As a result, Huntingdon will be open during the Parkside closure and will be staffed full-time. North and South Panels will need to agree who will conduct visits while Parkside is closed. The Constabulary is still on alert to HMIC/P inspection.

7. ICVA Conference Update

AW attended the Conference on behalf of the North Panel. The focus was on protection of vulnerable people. Documents and presentations can be viewed at <http://icva.org.uk/news/article/annual-conference-presentations>

8. Any other business

OM is no longer visiting Huntingdon.

RHs has resigned – his visits are being shared out amongst panel members.

Date of next meeting – Monday 23rd March 2015.