

## **Independent Custody Visitors North Panel Meeting**

**Date:** Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2014

**Time:** 7.00pm

**Location:** Conference Room, Thorpe Wood Police Station

### **Minutes**

#### **Attendees – Panel Members**

(JB)

(JC)

(FC)

(AD)

(JD)

(RH)

(RP)

(AW)

#### **Attendees – other**

CI Iain Clarke (IC) – Head of Custody, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Insp Angus McNeil (AM) – Custody Manager, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

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 RH, OM, JR, PR, CS and GW

### **3. Minutes of previous North Panel meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014**

- HW will establish reasons for sharing minutes on website – we have a moral obligation as well as a legal one, to be open with the public to provide reassurance and further build confidence and trust in the police. In addition, we would have to release it under Freedom of Information Act so therefore we make it publically available as FOI requests are time consuming to deal with. We will ensure that the minutes are written in a way that is appropriate for public viewing. ICVs also notified HW that names exist on minutes on the website.
- **Action: HW to establish if names would be released under a FOI request. HW to remove names from minutes and notify ICO.**
- AW will add first names to the rota and will contact every panel member a month before the new rota is issued to discuss pairings and availability - completed
- HW to share feedback provided to ICVA - completed. Home Office has since been in contact to thank us for the detailed feedback.
- HW to establish if a text only copy is available – not available.
- AM to follow up on location and use of fire extinguishers in Custody – not to be placed or used in custody. H & S representative happy for them to be only located in the kitchen.
- AM will investigate – CCTV pixels amended
- AM to update staff and introduce at March – there is an audit trail. On the back of the previous visit form – it wasn't a separate document.
- **Action: AM to chase as there should be a separate document**
- **Action: 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.)**
- AW / HW will ask for agenda items from panel members before issuing the agenda – completed / ongoing.

#### 4. Current performance & matters arising from visits

Summary of visits and issues raised was shared. ICVs felt this was a good summary of visits for the quarter and to be repeated for future meetings.

RH confirmed the halal certificate at March is still out of date.

**Action: AM to ensure current Halal certificate is displayed.**

ICVs thanked AM and the G4s representative for ensuring supplies of nicotine lozenges were available at Huntingdon despite a supply issue.

HW reminded ICVs that the arrival time should be the time they report to reception rather than arrival time at the station. AW reminded ICVs that they were not entitled to jump the queue. AM was pleased to hear the positive feedback about EO escorting ICVs to custody.

HW also reminded ICVs about the updates to PACE codes C and H (previously circulated by email). DPs should now have received and **understood** the notice of rights and entitlements.

JB was concerned that following a recent visit to Thorpe Wood no DPs who had been in overnight had been offered a wash and the opportunity to clean teeth etc.

**Action: AM will remind staff to offer DPs the opportunity to have a wash and brush teeth.**

JB also noted on the same visit that the Perspex on several hatches was badly cracked. IC is aware and is chasing remedial work.

ICVS are pleased to note that checks for Smartwater are now being made on every detainee.

## **5. Update: Office of Police and Crime Commissioner**

HW attended ICVA Conference where the HMIC/P gave a presentation of findings from recent Custody Inspections and HW asked panel members to consider these areas when visiting. HMIC/P are hugely supportive of the ICV scheme and value the feedback provided by ICV on report forms as often ICVs highlight things that the inspection team may not have noticed. They encourage ICVs to report whatever they see, no matter how small or big.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary is expecting an unannounced inspection and HMIC/P have confirmed that they would welcome ICVs involvement in the process. As soon as OPCC is aware of the inspection we will let ICVs know.

OPCC has undertaken a self-assessment of the ICV Scheme using a tool provided by ICVA. This has highlighted a number of areas for improvement including on-going training and development of ICVs as well as support and supervision. We will be working with ICVs to make improvements over the next 6 months.

HW reminded ICVs about the opportunity to attend Custody Sergeant training and the ICVA Conference.

**Action: IC will distribute January and June Custody Sergeant training dates for ICVs to attend, if they wish.**

**Action: HW to share ICV annual report when finalised by the Custody Visitor Panel.**

## **6. Update: Cambridgeshire Constabulary**

No major updates from Thorpe Wood Custody although they are expecting some new Sergeants and DOs to join the teams. Going forward, there will be an expectation that all promoted Sergeants will undertake the Custody training course.

IC shared the Constabulary Vulnerability Action Plan with ICVs (attached to the minutes) which looked at how people were treated within Custody, what the gaps were and what improvements can be made. Many of the actions have been implemented. IC asked ICVs to please take a look and share any observations. Please let IC know if there is any feedback either now or in the future

IC is involved in initial discussions across Beds, Herts and Cambs about custody collaboration. Scoping work is being carried out and they are looking at how we can work together in the future.

A peer review has been undertaken at Parkside which has informed a programme of improvements. This will result in Parkside being closed for 2 weeks in January for works to be carried out. Huntingdon will be open. IC is also looking at trialling IT systems during this period to enable officers to book in DPs via video link.

H & S risk assessment has been carried out at Thorpe Wood. IC is happy to circulate if anyone wants a copy. Some of the works have been completed.

Security gate at Thorpe Wood is still not working – waiting for contractors to move the button.

Finally, there is a tender for healthcare commissioning. The contract will run from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 so G4S contract has been extended to the end of the financial year.

## **8. Duty Solicitor Scheme**

If someone doesn't have a solicitor they can go through the Duty Solicitor Scheme where they can receive telephone advice and/or a solicitor present at

interview. DPs are also offered a list of local solicitors if they want to make their own arrangements.

### **9. Any other business**

Some ICVs expressed difficulties in parking outside Thorpe Wood police station. HW has obtained permission for ICVs to park in Copse Court (opposite) and is in the process of enabling access. HW will update as soon as this has been arranged.

ICVs discussed meeting arrangements for 2015. Most people present preferred a Monday evening, but HW will liaise with those not present and suggest dates accordingly. It was agreed that at least one meeting a year will be held at HQ.

**Action: HW to suggest 2015 meeting dates once all ICVs have been consulted.**

**Date of next meeting – 8<sup>th</sup> December – 19.00 hours**