

# Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017, 19:00-21:00

## Minutes

### Present

JT, ICV – South Lead  
AW, ICV – North Lead  
AD, ICV - North  
BE, ICV – North  
GW, ICV – North  
JC, ICV – North  
FC, ICV – South  
JL, ICV – South  
WT, ICV - South  
IM, Custody Inspector  
AB, OPCC - ICV Scheme Manager  
NP, OPCC  
CK, OPCC

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction and Apologies</b>
1.1	JT welcomed all to the meeting and round table introductions were made.
1.2	Apologies were received from: JM - ICV, PR - ICV, ME - ICV, JB - ICV, AL - ICV, RS - ICV, CM - ICV, PH - ICV, IS – T/Chief Inspector, AC – Deputy PCC, AW-D – Custody Inspector
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016</b>
2.1	<b>The Board approved the minutes subject to the change noted above.</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Current performance and matters arising from visits</b>
3.1	IM confirmed that St. Neots Custody block was no longer operational. Any specialist functions this block held will now be carried out at Huntingdon.
3.2	AW raised an issue regarding air pressure at Thorpe Wood. In some cells when the hatch is opened air rushes out which is unpleasant and signals a potential fault in the ventilation system.
3.3	AD added that there was a huge temperature variation in the different “wings”, with one overly cold and the other overly hot. GW thought this could have contributed to all the DPs being asleep on a recent visit.

3.4	IM updated that estates were aware and a temporary fix had been carried out, however works to fix this problem were ongoing.
3.5	JT asked IM to confirm that ICVs were able to view the CCTV to confirm it was working properly. IM confirmed that ICVs were welcome to view the CCTV to confirm it was working, as per the code of practice. IM also re-iterated IS statement that the custody team are happy to be as open and transparent as possible.
3.6	BE raised the issue of kitchen hygiene with particular regard to the microwave. IM confirmed that the kitchen area does form part of the cleaning contract, and is regularly cleaned. Feedback from custody staff also asked ICVs to bear in mind the timing of visits may affect the appearance of the microwave.
3.7	AW flagged concern after seeing other professionals in custody wearing "Custody Visitor" badges. AW felt this could be confusing for detainees. IM understood the concern, however explained that this wording was dictated by HMIC and little could be done to change this.
3.8	IM updated that offering female detainees feminine hygiene packs was now included in training for custody staff.
3.9	IM also updated on the new custody staffing arrangements due to come into place on 13 <sup>th</sup> March. There will be 2 Sgts and 1 Detention Officer at Parkside, and 2 Sgts and 3 Detention Officers at Thorpe Wood. This should ensure that staff can have breaks.
3.10	IM added that should there be any problems with the staffing structure, Custody staff are welcome to come directly to him.
3.11	JT raised a concern that a lot of staff have left or are leaving (with particularly reference to Parkside). IM updated that is something the custody management team and working on. New staff had been recruited or moved from temporary to permanent contracts and training was taking place. IM added that Cambridgeshire was in a relatively good position re: staffing compared to Beds and Herts as a result of the collaboration.
3.12	All around the table agreed that the new Detention Officers appeared well briefed on the ICV scheme.
3.13	There was a discussion around the days and times that visits took place. AB was pleased to hear that visits were now more evenly spread across different days. AB asked about the visit times and why visits didn't occur between 11pm-7am. ICVs responded that during these hours detainees are very often asleep, so the visits were not as impactful.
3.14	A discussion took place about Health Care Providers (HCPs) and gaps in their availability to custody. IM confirmed that custody staff did keep a log of when there were gaps in provision. ICVs were asked to continue to ask about the availability of HCPs, as this was all useful additional information that the Police and Crime Commissioner could take back to contract discussions with G4S.
<b>3.15</b>	<b>Action: AB was asked to check the new G4S contract for any relevant information</b>

3.16	<p>IM reported back on progress of the Appropriate Adult Scheme, which was now offered as a 24 hour service across the Force. AW was very happy with this as were all the ICVs.</p> <p>AW also then reported that the Liaison and Diversion Service (LaDS) had extended its operational hours which he felt was positive. IM added that while the hours were extended, 24 hour cover could not be justified.</p>
<b>3.17</b>	<b>Action: IM was asked to check if there was any feedback of the LaDS.</b>
3.18	<p>AD brought up the topic of virtual courts as two rooms were being prepared at Thorpe Wood. When looking at these rooms on a visit, the escorting officer had told AD that detainees could potentially be left in these rooms by themselves. AD was concerned of the potential health and safety risk where wires, sockets, plugs and equipment could be used by detainees to cause harm to themselves or others. IM informed the meeting that these concerns were also raised by custody staff. While the staff would not be in the room, they would be right outside and ready to react quickly.</p>
3.19	<p>IM also spoke about the expected demand and the impact it would have on custody. If someone is remanded then they would remain in the cells until collection, and the demand has been estimated using figures from 2013/14.</p>
<b>3.20</b>	<b>Action: further information to be requested</b>
3.21	<p>AD also asked in the case where detainees are remanded and subsequently have become prisoners, are ICVs still able to visit? AB responded that ICVs could still visit them as they remained in custody. IM was happy for this to happen also. GW asked is the questions would change, and if different questions were asked would the custody staff realistically be able to deliver this? AB will seek to clarify with ICVA.</p>
<b>3.22</b>	<b>Action: AB to clarify with ICVA procedure for visiting detainees who have become prisoners following the virtual court process.</b>
3.23	<p>IM updated that IS had also raised the issue with SERCO &amp; courts about the prompt collection of prisoners, as remaining in custody was not best practise and also had wider implications to custody.</p>
3.24	<p>There was further discussion around virtual courts, and JL asked for some further reassurances around the welfare of someone going through the stressful process alone. IM agreed this was an issue, however the virtual courts are overseen by the Ministry of Justice and this was the way things are moving. There have been positive results in Herts and there will likely be a lot of learning as things continue. All agreed they would like further information around the virtual courts.</p>
<b>3.25</b>	<b>Action: AB to organise further training on how the virtual courts will be run.</b>
3.26	<p>AB raised the wider topic of training. AB noted there had been a lot of training / information events recently, however take up from the ICVs had been quite low, and asked if there was any particular reason why. ICVs responded that there had been a lot of training all at once, and in the future it would be better to space this out a bit. AB understood and noted this point. ICVs felt the format of training events should remain as day sessions.</p>

<p>3.27</p> <p>3.28</p> <p><b>3.29</b></p>	<p>The discussion around attendance of training led onto a discussion about attendance at meetings. There was agreement that all ICVs should attend at least two panel meetings a year as was agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding when ICVs signed up. Where ICVs did not meet this minimum attendance, this should be raised with ICVs individually.</p> <p>To help ensure ICVs could plan attendance it was asked that dates could be set for each year at a time.</p> <p><b>Action: AB to set future meeting dates and circulate</b></p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.5</p> <p><b>4.6</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion on paperless reporting</b></p> <p>AB put the topic of paperless reporting to ICVs for their consideration and feedback. AB explained the some of the potential benefits and reasons for exploring this as: quicker reporting - no delay in the post, easier to pull information from the forms, less risk of forms being lost, easier to read. AB explained at this stage there was no decisions and it was important that if it was to be introduced it would be in a way that was easy for ICVs to use.</p> <p>AW stated it would be important to know what would be captured on the form and added it would be good to have space to capture all the issues eg: PACE / Non PACE, Male / Female, Juvenile, Appropriate Adult, etc.</p> <p>IM gave an update that the new Athena IT system was due to be introduced in January 2018. The question was asked if there was scope for an electronic visiting form to link in with this.</p> <p>ICVs were all keen to know if this would involve using a tablet or PC to complete the form. There was no clear preference, however ICVs wanted to continue to make paper notes as they visited detainees and then complete the electronic form afterwards. JT made the point that sometimes technology can be seen as power, which could be a barrier to communication if carrying round a tablet.</p> <p>JT also raised the questions about the security of data, and how the form would be sent. Would ICVs be able to log onto a Cambs Constabulary PC, or would they be expected to complete it from home?</p> <p><b>Action: AB to take feedback to Beds and Herts ICV co-ordinators with a view to taking a shared approach to developing a reporting form and electronic reporting form.</b></p>
<p><b>5.0</b></p>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>GW ask to confirm if all female detainees are offered feminine hygiene packs. IM confirmed they were. IM also confirmed that toothpaste and a brush was also offered as routine.</p>
<p><b>6.0</b></p>	<p><b>Date of the next meeting</b></p> <p>ICVs agreed meetings should continue to be held on Monday evenings with a 18:30 pre meet for a 19:00 start.</p> <p>After the meeting dates were circulated as follows:</p>

	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2017 Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2017 Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2017 Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2018
--	---

These minutes have been approved by the Panel as a true and accurate record of the meeting.