

Cambridgeshire Independent Custody Visitors' Group Meeting

Date: Thursday 1st October 2015

Time: 7.00 pm

Location: Conference Room 3, Police Headquarters

Minutes

Attendees

AW - ICV

FC - ICV

GA –Sergeant

GW - ICV

HW - Volunteer Co-ordinator

IC - Chief Inspector

JB - ICV

JC - ICV

JL - ICV

JT - ICV

NP --Strategic Advisor

RP -ICV

Welcome & introductions

HW welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Cambridgeshire ICV group. The single group was created by the Police and Crime Commissioner after consulting with ICVs and the Constabulary. The decision better aligns our model with that of Beds and Herts and will allow greater sharing of best practice from across the county while in turn reducing the time spent on scheme administration. There was a round of introductions where people gave their name, where they usually visited and explained why they gave time to be a custody visitor.

Apologies have been received from:

- AD
- JM
- ME
- MF
- PH
- CM
- CS
- PR
- RS
- OM

Terms of reference / purpose of the new single group

HW introduced the draft terms of reference. The PCC has a statutory duty for the ICV scheme and this new group ensures he continues to be compliant with legislation and performing his statutory role.

The PCC recognises ICVs' independence is vital to the success of the scheme and all ICVs are independent of the Constabulary. Sadly, two ICVs have recently left the scheme as they have taken up a voluntary role with the Constabulary and it would not be appropriate for them to continue as an ICV.

The drafted Terms of Reference sets out a framework for us to operate under to be able to re-assure the public on the safety, security and welfare of people detained in custody.

A discussion was had and the following comments were made:

- AW was concerned about the visibility of the governance meeting.
 - **Action** – HW will ensure Group Co-ordinators are notified in advance of the governance meetings and enable them to suggest agenda items. Minutes will be shared with the group and updated on the website.
- AW raised concerns that receiving papers three days in advance was not enough time to prepare for the meeting.
 - **Action** – Terms of Reference will be updated and papers sent out two weeks (10 working days) in advance of each meeting.
- AW felt there was a third aim to the meeting. To raise awareness of the ICV scheme amongst the general public. ICVs are representatives of the public and provide reassurance to the public. If the public are not aware of the ICV scheme, how can they be reassured?
 - **Action** - HW to update the Terms of Reference and bring a Communications Plan to a future meeting about how this awareness can be raised.
- AW was unhappy that the meetings will not be chaired by an ICV. RP and JC also strongly disagreed with this decision. NP responded by explaining that with the OPCC chairing it is taking on the administration of the meeting and facilitating the discussions. The scheme still remains independent of the Constabulary. RP expressed concerned that the initial consultation document stated the meetings would be chaired by an ICV but the Terms of Reference now state that the OPCC will chair the group meetings. HW explained that the consultation document was just that and following feedback from previous group meetings, ICVs and the Constabulary concerns had been raised that by having one ICV co-ordinator/chair for the whole county it would take away the local ownership. The final arrangements therefore mean that as the OPCC will chair meetings, local group co-ordinators can remain and be responsible for the day to day operation of the scheme in their local area.
 - **Action** – HW will contact the group Co-ordinators in advance of meetings to draft an agenda for future meetings.
- AW identified that previous meeting minutes have not been updated onto the OPCC website. HW apologies for this oversight.
 - **Action** - HW to update the website with previous meeting minutes.

- RP raised concerns that future dates for the meeting have been set without consulting ICVs as Mondays were felt to be good days for the North group
 - **Action** – AW and JT to canvas group members to see what day of the week is best for meetings. Future dates to be amended as appropriate.
- NP explained that the new arrangements makes it possible for ICV to visit other custody suites if interested.
 - **Action** – AW and JT to establish if any ICVs are interested in making visits to Cambridge / Peterborough (respectively) and arrange as appropriate.

Minutes and actions of previous South and North Group meetings

The last South group meeting took place on 18th June. There were no actions to follow up and attendees confirmed they were an accurate record.

The last North group meeting took place on 28th June. Attendees confirmed they were an accurate record.

- IC to introduce sheet of phone numbers for ICVs to call if left alone and need to exit Huntingdon custody suite – **completed**
- NP to provide further details of how costs would be saved – **completed** – see email text below:
“As promised I have provided the costs which are publically available. However, I do want to reiterate that this is not about cashable savings but releasing operational hours.

“It cost £5,500 to run the scheme in 14/15 which equates to £3,500 in expenses for ICVs and £2,000 for conferences, training and membership of ICVA. A move to single panel would not reduce these costs.

“However we have estimated that moving to a single panel will release four operational policing days and seven non-operational policing days a year.”

RP added that he did not claim travel expenses and was aware that others may not. Whilst this was a personal decision, he felt it had bearing on the discussion.

RP also asked for clarity around the days saved. HW explained that this is across the Constabulary and OPCC and relates to staff directly involved in enabling the scheme. The non-operational policing time will be reinvested into work to support the scheme and provide development opportunities for ICVs

Current performance & matters arising from visits

HW updated the group with the following:

- JT has been appointed the Co-ordinator for the South Group. Congratulations and thanks to JT.

- Four people from the North group have resigned – JD, JB, JR, and BH. We thank them all and wish them well in their future endeavours
- Insp Paul Street has moved on from his role as Custody Manager at Parkside and has been replaced by T/Insp Nigel Leadbeater
- Four new ICVs have been recruited – currently going through vetting
- **Action** – HW to issue an updated contact sheet

HW reminded ICVs to include the following when completing the form:

- Use the 24 hour clock when recording time
- Please ensure you add the time when the visit finishes

HW's observations from the summary:

- Really pleased to see earlier / later visits at Parkside
- There is still a preference for visits at Parkside and Thorpe Wood to take place on a Wednesday – please consider other days of the week – particularly at the weekend.
- Please do consider when the previous visit took place – feedback from custody staff that they have been visited on the Sunday and then first thing Monday morning or on the last day / first day of the month.
- Translation cards have been updated.
- When you meet a detainee and there is a concern for example (from recent visits) that they have been held under 163 or a detainee has a young baby to care for, please document the follow up questions / answers that were asked.
- GW shared an example where she successfully used the translation cards with a detainee.

AW raised concern that Huntingdon enquiry office often closes at 19.15 despite the opening hours being advertised on the website until 20.00.

Action – IC will raise this issue (opening hour for enquiry office at Huntingdon) with Area Commander.

Discussion was had around training. HW asked ICVs to let her know if they identify any training topics.

AW raised the issue of visiting mothballed stations and whether a visit once a month was of use to the Constabulary. IC agreed in the case of March and St Neots but as Huntingdon was used as a fall back station he would like to continue to see a visit once a month. A suggestion was put forward that March and St Neots would only be visited in the event of a planned opening and Huntingdon would continue to be visited on a monthly basis.

Action – HW to take suggestion (only visiting March / St Neots before a planned opening) to Sir Graham who will discuss and agree at next governance meeting.

AW raised concerns that he was not always notified of when mothballed stations were opened.

Action – GA to notify AW and JT when mothballed stations have planned openings.

AW identified that the OPCC is missing visit report forms from Huntingdon on 8 April and 28 July and from March on 6 July.

Action – AW to provide missing forms to the OPCC.

Action: GA to look at scrolling video screens in Huntingdon

Action: GA to check all cells that Qibla arrows are present and pointing in the correct direction.

Theme of inadequate / infrequent cleaning was raised across all custody suites. IC confirmed he was aware and it was being addressed.

Action – HW to ensure that Sir Graham raises in his upcoming governance meeting as an issue.

ICVs raised shower mats and bags on surfaces again. HW confirmed that these have both previously been discussed and responses received from the Constabulary.

IC confirmed that new guidance has been given to Constabulary staff about when spectacles should be removed.

Some ICVs were unaware of the spreadsheet on the OneNote system which logs issues (that cannot immediately be rectified)/-responses. **Action** – GA to add note to the ICV folder reminding ICVs to look at the issue log (which any Custody staff can access via the OneNote.)

ICV visit form

HW thanked ICVs for the five responses received.

Action – HW to establish a digital version of the new form.

Regional ICV Conference

HW confirmed that the date has been set for Saturday 5th March 2016. Cambridgeshire are hosting and it will be held at Force HQ in Huntingdon. ICVA's new CEO will be attending.

Working on programme with colleagues in region – focus on risk and preventing deaths in custody

Any other business and close

- HW confirmed that Alec Wood has been confirmed as the new Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire.
- HW confirmed that it looked like PCC elections will be May 2016 – Sir Graham is yet to decide if he will stand.
- IC updated ICVs on collaboration plans with Beds and Herts and it is likely to be signed off in the next couple of weeks.
- IC also confirmed he is still looking into joint training/-role plays with custody staff and ICVs. This has been moved back due to Athena training but is still on the cards.
- RP raised concerns that the reading materials in Thorpe Wood is of poor quality.
Action – GA to move reading material from Parkside (which is well stocked) to Thorpe Wood. Any ICVs who have magazines / books to donate please bring to future meetings.

- AW asked for pre-paid envelopes to be provided. HW had forgotten (apologies) so **Action** - HW to send out prep-paid envelopes.
- RP confirmed he will step down as an ICV after his next visit. HW confirmed that all ICVs / volunteers who leave the organisation will be offered an exit interview. RP requested a personal meeting with Sir Graham Bright. **Action** – NP will request a personal meeting for RP when Sir Graham returns from the conference.
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Next meeting – Tuesday 9th December, 7pm at Police Headquarters

Action log

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- **Action** – HW to take suggestion (only visiting March / St Neots before a planned opening) to Sir Graham who will discuss and agree at next governance meeting.
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- **Action** – AW to provide missing forms to the OPCC.
- **Action:** GA to look at scrolling video screens in Huntingdon
- **Action:** GA to check all cells that Qibla arrows are present and pointing in the correct direction.
- **Action** – HW to ensure that Sir Graham raises in his upcoming governance meeting as an issue.
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