

Independent Custody Visitors North Panel Meeting

Date: Monday 23rd June 2014

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Meeting Room, Thorpe Wood Police Station

Minutes

Attendees – panel

(JB)	(OM)
(JC)	(JM)
(FC)	(JR)
(AD)	(PR)
(JD)	(GW)
(RH)	(AW)
(BH)	

Attendees – other

T/Ch Insp Iain Clark (IC) – Head of Custody Hannah Watson (HW) – Volunteer Co-ordinator
Insp Angus McNeil (AM) – Custody Manager

1. Welcome & introductions

AW opened the meeting and welcomed IC and HW who were attending for the first time.

2. Apologies received

AW had received apologies from RP

3. Confirm Minutes of previous meeting

Apologies for the last meeting were received from BH, FC and JC but not noted on the minutes.

AD challenged John Hazell at the meeting on his statement that ICVs were there to catch the police out. ICV check on the treatment of detainees and the conditions in which they are held and that their right and entitlements are being observed. ICVs provide reassurance to the local community.

Panel members raised concerns about why minutes are shared on the PCC website as some saw the panel as a working group. **Action: HW will establish reasons for sharing minutes on website.** HW will also send draft minutes to the panel after the meeting asking for people to highlight any errors or omissions. These will be agreed at the next meeting before being shared on the website.

The panel had a discussion on the pairings and AW confirmed that pairings were made for the duration of the rota and will be reviewed before the next rota is produced. **Action: 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.**

4. Correspondence

AW circulated an email from ICVA requesting feedback about the production of Easy Read Notices of Rights and Entitlements. **Action: HW to share feedback provided to ICVA**

HW circulated Visiting Times Magazine from ICVA. Some panel members expressed difficulties in reading the magazine because of the background. **Action: HW to establish if a text only copy is available.**

5. Update from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

HW spoke about the following:

- PCC has published its annual report and HW has circulated.
- HW is about to work on the ICV annual report. AW has submitted a summary on behalf of the panel, but HW asked if anyone had suggestions for inclusions to let her know
- PCC has launched a 101 survey. To take part visit <http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/survey/101-call-handling/>. Although the deadline is 23/06/2014 if anyone has

any anecdotal feedback they would like to share please send to HW and she will ensure it is considered.

- HW will attend a national ICV Administrator Conference on 1-2 July and if anyone has any issues / concerns that they would like to be raised nationally to let her know.
- HW also updated the panel on the new Cadet Scheme that will be piloted in Peterborough
- Finally, HW gave out information about becoming an Independent Dog Welfare Visitor as Cambs is currently recruiting. If anyone is interested please contact HW.

6. Reports on Visits

In the last quarter 5 visits have taken place at Huntingdon, 3 at March and 13 at Thorpe Wood.

Issues raised from reports included:

- Recent visit to Huntingdon – ICV couldn't get access to custody. AM apologised for the delay at the ICVs were not able to gain access. He has briefed officers and if the Sgt isn't available then Enquiry Officers do have keys and will let you in. To exit Custody, contact Front Desk. If you experience any problems in the future then please contact Insp Lowings who is based at Huntingdon will facilitate the visit.
- Recent visit to March - ICVs raised a few concerns. AM has followed these up. The excrement on the flush button was rust and has been rectified. The Halal certificate is in date (expires 06/09/14.) AM is still following up the query regarding fire extinguishers.
Action: AM to follow up on location and use of fire extinguishers in Custody.
- Recent visit to Thorpe Wood – concerns that the pixels on the CCTV were not quite in the right place for modesty. Cells B3 and C10 of concern. **Action: AM will investigate.**

Following a recent visit to Thorpe Wood, JB asked about where is best to wait if on arrival into Custody the Sgt is unavailable as they are booking in a prisoner. ICVs should assess the situation and if safe can wait at the back and observe the booking in process. However if at any time ICVs feel unsafe they can wait in the side room behind the desk.

JB also asked about procedure for shutting cell doors. AW confirmed that is not a responsibility of ICV and should be left to the escorting officer.

A reminder to all to check the domestic fridges in Custody to ensure there is no evidence stored in them. In addition, officers should be routinely checking detainees for traces of Smartwater.

The panel had a discussion on the use of the Audit Trail document to record any issues concerning the fabric of the building. It was decided that the Audit Trail would be continued to be used at Huntingdon and introduced at March. This will be reviewed at the next meeting. **Action: AM to update staff and introduce at March.**

AW commented that Huntingdon has recently been operational and asked whether ICV should visit when it is operational. Following a short discussion the panel agreed it would be good to visit when it is operational. AM will continue to update AW with any future plans to open Huntingdon and AW can update the visitors accordingly.

AW talked about the completion of report forms. He recognised that different people completed the forms in different ways, but asked everyone to consider including the following:

- Ensure your handwriting is legible
- Refer to the custody locations as Thorpe Wood (not Peterborough), March or Huntingdon
- Indicate if the detainee is M (male) or F (female)
- Indicate if the detainee is J (juvenile – under the age of 18) and where possible indicate their age
- Record the reasons for the individual being in Custody eg S136, PACE, non-PACE
- If you are raising any issues with the Custody Sgt please also write them at the bottom of the form
- If you're unable to see a DP please state the reason eg at Hospital, in interview etc
- If someone's asleep consider using the wording 'appeared asleep' and mention that you viewed them eg 'appeared to be ok – viewed on CCTV/through hatch'
- If you have any problems or concerns during the visit then please raise them with the Custody Sgt. If you don't get the required response or are still concerned then raise with the Duty Insp and inform AW of your concerns.
- If you are advised not to see a DP, then please record the reason and note that you have viewed them eg 'appeared to be ok – viewed on CCTV/through hatch'

7. Any Other Business

AM informed the panel that Thorpe Wood would be closed Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th June for a deep clean. March will be open from 22.00 hours on Tuesday 24th and Huntingdon will open on Wednesday morning.

IC thanked the panel for their vital work. He also reported that the force is going through a change in ethos where people are more focussed on individual's wellbeing rather than performance. As a result ICV may notice that detainees may be spending longer in custody. For example it may be decided to detain a person for an extra couple of hours while house to house is carried out so that a charging decision can be reached rather than bailing them for 4 weeks for those enquiries to be carried out.

IC reported that an 'air lock' will be fitted to the rear door at Thorpe Wood. This is required for Thorpe Wood to be considered suitable to hold category A prisoners. The airlock will be operated by Custody Officers.

IC mentioned that ICVs may see Detention Management Plans in place for detainees who are on constant watch. These will be overseen by the Insp on duty and will be discussed at the Daily Management Meetings (DMM) to ensure risks are better highlighted and appropriate resourcing is provided.

IC stated Cambridgeshire Constabulary are on a 30 minute notification for a HMIC Inspection to Custody. When they inspect it is likely that they will have some engagement with the ICVs.

IC updated the panel on the Constabulary's move to become paperless. Sharepoint is also being introduced. This raised questions about the possibility of reports being completed electronically which will need to be considered in due course.

IC finally updated the panel that Custody is one of the services that is being discussed with regards to collaboration with Herts and Beds. IC is attending his first meeting on Friday to discuss further and will update the Panel in due course.

JB asked for the panel to be asked for agenda items in the future. **Action: AW / HW will ask for agenda items from panel members before issuing the agenda.**

Date of the next meeting: Monday 22nd September 2014