

Independent Custody Visitors South Panel Meeting

Date: Wednesday 2nd April 2014

Time: 6.30pm

Location: Lecture room 2nd Floor, Parkside Police Station

Minutes

Attendees – Panel Members

(GC)	(JL)
(ME)	(CM)
(PH)	(JT)
(PK)	

Attendees – other

John Hazell, ICV Scheme Administrator (JH)

1. Welcome & introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced JT who will join the new South panel which was launched during the meeting. JT also advised that she was the Dog Welfare Scheme rep but had not heard from the scheme coordinator for some time.

Action: JH to contact PS Owen Rogers

2. Apologies

MB-H
MF
GR
RS
WT
Insp Marcia Nichols

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held & matters arising from 12/12/2013

ME recalled that some conversation around the use of Sporks was not recorded in the minutes. JH confirmed that Sporks were the constabulary choice based on safety (rubber not plastic) and cost savings (can be recycled through a dish washer) Custody staff had been instructed to dispose of any showing excessive wear and tear.

4. Current performance

Current performance was reported as good. PK advised that there were occasions when visits did not take place due to last minute issues arising with colleagues. PK reminded the panel of the use of the reserve visitor detailed on the rota on these occasions.

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5. Matters arising from visits

ME raised the issues of being in close proximity to detainees who may have a transmittable disease. JH offered to arrange awareness training if the panel felt this was necessary. On balance this was not felt to be necessary, given that ICVs are not expected to be in physical contact with detainees and that custody staff should be in a position to brief and advise ICVs of any risks associated with each detainee.

ME asked about the use of sensors in cells to assist in assessing whether an apparently asleep individual was just asleep. JH reaffirmed that although some cells had such devices not all did. JH advised that other than when a person is in his/her period of PACE rest, they may be roused if necessary.

PK raised the issue of free access to the area at the rear of the custody reception area, following an abrupt exchange of views with 2 custody officers. JH had sought clarification from Insp Nichols to the effect that as a consequence of additional staff in this area and it becoming crowded ICVs should ask custody staff whether they could enter. This did not alter an ICV's right (with detainee permission) to view custody records or to view cells via CCTV monitors. It was a matter of having a conversation with police staff before access.

The custody officers above extend an invitation to any ICV to spend a day in the custody block so as to increase their knowledge of custody working practices. An application form was available to any who wished to do this.

JH added that an ICV may spend as long as they wish checking on detainees during a visit and should not feel hurried by police staff, although escorting detention staff do have jobs to do outside the visit too.

Action: JH to provide form to all.

6. Update Police and Crime Commissioner

JH advised that he would be leaving the OPCC in May. A replacement was being recruited and he hoped for a handover period with this person.

JH introduced the new South Panel and listed some terms of reference for it. This panel was effective immediately and the Cambridge panel was now closed.

- 2 members from the Huntingdon area would join existing Cambridge members to form the South panel.
- Members will visit both Parkside, weekly and St Neots, monthly
- All members will have an opportunity to visit each facility in equal measures given that some may have travel difficulties.
- Redacted minutes of South panel meetings will be placed on the Commissioner's website.

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JH sought the views of the meeting as to who should coordinate the new South Panel. JH was aware that the new set up would involve additional work. However, the meeting agreed that PK carry on as coordinator for the South panel. PK was happy to do this. The coordinator role would be revisited in 12 months.

7. AOB:

- JL asked for a map to be provided for St Neots police station
- JL asked for this year's ICV diary

Date of the next meeting Thursday 12th June 2014