

DECISION NO: PCCG-2013-064

OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CUSTODY VISITORS
HELD AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CROESYCEILIOG, CWMBRAN
ON 26TH MARCH 2013

Present: Mr Paul Harris (Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner)
Mrs Sian Curley (Chair & Scheme Administrator)
Mr Arthur Elliott
Mr Justin Johnstone
Mr Brian Thomas
Mrs Joyce Morgan
Ms Ivy Forkin

Also in attendance: Chief Inspector Daniel Taylor (Custody)
Inspector Robert Toghill (Newport Custody)
Ms Michelle Vaisey-Baker (Assistant Scheme Administrator)

Apologies were received from Mr Ian Johnston Police & Crime Commissioner, Mr Eric Smith, Mr Brian Williams, Mr David Howells and Inspector Thompson

The meeting commenced at 3.00 p.m.

Action

INTRODUCTION TO DEPUTY POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

1. The Deputy Commissioner introduced himself and welcomed all attendees. It was explained that in the absence of the Commissioner Mr Harris was attending on his behalf to take back any issues or queries the visitors wanted to raise. Mr Harris received feedback and answered a number of queries relating to the Commissioners Police and Crime Plan.

Mr Harris advised that he had reviewed the minutes of the last meeting and could confirm that in respect of the HMIC / HMIP report on Joint Inspection of Custody the Commissioner and Mrs Curley had received a briefing from the Assistant Chief Constable. (A copy of the report was circulated to all attendees). It was explained that the majority of issues raised were minor and that an action plan was now in place to address this. However the main concern that came from the report was in respect of primary healthcare provision which is something that is outside of Gwent Police's control but will be beneficial to pursue. We were informed that the Commissioner is going to raise this issue at the All Wales Policing Group in April; this meeting will be attended by all the Welsh Commissioners. A letter will also be sent to the Welsh Government Health Minister. It was confirmed that the ACC

will be taking this matter forward and that ACC Jukes from South Wales will be linking in with the Welsh Assembly on the matter.

We were advised that in terms of recruiting additional visitors to the scheme there has been one application and a few expressions of interest. Mrs Curley confirmed that an informal interview will need to take place for anyone who applies and this will need to be followed by a training session that would be beneficial for all visitors to attend as a refresher course. It was agreed that this would be useful and that it would also be beneficial for a long serving custody visitor to sit on the interview panel once interviews were arranged. It was suggested that a past Independent Custody Visitor could be approached to come back onto the scheme if there was a resilience issue.

The Deputy Commissioner left the meeting.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

2. The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th December 2012 were confirmed as an accurate record.

It was noted that Brian Williams had emailed the OPCC following his injury to advise that he was going to be unable to attend any visits until around May. Updates on Mr Williams' welfare will be provided to visitors when received.

It was noted that visitors will need to attend Vantage Point when they arrange for their new badges to be issued. It was agreed that maps would be circulated to all visitors to assist with this.

MVB

It was raised that visitors have been waiting for lengthy periods of time for anyone to collect them from reception at Newport Custody, as nobody is answering the telephone. It was noted that on some occasions this was justified as incidents had occurred or staff were busy, however it has also occurred on occasions when it has been quiet in custody. It was suggested that visitors raise this with the Sergeants on the day asking for an explanation and noting it on their forms. Inspector Toghill advised that he would speak to the Custody staff to try and resolve this issue, he will also make enquiries to establish if it is possible for any incoming calls from the red telephone be highlighted on the custody phones, as at present it appears like any other phone call to custody so doesn't indicate that anyone is waiting in reception.

RT

The Scheme Administrators were requested to contact ICVA

to suggest that they avoid using white writing on green print in future issues of Visitors Times as it isn't very clear once printed.

MVB

SCHEME UPDATE

4. Membership

Mrs Curley advised that by the next meeting we will hopefully have had more interest towards the ICV role to enable an application, interview and training process to be initiated.

Visits

It was noted that Newport Custody had been closed for two weeks in January. It was requested that in future could Custody link in with the OPCC to notify on closure dates in advance. We were advised that there would be another closure some time in September for training purposes, details will be provided to the OPCC in due course.

DT
RT

Issues Raised

We were advised that despite ICV's reporting it on a number of occasions the shower light in Ystrad Mynach is still not working, however visitors have been informed that this is a shower that nobody actually uses so is it worthwhile to keep reporting it? Chief Inspector Taylor confirmed that it was beneficial to keep reporting it as it should be repaired. Visitors were informed that the glass door that had been broken had now been repaired.

CONFERENCES

5. Mrs Curley advised that the usual Scheme Administrators conference will likely be scheduled sometime in the Summer. There is usually a national conference in Brighton for ICV's that takes place around November. If any visitors are interested in attending the conference please can they let the Scheme Administrators know. Further details will hopefully be available by the next meeting.

We were advised that ICVA have asked for membership again and that the OPCC will be subscribing as they are a beneficial organisation to be linked in with; they offer training sessions and sit on many boards that feed a lot of valuable information through.

We were advised that the revised codes of practice have had clearance from Ministers and will be laid in Parliament

sometime in April. It is unsure yet how this will affect us but it will potentially require a training session once it is brought in. It was requested that a copy of the revised codes of practice be kept in both Custody units once approved.

RT
DT

TRAINING

6. Mrs Curley suggested that when ICVA attend to conduct a training session with visitors they could potentially incorporate a custody visit as part of the session too, it was agreed that this would be beneficial as part of the recruitment and refresher training. It was queried if someone could provide any training based on the HMIC report. We were advised that as an action plan had been written to cover the report this would be sent to the OPCC to circulate to visitors.

DT
MVB

We were advised that any training organised will likely take place after May.

CUSTODY UPDATE

5. We were informed that following the custody review the change over of staffing to custody units will take place on 1st April 2013 when staff will also go on to a six on four off shift pattern that will mean shifts have an overlapping period. This will mean that ICV's no longer need to avoid attending custody at specific times e.g. change over times. However we were advised that if for any reason it did present an issue ICV's are requested to raise it to the Scheme Administrators to advise Chief Inspector Taylor so that the matter could be addressed.

It was queried if there could be any flexibility with the food runs e.g. if a food run is at 12:30pm and a detainee is in custody around 1pm they have missed out. It was noted that the main food runs need to be set at their specific times, however if detainees come in later there is flexibility as they can ask staff for food / drink and they will provide something from the stocks that are retained in custody e.g. cereal bars.

Inspector Toghill has recently sat on a panel with Social Services where it was proposed that all youths up to 17 years old will be offered appropriate adult services as they want to make the facilities much more available. Social Services are in agreement with this protocol. It was requested that a copy of the protocol be circulated once finalised. We were informed that clarity is needed from the Government on what age a detainee should be treated as an adult.

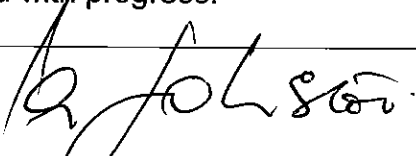
RT

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6. We were advised that the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner will be attending future ICV meetings for roughly the first 10 minutes to address any queries on custody related matters. In order to assist with this process it would be beneficial if ICV's could advise Mrs Curley or Ms Vaisey-Baker in advance of the meeting any issues they wish to raise.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11. The date of the next meeting is 3rd July 2013 at 3pm in Conference Room 1 at Headquarters.

Ian Johnston QPM, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	
I have monitored the Independent Custody Scheme minutes as per my statutory responsibility under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and am satisfied with progress.	
Signed 	Date 16.5.13

Contact Officer	
Name	Sian Curley
Position	Senior Business Manager
Telephone	01633 643025
Email	Sian.Curley@gwent.pnn.police.uk
Background papers	None

