



MINUTES OF THE INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME
HELD REMOTELY
ON 19th JANUARY 2022

Present: Ms Jean Munton - Chair, Independent Custody Visitor (JM)
Mr David Binding – Vice Chair Independent Custody Visitor (DB)
Ms Lesley Ball – Independent Custody Visitor (LB)
Mr Richard Holland – Independent Custody Visitor (RH)
Mrs Lisa Langley – Independent Custody Visitor (LL)

Also, in attendance:

Mrs Nicola Warren - Scheme Administrator, OPCC (NW)
Mrs Ceri Davis - Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC (CD)
Chief Inspector Huw Jones (HJ)
Inspector Roland Giles – Custody Newport (RG)
Ms Louise Price – Custody Lead Nurse (LP)
Sergeant Laurence Carrington – Continuous Improvement (LC)

The meeting commenced at 6:03 p.m.

	Notes and Actions	Action
1.	Apologies	
	Apologies for absence were received from Michael Hallinan.	
2.	Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings	
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.	

3.	Disparity Training	
	<p>LC advised us that the Force had implemented a Disparity Scrutiny Panel which involved independent members from the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) Independent Custody Visitors, members of the community from various ethnic minority backgrounds and members with protected characteristic backgrounds. The members scrutinise a number of processes within Custody to ensure they are fair, proportionate and transparent towards detainees from different backgrounds, towards children and for males and females.</p> <p>LC welcomed any further interest from ICVs joining the panel. JM and DB advised they would be interested in sitting on the panel.</p> <p>LC advised us the Scrutiny Panel would be held quarterly and would focus on three key areas which were Strip Searches, Remands, Use of Force, and others as required. These areas had been identified by the national working group who had advised all forces to implement the custody scrutiny panel.</p> <p>LC gave a presentation on each of the three key areas and informed us what was required of custody officers.</p> <p>NW asked if there were sufficient female officers on shift should females need to be strip searched. HJ advised us that shifts were planned to try to ensure there were sufficient female officers in custody on every shift to carry out strip searches when required. However, if no officers were available in custody, a female officer from the Local Policing Area (LPA) would be called in to conduct the search.</p>	
4.	Custody Update	
	<p>RG advised us that Newport custody refurbishment had been completed and the suite reopened at the beginning of December and both custody suites were now fully operational.</p> <p>RG informed us that the Covid practices remained in place and Solicitors were still attending in person.</p> <p>RG advised us that a more vigorous track and trace system had been put in place to ensure all tracking details were captured. All attendees entering the custody unit, other than officers, were let into the unit instead of entering with their ID card. The system was working well and allowed a more controlled unit making it easier to capture the attendee's details.</p> <p>RG advised us as part of the refurbishment at Newport custody there had been new cell doors, bunks and toilets fitted and ten cells had been painted in green as part of a wellbeing pilot.</p>	

RG informed us that peer reviews were being conducted with other forces. A three day visit to three units in Dyfed Powys custody had taken place to observe their practices and processes to share knowledge, learning and to offer recommendations. RG had provided some recommendations to Dyfed Powys.

RG advised us that a visit to Cardiff Bay custody had taken place and a Sergeant would be visiting Bridgend this week.

RG advised us that South Wales and Dyfed Powys had conducted a peer review on Gwent custody.

RG informed us that some good practices had been taken from Dyfed Powys and implemented within Gwent. This involved distraction boxes for children and vulnerable detainees including footballs to play with in the cells or in the exercise yard and they had established a link with Caerphilly Library to restock the custody library.

RG advised us that a daily management meeting had been implemented to discuss, any areas of focus or concerns about the management of the unit. The meeting also focused on children in custody and their cases and this enables the Inspector or Chief Inspector chase up processes with divisional colleagues. RG informed us that the meetings were positive and effective and allowed quick time feedback for information.

RG advised us that the attendees in the daily management meeting were the Chief Inspector, Inspector, Lead Nurse and the Diversionary Manager.

RG agreed that it would be helpful if visits were not conducted during 09:30am – 10am whilst the daily management meeting would be taking place.

RG advised us that posters were now displayed in both units with guidance on the complaints process. Posters were also displayed informing detainees of entitlements such as stationery, literature and showers whilst in custody.

RG informed us that there was still an issue with obtaining ambient and hot food. There was an issue nationally with a shortage of HGV drivers which was resulting in stock shortages. A meeting with Procurement was planned to resolve the issue and the Chief Officers were aware of the matter.

RG advised us that a new process had been implemented with Newport Offending Service to improve the service offered in custody.

Newport Offending Service provides advice about the children who are using their service, such as the type of interventions in place and who the social worker is for the child, which was beneficial information for the Sergeants when children are in custody.

RG informed us that there was a Custody Detention Officer (CDO) course taking place and this would see six CDO's join Newport custody in February following completion of the course. There would then be five CDO's on each shift.

RG advised us that a recruitment process had started for an additional five CDO's.

HJ informed us that a flexible operating model had been created so there were fewer officers in Ystrad Mynach. This was as a result of the demand being greater in Newport.

HJ advised us that seven Sergeants has been trained and would be working with their mentor over the coming weeks. This would see twenty Sergeants available to provide cover in custody when required. HJ advised us there were several Sergeants in other areas of the force that could also be utilised should additional cover be required.

HJ advised as part of a succession plan created the experienced Sergeants would receive refresher training and would be rotated with new recruits. This would see a regular rotation of Sergeants on a two-yearly basis who could use the time for development and progression.

HJ informed us that an additional three Custody Nurses had been recruited and would be joining in the coming months. The team would have a Lead Nurse and eight nurses per shift, four in Newport and four in Ystrad Mynach.

NW asked LP if hospital staff were ensuring detainees were being kept in hospital for the appropriate time now if there were safety concerns. LP confirmed that the issue with detainees being released from A&E back to custody before it was safe to do so had been resolved. A protocol had been agreed stating that if a detainee had been admitted with a suspected drug overdose or a concealed package then they would remain in A&E for six hours unless the detainee would not accept medical advice or refused to remain there. If they refused to stay, they would be examined and given clearance by a senior doctor to return to custody.

LP advised us there had not been any detainees refusing to remain in A&E. LP informed us that two of the recruited nurses were trained Paramedics and therefore, the custody nurse team would have varied experience across the health care profession, from paramedics, mental health nurses to general nurses.

LP confirmed that the Covid triage process was still in place when booking in detainees, some questions asked would be altered to reflect the symptoms of the new Covid variant. The questions are asked before the detainee enters the unit and if the detainees were symptomatic, they would be segregated into the Covid wing.

	<p>HJ advised us there were nine cells in Ystrad Mynach unit that were utilised for detainees who were Covid positive or Covid symptomatic.</p> <p>HJ informed us prior to the detainee being transported to the Covid wing in Ystrad Mynach, the transporting officer would radio the CDO to advise and ensure acceptance. This is proving to be most efficient process for both custody officers and the Local Policing Area.</p>	
5.	Terms of Reference	
	<p>NW advised us of the terms of reference for the meeting. CD to circulate to all members.</p> <p>NW asked if visitors would prefer to attend our next meeting in person, to continue online or with hybrid approach of both. CD to email visitors requesting their preference.</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>CD</p>
6.	Abuse of Power	
	<p>NW advised us of the reporting process should there be any concerns with abuse of trust or position. NW advised us that ICVs represented the Commissioner and their position as an ICV should not be used for any other reason other than to check on the welfare of detainees. We discussed some examples of inappropriate behaviour and NW advised us that there was an expectation that ICVs would report inappropriate behaviour. ICVs were advised that they would be supported if they do report any inappropriate behaviour and they could contact the Scheme Administrator or Scheme Assistant at any time should they have any concerns.</p> <p>NW advised us there was a Safecall number available to call should you wish to remain anonymous. CD to circulate number to all members. All reports would be considered whether reported anonymously or not.</p> <p>All members confirmed they understood what they would consider to be an abuse of trust or position.</p> <p>HJ advised us the process for reporting abuse of trust within the custody unit was to report to the Inspector or the Chief Inspector or to the Scheme Administrator should ICVs not feel comfortable raising with the Inspector and this would be fully supported.</p> <p>JM assured us that she had always been impressed by the way in which the custody officers had dealt with the detainees.</p>	CD
7.	Scheme Update & Performance Framework Update	
	<p>NW advised us that there were six visitors on the scheme with three new ICVs inductions taking place this week, increasing the number of visitors to nine.</p>	

	<p>NW advised us that another recruitment campaign would take place during 2022 and it was hoped that we would reach a wider audience to encourage more interest.</p> <p>NW informed us that weekly visits could resume as opposed to fortnightly visits as both custody units had now been refurbished and the number of custody visitors had increased.</p> <p>NW confirmed the new visitors would be included on the rota from February and would visit with an experienced visitor until they were confident to conduct visits.</p> <p>NW asked JM if she could advise the new visitors of the parking protocol when visiting the units.</p> <p>NW to send JM the new visitors contact details in order to produce the rota.</p> <p>Twelve visits had taken place over the previous quarter with one missed visit due to cover not being available.</p> <p>All visits took place on a Wednesday through November but varied in October and December. NW asked the visitors if they could vary the visit days.</p> <p>NW asked visitors to submit visit forms as soon as possible to ensure she could monitor the forms and to ensure she was able to complete the quarterly statistical information for the Independent Custody Visiting Association.</p> <p>RH raised an issue with the visitor forms not being in the correct format in Newport custody. CD to print and send form to Newport unit.</p> <p>CD to send some prepaid envelopes to RH.</p> <p>It was agreed that the visit report form now had sufficient space to allow for comments since it had been modified.</p> <p>NW advised us from the visit reports received, there had been twenty-two minor issues raised that had been dealt with immediately by the Custody Sergeant.</p> <p>NW informed us an issue had been raised, regarding temperature checks not being carried out prior to detainees entering the unit. This was followed up by the OPCC and confirmation had been received that the process was still in place.</p> <p>NW advised us that on two occasions visitors had attended Ystrad Mynach unit to carry out a visit but there had been no detainees present.</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>NW</p> <p>CD</p> <p>CD</p>
--	--	---

	<p>This was followed up with the Inspector who confirmed that no detainees were present at the time.</p> <p>NW advised there had been a considerable increase in visits being accepted. There were eighty-eight detainees in custody during the visits during the quarter with seventy-eight of them accepting visits from ICVs, the remaining detainees either refused a visit, were in interview, asleep or intoxicated.</p> <p>NW advised there had been minimal delays in terms of visitor access to the custody suit with nine of the visits being granted access within five minutes.</p> <p>NW reiterated that if the detainees had been seen and no issues had been raised there would be no need to check the detainee's custody record unless the visitor felt appropriate.</p> <p>NW informed us refresher training would be conducted following the induction of the new visitors. NW to send out available dates in the coming weeks.</p> <p>NW asked visitors to ensure their ID Cards are kept up to date.</p> <p>NW asked the visitors to view the straight to resources bite size training that was included within the circulated Independent Custody Visitor Association newsletters.</p>	<p>NW</p> <p>All visitors</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p>	
	<p>JM advised us that she would not be available to chair the next meeting. CD to circulate a revised meeting date.</p>	<p>CD</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p>	
	<p>The next meeting will be held at 6pm, on the 6th April 2022.</p>	

Meeting concluded at 7:40pm

<p>Jeff Cuthbert B.SC., MDIPD, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent</p>
<p>I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct.</p> <p>Any such interests are recorded below.</p> <p>The above request has my approval.</p>
<p>Signed</p>

Jeff Case

Date

18/02/2022

Contact Officer	
Name	Nicola Warren
Position	Governance Officer
Telephone	01633 642200
Email	Nicola.Warren@gwent.police.uk
Background papers	

Actions from Meeting dated 22nd January 2022				
Minute Number	Action	Owner	Update	Complete/Ongoing
5.	NW advised us of the terms of reference for the meeting. CD to circulate to all members.	CD		
5.	NW asked if visitors would prefer to attend our next meeting in person, to continue online or with hybrid approach of both. CD to email visitors requesting their preference.	CD		
6.	NW advised us there was a Safecall number available to call should you wish to remain anonymous. CD to circulate number to all members. All reports would be investigated whether reported anonymously or not	CD		
7.	NW asked JM if she could advise the new visitors of the parking protocol when visiting the units.	JM		
7	CD to send JM the new visitors contact details in order to produce the rota.	CD		
7.	RH raised an issue with the visitor forms not being in the correct format in Newport custody. CD to print and send form to Newport unit.	CD		
7.	CD to send some prepaid envelope to RH.	CD		
7.	NW informed us refresher training would be conducted following the induction of the new visitors. NW to send out available dates in the coming weeks.	NW		

7.	NW asked the visitors to view the straight to resources bite size training within circulated Independent Custody Visitor Association newsletter.	All Visitors		
8.	JM advised us that she would not be available to chair the next meeting. CD to circulate a revised meeting date.	CD		
Actions from Meeting dated 13th October 2021				
3.	RG informed us that no decision had been made regarding the consideration of a partial collaboration with South Wales Police Force to detain Gwent Police detainees.	RG	No decision had been made regarding the consideration of a partial collaboration with South Wales Police Force to detain Gwent Police detainees. RG to update at January meeting.	Ongoing
6.	It was requested that visitors who would prefer to attend the next meeting in person at Gwent Police Headquarters should notify CD via email prior to the meeting date.	All Visitors	Due to current Covid 19 guidelines the option to meet in person is not possible.	Ongoing

