



**MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME
HELD BOTH REMOTELY ON TEAMS AND IN PERSON IN HAWTHORN MEETING
ROOM,
POLICE HEADQUARTERS ON 22ND APRIL 2026**

Present: Mike O'Farrell Independent Custody Visitor (MO)
Linda Mason - Independent Custody Visitor (LM)
Richard Holland - Independent Custody Visitor (RH)
Andrea Williams - Independent Custody Visitor (AW)

Also in attendance:

Sian Curley – Chief Executive, OPCC (SC)
Nicola Warren – Scheme Manager, OPCC (NW)
Ceri Hiscox - Scheme Administrator OPCC (CH)
Michael Preston – Superintendent Custody and Criminal Justice (T/SUP)
Inspector Akbar Ali – Custody Ystrad Mynach (AA)

The meeting commenced at 6:11pm.

	Notes and Actions	Action
1.	Apologies	
	Apologies for absence were received from Alexandra Robinson.	
2.	Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings	
	MO stated that he had been omitted from the attendee list for the previous meeting. CH confirmed that the list would be updated accordingly.	CH
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.	

3.	Introduction T/Superintendent Preston	
	T/SUP formally introduced himself to the visitors and stated that he welcomed the scrutiny provided through the Independent Visitor Scheme. He confirmed that he was prepared to offer any assistance required. T/SUP clarified the process for obtaining detainee consent to view the custody records. T/SUP stated that the escorting officer could take the ICV to the cell, open the door and then stand behind it, out of sight, while the visitors introduced themselves as ICVs. It was explained that, during the same initial conversation with the detainee, the ICVs could outline the purpose of the visit and ask whether consent was given for them to view the detainee's custody record if required. Once the detainee provided consent, the escorting officer would expect to move out of earshot but remain in sight for safety purposes, in line with established custody procedures. The visitors agreed that they supported this approach. T/SUP informed the meeting that a recruitment campaign was currently under way. NW asked to be notified of the dates on which the training would take place so that she could attend and provide an input on the ICV Scheme. INSP/A to share date when available. RH noted that, in the past, a video produced by Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) had been used during CDO training. NW agreed to check whether this video was still available for use. NW informed T/SUP that the visitors' ID cards might be out of date, as the department responsible for issuing them was in the process of implementing a new card system, which had caused delays. NW confirmed that all visitors were vetted, which remained the most important aspect. NW informed the meeting that visits could be carried out every fortnight, if necessary, to accommodate any shortages or unavailability among visitors. MO raised that temperature checks had not been carried out within custody that day and asked whether they should be completed daily. INSP/A agreed to seek clarification on the required frequency of these temperature checks.	AA NW AA
4.	Scheme Update and Performance Framework Update	
	NW advised the meeting that there were currently five visitors on the scheme. Four visitors had taken the decision to resign.	

	The meeting recorded thanks for their contribution and expressed good wishes for their future endeavours. NW informed the meeting that thirteen visits had been scheduled between January and March 2026. Of the report forms received to date, nine visits had been completed. Three visit forms were still outstanding—one from January and two from February—and the final scheduled visit for the end of March had instead taken place in early April. NW advised the meeting that there had been a good mix of visits during weekday mornings, afternoons and evenings throughout the quarter. NW noted that arranging visits across a range of times and days enabled the custody unit to be observed under different levels of demand, which was important for ensuring that detainees' welfare was consistently maintained. NW advised the meeting that a few issues had been raised in the visit report forms: 1. The Healthcare Practitioner (HCP) room had been left unlocked while unattended. This was noted as a matter requiring attention. INSP/A advised the meeting that all medication stored in the HCP room was kept securely locked away, so this should not present an issue. NW agreed to review the relevant guidance to confirm the position and ensure clarity. 2. The kitchen and fridge had not been as clean as they should have been. INSP/A informed the meeting that a new fridge had since been installed, addressing part of the concern raised. 3. Rights and entitlements leaflets were not always being given to detainees. NW reiterated the importance of ensuring these leaflets were provided consistently, as they form a key part of detainees' rights and entitlements within custody. NW informed the meeting that a new Procurement lead for custody had been appointed and had been invited to attend the next panel meeting, where they would be able to discuss any issues relating to laundry and blanket shortages within custody. CH to send meeting invite. NW informed the meeting that work on the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) was ongoing. NW noted that the scheme had achieved a silver award last year and that the intention was to complete the required evidence to qualify for a gold award this year. One outstanding piece of evidence was the completion of a satisfactory survey by visitors. NW to circulate survey.	NW CH NW
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	NW advised there had been a couple of issues whereby the Cell Usage form was not being provided by the Custody Staff and another form was being provided instead. This did not provide the relevant information. NW asked that the Cell Usage form developed in conjunction with the Force be used to ensure the ICVs could capture the appropriate elements on the visit forms. It was also noted that the ICV Report Form was not being used consistently, this was also developed with the Force Custody Trainer to ensure the custody record was redacted to ensure the necessary detainee information was shown as per the Home Office Code of Practice. NW informed the meeting that no issues had been reported regarding access times to custody. NW asked the visitors whether they would like to attend the Officer Safety Training to observe what officers are taught regarding the use of force. NW to circulate training dates to visitors. NW thanks the visitors for attending the meeting and for their ongoing support.	NW
5.	Custody Update	
	T/SUP informed the meeting that vetting was in progress for ten Samaritans who would be shared between Gwent and South Wales Police. SC asked whether Samaritan visiting times could be shared with the OPCC so that visitors and Samaritans did not attend custody at the same time, ensuring smoother coordination within the ICV Scheme. INSP/A to share rota with CH/ CH to circulate to visitors. T/SUP informed the meeting that ten cells within the Newport custody suite were scheduled for refurbishment in the coming months, should they be required for any major event.	AA/CH
6.	Any Other Business	
	None discussed.	
7.	Date of Next Meeting	
	The next meeting will be held at 6pm, 1st July 2026.	

Jane Mudd Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	
My decision is as I have recorded in this paper	
Signed 	Date 04.08.2026
Contact Officer	
Name	Nicola Warren
Position	Senior Governance Officer and Volunteer Lead
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Background papers	

