**Decision Log: PCCG-2024-002**



**MINUTES OF THE INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME**

**HELD BOTH REMOTELY ON TEAMS AND IN PERSON IN HAWTHORN MEETING ROOM,**

**POLICE HEADQUARTERS ON 24 APRIL 2024**

**Present:** Ms Jean Munton - Chair, Independent Custody Visitor (JM)

Mr Mike Hallinan– Independent Custody Visitor (RH)

Mr Alan Heywood – Independent Custody Visitor (AH)

Ms Linda Mason - Independent Custody Visitor (LM)

Ms Andrea Williams - Independent Custody Visitor (AW)

Mr Mike O’Farrell - Independent Custody Visitor (MO)

Ms Lisa Langley - Independent Custody Visitor (LL)

Ms Booker Skelding - Independent Custody Visitor (BS)

Mr David Salmon - Independent Custody Visitor (DS)

Ms Alexandra Robinson - Independent Custody Visitor (AR)

Also in attendance:

Mrs Nicola Warren - Scheme Administrator, OPCC (NW)

Inspector Martin Cawley – Custody Newport (MC)

***The meeting commenced at 6:17p.m.***

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|  | **Notes and Actions** | **Action** |
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| **1.** | **Apologies** |  |
|  | Apologies for absence were received from, Richard Holland, David Binding, Chief Inspector Mark Thomas, Custody Nurse Louise Price and Ceri Davis, Assistant Scheme Administrator. |  |
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| **2.** | **Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings** |  |
|  | The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.  Action 3, It was noted that Ystrad Mynach would remain as the main custody unit for the time being. There were two training refresher courses planned for custody officers on the booking in process for detainees, one of which was to take place imminently and another in September 2024. MC was in the process of arranging custody training for all newly qualified Sergeants to provide further resilience in the unit when required.  Action 5, a discussion ensued regarding the provision of custody record information to ICVs, MC confirmed the Niche development team were in the process of developing a form containing the required elements of the custody record. This would make it easier for ICVs to review the information and provide a simple process for custody staff to extract the information. It was agreed that MC would provide a short briefing session on the new form at the following meeting.  Action 6, The Chair asked if there were any issues with the Force obtaining Appropriate Adults (AA) when required as visitors had been made aware during their visits that some AAs were travelling from Swansea. MC confirmed there were some issues with provision due to the long distances some AAs had to travel to attend custody. MC assured the meeting that he was conversing with the AA provider to inform them of any delays and was informed that additional AAs had been appointed. MC was seeking regular updates from Custody Sergeants (CS) on AA provision to ensure continuity of service.  LM asked if it was possible for detainees to be transferred to the Newport custody unit should the temporary fix on the boiler in Ystrad Mynach fail, as the engineer present at a recent visit to the unit was not confident a permanent fix could be found so a new boiler may need to be installed. MC confirmed detainees could be moved to the Newport unit if required, although there were issues with both heating systems on occasion. These issues were in the process of being reviewed by the Force.  NW reiterated the importance of including this information in the report forms as she was not aware of the issue as it had not been included in the forms. | **Action**  **MC** |
|  | It was agreed that item 4, Scheme Update would be taken next followed by item 3, the Verbal Custody Update. |  |
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| **3.** | **Scheme Update & Performance Framework Update** |  |
|  | NW welcomed the new members to the scheme which increased membership to twelve.  NW conducted annual refresher training session on 26th February 2024 which provided a good opportunity for new members to network with existing members. NW thanked the visitors for attending and for their feedback on the training session.  NW thanked D Binding for undertaking the role of the Welsh regional National Expert Forum representative for the last 4 years and for his support in handing over the role to a fellow ICV in Dyfed Powys as of January 2024.  NW advised the meeting there were thirteen visits scheduled between January and March of which twelve took place as one visit was overlooked.  NW thanked the visitors as there had been a good spread of visiting times and days, including a weekend visit.  NW informed members that all custody issues raised by the visitors for the last quarter were dealt with immediately by the CS. However, an issue was raised with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) regarding a faulty gauge on the fridge containing detainees’ food. NW followed this up with MC as he had advised the fridge would be checked and a new one purchased if it was not at the appropriate temperature. MC confirmed the estates team had checked the temperature and it was adequate.  NW asked the visitors to ensure the forms were completed fully as there had been a few lacking in detail. There was a form without a signature whereby NW had to obtain confirmation from the custody unit that the actions requested by the ICVs during the visit had been fulfilled. NW emphasised that it was also important to note if an AA had been called for any detainees under the age of eighteen or who had been identified as vulnerable. There was also a lack of reporting in relation to ethnicity. NW advised visitors this information could be sought from the officers if they were not comfortable obtaining this information from the detainee.  NW advised visitors that the number of near misses had been provided by the Force and there had been eight from April 2023 to December 2023. NW was awaiting information from the Force Health and Safety (H&S) department for this quarter. MC advised the visitors that the process was to change in that a near miss and adverse incidents were to be recorded on the same H&S system as opposed to running two systems. MC has requested access to the system to be able to extract the relevant information for NW.  NW informed the visitors that the number of detainees accepting visits over the last quarter was an average of 72%.  NW asked the visitors to continue to watch the ICVA Bitesize ‘straight to’ training resources contained within the ICVA weekly newsletters.    There had been minimal delays with regards to ICVs accessing custody. NW informed the visitors there was one front page missing from a report form so she was unable to determine the entry time. The Chair requested the date of the form in order that she could check the folder in custody during her next visit. NW to provide date of form.  NH asked what test the Force used to determine if a detainee was vulnerable and when an AA was required, as a detainee appeared to be vulnerable during his last visit but this had not been identified at the initial booking in process. MC assured members that assessments were conducted by Health Care Professionals (HCPs) during the risk assessment process and any disclosures were taken into consideration. The assessment could change if further information came to light, or the detainee disclosed further information whereby it would be deemed necessary to request an AA. MC assured visitors that officers would usually err on the side of caution and request an AA to ensure the detainee’s rights and entitlements were protected.  The Chair asked who the HCPs were and MC confirmed HCPs were  paramedics and nurses who were on duty, the majority of whom had received training in mental health to conduct the assessments. All detainees were now seen by a trained HCP as a matter of course as opposed being referred on an ad hoc basis.  MH referred to the aforementioned visit and acknowledged that a HCP assessment took place and questioned whether too much responsibility was being placed on HCPs given that Inspectors were likely to have authority to use their powers under the Mental Health Act to ensure vulnerable detainees were sectioned for their own protection. MC informed the meeting the CS or Superintendent were the only officers with that level of authority, the Custody Detention Officer (CDO) should escalate the issue to the CS in order for them to contact partner organisations who specialise in Mental Health to arrange for a further assessment at a local mental health facility. MC informed visitors that the condition of the detainee could deteriorate from initial presentation if the detainee had previously taken drugs. MC advised the meeting he would review the case and provide an update to NW. NW to forward visit details.  A discussion ensued regarding the current ICV visit report form and it was agreed the form should be revised to make the format more user friendly. NW advised this had been put on hold as a digital reporting process was being considered. However, as the majority of the visitors stated they would prefer to keep a paper copy NW agreed to review the form and circulate to the visitors for comment. AH to forward his proposed templates to NW for consideration.  NW requested an update on the menopause packages and if they were being provided to detainees. MC agreed to obtain an update and advise NW outside of the meeting.  NW informed the meeting she had invited Inspector Carrington to provide an update on the Disproportionality Scrutiny Panel to the following meeting. | **Action**  **NW**  **Action**  **MC**  **NW**  **NW**  **AH**  **MC** |
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| **4.** | **Custody Update** | **Action** |
|  | MC advised the members there were twenty applicants shortlisted for the CDO role and interviews were underway.  A benchmarking exercise had been undertaken in relation to other Force Operating Models which had resulted in changes to the custody model in Gwent including the assignment of dedicated officers to certain roles within custody, such as booking in detainees or officers to move detainees within the unit thus reducing waiting times.  MC informed the visitors that a Performance Matrix and Framework report had been provided to NW focussing on monitoring children in police custody with the process being reviewed for any child that had been in custody over 10 – 14 hours. MC to share Performance Matrix to NW the following week for review and circulation to ICVs.  An analytical tool had been developed using Qlikview software to extract information such as detainee detention times, use of force, children in custody and vulnerability. This would assist the Force in identifying trends or issues that needed to be addressed with officers.  Monthly meetings had continued with Local Policing Areas (LPAs) to address any issues identified for improvement during custody reviews such as timeliness. | **MC** |
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| **5.** | **Any Other Business** |  |
|  | A discussion took place regarding receipt of ICV report forms and NW advised visitors that some forms had been lost in the post and it was possible for the forms to be photographed and emailed provided the paper form and photograph were destroyed immediately after it was sent. |  |
| **6.** | **Date of Next Meeting** |  |
|  | The next meeting will be held at **6pm, 17 July 2024.** |  |

**Meeting concluded at 7:35pm**

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| **Jane Mudd, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent** | |
| 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.  Any such interests are recorded below. The above decision log has my approval. | |
| Signed | Date  24.07.2024 |

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

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| **Actions from meeting 24th April 2024** | |  |  |  |
| **Minute Number** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Update** | **Complete/Ongoing** |
| **2** | A discussion ensued regarding the provision of custody record information to ICVs, MC confirmed the Niche development team were in the process of developing a form containing the required elements of the custody record. It was agreed that MC would provide a short briefing session on the new form at the following meeting. | **MC/NW** | A redacted report has now been created for the custody record. MC will run through the form at the next panel meeting. | **Complete** |
| **3** | There had been minimal delays with regards to ICVs accessing custody. NW informed the visitors there was one front page missing from a report form so she was unable to determine the entry time. The Chair requested the date of the form in order that she could check the folder in custody during her next visit. NW to provide date of form. | **NW** | Form date provided to Chair. Form copied and posted to OPCC. | **Complete** |
| **3** | MC advised the meeting he would review the case and provide an update to NW. NW to forward visit details | **MC/NW** | Form details provided to MC – awaiting update. | **Complete** |
| **3** | NW agreed to review the ICV visit form and circulate to the visitors for comment. AH to forward his proposed templates to NW for consideration. | **NW/AH** | Form received form AH. NW has revised form. | **Complete** |
| **3** | NW requested an update on the menopause packages and if they were being provided to detainees. MC agreed to obtain an update and advise NW outside of the meeting. | **MC** |  |  |
| **4** | MC informed the visitors that a Performance Matrix and Framework report had been provided to NW focussing on monitoring children in police custody with the process being reviewed for any child that had been in custody over 10 – 14 hours. MC to share Performance Matrix to NW the following week for review and circulation to ICVs | **MC** |  |  |
| **Actions from meeting 23rd October 2023** | | | | |
| **6** | NW asked the visitors if they could monitor the level of time it takes for an Appropriate Adult (AA) to attend for juveniles and vulnerable adults. AAs should attend when practicable. | **All ICVs** |  | **Ongoing** |