

DECISION NUMBER: PCCG-2019-018



OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS
HELD AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CROESYCEILIOG, CWMBRAN
ON 07TH MARCH 2019**

Present: Present: Mr Justin Johnstone (Chair)
Ms Jean Munton
Mr Jeffery Seabourne
Ms Ruth Coulthard
Mr David Binding
Mr Richard Holland
Mr Mike Hallinan

Also in attendance:

Miss Jessica Tippins - Communications and Engagement Officer, OPCC
Mrs Nicola Warren - Scheme Administrator, OPCC
Mrs Ceri Davis - Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC
Inspector Jitka Tomkova-Griffiths, Custody Inspector

The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m.

	Notes and Actions	Action
1.	Apologies	
	Lesley Ball	
2.	Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings	
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and all actions had been completed.	


<p>3.</p>	<p>Custody Update</p>	
	<p>Inspector Tomkova-Griffiths (JT-G) introduced herself as the new Custody Inspector. She then informed the visitors that she was changing roles imminently and would now be the Inspector of the Pill area. It was not known yet who the new Custody Inspector was going to be.</p> <p>JT-G informed visitors that there were three Custody Sergeants permanently on each shift in Newport and two in Ystrad Mynach. There had been an increase in Custody Sergeants who were still learning the role. This new intake of staff were not fully aware of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme because this was not fully covered on their training.</p> <p>JT-G advised visitors that arrests were expected to increase this month despite having actually gone down by 78 in the previous month. She was unable to say exactly why this figure had reduced given that officers in the west and north of Gwent now had a closer custody unit at Ystrad Mynach. If numbers continued to decrease, an analysis would take place.</p> <p>Time spent in custody was still increasing. This was due to the change in the Bail Act and the responsibility to investigate offences within 24 hours. It was expected that this trend would continue. 53% had been dealt with within twelve hours and almost 90% within 24 hours, the remaining 10% were remands in custody and Superintendents extensions.</p> <p>The average waiting time has been longer. This was expected due to the new staff intake and is expected to be longer for the next month until the new staff are up to speed.</p> <p>The maximum waiting time was four hours for one detainee in the Ystrad Mynach unit. This was a result of two incidents within the custody suite at the same time. An ambulance was required however, the incident did resolve itself.</p> <p>Just under 50% of detainees waited more than ten minutes but under an hour to be booked, 8% waited over an hour. This will continue to be monitored to ensure improvement.</p> <p>The average waiting time for fingerprints and rights being read was longer than the previous update, but again, this was due to new staff joining in December. The process was being monitored and expected to decrease in the coming months.</p> <p>Voluntary attendees had declined. This is thought to be due to a change in process around voluntary attendees. Two extra members of staff had joined the criminal justice department who assist all officers to ensure all voluntary attendees are booked onto the system, risk assessed, checked if the need to see the nurse and offered the same rights as detainees.</p>	

	<p>A training Sergeant has now joined the department and would be providing interactive and ongoing structured training to all custody staff. It was agreed that this would include an input from the OPCC on the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme.</p> <p>The visitors were advised that Newport Custody suite would be closed from 19th March 2019 to 20th March 2019, possibly the 21st March 2019 due to major servicing taking place on the doors system. The Inspector would inform the OPCC when the suite was back open.</p> <p>A discussion was held around the continuing issues of gaining access into the custody area and the lack of communication with the front desk staff and the custody suite at the Newport unit. JT-G gave Independent Custody Visitors (ICV's) permission to use the red phone on the wall in the front area. It was suggested that skype be used as a secondary method of communication should there be no answer on the phone line. JT-G and JT agreed to discuss this option with the Superintendent.</p> <p>The Inspector confirmed that the custody staff haven been informed that a more detailed explanation was required if entry for ICVs were not safe.</p> <p>Justine Johnston explained that ICVs were not always being asked to sign themselves in on arrival and was concerned that this could have an impact should there be an emergency such as a fire. JT-G advised that she would feed this back to their supervisor.</p> <p>We were reminded that the hand over period in custody was always 06:30am and 18:30pm daily and could take up to thirty minutes. ICVs were advised they may expect a delay if arriving at those times.</p> <p>We were also informed that a discussion had taken place with the Head of Estates enquiring if a direct access into the Newport unit would be possible instead of going through the front desk. This was still in the early stages of discussions but all agreed this would be more appropriate.</p>	<p>JT/NW</p> <p>Custody Inspector</p> <p>JT/Custody Inspector</p> <p>Custody Inspector</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Scheme Update</p>	
	<p>Jessica Tippins (JT) informed visitors that there were eight active ICVs on the scheme with Jeffery Seabourne currently on medical leave. The group was asked that if there were any visits scheduled for Jeffery, could cover be arranged.</p> <p>JT advised visitors that the only one major issue raised was that of the Niche system going down. It was confirmed that this was a force wide issue and was continuing to cause issues.</p> <p>Ceri Davis (CD) confirmed she would continue to email a record of the previous months visiting times.</p>	<p>CD</p>

	<p>JT informed visitors that there were some very good blogs on the ICVA website at the moment which would be interesting to read. A link was provided in the Scheme Update.</p> <p>JT introduced Nicola Warren (NW) as her replacement for Scheme Administrator and informed us that she was now moving to her new role as Communications and Engagement Officer. She asked that if anyone would like to volunteer to appear in any promotional material for the Scheme, to contact her directly.</p> <p>JT updated visitors on progress with the confidentiality agreement form presented at the last meeting. It has been sent to the Gwent Police Data Protection department to be revised but had not yet been returned. It was confirmed NW would chase this.</p> <p>JT advised that she had discussed with the Inspector the viewing of custody records in a more appropriate way. This also raised an issue with the viewing of detainee data on the whiteboard held in Ystrad Mynach. Until this issue was resolved, ICVs were asked to be extra vigilant about what information they saw whilst at the unit.</p> <p>JT informed us that Gwent Police would be holding another Behind the Badge day on Sunday 2nd June 2019. It was confirmed that the OPCC would have access to Crownbridge school hall for the event and would like to promote the volunteer schemes. If anyone would be available for an hour to be on a stand to talk to the public about the role of an ICV, please contact JT direct.</p> <p>Visitors were also informed that Gwent were hosting the National Dog Trials on 16th – 17th May 2019 at Tredegar Park, Newport.</p> <p>JT informed visitors that Justin would be leaving the scheme in June and that as previously agreed Jean Munton (JM) would step up to be chair and that there would be a vice chair vote at the next meeting. It was agreed that nominations would be sent in beforehand and then announced at the next meeting. Nominations could be sent directly to NW or CD.</p> <p>JT congratulated JM on becoming Chair and thanked Justin for all his work and time on the scheme.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>NW</p> <p>NW</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>7@7 Custody Briefing</p>	
	<p>We watched a briefing produced by Gwent Police on Keep Safe Cymru which is a card scheme, developed as a partnership project between Gwent Police and OPCC. The scheme is for anybody with a communication difficulty or anyone that feels worried or frightened when coming into contact with the police. Everybody that registers onto the scheme will be given a card and keyring.</p>	

	JT confirmed the information of the card scheme would be sent out to all to be shared.	CD
6.	Date of Next Meeting Thursday 6 th June, 2019, 6pm in Conference Room 1	

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm

Jeff Cuthbert, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	
I have monitored the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Minutes and am satisfied with progress.	
Signed 	Date 20/5/19

Contact Officer	
Name	Jessica Tippins
Position	Scheme Administrator
Telephone	01633 642200
Email	Jessica.Tippins@gwent.pnn.police.uk
Background papers	None

