

**Decision number: PCCG-2019-071**



**OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS  
HELD AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CROESYCEILIOG, CWMBRAN  
ON 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2019**

**Present:** Ms Jean Munton (Chair)  
Mr Jeffery Seabourne (JS)  
Mr Michael Hallinan (MH)  
Miss Bonnie Harris (BH)  
Mr David Binding (DB)

Also in attendance:

Mr Jeff Cuthbert - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)  
Mrs Nicola Warren - Scheme Administrator, OPCC (NW)  
Mrs Ceri Davis - Assistant Scheme Administrator, OPCC (CD)  
Inspector Owen Jones - Custody Inspector (OJ)  
Sergeant Carl Watkins - Custody Trainer (CW)

***The meeting commenced at 6.05 p.m.***


	<b>Notes and Actions</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
	Ms Lesley Ball	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings</b>	
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed. We noted that all actions had been completed.	
	The Chair informed us that BH had completed her observation period and	

	was now on the rota.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Custody Update</b>	
	<p>OJ informed us that the Custody Suite in Ystrad Mynach would close in March 2020 for possibly twelve weeks to have new CCTV installed. During this time all detainees would be taken to Newport Custody Suite.</p> <p>We were also informed that Newport Custody Suite would be closing in April 2020 for a full refurbishment which would involve a change in the use of some rooms. This was expected to take twelve weeks. All detainees would go to Ystrad Mynach during this time.</p> <p>OJ would inform the OPCC of the closure dates as soon as they were known.</p> <p>OJ informed us that all officers had been advised that female detainees were to be made aware of the menstrual products available to them in accordance the changes to Police and Criminal Evidence Act.</p> <p>OJ advised us that the Force were currently trialling a new system in which near misses are recorded electronically rather than them being recorded on the custody record. This also captured any Health and Safety issues. However this was still in the early stages and a further update would be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>OJ confirmed that detainees were made aware that the toilet areas were pixelated on the CCTV.</p> <p>OJ informed the visitors that there were various checks that needed to be carried out on Foreign National offenders coming into custody. This was to ascertain if they were wanted by another country and also to ensure the safety of the staff in the unit as well as that of the detainees. These checks were continually improving, however they could be lengthy at times, depending on the country of origin.</p> <p>OJ informed the visitors that custody numbers had increased slightly compared to previous months but were not as high as the same time last year. We noted that this was being looked at by Chief Officers to try and determine if there was a reason behind the increase and what could be done to address it.</p> <p>OJ advised that he had made contact with Avon and Somerset Police regarding the ability to produce a redacted record form for review by custody visitors using the Niche Policing system, however they had confirmed that they do not have the facility. OJ had asked other Forces on the Police National Forum if they had this capability but a response had not yet been received. However, OJ advised us that solutions would continue to be looked into.</p>	<p>OJ</p> <p>OJ</p>

	<p>MH informed the visitors of a situation on a recent visit to Ystrad Mynach where a Custody Officer was in hearing distance of the cell when he was conducting his visit. OJ confirmed that officers should be within sight but not hearing distance and that this could be a training issue that he would address. The visitors were informed that if there were any issues, they should record them on the visiting report forms for the OPCC to review.</p> <p>NW informed the visitors that ICV training formed part of Custody Officer training. The ICVs agreed that it would be beneficial for them to attend to give an overview of their role. NW to liaise with CW provide training material and to arrange for ICVs to attend.</p>	<p>OJ ALL  NW</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Scheme Update</b></p>	
	<p>NW advised us that there were currently eight active visitors on the scheme. A recruitment process would take place in January 2020 to recruit one additional visitor.</p> <p>JM informed us that she had circulated a new rota up until March 2020.</p> <p>NW informed the visitors of a new Custody Reviewing Pilot Scheme. The pilot was very much in the early stages with only a few OPCCs taking part. The pilot involved a more in depth look at the Custody records and procedures. The results of the pilot were to be collated by the Independent Custody Visiting Association in Spring/Summer 2020 and a report of findings provided to all OPCCs.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Framework Update</b></p>	
	<p>We received an update on the performance framework for our information.</p> <p>NW advised us that there had been a good spread of visit times and days over the past three months.</p> <p>We were advised that one report form had not been received from a visit to Ystrad Mynach week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The relevant ICV would look into this and submit the report form.</p> <p>NW confirmed no major issues raised.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Blite Size Training</b></p>	
	<p>CW gave a presentation on Vulnerable People in Custody. 'Vulnerable' applies to any person who, because of a mental health condition or Mental disorder may have difficulty understanding or communicating</p>	

	effectively about the full implications for them of any procedures and processes connected with their detention. For juveniles and vulnerable persons a Custody Officer must as soon as practical contact an Appropriate Adult (AA). An AA ensures the police treat detainees fairly and respect their rights. They also make sure that the detainee understands the process whilst they are in Custody.	
	CD to send presentation slides to all visitors.	<b>CD</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	None.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
	The next meeting will be held at 6pm, on the 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2020 in Conference Room 1 at Gwent Police Headquarters, Croesyceiliog.	

**Meeting concluded at 7:45pm**

<b>Jeff Cuthbert B.SC., MDIPD, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent</b>	
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 request has my approval.	
Signed 	Date 14/2/20

<b>Contact Officer</b>	
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<b>Background papers</b>	