

DECISION NUMBER: PCCG-2016-009

OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS
HELD AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CROESYCEILIOG, CWMBRAN
ON 23rd NOVEMBER 2015**

Present: Mr Brian Thomas (Acting Chair)
Mr Arthur Elliott
Mr Brian Williams
Mr Richard Holland
Ms Jean Munton
Mr David Binding
Ms Eleanor Weare
Ms Haylie Griffith
Mr Stephen Spokes

Also in attendance:

Mr Ian Johnston (Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent)
Mrs Siân Curley (Scheme Manager)
Mrs Maria Chapman (Scheme Administrator)
Miss Jessica Tippins (Assistant Scheme Administrator)
Detective Inspector Steve Hudson (Gwent Police)
Inspector Mark Smith (Custody Inspector)

The meeting commenced at 3.00 p.m.

Action

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENSE

1. Apologies were received from the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Paul Harris, Mr Justin Johnstone, Mr Anthony Angell, Ms Julie Morgan, Mr John Thomas and Inspector Micah Hassell.

Introductions were made amongst the group.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent welcomed both returning and new Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) to the meeting. He informed the group of how important the role of an ICV was in ensuring the welfare of detainees and providing an independent view of Gwent's custody procedures. The Commissioner thanked the returning ICVs for their commitment and wished all luck for the future.

Brian Williams (BW) raised a query regarding a visit which he and Justin Johnstone (JJ) had carried out a few days previously. The query centred around a young female who was in Police Custody as a result of no other appropriate accommodation being available. The Commissioner made the

group aware that a discussion was ongoing between the health services, local government and the police services to look into providing better nursing care and support, especially for those with mental health issues. It was agreed that Inspector Smith (MS) would look into this matter further. **MS**

The Commissioner left the meeting at 3.10pm.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13TH AUGUST 2015

2. The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record.

CUSTODY UPDATE

3. MS and Detective Inspector Steve Hudson (SH) provided the group with the custody update.

We were made aware that there were no major issues to make the ICVs aware of. MS reiterated the Commissioner's comments stating that the ICVs carry out a very important role.

SH advised the group that the refurbishment of Newport Custody suite had been completed. It was now fully repainted, new flooring had been installed as well as life monitoring cameras in cells. We were also made aware that a separate booking in desk had been fitted away from the main desk so that certain detainees could be booked in in private, such as under 18's or those arrested on sexual offence charges, for example. This facility is not currently available at the Ystrad Mynach custody suite. At present, part of the booking in desk is shut down so that detainees could be booked in privately. It was confirmed that consideration was being given to creating a separate booking in facility at Ystrad Mynach with plans being drawn up by an architect.

We were informed that custody officers were being encouraged to submit 'near miss' forms in order for trends to be identified and key areas of concern to be noted. A discussion was then had around safety issues which have previously been identified.

Arthur Elliott (AE) asked whether the records keeping process was the same with those detained under immigration legislation and whether the ICVs could view these records as normal. MS confirmed that these detainees are booked in as usual and as such, ICVs could view all records. Jean Munton (JM) queried how many individuals are detained under immigration legislation within Gwent. MS confirmed that the custody suites are dealing with immigration detainees every week.

BW raised that ICVs can no longer use the Sergeant's room at the Newport Custody suite and asked if there was another room suitable for them to use. SH confirmed there were facilities available at both custody suites for ICVs and that the custody staff would always accommodate them.

SCHEME UPDATE

4. Siân Curley (SC) provided the group with the scheme update.

The group were made aware that Mr Anthony Angell (AA) was not undertaking visits due to ill health.

SC informed the group that page 1 of the scheme update should have stated that Mr John Thomas had tendered his resignation as an ICV. The group all agreed that he will be greatly missed.

ICVs were reminded to ensure that all forms were completed fully and that the content was written clearly to ensure that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) could accurately record the information.

We reviewed the performance monitoring framework. SC raised that only one weekend visit had been carried out between August and October. She therefore queried whether anyone was experiencing difficulty accessing the custody suites during these times. BW advised the group that he and JJ had carried out a visit during the previous Sunday morning and found that the custody suite was very busy. He stated that he found this far more valuable than visiting during the weekday evenings when the suites were often very quiet. SC confirmed that a document was being produced by the OPCC which would detail the availability of all ICVs. This would be distributed amongst all visitors. MC

Maria Chapman (MC) entered the meeting at 3.45pm.

It was confirmed that a task and finish group to discuss what information should be included on the visit record forms was still going to be arranged by the OPCC. MC

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

5. We noted the updated information within the performance framework.

UPDATE REPORT TO THE ICVA BOARD

6. SC informed the group that once a year, an individual from

either the Dyfed Powys, South Wales or Gwent Commissioner's Office was nominated to represent the three Welsh forces at the national Independent Custody Visitor Association (ICVA) meetings. It was confirmed that the current representative was Stephen Wood from Dyfed Powys. SC advised the group that the documents provided under this item were for information only.

HMIC GUIDANCE ON ASSESSING THE TREATMENT OF AND THE CONDITIONS FOR DETAINEES IN POLICE CUSTODY

7. The group were made aware that the guidance provided good referencing material for the new ICVs on their initial visits and were provided for information.

It was confirmed to the new ICVs that the recording forms for visits were located in the custody suites.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. All members were made aware that they would be offered the opportunity to attend the national ICVA conference once the OPCC receives confirmation of the event details.

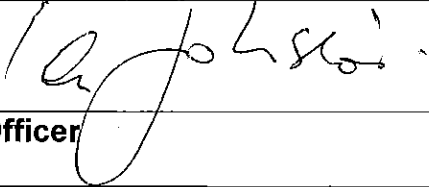
DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9. The next meeting has been scheduled for **3pm** on the **25th February 2016** in **Conference Room 1** at **Gwent Police Headquarters, Croesyceiliog**.

Meeting concluded at 3.55pm.

Ian Johnston QPM, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

I have monitored the Independent Custody Scheme minutes as per my statutory responsibility under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and am satisfied with progress.

Signed		Date	8.2.16.
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Background papers		None	

