



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – April 2018

The Police & Crime Commissioner, Vera Baird QC, would like to take this opportunity to thank Independent Custody Visitors for the work they have undertaken when visiting custody suites within the Northumbria Force area. The ICVs are valued members of the volunteer team. Below are the points raised during **April 2018** from the stations visited.

Issues Raised following introduction of PCC ICV Custody Suite Questionnaire

Following the 2014 HMIC Inspection into Northumbria Police Custody, a number of recommendations were made by HMIC to improve the custody process and service offered to detainees.

Northumbria Police have produced an action plan to address the issues raised with added checks by officers that these recommendations are being delivered. The Commissioner requested that ICV's be part of this process to make sure that an independent check that the force are delivering on these recommendations is made.

The OPCC produced a checklist of questions with each question relating to a specific recommendation in the report. During the month of **April 2018** no issues of concern were highlighted by visitors in addition to the areas highlighted below.

Alnwick

No detainees in custody

Warm welcome received by staff

Suite clean and tidy

Food stock checked and all in date

Bedlington

Warm welcome received by staff

All areas clean and tidy

Main shower floor in need of cleaning

Force Response: Shower floor now cleaned.

Southwick

Suite clean and tidy and staff helpful

Female hygiene pack in stock

Custody suite extremely busy (on 4/4/18) with a number of 'difficult' detainees – staff efficient despite work pressure

Areas for Improvement

Shoes and clothes on floor outside cells

Detainee (9795/17) been in overnight but not offered wash/shower or male hygiene pack and no time in the exercise yard

Force Response:

Staff reminded on using lockers for clothing and shoes

Staff reminded to offer showers and this now forms part of our audit/quality checking process.

North Tyneside – Middle Engine Lane

Custody suite clean and tidy

Female hygiene packs in stock

Food stocks checked and all in date

Staff polite and helpful

Areas for Improvement:

2x lamb hot pot meals out of date (Oct 17)

Mattress in corridor beside cells

Lockers 10,11,12,31 and 39 open

Cell 31 out of use

Utility cupboard beside cell 31 – open and unlocked

No wash/shower offered to detainees who have been in custody overnight

Wifi signal - sporadic and intermittent (supervisor aware of issues with Wifi)

28/4/18 – Very strong odour in wing 31-40 (possibly from drains)

Tablets are working better, better reception

Force Response:

Cell 31 is repaired and back in use.

Staff reminded to offer showers and this now forms part of our audit/quality checking process.

Drain in wing 31-40 was blocked, has now been cleared after a contractor called out.

Staff reminded on closing lockers

WiFi – Appears issues are resolved with IT and the system upgrade

Forth Banks

Staff friendly and helpful

Comments on tidiness of the suite

25/4/18 - DO 5160 was very helpful and professional at all times. Also custody staff and sergeant very helpful and approachable.

Female hygiene packs in stock

Trainers left in corridor but locked away when identified

Etal Lane

All staff polite and helpful

General environment fine

Areas for improvement

11/4/18 – police station phone not working, CV used personal phone to gain entry

No forms – CV had a spare copy, photocopies made and spares left in the suite

Short staffed – everyone extremely busy – seemed chaotic, staff pleasant to CVs.

16/4/18 Intercom not working, took 25 minutes to gain entry into the building

CV3 not available from previous week to check

Force Response:

Phone – This was identified but there was a delay in repair by BT.

Lack of relevant forms noted and stock replenished.