



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – February 2017

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 February 2017 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 February 2017 no issues of concern were highlighted by visitors in addition to the areas highlighted below.

Alnwick

Warmly welcomed by staff

No issues identified

Berwick

All well

Clean and tidy suite

Bedlington – Resilience Suite

Warm welcome by staff

All food checked and in date.

Suite clean and tidy

Hexham

Prompt and friendly welcome

No issues raised

Southwick

Suite clean and tidy and staff helpful

Millbank

Clean and tidy station

Staff helpful and friendly

Areas for improvement:

Shoe lockers, cleaning cupboard and bedding stores left open

A number of cells out of use due to night lights not working

Male detainee shower out of use

Force Response: Staff reminded around need to secure lockers / cupboards.

Cell night lights fixed

Male shower repaired.

North Tyneside

Custody suite clean and tidy.

Staff polite and helpful.

Areas for Improvement:

Cell 4 lock missing

Rough edges on shower grate of cell 15

Detainees in some cases not offered showers or exercise (A Rota)

Microwave used to cook detainee meals is not appropriate for that use. An industrial style microwave is needed.

Force Response:

Cell 4 lock missing – now fixed

Rough edges on shower grate of cell 15 – passed to maintenance crew to fix

Detainees in some cases not offered showers or exercise (A Rota) – all staff reminded of need to offer showers.

Microwave used to cook detainee meals is not appropriate for that use. An industrial style microwave is needed. Microwave replaced

Forth Banks

Staff friendly, professional and co-operative with both detainees and ICV's

Food and first aid stocks checked and all ok

Clean and tidy suite

Areas for Improvement:

Custody suite very warm

Force Response

Issue identified in cells 1-10 with under floor heating, estates looking at issue and liaising with contractor.