



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – July 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 **July 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 **July 2017** 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 and all areas clean and tidy.

Food checked and all in date.

Berwick

No detainees in custody.

Warm welcome received by staff and food stores checked.

Area for Improvement:

Affray alarm is still broken however this has been reported

Force Response - This has been fixed

Bedlington

Cleaning of suite has been undertaken.

All detainee meals checked and in date

Warmly welcomed by staff

Areas for Improvement:

Emergency alarm strips within suite not working however this has been reported.

Force Response – CV Callan at Bedlington personally checked these last week (w/c 210817) in company with ICVs. They work, but aren't back-lit and never have been – possibly leading to the belief that they don't function correctly.

Millbank

Clean and tidy station

Staff helpful and friendly

Medical room door open with no medical personnel on site.

Areas for improvement:

Cell M1 – Night light not working

M8 – Day light not working

Force Response:

Repairs have been carried out

Southwick

Suite clean and tidy and staff helpful

Areas for improvement:

All taps in suite still running warm water

Cleaning materials should be moved to a cupboard that can be locked for Health and Safety reasons

Lack of reading materials for detainees

Force Response:

Business support checking water temperature to ensure it is within the acceptable temperature

There is nowhere else within the custody suite suitable for storing the cleaning materials, will ask business support to see if a different cupboard can be acquired

More reading material has been obtained

North Tyneside – Middle Engine Lane

Custody suite clean and tidy.

Staff polite and helpful.

Areas for Improvement:

One of the detainee microwaves is still unusable

Clothes and shoe lockers left open

Pillows and mattresses stored in corridors

Some cells and cell corridors are cold and staff unable to change the temperature in suite

Force Response: 2 x new microwaves present and functioning.

Standards re-iterated with staff and spot checks by Custody Inspector planned.

Maintenance informed re: temperature problems.

Forth Banks

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

Clean and tidy suite

Areas for Improvement

No pillows available for detainees as some are damaged and in need of replacing

Several lockers left open

Personal property lying in corridor and not in lockers

Some toilets within the suite are not working

Force Response:

A large amount of new pillows and mattress have been ordered to replace damaged stock and give some surplus to avoid future issues.

Foot locker doors have now been welded so they cannot be removed and used as a weapon.

A general expectation of cleanliness in the suite has been sent to staff.

Toilets reported and repaired.

