

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – May 2014.

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 in May from the stations visited.

Alnwick

No issues raised. All areas clean and tidy

Bedlington

All areas clean and tidy.

Well received by staff.

Staff under resourced.

Areas for improvement:

Issue raised regarding understaffing on a monthly basis by ICV's.

Issues raised regarding the transport of detainees from custody suite to the local court.

Berwick

Areas for improvement:

Cells in need of cleaning.

Hexham

All areas clean and tidy.

Well received by staff.

Etal Lane

Staff quickly addressed detainees concerns

Staff helpful and professional.

Area for improvement:

Detainee shower area in need of cleaning and tidying

Cell D7 – Out of use due to cracked seal

Cell M4 – Out of use

Cell M5 – Out of use

Graffiti in cells M13, M16 and M17

Gateshead

Staff polite and helpful

Suite clean and tidy

Areas for Improvement:

Detainee shower out of use

Cleaning cupboard unlocked

Detainees not being granted access to washing facilities or exercise yard

Millbank

Very clean and staff helpful.

Records well documented

Areas for Improvement:

Medical room unlocked

Gillbridge

All staff polite and helpful

No issues raised

Washington

No issues raised

Staff helpful and courteous

North Tyneside

All staff polite and helpful

All areas clean and tidy

Areas for improvement:

Number of mattress seams coming away

Shoe cupboards left open (Reported on every visit)

Kitchen area in need of cleaning

Interview room 10, 8, 5 and 41 left unlocked

Cells 2, 6, 15 and 16 out of use due to broken intercoms

Response from ACC Jo Farrell

Bedlington

Areas for improvement:

Issue raised regarding understaffing on a monthly basis by ICV's. Resourcing is continually monitored and a flexible deployment of staff is full utilised to support all custody facilities

Issues raised regarding the transport of detainees from custody suite to the local court.

There is ongoing liaison with service providers to maintain service provisions between courts and custody

Berwick

Areas for improvement:

Cells in need of cleaning. Polystyrene cup on windowsill - Removed

Etal Lane

Area for improvement:

Detainee shower area in need of cleaning and tidying completed.

Cell D7 – Out of use due to cracked seal fixed

Cell M4 – Out of use -Risk assessed for use. Sealant in door frame cracked. Has been reviewed by Estates who confirm that it does need a repair. Maintenance advised and awaiting their attendance to fix the fault.

Cell M5 – Out of use fixed

Graffiti in cells M13, M16 and M17. Graffiti is names. They have been observed on the last estates/ Inspector inspection. Awaiting maintenance to remove by sanding. Cells still in use. Maintenance staff reminded of need to have this completed as soon as possible

Gateshead

Areas for Improvement:

Detainee shower out of use -out of use due to underground fault. Cost implication out weigh the need to get this fixed. Two other showers available.

Cleaning cupboard unlocked Lock was broken on the 16 new lock fitted and was observed to be locked on the 19/5/15.

Detainees not being granted access to washing facilities or exercise yard Sgt reminded of need to offer shower and exercise where appropriate.

Millbank

Areas for Improvement:

Medical room unlocked All staff reminded of requirement to keep medical rooms locked when not in use. Subject of regular spot checks by supervision.

North Tyneside

Areas for improvement:

Number of mattress seams coming away Staff allocated to check and one pillow has been removed from stock in relation to it being damaged (Staff required to check daily and report via daily checks which is being monitored)

Shoe cupboards left open (Reported on every visit) -Spot checks conducted by all custody supervision to reinforce this matter and identified individuals given appropriate feedback. A wider issue regarding access to shoe cupboard keys has been highlighted and will be progressed.

Kitchen area in need of cleaning Part of daily checks by staff checked to be continually monitored by supervision

Interview room 10, 8, 5 and 41 left unlocked Staff reminded of need to ensure interview rooms are locked when not in use. To be monitored by supervision.

Cells 2, 6, 15 and 16 out of use due to broken intercoms All cells operational and in working order.