



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – May 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 **May 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 **May 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 food stocks checked.

Area for Improvement:

Suite and detainee toilets in need of cleaning

Force Response – I have had previous correspondence from Peter Gill and Tracy McConnell explaining that custody no longer forms part of the cleaning schedule, but that it can be cleaned upon request. I have emailed her asking for it to be cleaned (A/Insp 1008)

Berwick

No detainees in custody.

Warm welcome received by staff.

Area for Improvement:

Affray alarm is currently broken however this has been reported

Force Response - Repair to be followed up by Custody Inspector.

Bedlington

All areas of suite in need of cleaning.

All detainee meals checked and in date

Warmly welcomed by staff

Areas for Improvement:

Emergency alarm within suite not working

Force Response – This was raised the last time – an officer checked it upon my request and it was found to work. Maintenance have been emailed and asked to check it. A/Insp 1008

Millbank

Clean and tidy station

Staff helpful and friendly

Food stores checked and all in date

Areas for improvement:

Storage cupboards open in cell corridor

Force Response: All staff reminded of the requirement to keep cupboards locked, additional keys to be ordered

Southwick

Suite clean and tidy and staff helpful

Areas for improvement:

Cleaners and storage cupboard doors left open within suite

Exercise yard in need of cleaning

Force Response: All staff reminded of the requirement to keep cupboards locked, additional keys to be ordered

Yard cleaned

North Tyneside – Middle Engine Lane

Custody suite clean and tidy.

Staff polite and helpful.

Areas for Improvement:

On one visit (07.05.17) ICVs highlighted that only two staff were on duty for 19 detainees due to staff sickness.

One of the detainee microwaves is unusable due to requiring a plug.

Clothes and shoe lockers left open

Showers or washing facilities not offered to some detainees

Force Response: Sgts and staff made aware and this will be monitored by Custody Inspector.

Forth Banks

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

Clean and tidy suite and no issues raised