



**VERA BAIRD**<sup>QC</sup>  
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

## **Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner**

### **Independent Custody Visitors findings – May 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 **May 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 May **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

#### **Bedlington**

No detainees in custody

Warm welcome received by staff

All areas clean and tidy

#### **Southwick**

Suite clean and tidy and staff polite and helpful

Sleeves of white tea out of date (visits on 9/5/18 and 19/5/18)

Shoes on floor outside cell (19/5/18)

**Areas for Improvement**

Shoes on floor outside cell

Need to check if food stock in date

**Force Response:**

**Shoes are a persistent issue with Southwick's older cells not having shoe lockers, Insp will look at this issue to see if there is a better resolution.**

**Food checked**

**North Tyneside – Middle Engine Lane**

Custody suite clean and tidy

Staff polite and helpful

Tablets are working better, better reception

**Areas for Improvement:**

Cell 36 out of use – required cleaning

No female hygiene packs available – now individual products

Detainee 1/701/37 – not offered shower/wash facilities, but offered time in the yard

29/5/18 - Mattress in outer corridor (fire exit route)

**Force Response:**

**All issues either rectified or addressed. With regards showering difficult to establish which individual this is as not valid CRN.**

**Forth Banks**

Staff friendly and helpful

Comments on tidiness of the suite

**DO 4714 and DO4059 were very helpful and professional at all times. Also custody staff and sergeant very helpful and approachable.**

Areas for improvement:

8/5/18 – 2 blankets on floor outside cell24

8/5/18 – Detainee 18/010828 accused police officers of causing injuries to his hands

18/5/18 – Some foot lockers left open and property left in corridor

25/5/18 – Some foot lockers left open and personal belongings in corridor

- Main locker units unlocked

### **Force Response:**

- 1. There has been an order put through for significantly more blankets, Insp will monitor**
- 2. This CRN – the record has been viewed and the detainee was non-compliant on arrival and had to be handcuffed. He was then taken to hospital as he had taken drugs prior to arrival. He was also seen by the HCP's. He did not made any complaints and from the custody log it appears the only injuries noted were those from the handcuffs.**
- 3. Foot lockers and main lockers – this issue will be kept under review.**