



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – September 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 **September 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 **September 2018** no issues of concern were highlighted by visitors in addition to the areas highlighted below.

Berwick

All areas clean and tidy; food in date, ICVs warmly welcomed.

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

Stocks of food all in date

Areas for Improvement:

11/09/18

Detainees in over 24 hours as Courts unable to take them

Mattress in corridor, shoes/clothes locker was unlocked

One shift allowed detainee to have food brought in, another shift removed the food. Detainee asked to speak with an inspector, who confirmed food cannot be brought in.

21625/M3 Detainee in over 24 hours, stated had not been offered wash or shower facilities – there was no record of being offered this facility.

21596/M1 Detainee in over 24 hours stated not offered wash/shower, however, there was a towel in the cell.

Force Response:

All detainees should be offered showers once they have been in custody over night. Reminder to be sent by C Insp Readdie.

Regarding the availability of court space. C Insp Readdie has had a meeting with Geoamy and HM Court Service. There are issues with at the three court hubs that are used. This is most pronounced on a Monday

19/09/18

Custody suite extremely busy

22265/18 – detainee had been in overnight but had not been offered a shower

22259/18 – detainee had been in overnight but had not been offered a shower – however, had been offered breakfast.

Force Response:

All detainees should be offered showers once they have been in custody over night. Reminder to be sent by C Insp Readdie.

North Tyneside – Middle Engine Lane

Custody suite clean and tidy and kitchen was spotless

Staff polite and helpful

Areas for Improvement:

01/09//18

Short staffed but no issues

17/09/18

Cells 33, 35 and 38 require cleaning

One member of staff down, Street Sargeant was covering

Force Response: Nine new Dos are being recruited.

The custody unit resourcing model is based on “resilience” sergeants being used on occasions.

Forth Banks

Staff friendly, helpful and polite

Areas for Improvement:

12/09/18

Cell 21 – toilet not in use since 15th August

Cell 22 – CCTV issue since 15th August

DOs could not lock some lockers so detainees’ possessions were left outside the cells

Tablets appeared not to be picking up signals in corridors so unable to capture detainee’s signature (tablet kept freezing)

21/09/18

22475/18 – Detainee’s medical needs had not been addressed so ICV requested Detention Officer to speak with the nurse to address matters.

Force Response:

Estates chased re CCTV and toilet.

Reminder sent to DOs re lockers.

Custody record 22475/18 reviewed.