



# NORTHUMBRIA **POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER**

---

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

### **Independent Custody Visitors findings – November 2019**

Kim McGuinness, Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria 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 **November 2019** 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 **November 2019** no issues of concern were highlighted by visitors in addition to the areas highlighted below.

### **Southwick**

Suite clean and tidy and staff polite and helpful.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

Light out in corridor M1 – M5.

Detainee microwave broken.

Staff highlighted issues with mobile tablets breaking frequently and requiring regular repair.

Shoe and clothes lockers left open (A Rota)

30.11.19 – Detainees not offered shower or washing facilities (A Rota)

**Force Response:** The light in the corridor and the microwave used to heat the detainees' food are both now repaired. Staff are aware to report any defective mobile tablets to our ICT department for repair. In the interim pool mobile tablets are available for staff to use. Staff have been reminded to use the shoe and clothes lockers provided. Following our HMICFRS inspection audits have been conducted concerning the offering of showers. Whilst our own audits showed a good level of compliance staff are consistently reminded to increase detainee access to showers and exercise, particularly when they are held overnight or for extended periods of time.

### **North Tyneside – Middle Engine Lane**

Custody suite clean and tidy  
Exercise Yard checked and all in order  
Staff polite and helpful  
Supplies checked and well stocked

#### **Areas for Improvement:**

Cell 3 + 39 – broken camera

**Force Response:** Both cameras are now repaired and are in full working order. CCTV is checked on a daily basis to ensure faults are identified early and repairs reported to our external contractor.

### **Forth Banks**

Suite clean and tidy and all in order.

ICV's commented on staff who were informative, helpful and engaging with detainees which resulted in detainees highlighting good treatment by officers and custody staff.

#### **Areas for Improvement:**

Cell 17 – Broken alarm

Cell 35 – CCTV camera not working

Cell 46 – Out of order with broken intercom

Cell 47 – Out of order due to issues with CCTV

Cell 48 – Out of order with broken intercom

Some detainee lockers left open.

**Force Response:** Cell 35 – CCTV is working however the intercom is not, this has been reported via daily checks and will be fixed soon by an external contractor. Cell 46 – Intercom is still broken, does not play any sound when answered – has been reported on daily checks. Cell 47 – CCTV is now fully working. Cell 48 – Intercom is now repaired. Cell 17 is now repaired and fully functional. Staff have reported a number of shoe/clothing lockers are in need of repair due to faulty locks making them difficult to close.