



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – November 2016

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 November 2016 from the stations visited.

Alnwick

Warmly welcomed by staff

ACTION

The custody suite and cell toilets are in need of cleaning which has now been raised on several occasions.

Force Response – Suite has been cleaned a request for more regular cleaning placed but at present the suite is taking approximately only 1 detainee per week.

Berwick

All well

No issues raised

Bedlington – Resilience Suite

Warm welcome by staff

ACTION

General Cleaning of suite needed

Force Response – Suite has been cleaned. But is not part of day to day cleaning – as this suite is a resilience suite utilized in the main for operations and cleaned prior to use. However a request for more regular cleaning has been made.

Southwick

Suite clean and tidy and staff helpful

No issues raised

ACTION

Some detainees not offered washing or exercise facilities following overnight detention

Force Response – all staff at Southern AC reminded of importance of this issue and to make such offers to detainee's.

Millbank

Clean and tidy station

Staff helpful and friendly

No issues raised

North Tyneside

Custody suite clean and tidy.

Staff polite and helpful.

Areas for Improvement:

Shoe lockers left open (D Rota)

Detainee showers in need of cleaning

Force Response – Showers cleaned and all staff reminded re shoelockers.

Forth Banks

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

Clean and tidy suite

Areas for Improvement:

Over 20 cells out of use due to fire alarm fault

Force Response – Issue resolved alarms fixed.

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 2016 no issues of concern were highlighted by visitors in addition to the areas highlighted above.