



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – March 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 **March 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 **March 2017** no issues of concern were highlighted by visitors in addition to the areas highlighted below.

Berwick

All well

Clean and tidy suite

Southwick

Suite clean and tidy and staff helpful

Areas for improvement:

Comment made by visitors in relation to the new floor that has recently been laid in the suite which has caused minor cuts to staff and detainees.

Cold water tap in kitchen in need of repair.

Force Response:

Estates have revisited the suite and advised that the floor has been laid in line with the contractor and product manufactures guidelines, the abrasiveness texture of the floor will slowly wear down over time with people waking over it and when cleaning staff use their equipment.

Millbank

Clean and tidy station

Staff helpful and friendly

Areas for improvement:

Re-stock of clothing needed

Reading material available does not cater for younger detainees

Force Response:

Clothing is ordered on a regular basis, there was a delay in receiving the last order

Comic books and novels suitable for the younger reader will be purchased

North Tyneside

Custody suite clean and tidy.

Staff polite and helpful.

Areas for Improvement:

Substantial amount of out of date vegetable curry detainee meals in suite.

Current microwave used to to cook detainee meals is not suitable.

B Rota not offered showers or washing to detainees however majority of those in custody were under the influence of drink or drugs – **Force Response - staff reminded of this issue.**

A disabled detainee was unable to be moved appropriately around the suite due to a wheelchair not being stored in the suite – **Force Response - Wheel chair is on order for the suite.**

Substantial amount of out of date vegetable curry detainee meals in suite **Force Response - removed staff reminded of need to rotate stock.**

Current microwave used to to cook detainee meals is not suitable **Force Response - This has been replaced.**

Forth Banks

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

Food and first aid stocks checked and all ok

Clean and tidy suite

Areas for Improvement:

Several lockers outside each cell left open with property stored inside. One of these lockers was broken and could be lifted off and potentially used as a weapon.

Cell 1 sink out of use

Exercise yard in need of some attention due to flaking paint.

Force Response

Email reminder already sent to staff in relation to lockers with a number of new keys purchased as old keys were damaged

Broken locker door removed and reported to maintenance

Cell 1 sink out of use – Fault repaired

Exercise yard in need of some attention due to flaking paint - Reported to maintenance and will be completed soon.