

**DRAFT**

**DORSET POLICE AUTHORITY**

**INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 25 January 2010**

A meeting of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel was held in Boardrooms 1, 2 & 3, Headquarters on Monday, 25 January 2010 at 3.30pm

**PRESENT:**

Mrs K E Emery (Chairman),  
Mr J Baylem, Mrs C Bishop, Col G Brierley OBE (Police Authority),  
Mrs C Bueno, Mrs A Cray, Mrs V Grier, Mr A Holland,  
Mr E Holloway, Mr F Jabbari (Police Authority), Mr R Kerr,  
Mr H Masters, Mr M Payne, Mr D Sandever,  
Mr R Shore, Mr C Slee, Miss L Wilson (Police Authority)

**Also Present:**

Assistant Chief Constable (Operations) M Glanville, Dorset Police  
Chief Superintendent G Donnell, Criminal Justice Division  
Chief Inspector T Lumley, Criminal Justice Division  
Mr K Edwards, Criminal Justice Division  
Mrs Y Fenwick, Police Authority

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

18. Apologies were received from Mr G Brown, Mr P Crabtree, Mr J Drayson, Miss C Freestone, Mr K Gooding, Miss A McAlpine, Mrs S Merritt, Mrs A Middleditch, Mrs S Porter, Mr I Smith, Mrs K Wright and Inspector S Whitley.

**MINUTES**

19. The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2009 were approved and signed as a true record.

**CUSTODY VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS**

- 20.1 The report to the Panel showed that of 220 detainees held, 136 (62%) had been offered a visit, of which 127 (93%) had accepted. It was noted that although no visits were made on a Sunday, generally the spread and timing of the visits was good and it was pleasing to note that one visit was made between 10pm and 1am and a further two visits were made between 1am and 7am. The Chairman thanked the visitors involved for conducting those visits. The Chairman highlighted the additional information included in the Scheme Administrator's report and asked the visitors to ensure they record these details on the report form.
- 20.2 Chief Inspector Lumley advised the Panel that should access to a detainee be denied on the grounds of visitor safety, after the situation being risk assessed, the visitors should make every attempt to speak to the detainee through the door hatch, and with the agreement of the detainee, conduct the visit through the hatch. If the offer of a visit is refused, the visitors would need to seek the detainee's agreement to view the custody log. This procedure had been agreed with the Chief Executive and the Panel Chairman.

## **Bournemouth**

- 20.3** Whilst visiting Bournemouth on 17 November 2009, the visitors noted that a detainee had not been offered food or drink as they were being interviewed during meal time and that the risk assessment for another detainee stated they had epilepsy and asthma but they had not seen the nurse. Mr Edwards advised that the electronic log system now had a delegated action facility to ensure that the offering of food and drink would be highlighted by the Inspector during review. Mr Edwards added that a directive had been issued to custody staff which stated that detainees with medical conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy must speak to a health care professional.
- 20.4** During a further visit to Bournemouth on 19 December 2009, the visitors recorded that there appeared to be a problem with the heating particularly in one block. Chief Inspector Lumley advised that Building Services had been contacted to try and correct the problem which had been exacerbated by the recent cold weather. A number of repairs had already been made and the situation would be monitored.

## **New Poole**

- 20.5** On 18 December a visit was made to a detainee who had an injury to his head. When checking the log the visitors felt that the injury was not adequately described. Chief Inspector Lumley advised that it was not necessary for a detailed description to be made on the custody log as a more thorough description would have been recorded on the medical report when the detainee was seen by a health care professional.
- 20.6** During the same visit, the visitors noted their concerns regarding the shower facilities for female detainees and problems with solicitors speaking to detainees in their cells via telephones. Chief Inspector Lumley advised the Panel that there were issues with the dignity doors not offering the level of privacy that would be preferred, but this would be managed by the custody staff and the problems regarding solicitors speaking to detainees in their cells had now been resolved.
- 20.7** A discussion was held regarding the information recorded on the report forms and the necessity of that information being concise but sufficient. Visitors were asked to record issues relating to the running of the suite or with the building under the General Concerns part of the report. Issues raised by detainees should be recorded on the right hand side of the form. If the visitors were not satisfied that the issue had been satisfactorily dealt with then the relevant part of the form should be marked with an asterisk. This would highlight issues to be brought to the Panel meeting or be actioned or investigated by the Custody Manager. The procedure had been agreed with the Chief Executive and the Panel Chair.

## **Weymouth**

- 20.8** During a visit on 6 November, visitors reported that the custody log for a detainee had no record of food or drink being offered, although the custody officer reported that the detainee had eaten. Mr Edwards acknowledged the omission.
- 20.9** In the course of a visit on 14 December, visitors highlighted a potential ligature point to the custody officer. Chief Inspector Lumley advised that the toilet design was Home Office approved and thorough risk assessments are made and appropriate observation levels attributed to detainees.

## **Blandford**

- 20.10** A visit was made on 10 December during which the visitors noted the general shabby condition of the building. Chief Inspector Lumley stated that some remedial work would be carried out and acknowledged the problems with the condition of parts of the Estate.

## **Sherborne**

- 20.11** During a visit on 19 December, the visitors reported that the toilet flushes in some cells were inoperable. It was acknowledged that some flushes were stiff but the toilets were flushable from outside of the cell.

## **ESTATES AND BUILDING SERVICES UPDATE ON CUSTODY RELATED PROJECTS/WORKS**

- 21.1** The Panel noted the report from the Chief Constable outlining the current position in relation to custody provision in the County.
- 21.2** Chief Superintendent Donnell gave a verbal update to the Panel on the Joint Unannounced Custody Inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons. The formal report had not yet been received but the Force had acted on issues raised verbally by the inspectors. The formal report would be made available to the visitors when it had been received.

## **INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING ASSOCIATION (ICVA) NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

- 22.** The Panel noted the report from the Scheme Administrator informing visitors about the ICVA National Conference held on 14 November 2009.

## **REFRESHER TRAINING – 7 NOVEMBER 2009**

- 23.1** The Scheme Administrator outlined the items discussed at the Refresher Training, reiterating the necessity for visitors completing the report forms as fully as possible, including the use of an asterisk on the report form to highlight issues for further action or discussion. Visitors were asked to ensure that **all** concerns are recorded.
- 23.2** The Panel noted the report from the Scheme Administrator informing visitors about the Refresher Training held on 7 November 2009.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

### **Miss Anne McAlpine**

- 24.1** The Chairman advised the Panel that Miss McAlpine had decided to resign from the Panel for personal reasons. This resignation would be with immediate effect.

### **Use of 'Complaint'**

- 24.2** The Chairman asked the Panel to make it clear on the report forms whether the detainee had raised an issue or wished to make a complaint. If visitors were unsure about whether the detainee wished to make an official complaint then they should ask. The custody officer should still be made aware of the issue even if the detainee did not wish to make an official complaint. This should be highlighted on the report form with an asterisk.

### **Identity Cards**

- 24.3** The Chairman advised the Panel that, in agreement with the Force, photo ID would need to be produced on entry to the custody suite but then the magnetic 'Independent Custody Visitor' badge would be sufficient whilst conducting visits.

### **Recruitment Campaign**

- 24.4** The Chairman informed the Panel that a recruitment campaign would start in February with a view to completion by the July Panel Meeting.

## **ICV Scheme Document**

**25.5** The Chairman notified the Panel that the ICV Scheme Document would be considered by the Police Authority on 12 February. When the Scheme was approved all visitors would be issued with a copy.

## **Swanage**

**25.6** The Chairman informed the Panel that Swanage cells were currently closed. The situation would be reviewed by Chief Inspector Lumley on 1 February and visitors would be advised of the decision.

*Meeting ended at 1700 hrs*