

HUMBERSIDE INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME MONITORING REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents a monitoring account of the Humberside Independent Custody Visiting Scheme during March, April and May 2006.

BACKGROUND

2. The Humberside Independent Custody Visiting Scheme continues to operate with 40 visitors working across the four Divisions of the Force, under the administration of four Panel Representatives, one for each Division (although we have a current vacancy). The Humberside Police Authority Scheme Administrator is the Consultation and Partnership Officer and there is a nominated Lead Member.
3. Incidents of concern highlighted by visitors, relating to the welfare and treatment of detainees and conditions within custody suites, are reported by the Scheme Administrator to the Administration of Justice Unit. The Administration of Justice Unit conducts an investigation into the issues raised by Custody Visitors and responds directly to the Scheme Administrator. Details are provided in Appendix A of the Report.

MONITORING REPORTS

4. An analysis of the number of detainees visited by Custody Visitors during March, April and May is also shown at Appendix A. Copies of the original reports are available for inspection in the office of the Chief Executive to the Police Authority. This appendix also includes comments on issues raised by, and directed to, the Administration of Justice Unit.
5. Appendix B shows the number of scheduled visits to custody suites and the actual visits made by Custody Visitors.

RESIGNATIONS

6. There has been one resignation from the scheme during this period, that being a visitor from C Division, however a suitable applicant has been identified via an application through the Police Authority website and it is hoped that the new visitor can be recruited

and trained in time to replace the resigned visitor in the current roster, i.e. no visits should be effected by the resignation.

REFURBISHMENT/SITE WORKS

7. Site works have affected visits in D Division with three separate closure periods of the custody suites. Queens Gardens was closed for electrical work from 28 April – 30 April and heavy industrial cleaning was carried out at both Queens Gardens (4 April – 6 April) and Priory Road (11 April – 13 April), at least two visits were disrupted.

MISSED VISITS

8. Members will note from the figures in Appendix B that the number of visits carried out in D Division differ from those scheduled. The reason for this is that unfortunately we have two D Division visitors suffering from ill health at the moment. Both visitors have been contacted and they are expected to recover enough to continue visits but the situation is being monitored on a monthly basis and if it continues new visitors will be recruited.

ISSUES FROM 577'S AND CORRESPONDENCE FROM ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE UNIT (AJU)

9. There have been two outstanding issues for the Administration of Justice Unit during the period covered by this report.
10. Firstly, the issue of the unsafe showers at both A and B Division, showers can only be used under supervision due to ligature points and the unsafe state of repair they are in. Administration of Justice Unit (AJU) has brought this to the attention of Health and Safety and Buildings Department previously but work to make them safe is still outstanding. At the Force Custody Board meeting in February the issue was raised again as a matter of urgency by AJU and a full report on the state of the showers has now been requested by ACC (OS) Crosse who will pursue getting the repairs and alterations done.
11. Secondly, on 3 April two visitors attended Bridlington but were denied access by the custody staff because "they were very busy and a visit had been done earlier in the day". This is unacceptable. AJU have agreed that this should never have happened and that the only time visitors should be denied access to custody suites is if there is a threat to their safety. The Chief Inspector (Ops) in C Division has been notified by AJU of this denied access and the staff responsible have been identified. The Chief Inspector has requested a full report from the custody staff as to why this happened and that report will be forwarded to the Police Authority when it is available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. It is recommended that the Committee:

- i. Discusses the information contained in this report with particular attention paid to the content of Appendix A and B.
- ii. Direct any queries regarding the report, or the scheme in general, to the Consultation and Partnership Officer

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Background Documents: ICV File 6.5.2
ICV Rosters File 6.5.9