

HUMBERSIDE INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME MONITORING REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents a monitoring account of the Humberside Independent Custody Visiting Scheme between 11 November 2005 and February 2006.

BACKGROUND

2. The Humberside Independent Custody Visiting Scheme continues to operate with 41 visitors working across the four Divisions of the Force, under the administration of four Panel Representatives, one for each Division. 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 the period 11 November 2005 to February 2006 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 the Panel representative for D Division. Recruitment for a new Panel representative has been deferred in light of information contained in paragraphs 12 - 14 of this report.

REFURBISHMENT/SITE WORKS

7. During January the cells at Scunthorpe were the focus of building works to turn part of the visitors' area into a photocopy/admin facility area. The workmen required access to the exercise yard in order to carry out the work; the yard was unavailable from 9 January for approximately four weeks. This did not affect any of the scheduled visits, although detainees will be without the facility until work is finished.

MISSED VISITS

8. The matrix at Appendix B is showing missed visits in D Division. As stated above the Panel representative from this division resigned in December making it very difficult to trace missed visits.
9. Obviously this situation needs addressing. Hopefully the information contained in paragraphs 12 - 14 will address this adequately.

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

10. One issue from this period has been referred to the Administration of Justice Unit. A detainee complained of assault while in custody by the custody staff. The visitors contacted the Police Authority immediately and the matter was brought to the attention of the Custody Sgt who logged the allegation on the detainee's custody record, the duty Inspector was also informed.
11. We are awaiting the outcome of this allegation which is being dealt with by the Duty Inspector.

ADMINISTRATION CHANGES WITHIN THE POLICE AUTHORITY

12. The Police Authority is currently undergoing a recruitment campaign to appoint a new member of staff.
13. Following some concerns over the lack of communication between custody visitors and the Authority, and the perceived loss of control of some of the administrative functions essential for the running of an effective scheme, the newly appointed member of staff will have responsibility for supporting the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Administrator.
14. This will enable the Authority to bring the functions currently carried out by the Panel representatives in house, these will include producing visit rosters, making regular contact with visitors, organising quarterly visitors meetings, identifying any training needs and updating visitors on matters of national legislation and local policy.

15. Taking these functions back into the Secretariat should assist in resolving the issue of visitors missing visits without making alternative arrangements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

16. 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
- iii. Note the changes in administration of the scheme and the requirement to no longer need Panel Representatives for certain functions.

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Background Documents: ICV File 6.5.2
ICV Rosters File 6.5.9