

**To: Chair and Members
of the Professional Standards Panel
Date 29th July 2010**

Executive Officer: Julie Leng
Presented by: Kath Allaway

Status : For decision

Independent Custody Visiting Annual report 2009-2010

1. Purpose of the report

To provide Police Authority members with an update on the Cleveland Police Authority Independent Custody visiting Scheme in particular in respect of the number of visitors, visits undertaken, training and meetings during 2009 – 2010.

2. Recommendations

That members receive the annual report and agree its publication on the Cleveland Police Authority website.

2. Reasons

Police Authorities are required to operate an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme within the Police Reform Act 2002. National guidance published recommends that regular visits are undertaken by volunteers recruited and managed by the Police Authority, to Police Custody units. Within this guidance visits are undertaken in pairs and are unannounced. Visitors must be allowed access to the Custody area immediately unless there is a safety issue in which case this must be recorded.

This annual report brings the timescale into line with the financial year and also the annual reports of the Police and Police Authority.

Visits have been undertaken to all Cleveland Police Custody units on a regular basis. Middlesbrough and Hartlepool are visited on a weekly rota basis, with Redcar and Cleveland District continuing to be visited on a two weekly rota, however Visitors can visit more regularly if they wish. This reflects the low number of detainees held in the cells at Redcar.

Appendix 'A' gives the detailed information relating to the number of visits undertaken, the number of detainees held at the time of visits and the number of detainees seen by the Independent Custody Visitors during 2008/09 and 2009/10. (Appendix 'A') The data is not a full record however as it is taken from the visit forms returned to the Authority and during this period not all forms were returned. A reminder has now been sent to return a copy of all visit reports to the scheme administrator so more accurate information will be collected for 2010/11.

Panel meetings continue to be held on a quarterly basis at Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Hartlepool. These meetings raise issues experienced within the visits and are attended by Cllr Ron Lowes, Lead Member of the Police Authority, the Scheme Manager, a representative from the Custody Inspectors and representatives from Reliance. The minutes of the panels are circulated to the Independent Custody Visitors, Lead Member, Custody Inspectors and Reliance Custody Managers. They are available from the scheme manager and from 2010 will be available on Cleveland Police Authority's website.

Recruitment

Middlesbrough Panel is at full strength enabling weekly visits. Redcar has sufficient visitors to fulfil a rota for two weekly visits however as there are seven visitors there are usually 4 visits every six weeks. Visitors can also undertake more than one visit in their allocated two weeks if they wish. Hartlepool continues to be underrepresented but weekly visits are still undertaken at Hartlepool Custody due to the level of commitment of the panel co-ordinator. Middlesbrough panel visitors also assist with visits at Hartlepool. Further attempts have been made to address this issue with applications currently being processed which although not residents of Hartlepool will be allocated to that panel if successful. Details have also been submitted to the Volunteer organisation and the scheme manager will talk to prospective volunteers in the future.

Appraisals, Training, briefings and regional meetings.

Appraisals for Custody Visitors were carried out in 2009 for the first time, these will be revisited in 2010. All Visitors elected to remain with the Authority. A training programme has been established for the Independent Custody Visitors, Appendix 'B' which will ensure that ICVs are up to date with legislation and their role. In addition to formal training briefings which are topic specific are included. Training/briefings undertaken in 2009 include Diversity, Human Rights and the Mental Health Act. This training is usually held jointly with Members and Staff of the Police Authority.

Four Independent Custody Visitors attended the National Conference with the Lead Member and Scheme Manager, presentations on the agenda included Safety and Dignity in Police detention from the Home Office, Preventing deaths in Police Care – Mental health Act, Reducing deaths in Police Custody and an update from the National Association for Independent Custody.

On a regional level, half yearly meetings have been re-instated with Cleveland hosting the first in August 2009. Cleveland also hosted the Regional Conference in October 2009. Agenda items included a presentation from Add Action on drugs and alcohol referral, Reliance operating Custody in Cleveland and a National update from the Chair of Durham Police Authority who represents the region at a national level on ICV issues.

The Volunteers welcome the attendance of Cllr Lowes as the Police Authority representative at the meetings and briefing sessions and have thanked him for his continued commitment. The Lead member attended Panel meetings, training and briefing sessions, opened the Regional Conference and also attended the National Conference. The Lead member was also instrumental in introducing a Carers allowance for attendance at training and Meetings for Independent Custody Visitors.

4. Implications

4.1 Finance

There are no financial implications in applying this code, administration and training associated with Custody Visiting is included in the Police Authority annual budget

4.2 Diversity/Equal Opportunities

There are no direct implications from this report although the balance of Independent Custody Visitors is considered when recruiting and positive efforts are made to recruit volunteers from the BME Community.

4.3 Sustainability

There are no sustainability implications within the report, action has been taken or is planned to ensure that the Police Authority comply with legislation and the Code of Practise

4.4 Risk

Compliance with Legislation and Codes of Practise will negate any risk the Police Authority would face from non compliance.

Julie Leng
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Visit Statistics

No Of Visits undertaken			Detainees		Offered a visit		Visited			
*	08/09	09/10	08/09	09/10	08/09	09/10	08/09	%	09/10	%
M		50	319	484	261	370	173	66%	271	73%
R&C		32	76	77	63	66	20	32%	24	36%
H		49	218	174	212	160	97	46%	100	63%

*These numbers are approximate and based on returns received. All forms are now returned to scheme administrator who monitors visits undertaken together with detainee statistics. Figures were not available for 08/09.

Independent Custody Visitor Statistics

Total number	Gender		Ethnicity	
	Male	female	White	BME
M	6	5	10	1
R&C	1	6	7	
H	2	3	5	

Age: (based on forms returned by 30 5 2010)

	18-30		31-40		41-50		51-60		61-70		71-80		80+	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
M				1		1		1	1	1	2		1	
R&C						1		1		1	1	1		
H	1						1						1	