

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PAPER NO: AP15/38

SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISTING SCHEME – 2014/15

SUMMARY:

This report summarises the work undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk to support the operation of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Suffolk between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the PCC:

- (i) notes the content of the report;
- (ii) endorses the ICV Annual Report Summary attached at Appendix A.

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Suffolk comprises two designated Panels to ensure that visits are undertaken at the Constabulary's operational custody facilities at Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich (Martlesham). The information below captures the data for ICV visits between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015.

Panel	No. of Visits	No. of DPs in Custody	No. of DPs avail to be visited	No. of DPs visited	% of DPs visited (of those available)
Bury St Edmunds	52	321	205	195	95%
Ipswich	53	358	199	185	93%
Total	105	679	404	380	94%

- 1.2 The total number of ICVs in Suffolk as at 31 March 2014 was 17. A break-down of the constitution of the Panels is outlined below:

Panel	No. of ICVS in post (31 March 2015)	Optimum no of ICVS
Bury St Edmunds	7	8-12
Ipswich	10	8-12

- 1.3 One custody visitor resigned from the Bury St Edmunds Panel in December 2014 following 14 years of service, including a long period as the Panel Co-ordinator. In recognition of his long service he attended the Constabulary's Awards Ceremony on 25 March 2015 and was presented with a certificate by the PCC – Photograph included at Appendix A.
- 1.4 Another member of the Bury St Edmunds Panel resigned in February 2015, due to moving home, and a further member of the Panel has expressed a wish to step down from the end of May so therefore recruitment for the Panel is essential in 2014/15.
- 1.5 A new visitor joined the Ipswich Panel in February 2015 and another person has been appointed subject to satisfactory references and training.

2. ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED BY INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS DURING 2014/15

- 2.1 Throughout the year ICVs regularly commented on the professionalism of staff in dealing with detainees and ICVs and in the event of any queries raised, custody officers and staff responded satisfactorily and efficiently. A breakdown of the types of issues raised by detainees is contained in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Given the custody facilities were built in 2011 there have not been any issues raised by ICVs regarding the conditions of the facilities themselves. In September 2014 ICVs raised some concerns about the safety of the soap dispensers used in the showers, and whilst it was noted that detainees were risk assessed/supervised whilst they used the showers, as appropriate, the concerns were acknowledged and the dispensers replaced with sachets. It was also highlighted that some of the food items were beyond their recommended use by date so they were removed by staff and the issue was raised with the food suppliers for replacement stock to be put in place.

- 2.3 As part of their checks ICVs continue to follow-up on the recommendations from the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) Custody Inspection in April 2012 for example checking that custody staff carry anti-ligature knives as a matter of routine. On a couple of occasions ICVs have raised this point with staff who have been working in custody temporarily to ensure that it is included as part of their equipment.

3. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS DURING 2014/15

Mental Health Support

- 3.1 In 2014 the Constabulary, in partnership with Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust and Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group, launched an initiative aimed at improving the joint response to people coming to the attention of the police at times of mental health crisis. A mental health triage car was introduced in Suffolk meaning that a police officer and mental health practitioner is available to attend incidents where people are experiencing mental health difficulties. This development has resulted in less people being detained in custody under section 136 of the Mental Health Act, as a place of safety, for their own protection. ICVs have commented that they welcome the change and additional support being provided.

Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Codes

- 3.2 Changes to Codes C and H came into effect in June 2014 relating to the information made available to detainees about their detention with a view to make it easier for them to understand the reasons for their arrest, detention and rights. ICVs were made aware of the changes and introduction of new notification of rights documents.

National Standards

- 3.3 The National Standards were revised in late 2014 to take into account changes to the Codes of Practice, the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners and changes to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Codes. The revision also allowed for a definition relating to those detainees 'incapable' of consenting to a visit to be included in the glossary of terms. The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) training materials were updated to reflect the changes.

Eastern Region and Flash Cards

- 3.4 There were a number of changes to staff in the ICVA Eastern Region during 2014/15 for various reasons so unfortunately there was not a Regional Conference in 2014. Scheme Administrators met in September 2014 to discuss regional matters, including the need to update the flash cards used by ICVs to communicate with non-English speaking detainees. A regional meeting has been planned for Wednesday 17 June.

4. INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY 2013/14

- 4.1 As outlined in the Home Office Code of Practice for Independent Custody Visiting, the PCC is required to compile an Annual Report at the end of each financial year to highlight the work of the Scheme.
- 4.2 The content of this report for 2014/15 has been drafted in consultation with the ICV Panel Co-ordinators and is attached at Appendix A for consideration and approval.

5. BUDGET POSITION AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The budget spend for 2014/15 was £2,922. This represents an underspend of £1,078 against the budget of £4,000.

5.2 Costs are broken down as follows:

Mileage claims	£1,723
Training	£ 52*
Conferences	£460
Annual subscription to ICVA	£500
Printing and other incidentals	£187

*The ICV Scheme Administrator was on maternity leave during 2014/15 and therefore no annual training day took place this year which is why the training costs are so low this year in comparison with previous years.

5.3 In view of the level of spend during 2014/15, the need for recruitment and training the budget for 2015/16 remains at £4,000.

5.4 The linked financial implications in respect of the content of this report relate to the production and design of the ICV Annual Report. This sum is expected to be minimal given that the design is to be undertaken in-house. Further the document will be made available electronically thereby saving on printing costs.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

6.1 None.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	The originator is a Solicitor and the Monitoring Officer for the PCC for Suffolk
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	N/A
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	N/A
Have human resource implications been considered?	N/A
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	N/A
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	N/A
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	YES
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	YES

In relation to the above, please ensure that all relevant issues have been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission.