

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PAPER NO: AP14/42

SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISTING SCHEME – 2013/14

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 2013 and 31 March 2014.

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 2013 and 31 March 2014.

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	318	212	200	94%
Ipswich	49	322	205	185	90%
Total	101	640	417	385	92%

- 1.2 The total number of ICVs in Suffolk as at 31 March 2013 was 15. A break-down of the constitution of the Panels is outlined below:

Panel	No. of ICVS in post (31 March 2014)	Optimum no of ICVS
Bury St Edmunds	7	8-12
Ipswich	8	8-12

- 1.3 One custody visitor resigned from the Ipswich Panel in May 2014. Four new custody visitors were appointed in May 2014 which brings the membership up to 9 for each panel and a total number of visitors to 18.

2. ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED BY INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS DURING 2013/14

- 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.
- 2.2 No major issues of concern were raised by ICVs – further details are included in the Annual Report attached at Appendix A.

3. REVIEW OF THE HOME OFFICE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING

- 3.1 In April 2013, the Home Office reviewed its Code of Practice with regard to custody visiting incorporating the requirements of recent legislative changes. As a result, the Scheme updated its own policies and guidelines to account for any changes. The revised Code of Practice also offers Schemes a choice as to how ICVs can be 'introduced' to detainees, i.e. either through self-introduction or by the escorting officer obtaining this permission. The Suffolk Scheme has historically obtained consent using the escorting officer however, following a successful pilot during the first half of 2013, a decision was taken in October 2013 to move to consent to ICV visits being obtained through 'self-introduction'. Self-introduction involves ICVs introducing themselves directly to detainees and enquiring whether or not the detainee wishes to see them. ICVs also directly ask the detainee if they can look at their custody record.

- 3.2 Following on from the updates to the Home Office Code of Practice, the National Standards for Custody Visiting also require updating to ensure they reflect new arrangements and requirements for ICVs. During July to October 2013, a consultation was undertaken with all ICVs and comments were shared with the Home Office. The Home Office is yet to comment on this document however, once this has been endorsed, we will circulate to all those involved in the process.
- 3.3 In addition, the three-yearly review of our custody visitor appointments was undertaken during December 2013 in line with Home Office guidance. Two visitors decided to step down from the Ipswich Panel and two further members, one from each Panel, left in March as they were unable to meet the requirements in terms of attendance at training. Four new custody visitors were appointed in May 2014.
- 3.4 Throughout 2013/14, the Scheme has been working alongside colleagues in Norfolk to ensure that any work or best practice identified in Suffolk is shared with the Norfolk Scheme given that our constabularies operate with collaborative departments and facilities. As a result, the Schemes continue to align their policies and training which provides efficiency savings for both Police & Crime Commissioners.

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 2013/14 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 2013/14 was £3,435. This represents an underspend of £1,565 against the budget of £5,000.
- 5.2 Costs are broken down as follows:

Mileage claims	£1,245
Training	£520
Conferences	£950
Annual subscription to ICVA	£500
Printing and other incidentals	£220

- 5.3 In view of the level of spend during 2013/14, the budget for 2014/15 has been reduced to £4,700.
- 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.