

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PAPER NO: AP17/38

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
16 JUNE 2017**

**SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME ANNUAL
REPORT– 2016/17**

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 2016 and 31 March 2017.

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 2016 and 31 March 2017.

Panel	No. of Visits	No. of detainees held	No. of detainees available to visit	No. of detainees visited	% of detainees visited (of those available)	No. of detainees not seen
Bury St Edmunds	50	289	193	161	83%	128
Ipswich	48	303	152	136	89%	167
Total	98	592	345	297	86%	295

- 1.2 The total number of ICVs in Suffolk as at 31 March 2017 was 16. A break-down of the constitution of the Panels is outlined below:

Panel	No. of ICVS in post	Optimum no of ICVS
Bury St Edmunds	6	8-12
Ipswich	10	8-12

- 1.3 There were three resignations between April and December 2016, two from the Bury St Edmunds Panel and one from the Ipswich Panel, all due to work or family commitments.
- 1.4 In December 2016 there was a three-yearly review of the Scheme which looked at volunteer performance, length of service and willingness to continue in the role (see PCC Decision 50-2016). Two visitors (one from each panel) decided that this was a natural time to step down as they had other volunteer and work/study commitments and another member of the Ipswich panel also stood down to take up an alternative volunteer role. Three long serving members of the Bury St Edmunds panel agreed to continue in the role until 31 March 2017 to enable the appointment of new members. These three members attended the long service awards ceremony on 11 April 2017 and were thanked for their service and commitment to the Scheme – see Appendix A attached.
- 1.5 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) advertised for new volunteers in December 2016 and made four new appointments. Two members joined the Ipswich Panel in January (included in the statistics above) but one subsequently resigned in April due to a change in personal circumstances. Two new members joined the Bury St Edmunds Panel in early April (not included in the statistics above) so the panel membership now stands at eight.

2. ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED BY INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS DURING 2016/17

- 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 at the time of the visit, custody officers and staff responded satisfactorily and efficiently. Visitors have highlighted a number of concerns regarding the welfare of detainees which have been followed up by the OPCC and appropriately addressed by the Force. A breakdown of the types of requests made to the visitors by detainees is contained in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Given the custody facilities were built in 2011 there have been few issues raised by ICVs regarding the conditions of the facilities themselves. As reported last year an ongoing issue relates to the operation of the Athena IT system and the impact on the processes and staff. ICVs have received regular updates at their quarterly Panel meetings about progress with developing the system and procedures in place for continuity when there have been problems. The PCCs for Suffolk and Norfolk are also receiving regular updates on this issue.
- 2.3 In November 2016 and January 2017 visitors commented on detainees being held for some time in police custody, having been through the virtual court process, and awaiting collection for transport to prison. This was raised with the Head of Custody and the PCCs for Norfolk and Suffolk and assurance was given that a review of custody was being undertaken which would include consideration of the impact of the virtual court on custody staff and detainees. This issue was also raised with the Independent Custody Visiting Association and subsequently raised by them with the Home Office. The outcomes of the custody review will be reported to the Accountability and Performance Panel in October 2017.

3. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS DURING 2016/17

Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA)

- 3.1 Regular updates and support from the Independent Custody Visiting Association are beneficial to keep abreast of national matters. There have been many developments this year including the changes to police bail; an increased focus on children in custody and on identifying and managing mental health in custody. During 2017-18 ICVA will roll-out updated training packages and 'Train the Trainer' sessions which the Suffolk and Norfolk Schemes will both utilise.

Training

- 3.2 A Norfolk and Suffolk custody visitors' training day took place in Thetford on Saturday 4 February 2017 and was well attended by ICVs. This training included a refresher on the role of ICVs, categories of detainees and custody records as well as a session on 'The Transfer of Children from Police Custody – The Concordat' and a session on 'Safeguarding Adults'.
- 3.3 A further joint training and information day took place on 24 May 2017 in Suffolk which included presentations on Liaison and Diversion, Detainee Healthcare, Appropriate Adults, Personal Safety Training and the Role of the Custody Sergeant.
- 3.4 Throughout the year the Panel Co-ordinators (either Suffolk or Norfolk) have also provided an input to the Detention Officer and Custody Sergeants training courses to help improve staff awareness of the Scheme and the ICV role.

ICVA Regional Conference 2017

- 3.5 Four volunteers and the Scheme Administrator attended the ICVA Regional Conference hosted by the Hertfordshire OPCC on 4 March 2017. The programme included a presentation on the 'Choices and Consequences (C2) Programme',

Appropriate Adults and Custody Collaboration. There was also an input on 'Building Better Opportunities' from an ex-offender.

ICVA National Conference 2017

- 3.6 Two volunteers, one from each panel, attended the ICVA National Conference in Birmingham on 11 March 2017. Presentations included an update from ICVA, a presentation from the Chief Executive of the National Appropriate Adult Network, an ex-offender working with the St Giles Trust and representatives from Liaison and Diversion in West Midlands.

4. FREQUENCY OF VISITS

- 4.1 The Home Office Code of Practice states that:

'The PCC should liaise with the chief officer about the frequency with which visits should be carried out. Visits must be sufficiently regular to support the effectiveness of the system, but not so frequent as to interfere unreasonably with the work of the police. The frequency of visits must be monitored against expectations and reported to the PCC at regular intervals. Where insufficient visits are taking place, the causes must be investigated and corrective action taken.'

- 4.2 At the Regional Conference in March, ICVs heard that Hertfordshire ICVs undertook two visits per week and there were plans to increase this frequency to three visits per week. New visitors have also queried whether there was any possibility of increasing the number of visits to improve their learning. Having consulted regional colleagues most other areas presently make one visit per week.
- 4.3 In view of the above the PCC and CC have considered the frequency of visits carried out in Suffolk and are satisfied that the frequency is still appropriate and proportionate in view of the issues raised as summarised in this report. This position will be kept under review and consideration will be given to a change in frequency should circumstances warrant it.

5. LOOKING AHEAD

- 5.1 Due to the nature of the role, recruitment is ongoing. Therefore continuous training is essential such that the new ICVA training materials will be welcomed.
- 5.2 We will continue to work closely with the Norfolk Scheme as we have a joint custody function and also work closely with our regional counterparts to share best practice and plans.
- 5.3 The PCC will accompany ICVs on a visit this year so that he can see the process in action first hand.

6. INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY 2016/17

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 The content of this report for 2016/17 has been drafted in consultation with the ICV Panel Co-ordinators and is attached at Appendix A for consideration and approval.

7. BUDGET POSITION AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The budget spend for 2016/17 was £3,725. This represents an underspend of £275 against the budget of £4,000.

7.2 Costs are broken down as follows:

Mileage claims	£2,233
Training	£445
Conferences	£326
Annual subscription to ICVA	£625
Printing and other incidentals	£ 96

7.3 In view of the level of spend during 2016/17 the budget for 2017/18 remains at £4,000.

7.4 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.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

8.1 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.