

## **Independent Custody Visitors**

### **June 2021**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020, following an announcement by the Prime Minister re Covid-19 and government guidelines, all visits to custody suites were suspended until further notice.

To ensure the OPCC maintained an overview of the work of custody, the OPCC liaised with the custody manager and custody record reviews were undertaken by ICVs.

In October 2020 ICVs returned to face to face visiting and undertook visits to the three main custody suites across the force area, with their findings reported back to the Police and Crime Commissioner, Kim McGuinness.

Below are some of the highlights, issues and other newsworthy information raised during visits or by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner during **June 2021**.

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### **Millbank**

Two visits were made to Millbank, the suite was found to be clean and tidy on all occasions. Staff were friendly and helpful.

Food and drink stocks and all in order with some sachets of out of date drinks disposed of.

All other stocks including detainee clothing all at good levels.

ICVs visited a young person in custody who had been assigned appropriate adult and solicitor in person.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Lockers and panels open outside cells.
- ICVs attended out of hours and therefore used the all-weather phone outside of the station to gain access. Initially this went unanswered for a period of time before contact could be made to gain access.
- 30.06.21 – (21/14284) detainee had at the point of the visit by ICVs been in custody 22hrs without exercise or offer of shower.

**Force Response:** Out of date food stocks noted. Now custody has moved back to Southwick all food has been checked prior to storage and is all currently in date. I can only assume staff were busy within the suite at the time.

I have checked the ECR record of the DP who was not offered a shower or exercise, this appears to be the case. Feedback will be given to staff who were on at the time.

### **North Tyneside – Middle Engine Lane**

Three visits were undertaken to Middle Engine Lane, the overall cleanliness of the suite was very good and all staff were polite and helpful.

All food and drink stocks checked and any out of date drink sachets removed.

ICVs commented on the positive attitude of staff with specific praise for DO 4330 during their visits.

ICVs positively noted that female detainees had been provided a dedicated female officer and the provision of female hygiene packs.

ICVs noted that legal representation was being provided in person to detainees.

Exercise yard checked and in good order.

### **Areas for Improvement:**

- Out of date detainee drinks identified and removed.
- Cell 31 hatch broken where it was noted this had been raised and parts are awaited for repair.

**Force Response:** Excellent to hear such positive comments with only minor negative points raised. Cell 31 hatch has now been fixed.