



APPENDIX

City of London

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Annual Report

May 2018

Foreword

The City of London Independent Custody Visiting scheme has had a very successful year with several changes to the personnel of the panel. We have appointed three new ICVs in this time and aimed to reflect the age and ethnic diversity with the community it serves. First and foremost, I would like to thank our outgoing Chairman who I replaced in October, Peter Tihanyi, for his work in setting up the panel and ensuring its progression and success over the last few years.

The City of London Police Force main custody suite is located at Bishopsgate Police Station. The second custody suite at Snow Hill Police Station has been used this year as an alternative resource. Therefore, our visits to Snow Hill are limited – however the visits undertaken there have been to the high standard that we witness at Bishopsgate on a more regular basis. There was a necessity to visit Snow Hill after the closure of Bishopsgate in October due to a lack of resilience. We hope, in future, we will be kept up to date with these changes if alternative arrangements are being made.

The relationship with the custody staff has continued to be extremely amicable this year with comments from all visitors on the friendliness of the staff when conducting their visits. There have been occasional instances of ICVs being made to wait at reception for long periods, but these have been well explained (primarily due to safety concerns) by the Police at recent panel meetings. I am concerned, however, at the staffing issues that continue to affect custody and hope for next year there are sufficient resources in this area to train and retain officers.

The approval of the use of self-introduction last year has proven extremely successful with a rise in the number of detainees accepting our offer of an interview. This allows us to carry out our job more effectively and understand the needs of a wider variety of detainees.

We continue to be interested in custody healthcare and I have been in close contact with the custody manager on the performance of the contract and this will continue to be monitored; similarly, for the appropriate adult service. Now I am more able to raise these issues with the Police with my role in the Custody Management Group.

This year, we achieved over 95% of the scheduled visits to the Bishopsgate custody suite and have continued to ensure that our visits correspond with the peak periods. The ICV Panel has been monitoring the times of all visits made alongside the level of usage within the Custody Suites. We effectively spread our visits over the whole week (7 days a week). Volunteers also made their first visit between midnight and 6am and I thank the commitment of our visitors for this – they again witnessed a high quality of service even at this alternative time.

I give my thanks to my fellow custody volunteers for their hard work this year, and especially to our new visitors who have fitted in seamlessly. I would also like to thank the City of London Police and Civilian Detention Officers for enabling us to successfully carry out our responsibilities in 2017-2018. We look forward to the next year ahead and my first year as chair with a new national reporting form to integrate to adhere to advised standards and to also understand more about continually developing areas such as mental health, young persons in custody and the needs of ethnic minorities.

I would also like to thank Craig Spencer, the Scheme Manager and Richard Holt, the Scheme Administrator for their hard work throughout the year. I also congratulate Craig on his appointment to the national board for the Independent Custody Visitor Association which will give a strong link nationally and to other schemes across the country.

Godfrey Baillon-Bending
Chairman
ICV Panel

Welcome to the 2017-18 annual report of the City of London Independent Custody Visiting Scheme.

The Court of Common Council, as the police authority for the Square Mile, has a responsibility for securing an efficient and effective police service in the City of London and holding the Commissioner of the City of London Police to account. Under paragraph 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002, the City of London is required to have in place an Independent Visitors Scheme.

Independent custody visiting schemes have been around since the 1980s following the Lord Scarman Report and became mandatory in 2003. The Scarman Report recommended a system of independent unannounced inspection of detention arrangements in police stations by local community members. Custody Visiting Panels remain a vital important means of

securing police accountability for the local communities they serve.

City Visitors are volunteers who give up their free time to provide independent scrutiny of the treatment of those held in police detention and the conditions in which they are held. They continue to play a vital role in bringing together police and communities closer together and enhancing public perception of police procedures and practice in relation to custody.

We would like to thank all the City's Visitors for their commitment to the Scheme. The Police Committee appreciates their hard work and firm commitment to the Scheme and the contribution this makes to the overall confidence the community has in the City of London Police.

Deputy Doug Barrow
Chairman
Police Committee

Nicholas Bensted-Smith
ICV Panel Member
Police Committee

Introduction

THE CITY OF LONDON INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME (ICV SCHEME)

The purpose of this report is to give an account of the work of the City of London ICV Scheme in the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. It aims to:

- report on the Panel's performance;
- provide the local community and the Police Committee with information about the visits made and what they have revealed about the treatment of detainees;
- set out issues and concerns that the visits have raised; and,
- set out the objectives for 2018/19.

The City of London Corporation, in its role as the police authority for the City of London, has a statutory duty to have in place an independent custody visiting scheme. The operation of the Scheme is the responsibility of the Police Committee.

Independent custody visiting is governed by a range of legislation and guidance including the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 and Home Office Codes of Practice and National Standards.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are members of the local residential and business community who volunteer to visit police stations unannounced to check on the treatment and welfare of people held in police custody. They must:

- be over 18;
- be independent from the police force and the police authority; and,

- have no direct involvement in the criminal justice system.

The City of London ICV Panel currently consists of 12 (this is the maximum number required) visitors who visit the custody suites at Bishopsgate Police station three times every two weeks. Programmed visits to Snow Hill custody suite (an overflow facility for Bishopsgate) take place when this is being used. A member of the Police Committee attends the quarterly Panel meetings and representatives of the Force attend for part of the Panel meetings so that any queries or problems that have arisen out of custody visits can be addressed. The meetings are supported by staff from the Town Clerk's department (ICV Scheme Manager and Coordinator).

THE ROLE OF INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS

Visits are always made in pairs, and are unannounced. The objective of all visitors is to monitor and report on the treatment and conditions of individual detainees and to check that their rights and entitlements have been upheld.

During their visit, ICVs are escorted by a custody officer at all times. Every detainee being held is offered the opportunity to speak with the custody visitors (unless they are not to be disturbed due to being asleep or are a safety risk) but may choose not to. Visit interviews are carried out within sight, but out of hearing, of the escorting officer. Strict rules of confidentiality apply so that detainees are identified by their custody numbers only, and the details of what visitors see and hear are

treated as confidential. ICVs are not concerned with any alleged offence and maintain their independence and impartiality at all times. They do not provide advice to detainees; they are there to look, listen and report on conditions in custody at the time of their visit.

After every visit, custody visitors fill out a report form recording details of the visit. The information about the visit in the form includes details of problems that were resolved immediately and those that required further action. Copies of the reports are provided for the appropriate Chief Superintendent, the Custody Manager and the Scheme Manager on behalf of the Police Committee. The ICV Panel will follow up and discuss at the next review meeting any concerns that cannot be resolved during visits. If necessary, more serious issues can be highlighted directly to the Police Committee or dealt with outside Panel meetings.

PANEL MEETINGS

The quarterly Panel meetings allow Visitors to discuss each visit and any issues that have arisen. In addition, short update or information sessions are often included on each agenda so that Visitors are kept up to date with any national developments concerning the custody environment. Topics discussed this year included:

Custody visit throughputs – The Panel has been successful in having a spread of visits across the week which is more appropriate to the usage levels in the custody suites at particular times. They have monitored the times of all visits made alongside the level of usage of the Custody Suites. The analysis shows that the timing of visits reflects the level of Custody Usage.

The Panel also undertook their first visit during the Midnight to 6am slot to ensure 24-hour coverage. The Panel aims to undertake at least

four visits annually during the Midnight to 6 am slot in 2018-19.

The Panel now undertakes three visits every fortnight which is an increase to the weekly visits. This has not resulted in a decrease in the percentage of visits overall. The panel also met the target of keeping the consistently high level of their visits which was included in the previous report (which is above 97%).

Self-Introduction to Detainees – The Panel have now embedded the policy of self-introduction when encountering detainees. This has seen an increase the rate of acceptance when interviewing detainees and will therefore stay as the suggested policy for Panel Members. The increase saw an extra 5% of detainees choose to be interviewed by the visitors.

Closure of Bishopsgate – The Panel were notified of the closure of Bishopsgate Custody Suite in October and visited the reserve facility at Snow Hill. There is concern that the staffing of the custody suite is currently stretched and there are not sufficient trained officers to cover. This has resulted in staff working longer shifts and using British Transport Police for cover when necessary. The Panel have raised the resilience of the service as an issue.

Mental Health – Recent changes to the mental health act have been considered and ICVs take a great interest in this area. The City of London already abided by the changes and ensure that custody is not used as a place of safety. ICVs will continue to check that there is regular medical presence in mental health situations that develop whilst in custody and note the correct rank is dealing with an ongoing issue.

Sanitary Protection – this has been a national issue across Forces and has received lots of media coverage. In other Forces there has been insufficient coverage of sanitary protection often using inappropriate items for detainees. ICVs now check that the protection provided is

satisfactory and have aided a national response about this issue. City of London Police have always adhered to the standards provided on this matter.

Annual Update on Custody – the second annual update to Police Committee was received in September and focused on the statistics for young persons and children as well as those with mental health problems in custody and any changes in policy that have occurred over the year. Due to this being the second iteration, trends are now being formed and be monitored over a longer period to assess any changes to the nature of custody in the City of London.

In addition to the points above the Panel have raised a number of other issues with the Custody Manager and other partners:

- 1) **Repairs & Maintenance – Time lag** - The Panel raised a number of concerns about the time taken to institute repairs to the cells. A new contract is now in place for these repairs but this has not meant that issues have been dealt with any quicker which has meant some cells have been out of use for months.

Outcome – The ICV Scheme Manager reports regularly to the City Surveyor's Department and City Procurement over any issues within custody over maintenance. This has allowed ICVs to show the length of time some problems have persisted for and can pass this information onto the relevant contract manager.

- 2) **Custody Healthcare** – The Panel has raised the issue of an irregular service from the contracted supplier and now check when on visits about the quality of the service. As the NHS are now not to commission the service

for the foreseeable future, the service is commissioned by the Community and Children's Services (CCS) Department with G4S winning the contract.

Outcome – The ICV Scheme Manager has met with CCS representatives to understand the ongoing issues and whether G4S are currently adhering to the contract. This includes ensuring the correct referral pathways are given to detainees. CCS meet regularly with G4S and the Custody Manager to work on any problems that have occurred over the last month. This is then reported to the Custody Management Group which the scheme manager and Chairman are part of. ICVs can feed back any issues they foresee with the healthcare professionals to ensure the custody manager and CCS are aware.

- 3) **Appropriate Adults** – The Panel and the custody manager been concerned with the provision of appropriate adults (AA) out of hours. The contract is again commissioned by CCS in two months' time and ICVs have noted the difference in service provided to vulnerable adults and juveniles. The position of ICVs and AA has also been further clarified and it is no longer possible for an ICV to be an AA within the same area.

Outcome – The Scheme Manager has met with the custody manager and CCS to recognise how the service delivered by 'The Appropriate Adult Service' could be improved and that any contractual issues can be addressed when this is required to be renewed. ICVs will continue to monitor the service given on their visits. The new contract will include further provision for vulnerable adults and address any out of hours service requirements.

Visit Statistics

	Total number of detainees in Custody at time of visit	No of detainees offered visit	No. of detainees accepted visit
Bishopsgate Q1	48	34	30
Bishopsgate Q2	52	31	25
Bishopsgate Q3	39	30	27
Bishopsgate Q4	42	22	17
Total	181	117	99

ISSUES AND CONCERNS ARISING FROM VISITS

This list of issues and concerns reflects the range of issues that have been raised by detainees in the City of London in the last year and, in addition, other issues which have been reported by ICV Panels elsewhere for which there has been a nil return in the City of London.

	Bishopsgate
No of Total Visits	71
Report Form with no matters requiring a police response	34
Infrastructure / furnishings / fittings/out of service	44
Comments individual officers - Positive	23
Comments individual officers – negative	1
Cleaning, tidiness and general hygiene - positive	13
Cleaning, tidiness and general hygiene - negative	3
Information Technology	1
Temperature and availability of blankets	1
Health related matters	1
Procedures not followed	1
Rights and entitlements seemingly delayed	0
Personal hygiene requests– (showers, washing etc)	0
Requests for phonecalls	0
Perceived risk to detainees	0
Periodic checks (15, 30 minutes) not maintained	0
Requests for food and drink	0
Requests for literature	0
Other	0

Station	Target No of Visits	Achieved	% of Target
Bishopsgate	74	71	97.2%
<i>Snow Hill*</i>	1	1	100%

DAYS OF VISITS

	No of Visits	% (figure expressed to one decimal place)
Monday	4	5.6
Tuesday	12	16.9
Wednesday	11	15.4
Thursday	14	19.7
Friday	21	29.5
Saturday	5	7
Sunday	4	5.6
Total	71	100

TIME OF VISITS

00.01 – 06.00	1
06.00 - 12.00	34
12.01 – 18.00	27
18.01 – 00.00	9

*1 visit did not have the time recorded.

DAYS OF VISITS / TIMES – COMBINED

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
00.01 – 06.00					1		
06.00 -12.00	2	4	4	7	10	5	2
12.01 – 18.00	2	4	5	7	7		2
18.01 – 00.00		4	2		3		

*1 visit did not have the time recorded.

*Snow Hill is not included in the overall figures

2018/19

The City of London ICV Panel wants to ensure that it meets its objectives in scrutinising the custody arrangements in the City of London. It has set itself the following targets for 2018/19:

- to continue to promote and raise awareness of the work of the ICV Panel;
- to undertake at least four visits per year between the hours of midnight and 6 am.
- to maintain the consistently high level of visits

- to further engage with the MOPAC arranged scheme to build a wider knowledge base.
- Introduce a new reporting form which will align with other schemes to gather national data and trends.

Conclusion

The City of London ICV Scheme provides an independent check on the treatment of detained persons. Through the dedication of the volunteer visitors, an appropriate level of scrutiny of the Force is achieved on which the Police Committee and the community can rely.