

## REPORT OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

**TITLE:** Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales' Independent Custody Visitor Report

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**PURPOSE:** For Noting

<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION</u></b></p> <p>That the Police and Crime Panel considers and responds to the attached Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) Report for the financial year 2019/20.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b><u>INTRODUCTION &amp; BACKGROUND</u></b></p> <p>Section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002 (as amended) requires Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales to make arrangements for detainees to be visited by ICVs. Such arrangements may make provision for access to detainees by ICVs, examination of records, inspection of detention facilities and provision of a Code of Practice.</p> <p>In South Wales, the Commissioner is responsible for the statutory Independent Custody Visiting scheme and the non-statutory Animal Welfare visiting scheme. The Commissioner appoints volunteers from the local community to carry out unannounced visits to police stations and the police's dog and horse mounted site.</p> <p>The statutory Independent Custody Visiting scheme involves volunteer visitors reporting weekly on the welfare of detainees and ensuring that their rights and entitlements are being met whilst in custody. It is an effective oversight of police custody and one aspect of the Commissioner's overarching scrutiny and oversight role.</p> <p>The report provides an update on scheme activity from April 2019 to April 2020. It highlights the work of our independent custody visitors, the findings they have made and the value they provide to our communities.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b><u>ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION</u></b></p> <p>In 2019/20, the South Wales independent custody visiting scheme was provided by 31 volunteer visitors split across two panels – East and West. The two panels meet quarterly with the Regional Custody Inspector and Scheme Manager to raise issues of concern arising from visits, highlight good practice, and discuss any changes in policy and procedure that impact on the local custody suites and the visiting role.</p> <p>South Wales Police operates 4 custody suites, and these are located in Cardiff Bay, Merthyr Tydfil, Swansea and Bridgend. The custody suites in Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend were built in 2014 and are located away from the town centres. Each suite has 42 cells and are both identical in design. The oldest suite in the South Wales area is located in Swansea with its estate being part</p>

	of Swansea Central police station, with 27 cells. Cardiff Bay police station was completed in 2009 and the suite is designed over 2 levels, with 60 cells in total.
<b>4.</b>	<b><u>NEXT STEPS</u></b> The Police and Crime Panel are required to note and comment, the report will then be published on the Police and Crime Commissioners website.
<b>5.</b>	<b><u>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</u></b> There is a small budget to support the delivery of the scheme to cover reasonable expenses for volunteers.
<b>6.</b>	<b><u>PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS</u></b> The scheme is supported through volunteers, their welfare and health and safety are monitored by officers within the Commissioners team.
<b>7.</b>	<b><u>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</u></b> The report is produced in the light of: (i) any report or recommendations made by the police and crime panel; and (ii) any changes in the strategic policing requirement (iii) statutory responsibilities of the Commissioner under the Police Reform and Social Responsibilities Act 2011 And the Police Reform Act (as amended)
<b>8.</b>	<b><u>EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS</u></b> This proposal has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.  In preparing this report, consideration has been given to the requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.
<b>9.</b>	<b><u>RISK</u></b> A timely decision will minimise the risk to the compliance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
<b>10.</b>	<b><u>PUBLIC INTEREST</u></b> This report will be placed on the website of the Commissioner.
<b>11.</b>	<b><u>CONTACT OFFICER</u></b> Lee Jones, Chief Executive to the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales.
<b>12.</b>	<b><u>ANNEXES</u></b> The Annex to this report is a copy of the ICV report for noting.