



GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD

COMMITTEE: GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD
DATE: 4TH NOVEMBER 2011
TITLE OF REPORT: GRAMPIAN INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME – UPDATE REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Board Members with respect to the operation of an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Grampian.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Board:

- i) Approve the use of Grampian Police Vetting Checks for the purposes of Volunteer appointment
- ii) Note the update provided.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Operation of an effective Independent Custody Visiting Scheme will provide assurance to the local community that the custody facilities and practices of Grampian Police are reasonable, efficient and fair.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

6. REPORT

6.1 The Grampian Independent Custody Visiting Scheme has been in operation since July 2011. The following table details the visits that have been conducted in the three month period July – September 2011.

Month	Number of Visits Per Station		
	Elgin	Fraserburgh	Queen Street
July	1	1	1
August	1	1	1
September	2	2	2

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- 6.2 At the present time the Scheme has appointed 7 volunteer Custody Visitors. At present the scheme covers the main custody facilities only and plans to visit each of these facilities once per fortnight. During July and August this level was not attained owing to holiday commitments of volunteers. In order to expand these scheme to increase the level of visits to the main custody centres to once weekly and to cover all Grampian Police custody facilities an increase in volunteer numbers to between 20 and 30 is required.
- 6.3 During each visit, Custody Visitors are required to complete a visit report form summarising details of the number of detainees held at the time of the visit, the number of visits offered and conducted and a summary of the findings of the visit.
- 6.3.1 During the 4 visits conducted at Elgin Custody Suite a total of 26 detainees were held. Visits were offered to 25 detainees and were conducted with 14, a take up rate of 56%.
- 6.3.2 During the 4 visits conducted at Fraserburgh Custody Suite a total of 11 detainees were held. Visits were offered to 11 detainees and were conducted with 6, a take up rate of 55%.
- 6.3.3 During the 4 visits conducted at Queen Street Custody Suite a total of 33 detainees were held. Visits were offered to 10 detainees and were conducted with 6, a take up rate of 60%.
- 6.4 During the period July – September 2011 the visit report forms have raised no issues which have required to be raised with the Grampian Police Scheme Liaison Officer. This would require to be done where issues of concern have been raised by detainees or visitors which have not been addressed by the Custody staff on duty.
- 6.5 Visitors are also asked to record general comments and observations over the course of the visit. In the reports of the 12 visits undertaken during the period in question, no adverse comments regarding detainees reports during visits were noted and all areas upon which resolution was sought with the Custody staff on duty were completed during the visit. A selection of these comments is provided for the Boards information:
- 6.5.1 "No issue, unit clean and tidy" (Elgin)
- 6.5.2 "Detainee requested blanket and one was delivered, cell was clean, tidy and warm" (Elgin)
- 6.5.3 "Very busy during visit, unit is well organised and staff helpful and professional" (Elgin)
- 6.5.4 "Detainee was happy with services offered and pleased with staff" (Fraserburgh)

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- 6.5.5 “Nice, clean, tidy – nice environment” (Fraserburgh)
- 6.5.6 “Detainee said everything fine, food not the best but otherwise fine” (Fraserburgh)
- 6.5.7 “Pretty satisfied detainee, well fed, well hydrated, nothing to report as abnormal” (Queen Street)
- 6.5.8 “Food offered not to his liking but has been treated kindly by Sergeant” (Queen Street)
- 6.5.9 “It was clear that detainees treatment was in keeping with expected standards – keep up good work” (Queen Street)
- 6.5.10 “One detainee was unhappy, reason being no facilities to shave” (Queen Street)
- 6.6 All Custody Visitors have been invited to a Scheme Development Session which will take place on 26th November 2011. The purpose of this event is to explore the future development of the scheme, design a revised Visit Report Form and to explore the training needs of volunteers.
- 6.7 As noted above, to expand the scheme to cover all custody facilities at the recommended frequencies an additional 13 – 23 volunteers require to be recruited. Three individuals who responded to the Boards previous recruitment campaign are currently being processed through the ICVS Selection and Training programme. In addition, a further recruitment campaign is presently being planned. A verbal update on progress on these areas will be provided to the Board.
- 6.8 As part of the recruitment process for volunteers, the Board has previously requested that a Disclosure Scotland Enhanced Check is made. Owing to a change in legislation and the introduction of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme the Board is no longer able to access these checks. Grampian Police complete a Force Vetting Procedure for all volunteers, previously in addition to the Disclosure Scotland check. It is suggested that the Force Vetting Procedure will be sufficient in light of this change in legislation and therefore it is recommended that the Scheme Recruitment processes be amended in line with this.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

**KAREN M DONNELLY
DEPUTE CLERK
28TH OCTOBER 2011**