



Police and Crime Panel

12th December 2024

Independent Custody Visitor Annual Report 2023/24

Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Purpose

1. For Panel Members to consider the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) Independent Custody Visitor Annual Report 2023-24.

Background

2. The Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) scheme exist to provide assurance to local communities so that they can have confidence in the way the police treat people who are held in their custody.
3. The Police and Crime Commissioner must ensure that robust and effective procedures for establishing and maintaining the scheme are in place. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) recruits volunteer ICVs to undertake the role and provides them with support and on-going training to ensure that they can carry out their role effectively. The scheme plays an important part in maintaining police accountability to the local community and the aim of this annual report is to ensure that this information is available in the public domain.
4. ICVs are vetted volunteers who visit our custody suite in pairs and speak to detainees who are being held in police custody. Visits are random, unannounced and can take place at any time of the day and night.
5. This year's annual report includes the following content:
 - Information about the scheme in Durham;
 - Custody visits and areas that were checked and any issues that were raised, if necessary;
 - Training and events;

- Priorities for the forthcoming year.
6. In November 2023, the scheme received formal accreditation from the Independent Custody Visitor Association following completion of their Quality Assessment Framework. This is a national assessment which takes place every 3 years and contributes to the continuous improvement of ICV schemes.
 7. This year will see the opening of the Investigative Hub and the office will be focussed on recruiting and training new custody visitors into the scheme as we transition from the old to the new facilities. Our Independent Custody Visitors will play a critical role in driving further improvements in our processes and procedures to ensure Durham not only delivers the very best quality of care to detainees but is held aloft as a beacon of good practice nationally.
 8. Appendix 1 of this report contains the Police and Crime Commissioner's Independent Custody Visitors Annual Report 2023--24 and will be primarily available as an electronic document and printed copies will be made available upon request.

Recommendation

9. That Panel Members note the contents of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Custody Visitor Report 2023-24.

Joy Allen
Police and Crime Commissioner