

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

PAPER MARKED

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Meeting **POLICE AUTHORITY**
Date **TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2009 – 2.00 PM**
Report of **CHIEF CONSTABLE**
Subject **INSPECTION BY HMIC/HMIP ON CUSTODY PROVISION**

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides members with an update on the current custody provision in Leicestershire Constabulary, together with proposals to carry out further improvements in line with NPIA Guidance Safer Detention and Handling of Detainees in Police Custody and in response to HMIC/HMIP feedback following their inspection in August 2009.

Background

2. Safer Detention and Handling of Detainees in Police Custody Guidance was published in 2006 and it is recommended that Forces are compliant by April 2010. Criminal Justice, under the steer of ACC Crime has put together a comprehensive action plan to upgrade the custody estate and improve business processes. The action plan is now largely completed, although plans to upgrade Loughborough and Beaumont Leys Custody Suites have been delayed due to the current financial situation and works will not now be completed before April 2010.
3. In August 2009 HMIC/HMIP carried out an inspection of the Force custody provision. The report highlighted good and sound practices and acknowledged that the Police Authority lead for custody took an active interest in custodial matters and played a proactive and supportive role. They also made a number of recommendations to improve the overall standard of care provided to detainees. An Executive Summary of their findings and recommendations is found at APPENDIX 1 to this report.

Interim Report

4. Following the initial de-brief and draft HMIC/HMIP Inspection Report, Criminal Justice developed an action plan to address the issues raised. An up to date plan is found at APPENDIX 2 to this report.
5. DNA – The Inspectors highlighted a lack of quality control systems for taking, storing and submission of DNA and forensic samples should be addressed as an urgent priority. This has been actioned, improved procedures are in place and are closely monitored through a robust inspection regime. The Independent Custody Visitors scheme has agreed to assist with this process by checking the integrity of the DNA freezers during their visits.
6. Estate – During their inspection the Inspectors acknowledged that the Force was part-way through a modernisation programme. However they were particularly concerned

about the number of potential ligature points across the custody estate. They also highlighted that the cells at Beaumont Leys were in a poor condition and some of the cells at Loughborough were cramped. There were also issues regarding the lack of privacy and general hygiene at both of these sites. Inspectors also suggested that cells should be adapted for use by detainees with disabilities; however since their inspection Euston Street has been upgraded. This is the designated site for detainees with disabilities for the Force and it is DDA compliant. Criminal Justice, in conjunction with Estates has developed a plan of works at Loughborough and Beaumont Leys to address these issues and comply with the recommendations of the Safer Detention Guidance. This has been reviewed by COG and approval has been given to carry out works identified as a high priority in order to reduce threat, harm and risk. The proposed and revised schedules of work are found at APPENDIX 3 (Loughborough) and APPENDIX 4 (Beaumont Leys).

Future Steps

7. To Complete the Safer Detention and Handling of Detainees in Police Custody and HMIC/HMIP Action Plans, minus the improvement works to Beaumont Leys and Loughborough by April 2010.
8. To appoint architects and to tender for agreed building works with a view to commencing Beaumont Leys in May 2010, shortly followed by Loughborough.

Recommendation

9. The Authority is recommended to note:
 - a. The progress being made towards the Safer Detention and Handling of Detainees in Police Custody.
 - b. The recommendations of HMIC/HMIP.
 - c. The HMIC/HMIP Action Plan.
 - d. The revised Safer Detention/HMIC custody estate improvements to Beaumont Leys and Loughborough.

Implications

Financial: £424,888 already in the Capital Programmes for 2009/10/11.

Legal: None

Diversity: None

Risk Management: Proposed upgrades to Loughborough and Beaumont Leys will not fully satisfy the requirements of Safer Detention and Handling of Detainees in Police Custody. Control measures are in place and as a consequence this is viewed as a low risk.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Executive Summary of HMIC/HMIP findings.

Appendix 2 – Leicestershire Constabulary HMIC/HMIP Action Plan.

Appendix 3 – Loughborough Custody Suite Improvement Works Schedules.

Appendix 4 – Beaumont Leys Custody Suite Improvement Works Schedules.

Officer to Contact

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