



OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORFOLK

ORIGINATOR:

DECISION NO. 2013/22

REASON FOR SUBMISSION: FOR DECISION

SUBMITTED TO: PCC

SUBJECT: THREE YEARLY REVIEW OF CUSTODY VISITOR APPOINTMENTS

SUMMARY: *A brief summary of what the submission covers*

The Home Office Code of Practice for Custody Visiting requires each Scheme to undertake a reconstitution process every 3 years. The key factors considered in maintaining appointments are:

- The continuing ability and willingness of the individual in question to conduct the role effectively having regard to the role profile for a Custody Visitor;
- Ensuring that the individual is operating within the Scheme Guidelines, in accordance with the Home Office Code of Practice and other National Standards, and within the spirit of the Scheme.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the PCC review the contents of this report and endorse the proposal to renew the appointments of all 28 ICVs in Norfolk as of 1 September 2013.

It is also recommended that the PCC endorse the proposal to commence a 2 term limit for ICVs in Norfolk so that a balanced representation of volunteers can be maintained. This proposal would be implemented as of 1 September 2016.

OUTCOME/APPROVAL BY: PCC

The above request has my approval

Signature

A.W. Bett

Date 20/8/2013

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. BACKGROUND

The Home Office Code of Practice for Independent Custody Visiting provides guidance in respect PCC duties in discharging the independent custody visiting function.

In respect of individual appointments to custody visiting schemes, the Home Office provides the following national guidance:

“29. Appointments as an ICV must initially be for three years and must not be confirmed until a six-month probationary period has been satisfactorily completed. Full re-assessments of suitability must take place at regular intervals but no longer than three years apart. The key factors in renewing appointments for further periods must be the continuing ability and willingness of the individuals involved to do the job effectively. Any decision not to renew the appointment must follow the principles of natural justice and must be publicised in the scheme’s memorandum of understanding or guidance.”

All of the 28 current Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) appointments to the Scheme in Norfolk are effective until 31 August 2013. The last full review of all appointments to the Scheme was undertaken in 2010.

2. REVIEW OF INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITOR APPOINTMENTS IN NORFOLK

The OPCCN commenced the three yearly review process in line with Home Office guidance, being particularly mindful of the designated Role Profile and Person Specification for an Independent Custody Visitor in Norfolk.

Contact was made with all individuals currently appointed to the Scheme to establish if they were willing and able to continue within the role. A letter was circulated to all of Norfolk’s ICVs on 15 May 2013 and all have responded stating that they would like to continue after 31 August.

The Chief Executive’s office also sought feedback from each of the Panel Co-ordinators with regard to the performance of individuals undertaking visits, their commitment/flexibility to the Scheme and consideration of issues such as effective interaction with detainees. The aim of this was to provide evidence in relation to effectiveness to further inform the decision making process.

3. INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS

A comprehensive overview of the number of visits undertaken, individuals’ attendance at Panel meetings, training and conferences, together with any key issues to note is provided at Appendix 1 (Confidential appendix NOT FOR PUBLICATION – by virtue of Paragraph 2 of the Local Government Act 1972).

In light of the continued willingness, satisfactory level of performance and positive feedback received, the PCC is recommended to consider renewing the appointments for all 28 ICVs with effect from 1 September 2013.

4. OTHER ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Home Office Code of Practice for Independent Custody Visiting also states that PCCs must also seek to ensure that the overall Panel of ICVs is representative of the local community and provides a suitable balance in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. This is

particularly important to ensure that our broad range of volunteers can help identify whether the organisation has any hidden barriers.

To ensure that a rolling plan of recruitment can be implemented (therefore ensuring that any gaps in representation can be addressed) it is recommended that ICVs should serve a maximum of 2 terms of office. The PCC would reserve the right, in exceptional circumstances to extend a period of appointment (with the individual's agreement) beyond the six year term so as to retain particular skills within the scheme or to provide continuity.

It is suggested to implement the 2 term limit as of 1 September 2016 when the next formal reconstitution of the Scheme is to be undertaken. This will ensure that the knowledge / experience of our current volunteers are retained and any impacts on the Scheme of losing such experience can be managed prior to 2016.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All continuing Custody Visitors are required to complete a training module after the reconstitution process in order to ensure that everyone has received the same level of information / support to enable them to undertake their role. The impacts of this can be absorbed within the day-to-day budget allocated to Independent Custody Visiting.

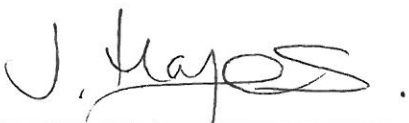
6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

The recommendation to apply a 2 term limit for ICVs poses a risk regarding the potential loss of knowledge/experience of volunteers. By implementing this change in September 2016, such a risk can be managed.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION: *Information contained within this submission is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and wherever possible will be made available on the OPCC website. Submissions should be labelled as 'Not Protectively Marked' unless any of the material is 'restricted' or 'confidential'. Where information contained within the submission is 'restricted' or 'confidential' it should be highlighted, along with the reason why.*

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	NO
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	NO
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	YES
Have human resource implications been considered?	YES
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	YES
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	YES
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	NO
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	YES

APPROVAL TO SUBMIT TO THE DECISION-MAKER (this approval is required only for submissions to PCC and DPCC).

<p>Deputy Head of Staff I am satisfied that relevant advice has been taken into account in the preparation of the report and that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the PCC.</p> <p>Signature:  .</p> <p>Date 20/8/2013</p>
--