

ACTION PLAN – Report on an inspection visit to court custody facilities

CLUSTER: Cleveland, Durham and Northumbria

TIMETABLE	DATE
Date of inspection	31 March – 14 April 2021
Report published	15 June 2021
Action plan submitted	

Rec. no	Recommendation	Accepted / Rejected	Response / action taken or planned	Action owner	Update / target date for completion
6.1	<p>Key concern: Relationships and communication between the three main agencies responsible for custody should be improved and prioritise the delivery of good outcomes for detainees.</p> <p>Recommendation: Relationships and communication between the three main agencies responsible for custody should be improved and prioritise the delivery of good outcomes for detainees.</p>	Accept	<p>Cluster Building Champion (CBC) is to reinvigorate site monthly meetings between HMCTS and Geoamey. CBC is to travel to each site by the end of August with the Senior Geoamey CCM to meet with the site Delivery Manager and site CCM.</p> <p>A check and test document will be completed and a workaround of the cell area will be carried out along with an in depth discussion between agencies. CBC is also to reinvigorate the PECS forum meetings but to be lead by HMCTS.</p> <p>GEOAmeey Quarterly meetings to recommence, led by HMCTS, with a pre-approved agenda with some fixed agenda items covering Fire/H&S, Youth cases, welfare and facilities</p> <p>Attend quarterly Stakeholder Meetings with PECS, Police, & Prisons.</p>	HMCTS & GEOAmeey	<p>30 November 2021</p> <p>The PECS forum meeting has been resurrected and is chaired by HMCTS in line with the terms of reference. The meeting was held in September 2021 and the next is scheduled for January 2022. It was a positive start. Due to changes with people's roles over the last 18 months there was limited attendance. This will increase in due course. Cluster Building Champion continues to take the lead with resurrection of site monthly meetings with Geoamey and HMCTS. A new check and test document is being considered and developed with current requirements.</p> <p>HMCTS Operations Directorate have reviewed Terms of reference for stakeholder meetings, along with PECS and details and reminders of the need to conduct</p>

			Court Custody Managers (CCM's) to attend HMCTS Team Information Board meetings or equivalent where daily activity from the previous day and the current day are discussed, to identify specific needs of children and young people, women and those that are vulnerable.		these meetings have been issued via regular communications.
6.2	<p>Key concern: Recommendation: Comprehensive data covering activity affecting detainees in court custody should be collated and analysed, so that action can be identified and taken to drive improvement.</p>	Accept	<p>GEOAmeY have committed to improve data collation to drive improvement and in particular will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obtain accurate usage of language line from The Big Word. 2. Introduce local recording process for recording governors release requests 3. Work with PECS in developing data collation process for future HMIP inspections. 	GEOAmeY	<p>30 November 2021</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Big Word have committed to provide a monthly MI report, which goes out on 5th of each month. Local recording process has been briefed out near the time of the HMIP inspection. Assurance it is being used will be collated through November. To Review February 2022. 2. Attended a HMIP toolkit workshop with PECS Process Improvement Lead on 7th June 2021. Also hosted a workshop with GEOAmeY Account Director and Regional Managers in GEOAmeY on 4th October 2021, to brief them on the intentions of the toolkit.
6.3	<p>Key concern: Recommendation: Female detainees and children should be transported separately from adult men.</p>	Accept	<p>GEOAmeY will transport adult females and males separately in adherence to the contract specification and by use of a separate vehicle or the separation screen available on all cellular vehicles.</p>	GEOAmeY / PECS	<p>30 November 2021</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partition requirement is now added onto the overnight whiteboards to demonstrate to the depots which routes require a partition to be utilised. 2. Dip sampling to be completed before 30th

			<p>Young people will be transported separately to adults in adherence to the contract specification and where separation is not possible will ensure approval from the Authority is gained.</p> <p>All children from a SCH will travel separately with enhanced care provided.</p> <p>GEOAmev will ensure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GEOAmev's logistics centre will identify and communicate to local depots when the use of a separation screen is needed. 2. Introduce a dip sample CCTV quality assurance check at Spennymoor Depot, on moves whereby a separation screen is required. 3. Brief all staff in Cleveland, County Durham and Northumberland on the SOP 033 relating to Collection Transfer and Delivery - Police Establishments. <p>PECS will review the transportation of females and young people to ensure adherence to the contractual position and a commitment by the supplier towards continuous improvement</p>		<p>November 2021. Tracy Rutter has been briefed to instigate that in November.</p> <p>SOP 033 briefing on going</p> <p>PECS are currently reviewing the assurance process in relation to separation of both children and females from adult males with a commitment to improve the current process in place.</p>
6.4	<p>Key concern: Recommendation: Conditions across custody facilities should be improved. In particular, cells should be properly cleaned, of an appropriate temperature,</p>	Accept	<p>Ligature points identified within the HMIP report have been rectified following FM involvement and jobs raised. Assurance has been given by Delivery Managers on each site to confirm completion. Building Champion is to visit each cell complex in CDN to carry out a</p>	HMCTS (FM)	<p>30 November 2021 All issues with ligature points raised in the original HMIP report have been rectified following FM involvement. Cluster Building Champion (or deputy) to continue to visit all sites and conduct a walkaround with the CCM and</p>

	have access to natural light and be free from potential ligature points.		walkaround with the Delivery Manager and put together an action plan for each site in relation of cleanliness, temperature issues, lighting issues and any further ligature points coming to light.		<p>Delivery Manager to ensure there are no issues with cleanliness, temperature, lighting and ligature points. Any issues are to be recorded on the check and test and escalated.</p> <p>Geoamey provide daily assurance through the cell opening checklist around cells providing a safe, decent and secure environment for custodies, by undertaking reasonable visual checks to determine any changes/faults within the custodial setting. Issues are recorded in the HSQE folder and reported to HMCTS staff locally. The cell opening checklist refers to 'any new significant safety concerns' but does not explicitly state the cell is free of potential ligature points. Newly identified ligature points should see the cell taken out of action and or increased observations of people in the cell / consideration as to who is located in the cell (manage the risk).</p> <p>To Review February 2022.</p>
6.5	<p>In the custody suite: reception processes, individual needs and rights - Respect Recommendation (3.4): Detainees' personal data, including their names, should only be displayed on whiteboards which are out of general view.</p>	Accept	Implementation of Digital Court Custody Dashboards to replace current whiteboards at Middlesbrough Magistrates Court and Newcastle Crown Court, both of which are placed out of sight of prisoners. These can also be switched off if needed.	GEOAmey	<p>28 February 2022</p> <p>Court Custody Dashboards implemented at Middlesbrough mc and Newcastle cc.</p> <p>Assessment of whiteboards to be completed on HMIP extraordinary visit and documented as such</p>

			Assess all locations that have no Court Custody Dashboard, but have a whiteboard in view of prisoners, to determine a more appropriate alternative if viable and request HMCTS FM complete work as appropriate		
6.6	In the custody suite: reception processes, individual needs and rights - Meeting individual and diverse needs. Recommendation (3.11): Staff should use professional telephone interpreting services, to check on the welfare, risks and understanding of detainees who speak little or no English, on arrival and throughout their stay in court custody.	Accept	<p>All GEOAmeY officers have the ability to access interpreting services for detainees and instructions for use are set out in the standard operating procedures.</p> <p>GEOAmeY recognise that this service is often underutilised and are taking steps to encourage staff to make more effective use of the service. The service has featured in the 'WOU', a weekly notice informing all staff of the importance and value of this service including a guide of when and how to use the service.</p> <p>Cordless telephones have been purchased to make the service more accessible and a monthly report on each courts use is provided to the GEOAmeY Managers so as they can monitor uptake.</p> <p>GEOAmeY Managers will continue to promote the service and to challenge staff where it is noted that the service is not being utilised.</p>	GEOAmeY	<p>30 November 2021</p> <p>When MI report from the Big Word comes through, this will be shared to promote the use of it</p> <p>Extra ordinary court visit will document the need to use the language line in the reception process as a standard.</p> <p>Evidence of WOU being briefed for that specific addition to be evidenced.</p>
6.7	In the custody suite: reception processes, individual needs and rights - Risk assessments	Accept	The PER is key vehicle for ensuring that information regarding risks posed by prisoners is always available for staff responsible for the individuals care.	GEOAmeY / PECS	28 February 2022

	<p>Recommendation (3.18): A person escort record that includes comprehensive, clear and accurate information about a person's risks to themselves or others should accompany all detainees.</p>		<p>PECS and GEOAmeY are working together to improve the quality of PERs.</p> <p>PECS issued a notice to contractors in April 2020, reinforcing the process that contractor staff should follow when they are found to have an incomplete PER. This includes checking the PER and highlighting missing mandatory fields to dispatching staff for correction at the point of handover as well as an escalation process should significant risks be missed.</p> <p>The Digital PER (dPER) is currently being rolled out and this includes mandatory fields that must be completed in order to complete the form, it also extracts data from existing systems and will improve the consistency of PER completions, however this will not negate the requirement for quality assurance checks.</p> <p>PER completion will be added as an agenda item to the regional PECS Stakeholder Meeting where poor completions will be discussed and challenged as necessary.</p>		
6.8	<p>In the custody suite: reception processes, individual needs and rights - Risk assessments Recommendation (3.19): All staff should receive a thorough briefing, covering the</p>	Accept	<p>This is a contractual requirement and expectation from PECS, that all staff are briefed by the GEOAmeY Court Custody Managers regarding vulnerability and risk of all prisoners in their care.</p> <p>Training will be delivered to court custody managers to improve the</p>	GEOAmeY	<p>30 November 2021</p> <p>Training and written guidance will be provided and delivered to CCM's and OIC as part of the extra ordinary HMIP visits in November.</p> <p>To Review February 2022.</p>

	current risks presented by detainees while held in court custody.		<p>quality of briefings, this will include the requirement to brief staff coming on duty after the initial briefing as well as further briefings should new custodies arrive or risks change throughout the day.</p> <p>GEOAmev managers and PECS CDMs will observe and review briefings to ensure they are carried out to the required standard.</p>		
6.9	<p>In the custody suite: reception processes, individual needs and rights - Individual legal rights</p> <p>Recommendation (3.29): Interview rooms should be sufficiently soundproofed to make sure that legal consultations can take place confidentially.</p>	Accept	<p>Cluster Building Champion to take forward initially with Teesside Crown Court and Durham Crown Court in line with HMIP recommendation.</p> <p>Cluster Building Champion to raise with FM to assess and rectify as necessary. All other custody suites are to be assessed by Cluster Building Champion Team and issues to be raised with FM colleagues.</p>	HMCTS (FM)	<p>30 November 2021</p> <p>Checks have been carried out on each site in CDN and confirmation has been given that the majority of rooms are not soundproofed. Cluster Building Champion has raised the matter with FM and is waiting for a steer is any national funding available. Currently the mitigation is to use every other room if possible to minimise the transference of sound.</p>
6.10	<p>In the custody suite: reception processes, individual needs and rights - Individual legal rights</p> <p>Recommendation (3.30): Detainees should spend the minimum possible time in court custody; they should have their cases prioritised and heard promptly, and the reasons for delays should be explored and addressed.</p>	Accept	HMCTS to look at improving communication from the Courtroom with cell staff to improve time in Court custody for detainees.	HMCTS	<p>28 February 2022</p> <p>Weekly TIB meetings are being piloted at Newcastle Crown and Magistrates' Court between HMCTS and Geoamey to discuss plans for the next week. Further ad hoc daily communication when required is recommended and will take place.</p> <p>Delays, reasons behind these and what can be done to improve has been selected as part of HMCTS' review of thematic and national issues identified by HMIP. A joint stakeholder workshop between PECS and HMCTS will be held to specially examine this.</p>

6.11	<p>In the custody cell, safeguarding and health care - Physical environment Recommendation (4.8): Emergency evacuations should be practised at least annually in all custody suites and should involve detainees.</p>	Partial accept	<p>Cluster Building Champion to speak to RSSO to confirm when Fire Drills can take place due to Covid-19 and arrange with sites to commence.</p> <p>GEOAmeY Managers will work with HMCTS Building Champions/Delivery Manager/SPOS to conduct evacuations HMCTS require Fire Evacuations to be held at least twice per year not once per year:</p> <p>These evacuations will take the form of a simulation and would not include detainees, as to do so would pose an undue and unacceptable level of risk. A simulation approach would potentially utilise PECS/Suppliers staff and HMCTS staff in the custody areas acting as detainees in order to reduce the risk, but still provide a practical physical walk through of emergency evacuation plans rather than a 'desktop' exercise as that does not offer the level of assurance that is required by either HMCTS or CPFSI.</p>	HMCTS/GEOAmeY	<p>30 November 2021 HMCTS RSSO's have now confirmed that fire drills can be carried out following the Covid-19 pandemic. Cluster Building Champion and Team are to plan these in at all sites and liaise with Geoamey as to dates. Once taken place HMCTS and Geoamey to get together to look at findings and actions.</p>
6.12	<p>In the custody cell, safeguarding and health care - Use of force Recommendation (4.15): Each incident involving the use of force against detainees should be recorded separately, and the paperwork justifying any use of force</p>	Accept	<p>Senior Court Custody Managers and vehicle base managers will be briefed by Regional Managers on the requirement to ensure each use of force incident is reported separately and not all encompassed in one report.</p> <p>ROSS line operatives to receive the same briefing, to ensure they report these separately to the authority.</p>	GEOAmeY / PECS	<p>30 November 2021 Geoamey Regional Manager has briefed SCCM's and VBM's on the requirement to ensure each use of force incident is reported separately and not all encompassed in one report. I did this in a meeting on 3rd November when discussing the action plan and progress.</p> <p>ROSS line operatives not yet briefed.</p>

	should be sufficiently detailed.		Use of force lead CDM will provide assurance through UOF governance meeting.		
6.13	In the custody cell, safeguarding and health care - Use of force Recommendation (4.16): Escort chains should only be used on detainees subject to an individual risk assessment, and should remain in place for the shortest time possible.	Accept	GEOAmeY will review the Standard Operating Procedures relating to restraints and ensure staff understand the requirement for a risk based approach – this includes a review of Green and Red zones The authority will review the revised SOP and through assurance visits will determine the understanding of such approach and monitor compliance.	GEOAmeY / PECS	30 November 2021 Red and Green zone reviews occur quarterly as part of our normal practices, however, an extraordinary one will be done and documented in the November visits.
6.14	In the custody cell, safeguarding and health care - Safeguarding Recommendation (4.26): HMCTS should develop an overarching safeguarding policy. All staff should be made aware of safeguarding procedures and referral mechanisms for children and vulnerable adults at risk.	Accept	HMCTS is conducting a formal review of all of its processes and responsibilities that relate to safeguarding. The review will recommend how we might best meet the needs of our users and support the development of an HMCTS safeguarding policy. The PECS providers (GEOAmeY) have policies and procedures in place to support safeguarding for custodies and PECS have worked with GEOAmeY to introduce safeguarding logs for adults and C&YP, also to improve staffs understanding of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding. This will be monitored by SCCMs and CDM with good practice shared more widely.	HMCTS	31 January 2022 HMCTS has now developed a draft of its overarching safeguarding policy. This is currently under review to ensure that it meets the needs of both that it is intended to safeguard but also that it is in line with safeguarding polices already in place with stakeholders. Guidance on safeguarding is also planned for all HMCTS staff to allow them to properly apply the policy once launched.
6.15	In the custody cell, safeguarding and health care - Children	Accept	GEOAmeY will endeavour to locate children in rooms within custody suites rather than in cells where an appropriate location is available and	GEOAmeY	30 November 2021 No court locations pose an issue with respect to housing YP's

	<p>Recommendation (4.31): Children should only be held in cells when this is justified by an individual risk assessment.</p>		<p>the risk does not determine the use of a cell.</p> <p>SCCM's to review all court locations across Cleveland, County Durham and Northumberland, to review housing space for YP's.</p> <p>Court locations without sufficient non-cellular housing for children and YP's will be communicated to HMCTS to request reasonable alterations to the current cell complex to allow for this.</p> <p>The authority will assure compliance through assurance visits</p>		<p>outside of a cell. This will be documented and confirmed in the extra ordinary visit in November.</p>
<p>6.16</p>	<p>In the custody cell, safeguarding and health care – Health Recommendation (4.41): All custody staff should receive annual first-aid refresher training to maintain their skills, and have immediate access to regularly checked basic life support equipment, including an automated external defibrillator.</p>	<p>Partial Accept</p>	<p>Cluster Building Champion to confirm as part of site visits and incorporate in the check and test. HMCTS to make Geoamey aware if there is a defibrillator on site, where it is located, if it is checked and have a process in place for a contact to be able to get the defibrillator to the cell area as soon as possible.</p> <p>HMCTS is conducting a national review of it's Automated External Defibrillators (AED) Safety and Security Operating Procedure (SSOP) to ensure that this still meets requirements. In addition, new posters promoting the location of nearest AED are being designed for display in both public areas and custody suites.</p> <p>GEOAmeY officers are trained in first aid at work and resuscitation and attend two day refresher training</p>	<p>HMCTS/ GEOAmeY</p>	<p>30 November 2021</p> <p>First Aid refresher training was impacted detrimentally by COVID as a pause was placed on training. We are currently looking to recover this, however, the timeline for that will extend past 30th November.</p> <p>Impact assessment per location will be sought, to confirm that there is no sight with 100% of employees out of date. The majority in the region remain in date.</p> <p>Cluster Building Champion to add procedure for Geoamey to obtain defibrillator from HMCTS on at each site to the new check and test document.</p> <p>Nationally, HMCTS Regional Health and Safety Champions have been asked to review the locations</p>

			course every 3 years in line with current legislation; both GEOAmeY and PECS have internal processes in place to monitor this.		and numbers of AEDs on each site, with specific attention to their accessibility to PECS teams based in custody suites. Posters to promote the location of AEDs, with instructions on how to access them, have also been distributed via H&S Champions to be displayed in all areas of sites, including custody suites.
6.17	<p>Release and transfer from court custody - Release and transfer arrangements.</p> <p>Recommendation (5.5): All detainees should be helped to prepare for leaving custody with practical consideration of any imminent risks and needs, the provision of relevant support leaflets and the opportunity to wear their own clothes as they leave.</p>	Accept	<p>The GEOAmeY SOP committee will review section 5 of SOP 098 Outcome, Bail and release to consider allowing prisoners to change into clothes from their property in the custody suite prior to release.</p> <p>GEOAmeY's monthly court visit process to include a review of the pre-release process by Senior Court Custody Manager's at all their court locations, to ensure this is completed thoroughly and all information is communicated to the individual being released.</p> <p>Where practical, GEOAmeY will allow custodies to change into their own clothes before leaving the custody area, however there are a number of custody suites where this is not possible.</p>	GEOAmeY	<p>30 November 2021</p> <p>November extraordinary visit will include a review of the pre-release process and a review will be conducted to guide staff on how a prisoner can change cloths before departing and this will be documented.</p>
6.18	<p>Release and transfer from court custody - Release and transfer arrangements.</p> <p>Recommendation (5.6): HMCTS should work with PECS/HMPPS to make</p>	Accept	<p>From a Crown Court perspective HMCTS would work with PECS and HMPPS to any authority to release would be deal with as promptly – further discussion required on 16th July 2021</p>	HMCTS/ GEOAmeY/ PECS	<p>30 November 2021</p> <p>PECS: In addition to this being a standard agenda item at PECS Stakeholder meetings, any operational delay's may be escalated to the PECS On call manager / regional manager in</p>

	<p>sure that the governor's authority to release is issued as promptly as possible to the custody staff.</p>		<p>HMPPS communication to Governors instructing focus on release processes for timeliness and to avoid release in error.</p> <p>PECS Contract Delivery Manager's will work together with court staff to resolve delays to release at a local level.</p> <p>GeoAmey to track and monitor delays to release to allow for action by the CDM locally.</p> <p>Governor's authority to release to be added to the agenda of the Stakeholder meeting hosted at a regional level by HMCTS.</p>		<p>a timely manner. Delay's to Governor's releases form part of the standard PECS Prison visit agenda but maintaining a record of when these happen and the impact they have falls to the Supplier.</p> <p>To further review at 6 months (28 Feb 2021)</p>
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Recommendations	
Accepted	17
Accepted Subject to Resources/Partially Accepted	1
Rejected	0
Total	18