



# Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

## **HMICFRS and HMIP – Expectations for Police Custody**

Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner, welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) review of the expectations for police custody.

The Commissioner is supportive of the proposed changes set out in the revised version of the 'Expectations for police custody' document, including reference to the updated Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) codes of practice and the further amendments made by the College of Policing to the Authorised Professional Practice on Detention and Custody.

Mrs Bourne would like to make the following response in respect of three of the main changes identified:

### ***Recommendations about the care of detainees under the influence of alcohol, drugs and/or substances.***

The Commissioner recognises that detecting any early signs of deterioration, underlying medical conditions and injuries is critical in the care of all detainees and in preventing deaths in police custody.

Sussex Police has a policy and process in place for undertaking 'rousal checks' for any detainees who are recognised to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at their time of arrival in police custody, with the level of required checks adjusted as the signs of impairment reduce. Where intoxication levels appear to be worsening, a Health Care Professional is called to undertake an assessment and remains available to assist with assessing further detainees throughout the duration of their stay in custody.

Rousing detainees who are under the influence of alcohol involves using a stimulus designed to elicit a response from the detainee. This method of managing detainees who have consumed alcohol and/or drugs minimises the possibility of missing a more serious and/or underlying medical condition.

Mrs Bourne is reassured that the custody sergeants on duty within each of the custody centres in Sussex are responsible for ensuring that all appropriate checks are undertaken, with additional oversight provided by the custody inspectors as part of the review process.

### ***Concerns raised by the Independent Custody Visitors Association about the needs of menstruating women and girls in police custody.***

In order to comply with the changes to PACE, the custody record database in Sussex has been updated to ensure that all female detainees are asked a series of questions at their time of arrival in police custody. This process includes making further enquiries as part of the booking in process as to whether these individuals would like to speak to a nominated female member of staff, the offer of feminine hygiene packs and the provision of female detention leaflets.

Sussex Police has also updated the templates used to support the booking in process with additional prompts to ensure that this process is followed for all women and girls detained in police custody in compliance with PACE.

***Revisions to reflect changes in professional health care requirements and practices.***

Mrs Bourne is reassured that Sussex Police has appropriate policies and operational procedures in place to respond to each of the amendments to the professional health care requirements and practices identified in the revised document.

The Commissioner would be happy to discuss any of the above points raised and would welcome being updated with any decisions made in respect of changes to the expectations for police custody.

**Katy Bourne OBE**  
**Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner**