

**VISITING COMMITTEE FOR LEGALISED POLICE CELLS
AT KIRKWALL POLICE STATION**

ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Membership of the Visiting Committee during the reporting period comprised Councillors Andrew Drever, Steven B Heddle and Jack Moodie.
- 1.2 Clerk to the Visiting Committee is Albert V Tait, Chief Executive, assisted by Committee Services.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are six Legalised Police Cells, four for male prisoners and two for female prisoners, all with toilets and fittings for hand washing. Two of the cells for male prisoners and one of the cells for female prisoners are equipped with CCTV. In addition there are two detention cells.
- 2.2 The legalised police cells are visited on a quarterly basis by the Visiting Committee and monthly by individual Visiting Committee members.
- 2.3 The Legalised Police Cells at Kirkwall Police Station are rarely used to hold prisoners for a period longer than one day. Any prisoners who require to be held for a longer period are transferred either to HM Prison Inverness (Porterfield) or HM Prison Aberdeen (Craiginches).
- 2.4 Up to 9 January 2012, the firm of Reliance had responsibility for the care of prisoners. This has now been taken over by Group 4 Security (G4S). They provide ready meals which are prepared in the custody kitchen. G4S employees work from 0800 hours to 2000 hours daily. NHS Orkney therefore continues to provide the food for prisoners' breakfasts. NHS Orkney also provides meals on any occasion when G4S employees are not available or free to supervise a detention.

3. REPORT 2011/12

- 3.1 During the 12 month period to 31 March 2012, the Visiting Committee met on four occasions, namely 1 July, 9 September and 16 December 2011 and 23 March 2012. The minutes of the quarterly meetings are annexed hereto.
- 3.2 On each visit the cells were found to be clean and serviceable and the ancillary areas were satisfactory.

- 3.3 Monthly visits were carried out by individual Visiting Committee members in months in which a quarterly meeting was not held. On one occasion, there had been two prisoners detained within the cells. One prisoner was not present during the visit by the Visiting Committee member, as he was at court, but it was noted that the prisoner had expressed dissatisfaction to officers at not being able to smoke and that a light had been on all night. On the same occasion, the Visiting Committee member had spoken to the other prisoner, who confirmed that the condition of the cell and the food provided was satisfactory.
- 3.4 On another occasion, a prisoner was detained within the cells, but declined to speak to the Visiting Committee member.
- 3.5 Statistics provided by Northern Constabulary indicate that during the period of this report a total of 39 prisoners were held in legalised cells. Twenty six prisoners remained in custody overnight, with the remainder either appearing in court or being sent to prison on the same day.

Hazel Flett
Senior Committees Officer
8 June 2012