

CAMPBELTOWN

**LEGALISED POLICE
CELLS**

VISITING COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

2011/2012

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FOREWORD

Legalised Police Cells (LPC's) are unique to Scotland and these came about from the inaccessibility of the Scottish Courts to the outlying districts and islands. These cells are used to retain prisoners awaiting local trial, or following conviction, pending transfer to prison. Campbeltown Police Station is approximately a 300 miles round trip from the nearest prison and the journey is made over roads which are frequently closed for several hours due to road accidents and on occasions have been closed for longer periods due to weather and landslips. These closures involve lengthy detours and cause inconvenience to Courts, prisoners and Prison Staff. Toilet stops are generally made at police stations on route, but detours take them to areas where toilet facilities are not available, leading to general discomfort to the prisoner, which is exacerbated by the restricted confines of the vehicles.

The LPC's are inspected triennially by H.M Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland and were last inspected in 5 July 2011 when Mr. Mick Armstrong, Inspector, HMCIP. Was in attendance. Prisoners held in the LPC's are detained under the provisions of the Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (Scotland) Rules (2011).

The Campbeltown Police Station, which was built in 2009 is one of the 9 Police Stations in Scotland to have Legalised Police Cells and is one of three within Argyll and Bute.

Since the introduction of the private prisoner escort service in 2004 there have been no committed or remand prisoners held in the Campbeltown Police cells. The last year in which these cells were used for legalised prisoners was 2007/2008.

Campbeltown LPC's Visiting Committee is constituted under Rule 155 of the Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (Scotland) Rules 2011. In accordance with Schedule 3 of the Rules the Committee comprises of three members, all of whom are appointed by Argyll and Bute Council. Membership of the Committee has remained unchanged throughout the year, with Mr. Jack Milligan continuing in the role of Chair and representative on the Association of Prison Visiting Committees, Mrs. H. Joyce Gardiner as Depute Chair and Mr. Geoff Page. The Clerking of the committee continues to be provided by Mrs. Isabella Soudan.

MEEETINGS

During the year 1st April 2011 to 31 March 2012 the Committee has met at the Campbeltown Police Station on one occasion, 5 July 2011, when the HMCPI was in attendance. There was a full attendance of members' at the meeting.

The lack of finance has once again prevented the committee from holding further meetings, or having a joint meeting with the members of Oban and Dunoon Legalised Police Cells Visiting Committees. The loss of the Joint Meeting with their counterparts continues to be a matter of disappointment for the members as much has been lost due to the lack of contact. In order to increase the number of meetings the Clerk on one occasion had asked SPS for permission to hold a meeting at her own expense, but had received no reply.

Mr. Milligan attends as many meetings of the Association of Prison Visiting Committees as possible, together with their Annual Conference.

CELLS

During the year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 the cells were inspected on 10 occasions as follows, John Milligan - 3, Joyce Gardiner - 3, and Geoffrey Page - 4.

Generally the cells were found to be clean and tidy and in good condition, although there has been a persistent problem with the water supply in Male Cell 1 for some time now.

During the period 23 – 24 March 2011 a prisoner was detained in the cells and due to the circumstances surrounding the detention the Visiting Committee Members who had called at the Station had been unable to carry out inspections on these dates. The members had been thanked by the Chief Inspector for their co-operation during this time.

Within the Campbeltown Police Station there are 6 male cells, 2 female cells, a disabled cell with toilet and an observation cell all of which are housed on the ground floor and are contained within a suite which is covered by both audio and visual surveillance. Entry to the cells is by a rear yard which has an electronic gate, controlled from within the Police Office and covered by CCTV.

Cells/ cont.

Each cell is equipped with an unscreened WC and hand washing facilities. Modern buzzers and alert buttons are in place. Toilets cannot be flushed from within the cell and prisoners, when required, use a buzzer system to request that the toilet be flushed. There is a locker provision for prisoner's property.

It is declared under The Campbeltown Legalised Police Cells (declaration and Revocation) Rules 2009 that cells named "Female 1" and "Male 1" shall be the legal prisons for the detention of prisoners. These Rules came into force on 26 November 2009

Either a female Police Officer or female civilian worker is on duty for the duration of a female prisoner's detention.

Notices previously displayed in the Cells are now displayed in the Charge Bar area, and inform prisoners of their rights and of the Visiting Committee. A copy of the Prison Rules is also available in the Charge Bar Area.

LEGALISED PRISONERS

During the year from 1 April 2011 until 31 March 2012 there have been no committed or remand prisoners in the cells. The last year that Committed Prisoners were held in the cells was 2007. Since January 2012 the private prisoner escort service is provided by G4S who transport the prisoners to and from prison direct to court, without coming into Campbeltown Police Station. The transition from Reliance Custodial Service to G4S took place with minor upsets which were quickly rectified.

The Visiting Committee continues to express concern over the lack of prisoner contact.

While in custody, all prisoners are subject to observation checks every 60 minutes unless otherwise required. Any prisoner identified as being at risk is held on 15-minute surveillance checks with high-risk prisoners being detained in the observation cell under constant supervision with two members of staff in attendance for the duration of the prisoner's time in custody. G4S is informed at the time of pick-up from Strathclyde Police Cells of any high-risk prisoners being transferred into their care.

EXERCISE FACILITIES

The Station has an excellent secure outdoor exercise area which is partially undercover and is therefore ideal in bad weather.

LAUNDRY FACILITIES

The Police, provide mattresses, bedding, towels, etc. and nightwear if required. The local laundrette deliver and collect laundry as necessary and this arrangement, which has been in place for a considerable time works well.

MEDICAL PROVISIONS

Within the Station there is a purpose built and adequately equipped Medical Suite. A local Police Surgeon is called to the Police Station if any prisoner requires a medical examination or medical attention. A local hospital is reasonably close to the Police Station, which can be used in event of emergency and this is covered by an air ambulance service. All medication for prisoners is held by the police and kept in a secure locker. Any prisoner showing suicide tendencies is seen by a Doctor at the Police Station.

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PRISONER TRANSPORT

G4S transport the prisoners and as the committee members have no authority to inspect their vans or the Courthouse cells they have no contact with the prisoners and are therefore unable to comment on whether or not the prisoners are being properly cared for. As a result of this situation the members see little point in their continuance as they are no longer serving the people they were appointed to serve.

TRANSLATORS AND ETHNIC REQUIREMENTS

Strathclyde Police have ready access to translators via the telephone, if required, and hold a stock of prayer mats, compasses, washbasins and a copy of the Koran but to date none of these have ever been used. A bible is also available.

PRISONER CLOTHING

The Station holds a stock of Prison suits, "all in one" or individual tops and bottoms and the local Red Cross assist with clothing as and when necessary.

READING MATERIALS

A small selection of donated reading material is available for use by the prisoners and newspapers are provided if requested.

MEALS PROVISION

Ready prepared microwave meals are provided by the Police.

FIRE ALARMS

The alarms are tested on a weekly basis and mock evacuations are carried out, and the Local Strathclyde Fire Brigade attends.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE

Grievance forms are held in the Police Station but they have never been used.

SUMMARY

The Visiting Committee members express grateful thanks to Chief Inspector Marlene Baillie, Inspector Thomas Harper and all staff at Campbeltown Police Station for their help, assistance and co-operation during the year.

John Milligan Chair

Date.....1 December 2012