



Meeting	Policing Performance Committee
Date	10 June 2025
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	HMICS Improvement Plans – Progress Summary
Presented By	DCC Alan Speirs, Professionalism & Enabling Services
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Policing Performance Committee with an overview of progress against selected improvement plans developed to address HMICS recommendations.

Members are invited to discuss the progress detailed within the report.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 There are currently 24 active improvement plans comprising a total of 125 open recommendations.
- 1.2 At this review, we have focused on recommendations relating to Custody. There have been other closures within the period which have not yet been reviewed by HMICS. 3 recommendations have been closed along with 9 Areas for Development. 1 new improvement plan (Greater Glasgow Custody - comprising 4 recommendations) has been added since the last progress report to this committee.

Improvement Planning remains ongoing in relation to address the 11 recommendations which were made in relation to Roads Policing in November 2024 but is not available for presentation.

There are 5 inspections ongoing at various stages:

- Tools of the Trade (Frontline Focus Review)
- Drug Harm Reduction (Thematic Inspection)
- Citations (HMICS/IPS joint inspection)
- Conduct (Assurance Review)
- Best Value (HMICS/Audit Scotland joint Inspection)

2. CLOSURES WITHIN REPORTING PERIOD

- 2.1 Below is a summary of the closed recommendations.

Publication	Date	Remaining	Closed since last meeting
Joint Review of Diversion from Prosecution	Feb 2023	3 Recs	1 Rec Closed
Lanarkshire	Apr 2023	4 Recs, 0 AFD	4 AFD Closed
Tayside	Jul 2023	2 Recs, 0 AFD	
Dumfries and Galloway	Nov 2023	1 Recs, 0 AFD	
Fife	Mar 2024	8 Recs, 1 AFD	2 Recs Closed
Ayrshire	May 2024	3 Recs, 0 AFD	5 AFD Closed
Argyll and West Dunbartonshire	Oct 2024	5 Recs, 3 AFD	
Greater Glasgow	Mar 2025	4 Recs, 2 AFD	In draft

Custody Lanarkshire – 4 AFDs closed	
Recommendation	What we did and the impact
AFD1-The custody centres should ensure that property management procedures are followed and implemented effectively.	<p>Briefing circulated to all staff via the CJSD weekly electronic briefing and reminders provided at the Custody Operations Engagement Forum.</p> <p>Cluster Inspectors continue to monitor this in the Lanarkshire area to ensure compliance.</p> <p>This supports the Business Plan 2024 – 2027-to develop a custody estate that meets modern standards and is fit for the future.</p> <p>Compliance with our legislative and procedural frameworks helps to ensure the transparency and accountability necessary to build and maintain trust and confidence in policing.</p>
AFD2-The custody centres should ensure that a clear rationale is recorded on the national custody system in support of risk assessments and changes in observation levels.	<p>Briefings on Observation Levels and NCS Recording circulated to all staff via the CJSD weekly electronic briefing and reminders provided at the Custody Operations Engagement Forum.</p> <p>This is being monitored through the weekly Cluster Audits to ensure compliance</p> <p>This supports the Business Plan 2024 – 2027 to develop a custody estate that meets modern standards and is fit for the future.</p> <p>Compliance with our legislative and procedural frameworks helps to ensure the transparency and accountability necessary to build and maintain trust and confidence in policing.</p>
AFD3-NHS Lanarkshire and Police Scotland should work together to ensure that detainees know how to provide feedback or raise a complaint regarding the healthcare service they received while in	<p>Police Scotland have a robust Healthcare Service Review procedure which allows Police Scotland the ability to voice concerns and issues regarding the healthcare service they receive across the country.</p> <p>Posters are on display in the doctor's and the processing room of custody in Lanarkshire ensuring all relevant parties</p>

custody.	<p>being able to raise issues about each other and individuals in our care knowing how to do this.</p> <p>Strategic Outcomes</p> <p>This has contributed to meeting the needs of communities through effective service delivery by enabling and supporting our people to better serve the public.</p>
AFD7-The custody centres should improve the display and availability of information regarding services available in the community to support detainees on release.	<p>There are posters and information now up within the custody centre including the medical room too. There is also information within the holding area and charge bar in relation to referral services. Police Scotland display referral posters and since this report we have made this more prominent and in more areas in our custody centres. Importantly we are also proactive as an organisation offering this to individuals in our care. We also link in with partners in how to improve the services available and if we can get partners into the centre for that direct contact.</p> <p>Compliance with the provisions of the Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP, treating everyone with dignity and respect, building and maintaining trust and confidence.</p>

Custody Fife- 2 recommendations closed

Recommendation	What we did and the impact
<p>R5 - Risk Assessment Improvements to Recording</p> <p>Police Scotland should ensure that risk is correctly evaluated, addressed and recorded to ensure a clear correlation between risk assessment and care plans.</p>	<p>CJSD has now introduced a new audit and assurance regime which is now actively reviewing risk assessments and care plans for custody records in live time and implementing changes where there are incorrect/unsound decisions and/or a lack of appropriate recording of mitigations on place. Care Plan, Observation Levels and risk assessment decisions and recording all form crucial parts of these audits. This process is now ongoing and will be subject to review as to its effectiveness around 6 months and 12 months of</p>

	<p>implementation. Work is ongoing to improve education and compliance with this issue nationally, through E-briefs, engagement forums and training so all staff at every level are aware.</p> <p>This links to the Business Plan 2024 – 2027 -Compliance with our legislative and procedural frameworks helps to ensure the transparency and accountability necessary to build and maintain trust and confidence in policing.</p> <p>This also supports compliance with the provisions of the Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP, treating everyone with dignity and respect, building and maintaining trust and confidence.</p>
<p>R15 - Place of Safety</p> <p>Police Scotland should examine the extent to which local policing may at times use custody as an alternative to identifying an appropriate place of safety, and address any issues identified</p>	<p>CJSD worked with the Policing Together team, NHS Custody Healthcare colleagues and the Scottish Government to ensure that this consideration was included in the new Mental Health Index for Police Scotland.</p> <p>The document has provided a better understanding of the need to prioritise healthcare needs over criminal justice processes and provides Custody Officers and NHS partners with formalised guidance that they can highlight to colleagues should a person be inappropriately brought into police custody.</p> <p>This links to Business Plan 2024 – 2027- by examining our own practices and working with key partners this has helped to enhance our focus towards the priorities of policing, creating vital capacity for officers to best serve their communities.</p>

Custody Ayrshire - 5 AFDs closed	
Recommendation	What we did and the impact
AFD1 The custody centres should ensure routine checks include security risks and apply appropriate measures to mitigate any weaknesses identified.	<p>Estates repaired the closing door mechanism at Kilmarnock and to mitigate the risk a sign has also been secured to the door to remind staff and officers to ensure the door is fully closed at all times.</p> <p>With the control measures in place by officers bringing people to custody and within this area, the risk of being able to access a high-level ladder from ground level is extremely low.</p> <p>There have been no reports of any unauthorised individual accessing the roof space or attempting to do so. This links to our Strategic Outcome- Threats to public safety and wellbeing are resolved by a proactive and responsive police service</p>
AFD 2 -The custody centres should ensure a suitable mix of staff and detainee information posters are distributed throughout relevant areas within the centres.	<p>A newly formed cadre of Custody Support and Intervention Champions has been established to support the relaunch of the arrest referral scheme and training is ongoing to assist them in understanding what support services are available and providing this information to individuals in custody, which is in addition to posters on display. This will help individuals in our care get the assistance they require. Work is ongoing with ICT to secure the provision of video brochures that can be used to show short videos outlining what support and other services are available as well.</p> <p>This contributes to Health and Safety and compliance with the provisions of the Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP.</p> <p>Compliance with the provisions of the Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP, treating everyone with</p>

	dignity and respect, building and maintaining trust and confidence.
AFD 3-The Saltcoats custody centre should ensure existing storage capacity is utilised effectively to ensure appropriate accommodation is afforded to the housing of essential operational equipment.	<p>The intoximeter room and racking are now organised and allow space to work. No issue has been noted or recorded that this has had an adverse effect on the criminal investigation or has caused issue regarding security.</p> <p>Due to the low risk of issue after completing a clearance of this area and no recorded issue previously being raised, the intoximeter and racking will remain in place. A further review can be conducted and evaluation of current set up should anything arise in the future.</p> <p>This supports the Business Plan 2024 – 2027-to develop a custody estate that meets modern standards and is fit for the future.</p>
AFD 4 -The custody centres should routinely consider the use of separate cell corridors or separated cells for gender-based segregation to improve privacy, where considered appropriate.	<p>Briefings and guidance has been shared regarding this topic and has been highlighted to improve privacy for individuals in our care.</p> <p>On a national level there is guidance to staff regarding keeping males and females in separate cells and areas within our cell accommodation this is detailed in the Care and Welfare SOP.</p> <p>This supports compliance with the provisions of the Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP, treating everyone with dignity and respect, building and maintaining trust and confidence.</p>
AFD 5 -The custody centres should ensure that detainee healthcare interventions are undertaken confidentially unless a risk assessment indicates otherwise	<p>Guidance has been circulated to staff outlining the confidential nature of medical examinations, importance of privacy when safe to do so and reassuring of NHS escalation processes should there be a relevant disclosure.</p> <p>This supports compliance with the provisions of the Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP, treating everyone with dignity and respect,</p>

	building and maintaining trust and confidence.
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Diversion from Prosecution -1 Rec closed	
Recommendation	What we did and the impact
<p>R9 - Review all guidance re the completion of SPRs</p> <p>Police Scotland should ensure that internal police guidance, standard operating procedures and templates provide adequate information to guide reporting officers on the completion of Standard Prosecution Reports (SPRs) as they relate to diversion.</p>	<p>Police Scotland has gone through a national process of updating the Service's National Case system, this has now been completed and has rolled out across the country. Improved guidance and operating procedures for the completion of SPRs has seen an improvement in efficiency and effectiveness with a more consistent approach in reporting mechanisms, including the suitability of alternatives to prosecution (Diversion measures).</p> <p>The new SPR3 will be introduced in 2025 led by COPFS will require Reporting Officers to enter information where previously it would have been voluntary and at their own discretion.</p> <p>This links to the Business Plan 2024 – 2027- compliance with our legislative and procedural frameworks helps to ensure the transparency and accountability necessary to build and maintain trust and confidence in policing.</p>

3. OTHER OPEN RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Senior Officers are responsible for ensuring improvements are prioritised within their respective areas of ownership, meaning work can progress concurrently and independently across all areas without the need for prioritisation between workstreams. Given the scale of work ongoing it is impracticable to update on all progress and therefore below represents a selected sample of recommendations from improvement plans relating to Custody only.
- 3.2 31 recommendations and 6 AFD remain open.

Following a meeting with CJSD on 16 April 2025, led by Superintendent Partnerships, Governance & Improvement, the Division are developing a refreshed approach and methodology aimed at (i) improving planning and preparations for forthcoming HMICS Inspections and (ii) the management of recommendations across the entire Custody portfolio.

CJSD have identified a number of improvement themes and actions particularly around quality assurance and auditing processes. Other themes concentrate on the development and maintenance of the Custody Estate which will require longer term solutions.

3.3 **Recurring Themes from Inspections**

These have been captured in the Divisional checklist to ensure local work is directed towards each at the time of pre-inspection. In addition, they have been fed into the 2030 Strategy work as some require longer term solutions. Lastly, those recurring themes are being added to our Organisational Learning Group agenda for discussion / decision / progress on a Divisional basis.

The themes identified cover the following:

- Record keeping quality/consistency, recording checks, compliance checking and quality assurance processes
- Estates development and/or maintenance
- Cleaning products and standards – training and accessibility
- Examine resourcing models
- Sharps bins – accessibility and general maintenance in collaboration with Health.

3.4 **Divisional Healthcheck – template**

This has been launched in the North Region for the first time in advance of the forthcoming Highlands and Islands Inspection. Its impact will be assessed once we have received the first set of results, but the intent is to support a continuous regime of internal auditing and quality assurance. We have met informally with HMICS Inspectors and updated them on our planned approach.

3.5 **Closing recommendations and Evidence Submission Form (ESF) guidance**

We are currently completing work to change the focus of our closure reports, seeking to prioritise the strength and depth of our submissions, particularly as they relate to the 'Evidence of Impact' section. Responses in future closing reports will be layered at operational, tactical and strategic levels, to better reflect the breadth of work being completed.

3.6 A summary of the status of ongoing work is provided below.

D&G – 1 recommendation open	Status	Target Dates
R05 Custody Staff Training and Guidance	Requires partnership working. Progressing with obtaining guidance/ standards from HSCP and working via Estates to provide training to outsourced cleaning services.	July 2024 June 2025
Tayside – 2 recommendations open	Status	Target Dates
R2 Custody Supervisors Lines of Accountability Defined for Adverse Incidents	Work is complete. ESF submitted to HMICS but further evidence requested before HMICS support this for discharge. This is being collated.	March 2024 June 2025
R8 Collaboration with Healthcare partners recording of information on escort records	An ESF has been drafted and is ongoing final checks before submission to HMICS. Has required partnership working to achieve closure.	June 2024 June 2025
Fife – 8 recommendations open	Status	Target Dates
5 recommendations requiring Estates work. Other recommendations featuring our themes of cleaning, sharps bins and quality and consistency of record keeping.	We set a milestone date of March 2025 to confirm Estates changes are to be taken forward as part of the wider Estates Masterplan. This has now been confirmed with timescales now aligned to future work.	March 2026 (Estates) June / July 2025 for others

Ayrshire – 3 recommendations	Status	Target Dates
Delay of Release Policy Recording issues Sharps Bins	Ongoing The delay release policy was submitted for closure but HMICS rejected due to recurring issues and lack of evidence of impact. This will be addressed through our renewed pre-inspection work and improved approach to collectively address recurring themes.	June 2025
Argyll & West Dunbartonshire 5 recommendations open	Status	Target Dates
Maintenance of estate Resource model QA and Auditing Sharp Bins Cleaning	Ongoing	June 2025 / September 2025

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

7. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no reputational implications in this report.

8. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no social implications in this report.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 There are no community implications in this report.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no equality implications in this report.

11. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no environmental implications in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the progress detailed within the report.