

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

CLUSTER: Humber and South Yorkshire

| TIMETABLE | DATE |
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| Date of inspection | 27/11/23 - 09/12/23 |
| Report published | 5 February 2024 |
| Action plan submitted | 29 April 2024 |

| Rec. no | Concern | Accepted / Rejected | Response / action taken or planned | Action owner | Update / target date for completion |
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| | Priority Concerns | | | | |
| 1 | Excessive routine searching of detainees without any individual risk assessment was often disproportionate. | Accepted | GeoAmey have a specific Standard Operating Procedure relating to searching. This is now under review with the Compliance Team. | GeoAmey | October 2024 |
| | Key Concerns | | | | |
| 2 | GeoAmey staff shortfalls were causing delays to the transfer of detainees to and from court. | Accepted | An extensive recruitment drive has been completed across region. Staffing shortfalls have now been alleviated and the Target Operating Model (TOM) for staffing, achieved. Staff leavers and recruitment is reviewed weekly to ensure that our TOM is managed effectively. | GeoAmey | Completed 26/04/24 |
| 3 | Some reception interviews were rushed and not conducted in private. | Accepted | GeoAmey utilise a reception checklist to drive consistency in procedure and is completed for every detainee received into custody. Individual risk assessments should always be carried out to manage detainees safely. GeoAmey acknowledge that reception interviews and Cell Share Risk | GeoAmey | Ongoing |

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| | | | <p>Assessment (CSRA) should be completed to suit individual needs & characteristics.</p> <p>GeoAmey Senior Managers attend each court custody suite monthly and complete management checks/corrective actions. Procedures are further assured by the Internal Audit process, PECS, and Lay Observers.</p> <p>A review of the reception arrival procedure has been completed at each court facility to determine which elements of the procedure would benefit from being conducted at the reception arrival area or at the cell to afford more privacy to individuals. The outcomes are specific to each court facility.</p> | | |
| 4 | Staff were not always briefed about detainee risks, and observation checks were often cursory and not always carried out at the required frequency. | Accepted | <p>GeoAmey custody suite managers will complete a recorded daily/on-going briefing with staff on all detainees. Staff will utilise the digital detainee information boards to access risk information.</p> <p>All observations will be recorded on the dPER with meaningful entries in line with the Standard Operating Procedure.</p> <p>GeoAmey Senior Managers attend each court custody suite monthly and complete management checks/corrective actions. This also comes under the scrutiny of the Internal Audit Process.</p> | GeoAmey | October 2024 |

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| | | | GeoAmey's Compliance Team are committed to review operational risk management with a view to improve training and develop an enhanced assessment. | PECS | |
| 5 | A range of factors led to some detainees being held in court custody for longer than needed. | Accepted | <p>GeoAmey will provide key delay data identifying arrivals and departures to/from court, release authority and placement orders. This data will be shared with key Stakeholders monthly.</p> <p>HMCTS will continue to work and share information, such as listings, prioritising and any late notes from Police, with GeoAmey at the daily morning phone conference calls. This includes the identification of any vulnerable detainees who require prioritisation i.e., women & children, suicide/self-harm risks, mental health issues and translation services.</p> <p>HMCTS and GeoAmey to ensure collaborative working and effective communication is in place to sufficiently focus on outcomes for detainees.</p> <p>HMCTS regularly discuss delays, at quarterly stakeholder meetings (prisoner delay to court performance), there are sometimes delays that we are aware of, local arrangements are in place to discuss custody numbers and priorities for Court.</p> | <p>PECS, HMPPS, GeoAmey</p> <p>HMCTS</p> | Completed- monitoring |

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| | | | The Court cannot always bring defendants up due to factors involved with the case or parties involved. We do have turnaround target of paperwork to prioritise results, we review and address any local issues with legal representatives (timeliness at court) and discuss with CPS/police any delays in receipt of timely paperwork at operations meetings/efficiency groups, and Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB) | | |
| 6 | There was too little reading material or other distractions for detainees at most courts | Accepted | GeoAmey's Safeguarding team are reviewing the contents of the distraction packs to include reading matter and neurodiverse materials | GeoAmey | July 2024 |
| 7 | Some cells were not clean enough and not sufficiently well maintained. | Accepted | <p>The custody facilities are contracted to be cleaned to the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS) standards and will be maintained by daily custody suite inspections and the use of the cleaning schedules.</p> <p>HMCTS will ensure the custody facilities are clean, safe, and always well maintained. All defects will be logged with EQUANS helpdesk by HMCTS staff and escalate if necessary before it becomes an issue.</p> <p>There is a communications book in place at all custody suites, which will assist with communications between GeoAmey and Cleaners. If a site is not showing signs of improvement there will be an Added Value Audit (AVA) carried out at the site.</p> | HMCTS FM | Ongoing- monitor |

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| | | | <p>There are reporting mechanisms in place to discuss standards raised, this can be discussed at Quarterly stakeholder's meetings, following receipt of Lay Observers report, and or operational assessments that are carried out. HMCTS will investigate these and will also review whether a deep clean is necessary.</p> <p>Check & Test document which is carried out monthly with Delivery Manager (HMCTS) and PECS has been amended in NE Region to include HMIP expectations, this will form part of ongoing checks.</p> <p>GeoAmey will ensure all court custody managers are briefed to ensure the need for timely reporting of defects to ensure any faults/failures to the fabric of the custody suite are expedited and addressed.</p> <p>Progress against each issue can be monitored by both stakeholders at weekly and monthly Check & Test meetings between supplier and HMCTS Managers.</p> <p>HMCTS & GeoAmey at the monthly 'Building, maintenance & Issues meeting' will discuss and review cleanliness issues so that a solution is provided to rectify any issues that cannot be resolved locally.</p> | GeoAmey | |
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| 8 | Staff training in resuscitation skills did not take place with sufficient frequency | Rejected | GeoAmey are delivering to their regulatory requirements, that is mandatory with the governing body. This consists of a 3-year training programme. | GeoAmey | Completed |
| 9 | Detainee release arrangements were weak. (Some risk assessments were cursory and did not adequately identify welfare needs, some detainees were locked into cells pending their release, and serving prisoners often waited too long for their release to be authorized) | Accepted | <p>GeoAmey staff will complete the release checklist on every person released and this includes attending to any welfare issues presented. Travel warrants/ Taxis where vulnerabilities exist i.e., mobility/mental health/safety issues present/ Contact with third party assistance i.e., family members/support organisations.</p> <p>GeoAmey are developing a manager induction programme which will include the responsibility of ensuring the release of every prisoner includes signposting to relevant agencies as required.</p> <p>GeoAmey have collated contact details for several national assistance agencies to be published and handed out to those being released. This, to be presented to the SOP Committee for review & consideration of adding to the release checklist.</p> <p>GeoAmey will liaise with HMCTS/Probation/YOT to collate local assist agencies to be able to hand out contact details to those being released.</p> <p>Until Authority to Release has been granted HMP prisoners are returned to a cell. Whenever possible and safe to do so</p> | GeoAmey, PECS, HMPPS | October 2024 |

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| | | | <p>children are held in an alternative location to await release.</p> <p>An escalation process with PECS when delays are encountered is already in place.</p> <p>GeoAmey monitor all release authority delays and collate monthly data to identify and share with HMPPS sites that are not releasing within the one-hour time frame. The data will also be taken to the operational meetings between HMPPS, PECS & GeoAmey to drive performance and influence change.</p> <p>PECS have recently issued notice regarding “Supporting the Release Process” (NTC 683 2024) which provides an escalation route for delayed releases.</p> <p>PECS escalate to Prison Group Directors Offices if establishments fail to authorise release within the specific timescale.</p> <p>There is a Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place for HMCTS to produce warrants within 1 hour of being sentenced, instances of delay to be reviewed to look at service improvements. Some court results can be complex, which can add to the delay, this is being mitigated by a complex resulting team, whereby results are resulted away from the court room environment, which should reduce the times the SLA is not adhered to. PECS also have an obligation to check records to ensure detainees are eligible for release</p> | HMCTS | |
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| | | | and some time is required to enable those checks to be made. | | |
| | Outstanding recommendations from previous inspection | | | | |
| 10 | Person escort record should contain sufficient accurate, legible risk information and health care advice to inform risk assessment and facilitate the care of detainees. | Accepted | <p>The digital Person Escort Record (dPER) is accessed by all relevant key stakeholders to allow all risks to be viewed, updated (by the Supplier), and challenged where required.</p> <p>GeoAmey provide training on the dPER during every Initial Training Course to each officer.</p> <p>PECS and GeoAmey have developed a process to ensure that prisoners with incomplete DPERs are not accepted until all risk and health information is complete.</p> <p>PECS are currently liaising with MOJ Digital to enable both Suppliers to access risk information for prisoners transported from the other supplier area.</p> | PECS, GeoAmey, HMPPS | June 2024 |
| 11 | Staff should complete a standard risk assessment form for each detainee, and be trained to do this. | Accepted | <p>Risk assessment is covered through the Initial Training Course for all officers.</p> <p>The dPER includes all known risk-based information which staff risk assess to inform,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SASH procedures • Communication requirement including translation services. • Health matters, including referral to healthcare practitioners. | PECS/GeoAmey | October 2024 |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to L&D Services • Cell shared risk assessment. • Custody direction procedures • Dietary need • Religious need. • Risk of escape • Risk of violence to others. <p>Staff are trained to complete & understand the dPER in addition to updating risk as it may change. Dynamic risk assessments are on-going.</p> <p>The reception arrival process at court is completed for each detainee. All staff are trained in this procedure during ITC, and it is reinforced during Management Induction. Procedures are assured by GeoAmey Senior Managers, Internal Audit Scrutiny, PECS, and Lay Observers.</p> <p>GeoAmey's Compliance Team are committed to review operational risk management with a view to improve training and develop an enhanced assessment.</p> | | |
| 12 | There should be a small stock of mattresses and blankets or warm clothing for detainees who are pregnant, older or have disabilities. | Rejected | Rejected due to the limited length of time detainees are in the cells (no detainees kept overnight), self-harm risks identified by GeoAmey/PECS with provision of such items. | PECS/ GeoAmey | Completed |

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| 13 | <p>All court custody suites should have hearing loops.</p> <p>Braille versions of key information.</p> | Accepted | <p>HMCTS to review which sites do not have hearing loops in place, and to purchase where required.</p> <p>Check & Test Document, which is in place at all court sites, asks the questions on adequate hearing loops, this should identify where they are not in place or any issues in the future.</p> <p>Braille version of detainee rights has been produced and distributed to all courts.</p> | <p>HMCTS</p> <p>GeoAmey</p> | <p>October 2024</p> <p>Completed</p> |
| 14 | All courts should have a stock of appropriate reading material, including some suitable for children and non-English speakers, and this should be offered to detainees routinely. | Repeated action – Linked with no.6 | | | |
| 15 | Information about detainees should not be displayed in public view. | Accepted | GeoAmey will undertake to remove/relocate the information boards which are in public view in collaboration with HMCTS Buildings Champions. | GeoAmey | ongoing |
| 16 | Custody staff should check whether detainees being released have any immediate needs or concerns that should be addressed before they leave custody. | Repeated action – Linked to no.9 | | | |
| 17 | Each court should have information | Duplicate (9) | GeoAmey will liaise with local HMCTS/Probation/YOT to collate, publish | GeoAmey/HMPPS | |

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| | <p>leaflets about local support organizations.</p> <p>and local custodial establishments, which should be available in a range of languages for detainees leaving custody.</p> | | & distribute to released persons information on local support organisations. | | |
| 18 | The searching of detainees should be proportionate to the risks posed. | Repeated action – Linked to no.1 | | | |
| 19 | A programmed of regular deep-cleaning, graffiti removal and cell repairs should be implemented immediately | Partially accepted | <p>See response at point 7 regarding deep cleaning.</p> <p>Graffiti, if it's not racist or abusive or giving information to another prisoner, graffiti does remain until resources are available to re-paint the chalk boards, this will be reviewed monthly via Check & test document.</p> | HMCTS FM | Ongoing |
| 20 | All detainees should be able to use the toilet in privacy | Accepted | <p>GeoAmey will work in collaboration with HMCTS FM.</p> <p>There is design guide which stipulates exact requirement of all facilities within a court custody suite.</p> <p>A review of design guide against the facilities to determine compliance and rectify where possible non-compliance.</p> <p>HMCTS to jointly work with GeoAmey to review which sites this affects, and to review what can be changed so that privacy is maintained in all facilities.</p> | <p>GeoAmey</p> <p>HMCTS FM</p> | October 2024 |

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| | | | Check & Test document which is carried out monthly with Delivery Manager (HMCTS) and PECS has been amended in NE Region to include HMIP expectations, this will form part of ongoing checks | | |
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| Recommendations | |
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| Accepted | 14 |
| Accepted Subject to Resources/Partially Accepted | 0 |
| Rejected | 2 |
| Total | 16 |