

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

CLUSTER: Lincolnshire, Leicestershire & Rutland and Northamptonshire

TIMETABLE	DATE
Date of inspection	23 June to 5 July 2025
Report published	01/09/2025
Action plan submitted	07/11/2025

Rec. no	Concern	Accepted / Rejected	Response / action taken or planned	Action owner	Update / target date for completion
	Priority Concerns				
1	Custody facilities required investment and improvement. Cells were too often in poor condition and interview space was limited.	Accept	<p>FM have worked with PECS and GeoAmey to produce a list of improvements for all cell blocks in the Midlands Region. Our FM Contractors, Equans, are currently taking these forwards. Any items not directly related to the Action Plan recommendations have been raised separately as jobs with Equans. The FM Team will monitor these actions, via their own detailed action plan, to conclusion. The lack of interview room capacity at Lincoln Crown Court is being addressed, via a project to add one additional interview room within the Custody Suite.</p> <p>HMCTS Operations is increasing checks to the cell areas, and all meetings will be collated and reviewed in the east Midlands, to ensure consistency and focus on our contractors responsible for cleaning and maintenance. HMCTS Operations are looking at a single point of contact to review all cells in the East Midlands, to provide compare and tackle dips in condition. This will link into the FM work above.</p>	<p>HMCTS FM</p> <p>HMCTS</p>	Ongoing

2	Too many detainees were spending too long in court custody. A coordinated response to reduce or mitigate avoidable delays was required.	Accept	<p>HMCTS Legal teams reminded to prioritise custody cases in the Magistrates and are aware of the impact of long-term custody. Joint HMCTS/GeoAmey/PECS meetings will have this as an agenda item moving forward.</p> <p>This will be added as an agenda item at all local and regional inter agencies meetings to discuss reasons and look for improvements.</p> <p>The PECS enhanced reporting provides all stakeholders, which include: HMCTS Performance and Service Improvement Managers, - HMPPS Area Executive Director's - HMPPS Prison Group Director's - Prison Governing Governors with an overview, by location, of the total duration all custodies are held in custody suites. These are utilised to determine the root cause of significant delays to drive remedial actions to reduce the impact of the people in PECS care.</p>	HMCTS GeoAmey PECS HMPPS	Ongoing
3	Not enough was done to make sure acutely mentally unwell detainees in court custody received timely Mental Health Act assessments and prompt diversion to specialist care and treatment.	Reject	While these concerns are valid and impactful, it is the NHS which is responsible for delivering the Mental Health Act assessments. However, we are working with NHS partners to support improvements in this area.	HMCTS	<p>October 25 Completed Issues are dependent on NHS-led factors such as funding, staffing capacity, and the availability of appropriate facilities.</p> <p>HMCTS recognise the importance of continued collaboration with NHS partners to support improvements in these areas. We will ensure these concerns are raised through the appropriate channels and remain committed to working constructively with stakeholders to support the</p>

					<p>wellbeing of detainees within the court environment.</p> <p>To address the current challenges, we are piloting a regional Health and Justice Hub model within HMCTS, based in the Northeast. This initiative is reviewing the strategic oversight of the commissioning process for psychiatric reports and exploring opportunities to expedite and streamline delivery. The broader ambition is to strengthen collaboration between local courts and health services, ensuring more timely and effective support for justice outcomes. This pilot would serve as a foundation for evaluating the benefits of a more integrated approach across other regions.</p>
4	<p>Release processes were often completed without sufficiently exploring detainees' personal circumstances. (Often failed to id issues such as homelessness)</p>	Accept	<p>Amendments made to operational document to ensure the requirement to ask about potential support needs prior to release is completed.</p> <p>GeoAmey are also developing a process for the provision National and Local Support Services Contact Details which will be held at each site for reference.</p> <p>A programme of assurance checks, which includes supportive release processes, has been introduced to be completed by local managers with 2nd tier assurance being conducted by the central GeoAmey audit team. A report on findings provided to the Head of Quality and Compliance and the</p>	GeoAmey	December 2025

			Regional manager. Outcomes will inform action plans and lessons learned contract wide.		
	Key Concerns				
5	Some dirty and poorly maintained vehicles were used to transport detainees.	Accept	<p>GeoAmey have raised the issue of concern regarding the internal cleanliness of vehicles with the service provider (LWP).</p> <p>Spot checks by VBC's following any cleaning being undertaken to ensure they have been cleaned to a suitable standard.</p> <p>Vehicle Base audits are recommencing, with an area of focus on vehicle cleanliness, the outcomes of these questions will be reviewed and action taken to address any non-compliances.</p>	GeoAmey	December 2025
6	Staff failed to adequately protect detainees' privacy and dignity when they disembarked from the vehicle in public view	Accept	<p>Communication was sent out to the wider operation to remind them of the requirement to park as closely as possible to court buildings where no vehicle dock is available to ensure detainees privacy and dignity when embarking/disembarking.</p> <p>FM have worked with PECS and GeoAmey to produce a list of improvements for all cell blocks in the Midlands Region. Our FM Contractors, Equans, are currently taking these forwards. Any items not directly related to the Action Plan recommendations have been raised separately as jobs with Equans. The FM Team will monitor these actions, via their own detailed action plan, to conclusion.</p>	<p>GeoAmey</p> <p>HMCTS FM</p>	Completed

7	Staff did not consistently use telephone interpreting services when communicating with detainees who did not speak English.	Accept	<p>The roll out of a new telephone system within the cells complex is now complete which will allow for its use more widely within the cells complex. The relevant Standard Operating Procedures and supporting documents regarding the use of language line services have been reviewed to support understanding within the operation on the benefits of its utilisation.</p> <p>A programme of assurance checks through our monthly court visits document, which includes the use of telephone interpretation, has been introduced to be completed by local managers with 2nd tier assurance being conducted by the central GeoAmey audit team.</p> <p>We have also introduced a contingency plan which will be tested in November for Language Line usage and activity to be undertaken should it not be available.</p> <p>Exploration for court managers to access information captured in BaSM to identify those who require an interpreter to support the use of language line and to support assurance checks further.</p>	GeoAmey	December 2025
8	There were too few suitably adapted facilities for detainees with disabilities.	Accept	HMCTS does have limited DDA facilities. All new works and designs factor DDA in, where possible and we are looking at additional facilities in Northampton, should national funding be approved.	HMCTS FM	March 2026
9	There were weaknesses in risk management. (Staff were not always adequately briefed.	Accept	A business wide action plan has been created following a review of Use of Force and Prisoner on Staff Assaults. This action plan has several actions that focus on the dissemination of risk information through	GeoAmey	December 2025

	dPER were often incomplete)		<p>daily briefings, reinforcing through communications the need to ensure risk information is shared during any transfer of responsibility and the re-communication of the risk codes out to the wider operation.</p> <p>Operational Risk Management training course is underway and delivered to our operational teams. The scope of this training is to provide them an awareness of risk management and enable them to start thinking, acting, and communicating, using risk-management terminology, principles, and practices. The outcome of the training is to ensure a consistent and embedded approach to staff briefings.</p> <p>Escorting staff act as banks person only on occasion where a risk assessment has determined no specific cause for concern relating to a detainee on the rear of the vehicle, and this is for a short period of time. If risk is present a member of court staff would conduct the banks person duty.</p>		
10	Detainees did not have access to nicotine replacement therapy.	Partially Accept	<p>GeoAmey are currently liaising with NHS England and Medical Service Provider to ascertain if there is a solution regarding the provision of nicotine replacement therapy or other suitable options.</p> <p>Whilst not directly involved, HMCTS would welcome any option to be part of a pilot or early adopter for any therapy rollout.</p>	<p>GeoAmey</p> <p>HMCTS</p>	December 2025

Recommendations	
Accepted	8
Accepted Subject to Resources/Partially Accepted	1
Rejected	1
Total	10