



Meeting Minutes

NPM Scotland Subgroup Quarterly Meeting

Thursday 29 May 2025, 10:00-12:30

Chair: AOH

Present:

AO, Chair, Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC)

SHG, UK NPM (Virtual, intermittently)

RJ, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)

SS, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons Scotland (HMIPS)

CA, Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC)

AS, Care Inspectorate (CI)

JP, Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland (MWCS) (virtual)

CH, Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) (non-voting) (virtual)

Apologies:

KS, Independent Custody Visiting Scotland (ICVS) (Virtual)

CW, Care Inspectorate (CI)

NH, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (non-voting)

In attendance:

AN, Convenor of the Criminal Justice Committee

LM, Senior Clerk, Criminal Justice Committee

KD, SPICe

CK, NPM Secretariat Officer (Scotland)

SR, NPM Support Officer

ES, NPM Intern

1. Welcome, introductions, apologies

AO led a round of introductions for the benefit of the parliamentary delegation in attendance.

2. Presentation by AN, MSP and Convenor for the Criminal Justice Committee on the *Inquiry into the harm caused by substance misuse in Scottish prisons* – with LM (Scottish Parliament) and KD (SPICe)

AN presented an overview of the motivations, objectives and practicalities of the [*Inquiry into the harm caused by substance misuse in Scottish prisons*](#), recognising the work undertaken by the NPM, and that this scrutiny provides a strong foundation which the inquiry will build on. The Committee is aiming to frame the inquiry through a rights-based lens, taking a systemic view, with a key focus on trying to understand the nature and scale of drug and alcohol related harm, the responses (treatment), impact on

families, barriers to recovery and improving issues, how systems can be better shaped to prevent harm and promote recovery.

Aspects of the inquiry include a dedicated lived experience session, hearing from people directly affected, designed in partnership with Scottish Recovery Consortium and others. Two prison visits and five evidence sessions will take place during the inquiry.

The Committee plans to publish their report in early October 2025, including recommendations for the Scottish Government, which they hope will filter through to NHS, SPS and other partner organisations. They welcome support from NPM members in the form of recommendations, submissions, and insights into detention monitoring, implementation of rights frameworks in custodial settings, and healthcare in detention.

The group discussed the scope of the inquiry, balancing a holistic approach with defining the scope enough to make meaningful recommendations. Complementary activities were noted, including HMICS's recently published [TOR of their thematic inspection of police response to drug harm reduction](#), and scoping work that is underway by HMICS on a potential thematic. The Policing Together division was suggested as a key stakeholder, as well as HIS who have dedicated indicators in their framework around drug use

The group discussed the importance of taking a preventive approach, examining the outcomes of practices in other jurisdictions, clarifying which human rights are engaged in this issue, and interrogating and triangulating both qualitative and quantitative data, as well as concerns around stigma and the challenges of data collection.

Break

[SHG arrived]

3. Paper 1: Review of March minutes and matters arising

All approved the 4 March 2025 minutes.

The subgroup has received a letter in response to our correspondence to Minister Natalie Don-Innes with regard to the transfer of young people recently attaining the age of 18 to prison. The group agreed to send a response letter to Minister Natalie Don-Innes recognising that government resources are focused on immediate capacity management, and asking whether the issue can be considered in the response to the Reimagining Secure Care report this summer.

[ACTION 69] CK to draft key points for the letter and send for review.

MWCS and CI are starting joint inspections on restrictive practices. Inspection cycle will be completed in February 2026.

The SHRC and NPM have received a response from Cabinet Secretary Angela Constance the Review... Recommend... Repeat... report.

[ACTION 70] CK to set up SHRC and NPM to meet to discuss our response.

4. Paper 2: New Members' Update template (information)

The group suggested small changes to the template, including changing "best practice" to "good practice". **All agreed** the new template with suggested changes.

5. Paper 3: Pre-circulated written updates (discussion)

The group briefly discussed the pre-circulated members' updates and how the NPM mandate and human rights framing is incorporated into updates, annual reports and organisational reports more generally. CK suggested a possible collaboration on a blog with regards to HMIPS's Life in Prison event earlier this year.

[ACTION 71] CK to connect with Ewan and Vilma from HMIPS in the future to discuss a possible blog.

6. Presentation: Issues in police custody (information)

RJ delivered a presentation prepared by himself and KS with regards to the three concerns highlighted in the subgroup issues log with regards to police custody, namely (1) Extended periods in custody/delayed release (2) Inaccuracies and inconsistencies with data recording in custody records, and (3) Children in police custody.

The new [HMICS Recommendations Tracker](#) was highlighted.

The group discussed the presentation and explored possible avenues of action for the NPM, possibly including the concern about extended periods in police custody into the NPM person-centred pathways project, examining the wider impact of delayed release. Right to be free from arbitrary detention is also engaged, as well as right to privacy where strip searches have been undertaken in places where there is CCTV.

HIS will be publishing a recommendations progress review in Autumn 2025.

[ACTION 72] RJ going to attend meeting between SPA, CYCJ and CYPCS report back to NPM to see what NPM can contribute.

[ACTION 73] AO will integrate these concerns into meeting with Chief Constable and Just Right Scotland.

[ACTION 74] CK add to next agenda for relevant stakeholders (SHRC HMICS ICVS HIS NPM) to determine which bodies should do what.

[ACTION 75] CK to circulate presentation.

7. Papers 4 & 5: 2025-26 Issues Log & Workplan (discussion)

The group reviewed and updated the subgroup issues log and workplan with recent developments.

[ACTION 76] CK to include Data management and joined up justice on next meeting agenda.

[ACTION 77] SHG, CK to meet with new MWCS Executive Medical Director in advance of next meeting.

8. AOB

The group has received notification that the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) will be visiting during the week of 2 June 2025 to visit prisons and police settings in Scotland.

The next NPM Scotland Subgroup meeting will take place on 28 August 2025 in Glasgow.

Close 12:30

Summary of agreements and actions

Action	Agreement/action	Responsible	Status
<u>56</u>	Circulate any impact and indicators work to HMIPS to share knowledge and expertise.	SHG	
<u>57</u>	Circulate NPM 2023-25 business plan delivery presentation.	CK	
<u>59</u>	Send accessible prison rules to CK for circulation to subgroup when launched.	ED	
<u>61</u>	Share Police Scotland paper on auxiliary centres with subgroup when available.	RJ/KS	
<u>67</u>	Agree key objectives of deaths in prison custody efforts, the NPM's role, and who else needs to be engaged, at upcoming subgroup planning meeting.	AO/SHG/CK	Underway
<u>68</u>	Draft a 2025-26 workplan based on subgroup discussion, for initial review with AO and SHG. Draft to be shared with the subgroup in advance of the May 2025 meeting.	CK	Complete
<u>69</u>	Draft key points for SAS letter and send for review.	CK	Complete/ Cancelled
<u>70</u>	Set up SHRC and NPM to meet to discuss Cabinet Secretary response letter to RRR.	CK	Complete
<u>71</u>	Connect with Ewan and Vilma from HMIPS in the future to discuss a possible blog.	CK	
<u>72</u>	Attend SPA, CYCJ, CYPSC meeting and report back to NPM.	RJ	
<u>73</u>	Include police custody concerns into meeting with Chief Constable and Just Right Scotland	AO	
<u>74</u>	Add to next agenda for relevant stakeholders (SHRC/HMICS/ICVS/HIS/NPM) to determine which bodies should do what on police custody issues.	CK	Complete
<u>75</u>	Circulate police custody presentation.	CK	Complete
<u>76</u>	Include data management and joined up justice on next meeting agenda.	CK	Complete
<u>77</u>	Meet with new MWCS Executive Medical Director in advance of next meeting.	SHG/CK	Meeting requested



INDEPENDENT
CUSTODY VISITING
SCOTLAND