



# **HMP BUCKLEY HALL**

Rochdale

Prison Rules 2010 (consolidated)  
Paragraph 80

## **Annual Report to the Secretary of State for Justice**

Year Ending: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011

# **INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD (IMB)**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2011**

### **1. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB**

1.1 The Prisons Act 192 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice and from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

1.2 The Board is specifically charged to:

1.2.1 satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.

1.2.2 inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.

1.2.3 report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

1.3 To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner, every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

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## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

2.1 The prison is a Category C training prison for men. It is built on a steep site on the edge of the Pennines, near Rochdale. Most of the prisoners are from the Greater Manchester area and the majority are long-term; that is four years or more.

2.2 The prison opened in 1994 as one of four contracted prisons and was managed by Group 4 for a period of 5 years. In 2000, a ten year contract was sent out for tender, which was won by the Prison Service. During the second contract, the prison held Category C men, Women [Closed] and Category C men again.

2.3 Buckley Hall is a Level 3 performing prison. In terms of its Key Performance Targets, it scores mainly level 3 or 4. In terms of Training & Education, Security Audit, Value for Money and Training & Education it performs particularly well. A few areas have been identified as capable of improvement and include MDT results, Resettlement, IPP & Lifers' Parole Board paperwork and Staff Sickness levels. Strategies are in place to deal with each issue and, in the case of Staff Sickness there is no common pattern explaining the level of absence.

This year, the Prison Service has been successful in bidding for the latest contract and, in doing so, the Management and staff – uniformed and civilian – are to be congratulated. During a prolonged and uncertain period, the staff has shown patience, resolve and a willingness to explore all options in their determination to win the bid. At the same time as the Bid process, the staff has had to manage the day-to-day running of the prison and also contend with the disruption caused by major building work. The new Management Team made a strong and concerted effort throughout the Bid process to keep staff fully involved and informed. Despite all the upheaval, the prison remains a well-ordered establishment in which prisoners are treated humanely and with respect.

The Prison's Senior Management Team has been restructured by the new Governor and a number of new appointments made to the Team. Winning the Bid is, however, only the first hurdle facing them. Just some of the major changes they will have to manage and deliver in the year ahead include a new Core Day, new Staff Profiles, the increase in Prisoner numbers and additional Workshops.

The Board wishes to place on record its appreciation of the courtesy and cooperation shown to its members by all grades of staff, during what has been a particularly stressful time.

2.4 Five services are sub-contracted:

Education	Manchester College
Catering	ESS Criminal Justice Division
Healthcare	Pennine Primary Care Trust
Visitors' Reception	Partners of Prisoners & Families
Library Service	Rochdale Council

2.5 There are now four Residential blocks with a certified normal capacity of 441 and an operational capacity of 445. The new block – D Block – has a capacity of 60 single cells, each with its own shower and toilet. The Chapel will move from the Gymnasium building to a new Multi-Faith building, which will open in October 2011. The freed up space in the Gymnasium building will be used to develop the range and scope of physical activities offered to prisoners.

3. Executive Summary

Staff have, yet again, been asked to undertake a considerable process of change. Despite the uncertainty and upheaval, they are doing so positively and constructively. A significant number of the staff, are motivated to do because they believe remaining in the public sector is the preferred option.

The new Governor and Management team have made a considerable effort to make staff feel involved in the Bid and the ensuing 'Transformation' process.

The forthcoming major changes to the 'Core Day', Staff Profiles, Workshops, Payments to Prisoners have already begun. It is clear they will need the support of staff and to be clearly explained to prisoners if they are to be introduced successfully. The Management Team are fully aware of this and of the need for feedback on how these changes are working.

The introduction of sixty new prisoners had some, initially, unsettling effects on the prison but the situation appears now to have returned to normal.

Taking the 'Four Tests of a Healthy Prison'

*"All Prisoners feel safe"*

The arrangements for Safer Prisons generally work well and suitable procedures and protocols are all in place. However, the procedures for ACCT documents are followed rather more diligently than those subject to a TAB document.

*"Prisoners are treated with respect as individuals"*

The prison prides itself on the relationship staff have with prisoners. The majority of Prisoners are positive in their views of how they are treated by the prison staff at all levels.

*"Prisoners are fully and purposefully occupied and expected to improve themselves"*

Rates of unemployment have, on occasion, been higher than ideal in a Working Prison. However, the new Workshops should make a considerable difference. The provision, take-up and completion rates of Education Courses are above average.

*"Prisoners can strengthen links with their families and prepare themselves for release"*

The Board's monitoring of visitors suggests they feel valued and that staff are approachable and helpful. As part of the Incentives & Earned Privileges arrangements, a more relaxed seating arrangement has been introduced for the family visits, which Enhanced prisoners can apply for. The Management are placing a high focus on Resettlement strategies.

In the judgment of the Board, the prison performs well on each criteria and, at the same time, achieves excellent value for money.

4. Matters for the consideration of the Secretary of State

None

5. Matters for the consideration of the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service

Despite the best endeavours of Management, the time taken to move some prisoners from CSU to other prisons has often been longer than is desirable. In such cases, the Board feels the Area Manager should have a greater involvement in the process of managing such moves..

6. Matters for the consideration of the IMB Secretariat

The Board has some concern over whether or not they will be able to maintain their current level of monitoring given the future financial constraints they are likely to have to work under.

## 7. REPORTS

7.1 All of the following areas, as well as having their own specific meetings, are brought together under Reducing Reoffending with its eight 'Pathways' for prisoners. Board Members are responsible for monitoring specific areas.

### 7.2 **Diversity**

Issues of diversity are taken seriously by staff and a positive attitude towards it exists. Board Members attend as observers, the monthly meeting of the Diversity, Race, Equality Action Team. These meetings are well structured and offer the opportunity for all to contribute. Prisoner representation from each residential unit takes place at each meeting.

The needs of those of a religious persuasion are well met. For example, the commitment of Management and Staff ensured that over 70 prisoners were able to observe the period of Ramadan and celebrate the Festival of Eid. Christians and other denominations are equally well catered for by the Chaplaincy Team. A 'Black History' month is organised and members of the Travelling Community meet regularly with a member of the Chaplaincy. The newly established Chaplain has already made a very positive impact and contribution to the life of the Prison.

### 7.3 **Learning & Skills**

The Education Unit has expanded its provision, in part to cater for the increased number of prisoners at Buckley Hall. Additional staff have been appointed and new courses established in Graphics, Horticulture and Anatomy & Physiology. As part of the expansion, three new classrooms have been built and the IT provision considerably expanded. A virtual learning environment is due for prisoners in the near future. The use made by prisoners of the Library's resources is growing following the appointment of the new Librarian.

The number of unemployed prisoners has been relatively high on occasion during the year but the recent expansion of Education and Workshop provision has reduced this problem significantly. The time taken to obtain security clearance can lead to delays in the time taken for new prisoners to begin employment or education. The Department maintains close and effective links with the staff in OMU.

Staffs involved in 'Skills for Life' are given training to identify and help prisoners with learning difficulties. Outreach education, on an individual basis, is also provided on the residential wings, Workshops and in CSU.

Gym staff offer a number of certificated courses, which are popular. However, the physical environment in which staff deliver the more theoretical aspects of some courses is not ideal. At present, because of the absence of a dedicated classroom, such lessons have had to be held in a corner of the gymnasium. However, the planned redevelopment of the area should remedy this problem in the future.

The Psychology Department provide a growing number of programmes for prisoners. Among these, the TSP is particularly oversubscribed by prisoners who wish to complete the course as part of their sentence planning.

#### 7.4 **Workshops**

The Bid has led to some considerable changes in terms of the Workshops. A Call Centre operation is being set up and, in addition, it is hoped two Recycling Workshops. As part of the Bid, the Workshops are expected to create a positive net cash flow and contribute towards the running costs of the Prison. Alongside the new Workshops, it is intended to alter the Pay Structure for Prisoners. Under the new system, the proposal is that prisoners pay will vary with their area of employment, rather than their IEP status.

A number of the Workshops have formed links with firms willing to take on offenders who have gained skill certificates during their prison sentence. Outside organizations have shown a willingness to offer offenders on Release on Temporary Licence, an opportunity to gain work experience. Management have expressed some interest in increasing the number of prisoners who take part in the ROTL scheme but are mindful of the security implications of doing so.

#### 7.5 **Healthcare & Mental Health**

Prisoners receive a good provision for their medical needs. The Healthcare Department is efficient, progressive and forward thinking. New clinics have been introduced aimed at the 'Older Prisoner' and 'Well Man'. In addition, the Gym staff provide input through their contribution to healthy lifestyle courses and programmes.

Although the overall standard of healthcare is good and despite the best efforts of Healthcare and Prison Management, the length of time prisoners are required to wait for non-emergency dental treatment remains an issue.

A patient representative group has been set up, which meets bi-monthly, and the IMB attend as an observer. PALS provides a vehicle for prisoner complaints about healthcare.

The Mental Health staff provide an excellent level of service to prisoners. A member of the team is always present at Prisoner Reviews.

#### 7.6 **Safer Custody**

The Safer Custody committee meets monthly and part one of the meeting is attended by prisoner representatives. Prison Listeners are available who have been trained by the Samaritans. The arrangements for this are monitored carefully and the procedures are good. A Safer Custody cell has been created on one of the Wings, for the use of Listeners, should it be needed.

Prisoners on an ACCT document are extremely well cared for and procedures followed scrupulously. The Tackling Anti-social Behaviour scheme – with its focus on reducing the level of bullying by prisoners - is being relaunched in order to remind Officers of its importance. In addition to their own work with individuals, the Chaplaincy Team facilitate Counselling and Bereavement sessions for Prisoners when appropriate.

When asked, prisoners, in general, have a positive view of the prison. However, an up-to-date exit survey, carried out on release, would help clarify their overall experience and view of the regime.

## 7.7 **Care & Separation**

This is a small unit of 12 cells staffed by experienced officers. Board members have been impressed by the professionalism of these members of staff and their ability to manage the most demanding of prisoners. In recent months, Management and staff have experienced some considerable difficulty in moving prisoners out of CSU to another establishment. As a result, a number of prisoners have had to be held in CSU for longer than is desirable. With only a few disruptive exceptions, prisoners accepted this situation with good grace and fortitude. The Duty Governor, Chaplain and Health Care each do a daily round of the CSU. There is some debate within the prison as to the suitability of CSU for prisoners who are there on Own Interest.

The facilities for prisoners in CSU are clean and appropriate. However, the CSU exercise area would benefit from the installation of a bench for prisoners taking exercise and the library stock changed rather more frequently.

The staff in CSU routinely inform the IMB of any moves to the Unit. To date, Board Members have attended Reviews on a regular basis. Whether or not financial constraints will permit this in the future is considered to be a possible issue for the Board.

A member of the Board attends the quarterly SMARG meeting as an observer. The meeting does not always draw a full complement of those eligible to attend but this is being addressed.

## 7.8 **Prisoners' Induction**

The existing core day requires the prison to reduce the time spent on induction so that it is no longer possible to have set times for the Board to speak to new prisoners. Although there is a channel on the prison TV network that gives information about the prison, this is no substitute for meeting and talking to prisoners. It may become possible under the new core day to allow a Board Member to meet prisoners on a specified day and time.

The induction of new prisoners is carried out efficiently by staff and prisoners are satisfied with the process. Gym, Chaplaincy and CPN staff all contribute to the induction programme. The booklet currently distributed, on induction, would benefit from being rewritten and updated – especially in light of the changes proposed to the core day and the new workshops. No separate protocols, specifically for the 'First Night' Prisoners on the Induction Wing, appear to be followed by Night Staff.

## 7.9 **Prisoner Complaints**

A number of prisoners express dissatisfaction with the prison's Complaint system. Some claim that they do not receive a full explanation as to why the decision has been made to uphold or disallow their complaint. Others contend their complaints are not being responded to within the time scale allowed.

There have been a number of complaints to the IMB about the length of time it has taken for Cat D Applications to be processed. Management is aware of this issue. Prisoners whose Cat D Applications are turned down, do not always feel they have been given sufficient explanation for the decision.

#### 7.10 **Catering & Kitchens**

Meals provided for prisoners are of a high standard, given the financial constraints that exist. A particular effort is made by Catering Staff to celebrate the various Religious festivities during the year. The Catering Manager has regular meetings with Prisoners and the catering staff are prepared to adapt and respond to requests when it is feasible.

#### 7.11 **Adjudications**

Board Members have attended a number of the Adjudications. They are conducted in a fair and impartial manner. The Governors who conduct the Adjudications hold a quarterly meeting designed to foster consistency and good practice.

Because of a change in local policy, a Prisoner on adjudication is now more likely to find himself placed before the Independent Adjudicator. Not all staff are convinced of the efficacy of this move and contend too many cases are being dismissed on technical, rather than substantive, grounds.

#### 7.12 **Core Day**

From October, the new Core Day, which formed an integral part of the winning bid, will be introduced – initially on a trial basis. It is clear that adapting to the new timings will demand quite significant changes to the present routines of most Departments and, indeed, throughout the prison as a whole.

#### 7.13 **External Links**

A successful community engagement with Rochdale Connexions Trust has been established in which local young people, at risk of offending, take part in a visit to the prison and engage with specially selected prisoners.

POPS continue to provide a good level of service in the Visitor's Reception and with the catering facilities in the Visits Hall. The refurbishment of the Visits Hall has made the venue much more welcoming and attractive. The improvements appears to have been well-received by both Prisoners and their relatives. However, a survey of Relatives, to ascertain their views of the visit experience would be helpful in confirming that this was indeed the case.

Story Book Dads remains popular with prisoners and there is always a waiting list of prisoners who wish to be involved.

## 8. The Work of the Board

### 8.1 Membership

The Board has an allocation of 12 members and at the start of the year, had a complement of 10 members. However, a bereavement and one sabbatical leave left 8 members. Two new members have since been appointed and once their probationary year has been completed, the Board will consist of 10 members.

### 8.2 Organisation of the Board

Two members are on rota duty each week. Between them, the pair deal with all the Applications, Reviews and Rota Visits for that week. If members cannot attend a Review, they ensure the prisoner is seen as soon as possible thereafter and speak to the staff involved.

Recommended Complement	12
Members at start of period	10
Members at end	8
New Members	2
Board Meetings	12
Average Attendance	8
Rota Visits	250
Special Responsibilities Visits	36
Prisoner Applications Visits	68
Prisoner Inductions	0
Care & Separation Reviews	155
Adjudications	35
Vice Chairman	10
Chairman	96
<b>TOTAL VISITS</b>	<b>650</b>

9. APPENDIX

9.1 Applications to the Board July 2010 – June 2011

Subject	Total
Accommodation	3
Adjudications	5
Diversity related	2
Education / Employment / Training	10
Family / Visits	8
Food / Kitchens	0
Health	9
Property in Buckley Hall	22
Property transferred to Buckley Hall	16
Sentence Related	52
Staff / Prisoner	3
Transfers	10
Miscellaneous	33
TOTAL	173