



INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

HMP STAFFORD

ANNUAL REPORT
1 May 2012 to 30 April 2013

SECTION 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

1. The Prisons Act 1952 and the Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Justice Secretary from members of the community in which the prison is situated.
2. The Board is specifically charged to:
 - 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;
 - inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom s/he has delegated authority, as it judges appropriate, any concern it has;
 - 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 custody.
3. To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

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SECTION 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

4. HMP Stafford is a category C, adult male, training establishment with a certified normal accommodation of 741. On 30 April 2013 304 vulnerable and 397 mainstream prisoners were held. The prison is near to the town centre and is one of the oldest prisons in the country, many areas are “listed” for planning purposes.

5. Each of the six residential blocks has four landings and each has accommodation for over 100 prisoners. Each wing has in-cell sanitation and a shower block. The Main Hall comprises A, B and C wings which accommodate mainstream prisoners. D wing also holds mainstream prisoners; it is also used for induction prisoners and accommodates the Healthcare Centre and the Segregation Unit which is located below. The Crescent houses E and F wings for vulnerable prisoners, with E wing also being used for induction.

6. G wing, which is a single cell, two storey, prefabricated building for 40 prisoners, was constructed in 2004. The good quality of accommodation and facilities on G wing is in stark contrast to the remainder of the prison. It holds an integrated population of both mainstream and vulnerable prisoners.

7. There is a visitors’ centre in a building opposite the prison with a visits hall and a tea bar within the prison itself. There are 10 workshops providing a variety of activities.

8. As at 30 April 2013 the number of full time or equivalent staff was 329, 23 fewer than the previous year. Efficiency savings of £462.000 were achieved in 2012-13.

9. Healthcare facilities, including dentistry and chiropody, were provided by Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Primary Care Trust (PCT), education services by Milton Keynes College and library services by Staffordshire County Council. Transport for prisoners was provided by Geo Amey and canteen by HL/Booker.

10. There were many voluntary organisations supporting the prisoners. Among them were Samaritans (support for Listeners), Halow Trust (Visitors’ Centre), Shannon Trust (“Toe By Toe” reading project), official prison visitors, chaplaincy volunteers, Bereavement and Loss Counselling service and refreshment provision in the visitors’ centre.

SECTION 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

11. It is the Board’s opinion that HMP Stafford is well managed and that staff make determined efforts to ensure that prisoners are treated humanely, safely and justly. This is against a background of budgets and staffing reductions. Change will continue during the next reporting period when major plans will be put into place following a Prison Service benchmarking exercise. The Board welcomes the fact that approximately 95% of prisoners engage in purposeful activity during the day.

12. The Board wishes to raise the following issues with the Minister particularly in relation to IPP offenders which was highlighted in its previous report.

Respondent	Issue	Action Required	Section
Minister and NOMS	IPP offenders continue to remain in prison, some beyond their tariff date.	An action plan to address the needs of existing IPP offenders.	5.5
Minister and NOMS	IMB receives an increasing number of complaints in respect of prisoners’ property lost during transfer between prisons, which are sometimes difficult to resolve.	A plan to address this problem. Why does it recur?	7
Minister and NOMS	Catering budget of £1.96 per prisoner per day is considered inadequate.	Clarification as to why budget is so small and increase to alleviate ongoing challenges.	5.8

13. Certain concerns from the Board’s previous report have yet to be fully resolved although it is acknowledged and it is aware of actions taken partly to remedy some of these issues.

14. These include:

Issues to be raised with the Governor 2012-13:

Library – in view of decrease in book issues the Board would welcome increased access to this facility.

5.2:40

Allocation of recreational PE – some prisoners believe and the Board agrees that recreational PE should maintain a fairer system of allocations.	5.4:51
Resettlement – as a result of a pilot monitoring scheme more positive steps should be taken to inform prisoners of the resettlement process.	5.5:59
SOTP – alternative provision should be considered following withdrawal of low level risk offenders course.	5.5:62
Kitchen – the Board is concerned about the length of time it takes to repair inoperative machinery.	5.8:79
Senior support group – the Board would like to see accelerated progress on the planned additional accommodation.	5.1:19
C wing – complaints received were passed to estates in respect of cold cells on C wing. However, the problems continued.	6.1:81

SECTION 5

5.1 Equality and Inclusion (includes foreign nationals)

15. The Equality Duty under the 2010 Equality Act requires the IMB to have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Characteristics relevant and monitored at HMP Stafford were disability, age, race, foreign national prisoners, religion and belief, sexual orientation, ex services, marriage and civil partnership and gypsy, migrant, Roma, travellers.

16. It was the opinion of the Board that the prison continued to provide an effective level of service to prisoners in these areas. Of particular note was the work of the Gay/Bi-sexual/Transgender group which met regularly under the auspices of an enthusiastic Senior Officer who was instrumental in organising outside agencies and speakers to support prisoners. The Gypsy, Migrant, Romany, Traveller group of about 15 was very ably led by a Governor and issues raised such as literacy and employability were addressed in depth. It was pleasing to note that the Ex-Services strand, which supported the many veterans in prison, had become active once more.

17. Equality Action Group meetings were held each month and were well attended by representatives.

18. During the reporting period 68 Discrimination Incident Referral Forms (DIRF) were received compared to 99 in 2011/12. The Deputy Governor was responsible for ensuring a good quality of response was made by those with the characteristic lead. Race was the issue most complained about (52%): 41 complaints were rejected and 21 were upheld. One was partly upheld, three were withdrawn and two were yet to be finalised (pending). The reduction of the number of DIRFs reflected not only the work of the prison but also the prisoner representatives who were pro-active when issues arose on wings.

19. The Board welcomed the appointment of a full time Equalities Officer in January 2013. The pro-active administrator worked 18 hours per week. The overall responsibility for Equality and Inclusion was passed to the Deputy Governor. Senior Management Team members took on responsibility for each characteristic and reported monthly to the Equality Action Group and also to its monthly meeting.

20. The Board would like to see accelerated progress on the additional accommodation planned for the large Senior Support Group.

21. There was a recent reduction of about 40% of foreign national prisoners held at HMP Stafford. Those held beyond their release date, now fortunately

few in number, were subject to complications of the immigration removal process outside of the prison's control. The Board applauded this reduction and hoped it would continue.

22. Monthly meetings were held during the reporting period between the Strand Governor, the Offender Management Unit Hub Manager and representatives from both main stream and vulnerable prisoners. This was a good example of an integration initiative, supported by the Board. Regular immigration surgeries, attended by a representative of the Immigration Service, were also held every six weeks.

23. The translation process was improved by providing more telephones and translation facilities.

5.2 Education Learning and Skills

24. In view of the undoubted and acknowledged importance of education in the rehabilitation of offenders, it was disappointing that under Fair and Sustainable the role of Head of Learning and Skills (HOLS) did not seem to be regarded sufficiently highly. In the Board's view, this role demands a high level of responsibility, knowledge and experience.

25. This has been a very difficult year for Education, Learning and Skills. There had been important changes in a number of areas:

- Several experienced staff joined the new prison, Oakwood, near Wolverhampton.
- The provider changed from Manchester College to Milton Keynes College.
- A new Head of Learning and Skills was appointed towards the end of the reporting year.
- When the manager was promoted to a regional post for Milton Keynes, there was a lengthy gap before his successor was in place.

Offender Learning and Skills Service 4 (OLASS 4), the new funding system, was implemented. All courses had to be accredited, timed and completed with 80% payment on enrolment and 20% on completion. No general source of funding could be accessed as in the past.

- Despite the uncertainties and consequent lowering of staff morale caused by these changes, the department appeared to provide a good service to the prisoners. The most recent learners' survey was very positive about the courses offered, and the support and teaching given by the staff. The IMB rarely received complaints about education.
26. A wide variety of courses continued to be offered in the main building and the Vocational Training Centre (VTC). These ranged from functional skills to Open University diplomas and degrees through distance learning.
27. Inevitably some non-accredited courses were lost, but the 'soft skills' of Personal Social Development were largely incorporated into those remaining.
28. On induction, prisoners were assessed on their basic numeracy and literacy skills and a specialist Learning Support Practitioner conducted in-depth Hidden Disability Questionnaires in order to identify specific difficulties such as Dyslexia and Dyspraxia. The results of these were not used as effectively as they might have been. Milton Keynes College funded additional Learning Support workers and all prisoners in the VTC had functional skills support. Prisoner classroom assistants were also used in many areas which is a strategy strongly supported by the Board.
29. There did not appear to be any problems with the regime providing escort to classes and courses, but links with the Offender Management Unit (OMU) could be better. Communication over the availability, timing and length of courses could be improved. The new manager was aware of this and was putting in place measures which should prevent prisoners being transferred before they could complete or even begin courses.
30. When education staff were being recruited, they were aware that some prisoners, especially from the workshops, were reluctant to attend classes and courses because there was no cash incentive to choose them. Under the Prisoner Learning Policy only the cleaners received less payment. Payment for engaging in Education was 80% and in the VTC 90% of the pay offered to those employed in the most basic workshop.
31. 'Banged up and Mash', the café staffed by prisoners, was appreciated and increasingly patronised by the wider prison staff. It gave relevant experience and qualifications to those completing Hospitality courses.
32. Expressive and Creative Arts continued to flourish. The artistic, literary, dramatic and musical opportunities offered widened the horizons and strengthened the confidence of the participants whilst giving pleasure to their audiences.

33. The library was attractive and well stocked and continued to provide an invaluable resource within the prison. The staff were welcoming, knowledgeable, creative and worked hard to promote the service.

34. It was home to the Shannon Trust Toe by Toe Reading scheme. Which was well established and increasingly used. The Learning and Skills Business Administrator responsible has been nominated for a Prison Officer of the Year Award. The library was used by Education, Story Book Dads and the Writer in Residence.

35. The full time librarian left and three new part time members of staff, all willing to be flexible and work in the evenings and at weekends, were appointed. As in the previous year they were not used to their full potential as the library had not opened in the evening which the Board considered to be a lost opportunity.

36. A proposed timetable was created which offered 42 hours access per week to the library. This included four evenings and Saturdays but, although library staff were available, only 27 hours could be used by prisoners because of the difficulties caused by understaffing.

37. Prisoners in workshops were not allowed to visit the library during the week; their access was limited to Saturday mornings. Lists of those who wished to attend then were given to wing staff. However, the consistent co-operation of uniformed staff to unlock and escort was lacking.

38. It was no longer possible to offer the clubs which used to take place on Saturday mornings.

39. Reduced prison staff levels impacted on the day to day running of the library and it was closed for two weeks in the summer because of this.

40. It was of concern to the Board that in comparison with the previous year, visits and issues of books had decreased by approximately a third, and complaints from prisoners had increased.

41. Whilst acknowledging the difficulties under Fair and Sustainable, it was felt that the prison was failing the library service. The staff were frustrated and demoralised. For the first time, the two experienced librarians admitted sometimes to feeling vulnerable when visiting the wings and during the route when staff were not always in evidence.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health (includes drugs)

42. It is the Board's opinion that this department has continued to work effectively. During the reporting year relationships with the Primary Care Trust and other health providers were good. Clinical Governance Meetings provided an effective forum for any issues or concerns.

43. On arrival at HMP Stafford, prisoners were seen by staff within twenty four hours and their healthcare needs determined. There was no in-patient facility within the establishment, therefore escorts and bed watches to local hospitals proved to be problematical, both in terms of staffing and finance. The Head of Healthcare was in the process of streamlining procedures. Information about the NHS and complaints procedures were readily available to prisoners. Provision of ancillary services eg chiropody, diabetes healthcare and promotion of well-being continued to work well. A "Health Fayre" day was once again organised and was well attended. The "Health Champions" project continued to flourish. The Board welcomed the on site provision of minor repairs to spectacles. This reduced the time spent waiting for outside agencies.

44. Most medication was dispensed on wings from treatment rooms. The Board was pleased to report that the treatment room on C wing was completed and was operational during the year.

45. The waiting time for dentistry was approximately nine weeks and most healthcare complaints related to this issue. The Board received few complaints in respect of healthcare but, as stated in previous reports, continued to be disappointed by how few weekly dental sessions were provided under contract.

46. The mental health of prisoners was assessed by the healthcare department. Those deemed to be at a lower level of need were supported by group activities. Prisoners who required secondary care had access to the In Reach team. During the reporting period three prisoners were transferred to establishments which offered 24 hour care.

47. The drug treatment provider changed during the reporting period and the contract was awarded to Lifeline. The Board's opinion was that it had made a positive start with new initiatives but would monitor its drug intervention programmes.

48. The consumption of drugs increased in the prison but was still lower than the national average and certainly lower than comparable prisons.

5.4 Purposeful Activity (includes work)

49. During the reporting period prisoners welcomed the reopening of the woodwork shop. Its instructor and the plastering workshop instructor taught with real enthusiasm. Formal plastering qualifications were offered which pleased prisoners.

50. Some instructors were frustrated by the poor flow of work caused variously by short sessions, by the natural interruptions of prisoner arrival/departure/meal times and to some extent by the quality and choice of prisoners. The shortage of contracts made the work available monotonous; a greater variety would increase prisoner skills and enhance resettlement.

51. The board expressed concern during the reporting year about aspects of the rewards system. There was inconsistency in the awarding of “over achieves” which upset prisoners. This could impact on the prisoners’ status and benefits within the regime. The difference between the reward system in Industries and in Education and Skills was not helpful. During the reporting year, the staffing level in the PE department was reduced from 9 to 8. However, the department was still a considerable activity provider, supplying on average between 5 and 6 hours per prisoner per week. The department had 80 “work” places during the core day, some of which were for Level 2 courses. During the weekday, evenings and at weekends and holidays, recreational PE was offered to all, though it was felt strongly by some prisoners and by this Board that those prisoners who had spent all day in the gym should only be offered recreational PE if it was undersubscribed.

52. Links were formed with the Education department who were able to support prisoners in the gym with their basic academic skills.

53. The department had recently started to offer individual programmes to a group of 14 prisoners who had been referred by the General Practitioner. In the early planning stages this was a 15 week programme which would integrate such topics as money, cooking, drug awareness and health, all of importance in resettlement. This planning of innovations was to be greatly commended.

54. Health and Safety issues could well arise from the inconsistent provision of hand cleaners and barrier cream dispensers in the Reclamation Unit.

55. The Board was encouraged by the fact that 95% of prisoners were engaged in purposeful activity including education.

5.5 Resettlement (includes Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection IPP)

56. The Board was pleased to note that the Prison's resettlement record for this period was generally at or above target in all the key performance indicators. Indeed, the reduction of reoffending after discharge of prisoners, who had served less than a one year sentence at HMP Stafford, was the highest in the West Midlands.

57. Resettlement meetings were held on a regular monthly basis. However, the attendance of neither the pathway leaders, nor the attached governor, was reliable. Written reports were often not presented, nor were they pursued in time for the following meeting. This was not helpful to Board members who were only kept abreast of progress and development by the excellent resettlement clerk and the accommodation officer.

58. At the start of the reporting year, resettlement clinics were held on a regular basis but soon became ad hoc owing to the difficulties encountered in ensuring the attendance of the relevant external agencies. The Board was disappointed that by the end of the year the clinics had stopped altogether which meant that prisoners had no guaranteed access to pre-release support except through their offender supervisors (OS) and probation officers.

59. A different monitoring initiative was tried by two Board members during this period: for the three months prior to discharge prisoners were selected at random and interviewed at least three times. The results were shared with the Board and the Governing Governor. The questions about how these men were being prepared by the prison for life "outside" received disappointing answers: the word "resettlement" always had to be explained to them and they claimed not to have received invitations to resettlement clinics. Family Days were restricted in terms of frequency, staffing and allocated places, so few benefited from them. The men rarely got the chance to speak with their offender supervisors, even though the prison by then had an offender supervisor on each wing prior to leaving for work. This was largely owing to how little time was allowed them by their wing officers and to how slow prisoners were in preparing to leave the wing. However, the Board was aware that HMP Stafford was receiving greater numbers of short term prisoners during this period and this placed a difficult burden on the prison to provide effective resettlement for all.

60. Offender management figures suggest that there was a 50% success rate for Home Detention Curfew applications, based on weekly boards; that 33% achieved recategorisation to category D status, based on a monthly paper exercise; and that between four and 12 prisoners were released monthly on temporary licence with 100% success rate in terms of compliance with the licence.

61. The work of the Troubled Families initiative was heartening, particularly in the way it could impact on local prolific offenders. The Board looked forward to even greater progress in future in this area.

62. As in the previous year's report, the Board remained concerned about the existence and treatment of men who were imprisoned for an Indeterminate sentence for Public Protection (IPP). A particular concern was the problems often created by prisoners' inability to access, as part of their sentence plan, appropriate courses to ensure discharge and resettlement. The waiting lists were in some cases far too long which worked against the interests of those with relatively short sentences. These difficulties were exacerbated in cases where men denied the offences for which they had been imprisoned. Matters were not helped by the ending of the rolling Sex Offenders Treatment Programme for low risk prisoners. IPP events continued to be held so that outside agencies could be accessed, although prisoner attendance was poor perhaps due to the fact that IPPs felt little hope about a future life outside the prison.

5.6 Safer Custody

63. Overall the Board's perception was that HMP Stafford prisoners were safe. There were no deaths in custody in the reporting period. A reconvened inquest on a prisoner who died on 15 December 2006 took place in November 2012. A verdict of accidental death was recorded. There were no recommendations for the prison.

64. The use of Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) was now more common; the procedures involved were effective and the documentation accurate.

65. Listeners continued to be trained well by the local branch of Samaritans. Their use had been further rolled out to Reception for an extended time; there

was a small room for sharing problems on arrival. Reception was a well managed area with courteous and calm staff.

66. Prisoners' medical records routinely accompanied them on arrival; new receptions were always reviewed by staff and seen within 24 hours by Healthcare.

5.7 Segregation, Care and Separation, Close Supervision/Constant Watch

67. Staff continued to manage the Segregation Unit in their professional and caring way during the reporting period. The building was fresh smelling, clean and tidy.

68. Documentation was accessible and relevant. It was largely up to date, the exception to this being the Use of Force paperwork. This was not the fault of the Segregation staff who found it difficult in a period of heavy workload to chase up those who should have completed it; nor was it their fault that the senior staff responsible did not routinely check it after the weekly Rule 45 Board. In the Board's opinion, however, Rule 45 reviews were properly conducted with the requisite specialists in attendance. More prisoners were beginning to demand - and sometimes achieve - a transfer following poor behaviour which resulted in a stay in the Segregation Unit. The Board was disappointed that some prisoners were beginning to see misbehaviour as a solution to their problems.

69. The IMB was infrequently informed of arrivals in the Segregation Unit, partly as a result of a change in the IMB clerk, but mostly because of the inconsistent e-mail communication with the Board by the staff on the unit.

70. Towards the end of the reporting period staff morale dipped. This was due largely to extra workload and a lack of consistency in the team. The sudden death of one of the team dealt a further blow to the group.

71. Prisoners on constant watch were monitored closely by the IMB and were felt to be safe.

72. SMARG (Separation Monitoring and Review Group) meetings ended at the start of the reporting period. There were three dirty protests in May 2012, all by the same prisoner on three separate occasions. Special accommodation was used on three separate occasions, never with the use of restraints. Numbers in the Unit in this period varied greatly, ranging in a month from four to 14.

5.8 Residential Services (includes food, catering, kitchens)

73. The work of HMP Stafford's kitchen was ably led by the Catering Manager despite his budget having been reduced to £1.96 per prisoner per day.

74. The kitchen had received a 5 star award for food hygiene.

75. The kitchen's workforce averaged 28 – 30 but on occasions difficulties were experienced in maintaining this number.

76. Monthly Catering meetings with prisoner representatives had been constructive and the Catering Manager endeavoured to address issues raised at those meetings and in the wing food comment books. As a result changes had been made to the menu; the current choice was generally well received.

77. The food comment books were generally available although some difficulty had been encountered with one wing where the book was not always present on the servery.

78. The kitchen had experienced difficulties with food being quarantined as a result of the nationwide contaminated meat situation but staff were to be commended for their adaptability in providing alternative meals at short notice.

79. One area of concern was the high level of inoperative equipment and the length of time taken to repair during the reporting year. Equipment on wings was always observed to be clean.

80. Unfortunately funding was still not available to enable an NVQ course to be offered.

SECTION 6

6.1 Wing Issues

81. Wings were usually well kept, clean and tidy. Complaints were received during the winter months regarding the lack of adequate heating on C wing in certain cells which was not rectified.

82. The Board continued to receive frequent complaints about the quantity and quality of kit. Some prisoners wore their own clothes but were reluctant to entrust them to the prison laundry because of the harshness of its cleaning programmes; additionally, because of cost cutting, all washing machines had been removed from the wings (with the exception of G Wing for enhanced prisoners).

83. IMB application forms continued to be unavailable on Main Hall and occasionally unavailable for vulnerable prisoners. Information about the IMB was also unavailable on most wings.

84. There was some loss of association time because of staff shortages. The Board continued to be concerned that many prisoners spent a great length of time locked in cells after work/education.

85. The Personal Officer Scheme continued to be ineffective. Prisoners found it difficult to find a wing officer in whom to confide, largely because of staff shortages and changes to regime. As a result of inadequate use of the Incentives and Earned Privileges scheme, too many prisoners were on enhanced and too few on the basic regime. This did not give a true reflection of prisoners' behaviour on the wing and failed to motivate them to do better.

6.2 Prisoner Council

86. Prisoner Council meetings underwent a vast improvement in the last year. This came about by the good offices of a Residential Governor who chaired 11 of the 12 monthly meetings. He ensured that wing staff were reminded to send the prisoner representatives and that minutes were circulated. He notified relevant members of staff about any items that needed their response; because of his diligence and persistence, these matters were more often responded to than not.

87. At the monthly meetings, prisoners' issues were treated with respect. Items which could not immediately be answered were often given a response in the minutes or at the next meeting.

88. Towards the end of the reporting period Council representatives were encouraged to invite senior staff members to attend a meeting to discuss their issues. The Governing Governor started this process and spent a long time talking to and answering questions raised by prisoners.

89. The Board was delighted to report this great improvement in what it considered to be a most important meeting for the prisoners in HMP Stafford. The quality and consistency of its chairmanship were the main factors in this improvement which, it was hoped, could be maintained in the future.

6.3 Security

90. The security meeting went through a transitional period following both the introduction of Fair and Sustainable and a new governor so it had yet to achieve, in the Board's opinion, the effectiveness of the previous regime. Meetings rarely had a full complement of wing representation because staff were required at other meetings or were rescheduled at short notice to work on other wings; this led the Board to question the quality and accuracy of knowledge and of feedback between the Security Team and staff on the wings and staff elsewhere in the prison. However, the security presentation, given by the colleague responsible for analysis, continued to be comprehensive and informative.

91. Although IMB presence was welcomed, there had been little communication from the Security Team regarding cancelled or rearranged meetings. As in the previous year, the IMB did not see any meeting minutes.

92. The Board still had concerns about security in the visits hall, although some improvement had been seen regarding the circulation of officers and operational support grades. The continued and increased presence of the dog and handler was welcomed.

93. Although it recognised Fair and Sustainable could not cover this, the Board still recommended that a team of dedicated, specialist officers was attached to this area to ensure continuity of security.

6.4 Chaplaincy

94. The Board greatly valued the Chaplaincy's work in supporting, spiritually and pastorally, prisoners of all faiths and of none.

95. The Chaplaincy team discharged their statutory duties in the reporting year conscientiously, aiming to visit Healthcare and the Segregation Unit daily, receptions and applications within 24 hours and discharges in their last week.

96. During the year the Sikh Chaplain's hours were increased to half time, enabling him to assist with generic work. A third Imam led Friday prayers every other week, enabling all Muslim prisoners who wished to attend to do so.

97. Some of the Chaplaincy services had seen attendance rise steadily with prisoners inviting others to attend. The prison band added something special to a number of these services.

98. During this period of cutbacks the Chaplaincy's budget had been maintained. By careful management and by chaplains occasionally bringing in resources from their outside communities, there had not been an overspend.

SECTION 7

THE WORK OF THE IMB AT HMP STAFFORD

99. The Board appreciated the co-operation freely given by management and staff during the course of its work. Each week Board members attended the prison to monitor adjudications, Rule 45 reviews and to observe meetings. They responded to prisoner applications on a weekly basis; rota visits were undertaken fortnightly.

100. The Board held a monthly meeting, which the Governing Governor or Deputy attended, in order to brief members on prison matters and to discuss issues arising from monitoring. The Chair and Vice Chair always met with the Governing Governor or Deputy before each Board Meeting. The Board greatly appreciated their open and supportive attitude.

101. The IMB clerk was always present at Board meetings and her support was absolutely invaluable throughout the year.

102. One Board member attended the IMB Annual Conference in March 2013. The Board Development Officers arranged in-house training sessions after assessing training needs. Members also visited another prison in the locality similar in category and training to HMP Stafford.

103. Both Chair and Vice Chair attended the quarterly Area IMB meetings and also Senior Management Team meetings on a regular basis.

104. It was disappointing that at the end of the reporting period the IMB photograph boards had not been composed and installed on each wing.

105. Leaflets were written about the IMB's work but were not given out at induction sessions in spite of frequent requests. The Chair was interviewed by prisoners about the work of the IMB to be transmitted on the prisoners' Channel 10 radio channel.

106. The authorised strength of the Board was sixteen. No new members were recruited during the reporting period.

Lorna Jones
Chair

2 September 2013

*This report was approved by the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Stafford on 2 September 2013.
This report to be sent to the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice on 20 September 2013.*

ANNEX A - STATISTICS

Board	
Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within reporting period	0
Number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	10
Total number of visits to the establishment	567
Number of applications processed	107
Number of confidential requests/complaints processed	25
Number of segregation reviews held	48
Number of segregation reviews attended	42
Date of annual team performance review	Jan 2013

Applications						
Subject		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
A	Accommodation	3	0	5	4	0
B	Adjudications	6	1	0	5	1
C	Diversity related	2	1	0	3	0
D	Education/employment/training	10	5	7	11	9
E	Family/visits	26	5	3	19	3
F	Food/kitchen related	2	2	1	1	1
G	Health related	20	1	6	22	17
H *	Property	55	3	10	18	15
I	Sentence related	27	4	20	29	9
J	Staff/prisoner related	8	4	1	19	17
K	Transfers	36	8	9	13	22
L	Miscellaneous	42	9	26	27	24
	Total number of applications	237	43	88	171	107

* Most applications involved external loss of property on transfer to HMP Stafford