



HMP RYE HILL
INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT

April 2014 – March 2015



Section 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prison Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (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.
- (2) Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- (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.**

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.

Section 2

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Section 3

DESCRIPTION & FUNCTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT

- HMP Rye Hill opened in January 2001 and was operated by Group 4 Falck, which became Global Solutions Limited (GSL) in 2004, on a 25 year contract to the Home Office. In May 2008 GSL was bought by G4S who took over the running of the prison.
- The premises are purpose built with eight residential units with certified normal accommodation of 600 and operational capacity of 625.
- The prison is now a Category B Training Prison for sex offenders. Having been re-roled in April 2014 to hold only Category B prisoners convicted of a sex offence making them eligible for the Sex Offenders Treatment Programme (SOTP).
- It held 621 prisoners at the end of the current reporting period.
- The prison currently holds 67 prisoners under traditional life sentences with a further 89 held under Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (ISPP).
- There are 594 Category B, and 27 Category C prisoners.
- 13 % of the prisoners are foreign national prisoners, which is lower than previous years.
- The ethnic breakdown has changed significantly since the re-role at approximately 81% White, 8% Black and 7% Asian.
- Prisoners over the age of 50 have increased significantly and now represent 40% of the total population with 30% of these over 65 years.
- Health care is provided by sub-contract to a division of G4S called G4S Justice Health.
- The Education provider is The Manchester College.
- Catering is provided by Aramark.
- Links with Samaritans are established together with a Listeners Service.

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015.

There have been a number of strategic and operational changes during the year, most notably that of the re-role of the prison to a sex offender only establishment (see section 5.1). This process involved movement of 455 prisoners over a 3-month period and was handled professionally by all staff.

The cautious optimism in last year's report that better leadership and management introduced at the end of the year would lead to on-going improvements in practice has proved to be the case during the year and improvements continue and are being sustained. 2014-15 has been a year of steady and marked progress across a range of functions.

There has been a full Senior Management Team in place and a number of newly qualified officers have joined the staff roster.

Overall the prison has been more settled during this reporting year with fewer incidents of violence although increases in incidents of self-harm are of concern.

The major concerns of the IMB this year have been:

- The inadequate level of health provision that does not meet the needs of the current population. The re-role and change in population, with an increase in the numbers of elderly and sick, has led to a much greater workload in health care, including more bed-watches and end-of-life care demands. This affects both health care staff and also Prisoner Custody Officers needed for escort and bed-watch duties. Recruiting and retaining health care staff remains a challenge. A Health Needs Analysis review together with the NHS has recently been completed and it is hoped the report will highlight areas where extra resources can be made available to meet the increased needs of this new population.
- The needs of the population post re-role appear to have led to a shift towards more threatened and actual self-harm. Practice in this area is now carefully managed and monitored at all levels.
- The extreme difficulty in identifying secure mental health placements for men requiring these has led to a prolonged stay in CSU beyond that which is reasonable or decent.
- The Substance Misuse Service has experienced major staffing issues during the year and for a lot of the reporting period has worked on a skeleton staff. It is of concern that the reduced service is not adequate to meet the needs of the population and this continues to be an area of vulnerability.

It is pleasing to note that there has been significant progress in extending the range and mix of activities available to prisoners, which reflects the prison's demographics in terms of prisoners' age, disabilities, health and interests, eg, the Activity Centre for the Over 65s. Some of these are exemplified in the gardening and associated outside activities.

ISSUES REQUIRING A RESPONSE

G4S Management

The new population post re-role has increased demands on health care and additional provision for the elderly and for end-of-life care and this requires urgent action.

The Minister

It remains a concern that there are a number of prisoners with mental health issues and prisoners needing psychiatric hospital admission who have experienced more than reasonable waiting periods. (This has been raised in a number of previous reports.)

Section 5

ESSENTIAL REPORTING AREAS

5.1 Major changes during the year

There have been a number of strategic and operational changes during the year most notably that of the re-role of the prison to a sex offender only establishment.

The establishment commenced re-role to an all sex offender population on 28 April 2014. The decant was completed on 3 July 2014, at which point the establishment held 564 Category B sex offenders. The original operating capacity of 625 was expected to be reached by 31 July 2014. During the decant process 455 prisoners were transferred from and to the establishment.

All staff and prisoners (through the Prison Council) were kept informed before and during the re-role process by informative meetings. Once begun, meetings of relevant staff were held daily to address challenges and to update on progress. It was notable that the atmosphere of meetings was positive and the teamwork impressive. Wings were refurbished as they were emptied, employing prisoners who would be resident on the wing following the re-role which led to a high level of commitment.

Monitoring of transfers highlighted some problems with storage in GEO-AMY vans, as there was only space for the volumetric limit of stored property. This was creatively handled by the prison by using pool cars to take excess baggage, although it led to some concern regarding staffing levels in other areas.

The use of C&R and planned C&R remained as expected during decant, however, no incidents were specifically related to the re-role.

An assessment of all prisoners was completed at the point of arrival. Due to the increase in the elderly population an increase in mobility issues and difficulties in issuing medication was noticed by health care staff. Programmes reported a high number of appellants and deniers (30% of the population against an agreed 15%), for whom it was difficult to find alternative placement. It was noted that as OMU had vacancies this needed to be resolved quickly to avoid potential vulnerability for safer custody, public protection and case management.

The decant was managed professionally and it was notable how the Senior Management Team took ownership of the process and worked together to respond to daily challenges. The decanting happened decently and safely without significant incidence. This should be applauded.

Improved leadership and management have led to on-going improvements in practice which continue to be sustained. 2014-15 has been a year of steady and marked progress across a range of functions.

Overall the prison has been more settled during this reporting year with fewer incidents of violence, although increases in incidents of self-harm are of concern.

5.2 Equality and Inclusion

The Equality Action Team [EAT] met quarterly and has taken on changes in the prison population since the re-role. The Director feels these meetings should be better attended and occur more frequently, i.e. every two months. This has yet to be set up and will be chaired by the Director. The meetings cover Race, Disability, Faith and Belief, Age, Gender and Sexual Orientation, Gypsy and Roma and Foreign Nationals. The staff have been through a lot of training to be able to cope with the changes in the prison and some have left feeling they did not wish to work with sex offenders. The number of transgender prisoners has increased since the re-role and work is in progress to set up rules and regulations.

It is a concern that more frequent EAT meetings are not yet up and running and that the number of wing reps cannot be confirmed. This was also a concern last year.

5.3 Education, Learning and Skills

Attendance in education has improved significantly since the re-role. In March 2015 attendance at education sessions had risen to 83%, as compared to 63% in April 2014. In October 2014 pay rates for education increased, reducing the pay gap between industries employment and education.

Since the re-role the educational profile of the prisoners has shown a reduction in literacy capability. In 2013 26% of prisoners were below Level 1 in literacy; in 2014 there were 55% of prisoners below Level 1. This has led to an increase in basic skills classes. Demand for these classes has also grown as OMU are now noting in induction assessments a prisoner's previous education including use of Toe by Toe.

As Foreign National Prisoner (FNP) numbers have reduced by 30% since March 2014, so have the number of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes. However, the FNPs tend to prefer to work, rather than attend classes, due to their lack of financial support. They work mainly in industries and the main kitchen due to their limited language skills and the kitchen regime is sometimes not conducive to the education timetable.

5.4 Healthcare and Mental Health

The change in the population profile since the re-role has led to a much greater workload in health care. The number of prisoners on medication has seen a major increase and this together with the increase of disabled and older prisoners has meant that distribution of medication is now taking a disproportionate amount of health care staff time. A plan has been put in place to allow medication distribution hatches on each unit but this requires bespoke doors which have not yet been fitted.

The older population profile has also meant more bed-watches and end-of-life care demands affecting both health care staff but also Prisoner Custody Officers needed for escort and bed-watch

duties. At present the prison has no in-patient or end-of-life facilities so any prisoner needing constant nursing care must be moved to a hospital or hospice.

Recruiting and retaining health care staff remains a challenge with only a brief period during the year when the unit was fully staffed without the use of Bank nurses. However the GP situation has improved with a local GP practice now providing a selection of Doctors on a regular schedule which seems to be working well.

The health care premises now need remodelling work to increase the size of the waiting area (especially for prisoners in wheelchairs) and provide facilities for the increased number of clinics needed by this new population. Plans are under discussion on how to achieve this.

In spite of these challenges most waiting times are acceptable other than for the optician but plans are in place to increase the number of optician's visits per month.

A Health Needs Analysis review undertaken together with the NHS will be reported on soon and it is hoped this will highlight areas where extra resources can be made available to meet the increased needs of this new population.

5.5 Purposeful Activity (including work)

Purposeful activities continue to feature as an area of ongoing development. During this year, developments have to be viewed in the context of the re-role initiative, which inevitably brought with it some element of disruption. All workshops have now been refurbished, one has been added and another is currently undergoing an update.

Significant progress has been made in extending the range and mix of activities available to prisoners, including an Activity Centre for the Over 65s. This reflects the prison's demographics in terms of prisoners' age, disabilities, health and interests. Some of these are exemplified in the gardening and associated outdoor activities.

The average monthly hours of purposeful activities provided have varied throughout the year partly due to the effects of re-role, but in recent months have become more uniform. Currently, average monthly hours are marginally below target but improving each month.

5.6 Resettlement

The number of prisoners released from the establishment has reduced this year to 11; 8 before the re-role and 3 since. It is expected that releases in future will be further reduced due to the typical time remaining on sentences and transfers to Category C establishments. The few releases expected are most likely to be MAPPA referrals with an escort to their resettlement accommodation.

On re-role all prisoners transferred into Rye Hill completed a Needs Analysis questionnaire, which has been reviewed and updated for future use. Post re-role (in September 2014) a new Reducing Re-offending Strategy was developed with the prisoner at its centre.

There has been considerable progress in developing and implementing a 7-point Pathway towards reducing re-offending each with its own Action Plan in order to provide an improved framework of support. However, it is disappointing that the plans for health care and drugs and alcohol misuse treatment remain behind schedule and incomplete.

Regular monthly meetings have been held throughout the year to update the multidisciplinary Reducing Re-offending Team and share information. More recently and notably each new arrival is discussed to establish individual needs and any upcoming releases of prisoners are also discussed.

5.7 Safer Custody

The better leadership and management introduced at the end of last year has led to on-going improvements in practice which continue, and are being sustained, across a range of functions and are significantly noticeable in safer custody with stable middle and senior management providing consistency and continuity.

The outcome of the safer custody audit carried out during the year was green, a first for HMP Rye Hill.

At the start of the year the level of assaults rose suddenly and fell again at once. This was shown to be linked to the announcement to prisoners of the impending re-role. As the year progressed, the increased stability of the prison was reflected in the falling number of assaults. The level of planned use of force during the re-role was kept low and reflects good prediction and management of potential difficulties that reduced the need for physical intervention. The Board is satisfied that force has been proportionate and not used inappropriately.

The needs of the population post re-role appear to have led to a shift towards threatened and actual self-harm. Practice in this area is now carefully managed and monitored at all levels with care and support of prisoners being of greater rigour, depth, consistency and sensitivity. This is confirmed by the weekly Complex Cases meeting and by thoughtful ACCT reviews which are multi-disciplinary – though more attention needs to be paid to ensure wider attendance as unpredictable timings can hamper attendance of multidisciplinary personnel and IMB members.

The integrated system for addressing complex cases, includes discussion of self-harm, bullying, support plans and CSU needs, including exit planning for all cases. Levels of staff communication and accountability have improved.

The increased use of Anti-Bullying and (Blue) Support Plan interventions for poor copers has also helped improve practice. It is a welcome development that these are now more widely used than having to resort to use of an ACCT.

There have been 2 deaths in custody during the year. Coroner's/Ombudsman's reports are not yet available but neither was associated with suspicious circumstances.

There have been few serious incidents this year. IMB has been properly informed of them and is satisfied with their management.

There have continued to be a concerning number of key-lock failures. Major efforts to address this have been evident most notably the introduction of a gate lock warning system (which appears to be working), extensive staff retraining and management monitoring. Recent months indicate a level of success in this but constant vigilance is on-going and necessary.

HMP Rye Hill has recently (March 2015) become part of the NOMS-G4S Violence Management Project with emphasis on nil-tolerance of violence.

The effects of the Social Care Act, to be implemented in April 2015, were not fully identified at the end of the reporting period. However, the prison is aware of the implications of the Act and has a team responsible for preparation.

5.8 Segregation, Care and Separation, Close Supervision

Population levels in the unit have fallen dramatically since the re-role resulting in a calmer and more purposeful atmosphere, reducing pressure on staff who now have more time for the care element of the resource. Respect and decency of treatment have improved and the focus on exit planning (reviewed weekly) increased. Few prisoners now perceive CSU as a stepping stone to transfer.

However, concerns remain for those men who require a secure mental health placement to address their needs. Appropriate places are extremely limited and sectioning may be delayed in order to work around the mandatory time-frames for the transfer of sectioned men. This can result in prolonged stays in CSU, with limited mental health input, beyond that which is reasonable or decent. This is not acceptable.

From time to time it has been necessary to place a prisoner on ACCT in CSU. Management is mindful of the risks involved in this. Decisions are not taken lightly and support to prisoners concerned is extensive.

Men on dirty protest have been well treated with an emphasis on understanding their predicament and encouraging alternative ways to express any concerns.

5.9 Residential Services (including accommodation, food and kitchens)

All residential wings were redecorated as they became vacant during the re-role. In-cell phones have been installed throughout and the installation of in-cell fire detection is in progress. A non-smoking policy was introduced in August and this applies to all areas with the exception of residential wing cells. Overheating in cells in the summer months has always been a problem and fans are issued in extreme cases. Disappointingly with the increase in the elderly population since the re-role the issue

of orthopaedic mattresses has been, and continues to be, problematic. Whilst the standard of cleanliness on the wings has always been good, it must be reported that since the re-role the standard is now exceptional.

To accommodate the increase in older men since the re-role, the gym staff has introduced a walking group, which has proved to be very popular.

The IEP policy for behaviour management has produced a better distribution of the IEP levels (e.g. as of the end of March 2015 – 3.23% Basic, 28.23% Standard and 68.54% Enhanced)

Four new ovens have been installed in the main kitchen. The 14 allergens identified by the Food Standards Agency are listed on the CMS menu. Our weekly reports indicate that there is general satisfaction with the food provided, and this is verified by an offender survey which showed great satisfaction. The training kitchen provides NVQ courses for Food Preparation and Hospitality. During the reporting period 13 prisoners obtained NVQ level 1, and a further 7 NVQ level 2 qualification.

There has been a significant drop in canteen turnover since the re-role and 60% of all purchases are for tobacco and phone credit. The methodology of ordering canteen via CMS has proved to be very efficient.

The CMS system for booking visits is working well. The number of no-shows is very small.

Due to the 50% reduction of prisoners practising the Muslim faith since the re-role, there is now only one part-time Imam.

Section 6

OTHER AREAS

6.1 Drugs/Substance Misuse

The substance misuse service has experienced major staffing issues during the year and for a lot of the reporting period has worked on a skeleton staff. This situation is now being addressed but it is likely that staffing will remain critically low until the middle of 2015.

The new population profile has changed the pattern of substance misuse; more towards prescription drugs and alcohol rather than illegal drugs such as heroin and cannabis. However, there remain a fairly high percentage of prisoners with some substance misuse history.

The one area of the substance misuse programme that has worked very well during the year is the Ryton Organic Gardens project with the garden creation and maintenance progressing well and the prisoners involved being very engaged and enthusiastic about the work. This project will continue to expand with new aspects of horticulture such as bee-keeping being added.

External funding remains in place for a lot of the SMS initiatives originally planned and it is hoped that when a new manager is in place these will begin to be reintroduced as the present reduced service is not meeting all the prisoner needs.

6.2 Programmes

The programmes team experienced high levels of staff turnover and sickness at the beginning of the reporting period but is managing to meet KPTs.

In light of the re-role staff levels were proposed to go up to 20, for which additional resources were allocated to allow a greater emphasis on programmes. Accommodation was expected to increase by 4 porta-cabins (to a total of 8) by June 2014. However, new cabins were only in place and ready for use with interview and team space etc. by November 2014.

Following the re-role there was a far higher proportion of prisoners not ready for programme attendance, such as those in denial of their offence, than was considered feasible for meeting agreed KPTs. It was felt that 2014/15 targets together with those for 2015/16 could still be met but this needs to be addressed to avoid impact thereafter.

Re-alignment activities to increase the number of prisoners ready to attend a programme have been ongoing throughout the year as part of Phase II of the re-role. In March 2015 OMU were facilitating swaps on a 3 in 3 out basis. For deniers or those considered not psychologically ready for or

unsuitable for SOTP a pre-SOTP programme 'Mind the Gap' has been in development since at least July 2014. This was scheduled to start January 2015 but as yet this has not been formally approved.

Managing prisoner expectations of how quickly they are likely to be placed on a course after arrival is an issue (as it is at other treatment establishments).

SOTP programmes are running with 9 prisoners per group. The adapted SOTP 'Becoming a New Me' is also running, with 8 prisoners per course. Given the high percentage of prisoners with learning difficulties, disabilities and lower I.Q.'s, programmes staff would like to offer additional adapted programmes, however, only one team is trained and the longer course duration with fewer participants could impact on KPT achievement. By November 2014, 4 SOTPs and 1 TSP were running and by March 2015, 3 SOTPs and 1 TSP were running.

In March 2015, SOTP programmes delivery training for new staff is underway but there have been problems with cancellation of external courses at short notice. This is at great cost to the establishment as hotels, transport etc. often are booked in advance.

Given the characteristics of the new population the IMB has requested and received programmes awareness training.

6.3 Changes in Senior Management Team

Our concern, expressed in last year's report, regarding staff changes in the Senior Management Team has not carried over into this reporting period. Only two changes have taken place. The present Head of Security was appointed in February. The Director was transferred in December and his post has been temporarily covered by the Deputy Director. All indications are that the Senior Management will continue to be stable and provide continuity.

6.4 Staff/Prisoner Relations

The re-role has led to some loss of staff who felt they would rather not work in a sex offender prison. It is noticeable that most, but not all, of the staff who continue to work in the prison are doing so in a positive and productive way, although retraining and support for staff remains an ongoing exercise.

The prison council has been reconstituted following re-role. It is now managed directly by the prison without inputs from the external charity initially used. This has improved the quality of the council's work where it is increasingly used to consider broader issues in the establishment. A limiting factor is that its efficiency is often judged by prisoners by the speed at which their concerns are overtly addressed. However, as they begin to see results, it is becoming a useful forum for discussion and communication. There are early signs of prisoners believing they have a voice and can contribute to progress.

Section 7

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

7.1 Membership and Recruitment

At the end of the reporting period there were 11 members, with the Board remaining significantly below establishment strength of 17. Monitoring of specific areas has been maintained throughout the period. During the year 4 new members were recruited but 6 members resigned, mainly due to personal issues. A recruitment campaign is underway.

7.2 Applications to the Board

414 Applications were received during the period, an increase of 24%. Of these 27 contained 2 subjects requiring attention, making a total of 441 investigations – a 37% increase over the previous period. There has been an increase in property applications since the prison re-role when large numbers of prisoners were moved in and out of the establishment. Health related applications have doubled since the re-role, mainly due to the ageing population. Education/employment issues also increased from 16 in the previous year to 64 this year.

Applications in Confidential Access trebled but most did not require confidentiality and were treated as ordinary applications.

7.3 Board Statistics

BOARD STATISTICS		
Recommended complement of Board members	17	
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	13	
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11	
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	4	
Number of members leaving within reporting period	6	
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12	
Total number of visits to the prison	594	
Number of applications received (see comment above)	414	
Number of CSU review sessions scheduled to be held (each sessions could be up to 5 reviews)	Ca 150	
Number of CSU review sessions attended	Ca 145	
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	26 Feb 2015	

Application Statistics

Code	Subject	2013/2014	2014/2015
A	Accommodation	5	22
B	Adjudications	3	5
C	Equality & diversity (including religion)	4	10
D	Education/employment/training including IEP	16	64
E 1	Family/visits including mail & phone	20	23
E 2	Finance/pay	7	15
F	Food/kitchen related	13	11
G	Health related	39	79
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	31	38
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	55	66
H 3	Canteen, facilities, catalogue shopping, Argos	5	9
I	Sentence related (including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	38	29
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns including bullying	38	53
K	Transfers	23	7
L	Miscellaneous	24	13
	Total number of applications	321	441
	Of total: number of Confidential Access was:	7	21

Acknowledgement

This report has been compiled from information gathered by all members of the Board.