



The Annual Report of

THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

HMP FEATHERSTONE

1st November 2014 – 31st October 2015

HMP FEATHERSTONE
NEW ROAD
FEATHERSTONE
WV10 7PU

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statutory role of the Board	1
HMP Featherstone	2
Executive Summary	3
Resettlement	4
Learning and Skills	5
Healthcare	6
Safer Custody	7
Segregation	8
Accommodation	9
Environment in the Prison	10
Risk Reduction	11
Chaplaincy	12
Catering and Kitchen	13
Applications to the Board	14
Gymnasium and Sports Facilities	15
Industries	16
Health and Safety	17
Visitor Centre and Visits	18
Drugs and Drug Testing	19
Equalities	20
Work of the Board	21

Section 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration Act 1999 require each Prison and Immigration Control Centre to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community within which the establishment is located.

The Board is specifically charged with:

- Satisfying itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody in the prison and the range and adequacy of programmes preparing them for release.
- Informing promptly the Secretary of State or any official to whom he/she has delegated authority and judged to be appropriate of any concerns it has.
- Reporting annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed upon it and what impact this has on those in its custody.

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 to prison records.

Section 2

HMP FEATHERSTONE

HMP Featherstone is an adult male Category C prison located approximately 8 miles north of Wolverhampton. The main section of Houses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 were built in 1976, and occupy part of the same land complex as HMYO Brinsford and HMP Oakwood. Houses 5 and 7 were later additions.

HMP Featherstone has an operational capacity of 687. It holds only convicted prisoners and is served by local prisons including HMP Birmingham and HMP Hewell as well as other Category C prisons. Prisoners are either released directly or transferred to Category D prisons whilst very occasionally a prisoner might go to a Category B prison. The majority of prisoners are aged between 21 and 29 years, usually serving sentences of between 4 to 10 years for a variety of offences. The prison also houses a small number of lifer, IPP and older prisoners in the later stages of their sentences.. The prison is now categorised as a Resettlement Prison.

HMP Featherstone is primarily a working prison with well-equipped workshops, an Education Department, a library, gymnasium and an all-weather sports pitch. The Healthcare Department provides daytime cover but there are no in-patient facilities and those requiring them are either transferred to prisons where they are available or to hospital as appropriate. The Chaplaincy provides spiritual and moral guidance for all prisoners.

The Board commends HMP Featherstone for the number and diversity of Peer Supporters employed in many areas of prison life. Their work greatly enhances the well-being of many fellow prisoners.

Section 3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 This report covers the period 1st November 2014 – 31st October 2015.
- 3.2 HMP Featherstone is a Level 3 prison following changes to the assessment requirements but continues to perform strongly as shown by score results from good to excellent in various audits. Directed by Governor Babafemi Dada the prison continues to exhibit a clear sense of direction and purpose.
- 3.3 The Governor and his Senior Management Team continue to work hard on the Decency Agenda and on Safer Custody.
- 3.4 The services provided by the Healthcare Department have improved considerably during the year. **However the Board are particularly concerned over the issues referred to in paragraph 6.1 of this report relating to cancellation of appointments at outside hospitals and believe that they need urgent review.**
- 3.5 Applications to the Board on medical matters have reduced with the introduction of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) complaints procedure.
- 3.6 The Board continues to monitor the time spent by some prisoners on the Segregation Unit, Transfers from the Unit are not allowed other than in special circumstances where the safety of the prisoner or of others is a concern.
- 3.7 The Board continues to be concerned that the property of some prisoners transferred to Featherstone is going astray. This appears to be an ongoing issue that is linked to the PECS contract and the fact that the vehicles are not adequate to carry both prisoners and their property. **The Board are concerned that the improvements promised by NOMS are still not having any marked improvements in this area.**
- 3.8 The extent of the ingress of illegal substances and in particular illicit synthetic substances concern the Board because of their effect on prisoner behaviour with health concerns, debt and consequent bullying being ongoing issues. **The Board is satisfied that the senior management are aware of the situation and are taking appropriate action. This situation is however common throughout the prison estate.**

- 3.9 The age of the prison has led to a situation where shower facilities are no longer fit for purpose and present serious risk to the health and safety of prisoners. **Immediate steps are needed to redress the situation.**

Section 4

RESETTLEMENT

- 4.1 This important area of Featherstone's responsibility in preparing prisoners for release is overseen by a Governor Grade – the Head of Reducing Re-Offending (HoRR). Meetings take place regularly on a bi monthly basis, chaired by the HoRR and are attended by a member of the IMB. Meetings are generally well attended but the IMB has noted that Healthcare's attendance has been infrequent. Figures for achievement for each Pathway are reported to the meeting and the IMB congratulates all concerned for success in reaching targets.
- 4.2 There has been some difficulty in opening bank accounts with HSBC for eligible prisoners but we understand this has been resolved. The board appreciates that the non-profiled activity to organise Family Days takes place although this activity is under review due to low attendance which is disappointing. A Prisoner representative carries out pre-release feedback to establish the effectiveness of Resettlement planning, and outcomes of this evaluation are reported to the meeting. The only concern expressed has been that some prisoners do not know the name of their Offender Supervisor or have difficulty making contact with her/him.
- 4.3 In May 2015 Warwickshire and West Mercia (WWM) CRC began to provide 'Through the Gate' services at HMP Featherstone. The board has received an update on progress from the HoRR which clearly indicates the effort that has been completed into agreeing how Pathways 1, 2 and 6 will be managed with close cooperation by both parties to reduce any duplication of services. It was envisaged that by the beginning of August a settled team would be in place, contracted to attend the bi monthly meetings. Some new initiatives have been planned by the CRC which are still in early stages of development. A Meet and Mentor Service has also been introduced. Interface meetings take place between both partners to monitor Contract Assurance within the enabling environment Featherstone has committed to provide.
- 4.4 The IMB would like acknowledge the efficiency and commitment with which the HoRR manages and monitors Featherstone's Reducing Re Offending services for prisoners in its care.

Section 5

LEARNING AND SKILLS

5.1 On arrival at the prison, all prisoners are issued with a comprehensive list of educational and training programmes. These programmes are both academic and vocational and are regularly tailored to suit the needs of the students. They are delivered at all levels in order to equip the prisoners with the best chances of gaining further training, education or employment on release. The department is cognisant of the latest trends in learning and skills which enables it to incorporate these into its curriculum.

5.2 (a) Management.

The vacancies which existed last year for a deputy education manager and an administration assistant have now been filled

(b) Staffing.

The Department is currently one tutor on long term sickness leave which is affecting the delivery of the Industrial Cleaning Course. Dudley College had to relinquish its education contract on 1st June 2015 due to reduced government funding. Milton Keynes College now deliver the subjects previously covered by Dudley with the exception of Music and level 2 Horticulture

5.3. The curriculum is both wide and varied with new courses being introduced for the ensuing academic year. As the prison will be having a high turnover of short term prisoners this should not affect the teaching and learning. A large percentage of courses are short and the prisoners will be capable of completing them before release or being transferred to other establishments. At the time of compiling this report there seems to be a proportion of prisoners not attending classes due to visits, “rest in cell” and other appointments. All of these are impinging on the learning of the students. Despite this the college has a 75 – 85% attendance with an approximate 70% pass rate on course completion.

5.4 Milton Keynes College enjoys excellent relationships with its partner colleges and other sub contracted learning providers with a good cross fertilisation of ideas and working practices.

5.5 The Industrial Workshops are modern and offer realistic working environments which assist in preparing the prisoners for “life beyond prison”. Courses offer good accreditation and work skills which are recognised by future employers.

- 5.6 The Board recognises the hard work of both the staff in the Workshops and in the Education Department in these times of austerity.
- 5.7 During the reporting year 20 prisoners (the maximum allowed) have commenced Distance Learning Packages which can lead to obtaining Open University Degrees. The Learning & Skills Manager and Staff are to be congratulated for negotiating the funding required to provide these opportunities.

Section 6

HEALTHCARE

6.1 Healthcare is contracted to Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent NHS Partnership with other sub contracts e.g. mental health, physiotherapy, dentistry, podiatry in place. The contract is currently due for renewal and bids have been recently evaluated. The new contract will start Easter 2016. A new manager was appointed in January who is responsible for both Featherstone and Drake Hall and a Deputy Manager 1 July. Clinical Governance and Operational Management meetings are scheduled and are attended by the IMB's representative. There is acknowledgement that the Healthcare service and team are well supported by prison management. During the reporting year the board's Rota reports and notes from meetings have commented on:

- Staff shortages or fluctuations and the use of agency staff.
- The board commends the team for continuing to maintain the service and clinics during challenging times. Since July staffing has improved significantly and there is hope that Healthcare will be fully staffed by the end of September. Staff shortages have, on occasions, led to cancellations of clinics but this has been kept to a minimum. During the summer period, as in 2014, the staffing problem was escalated by the Deputy Governor to the Trust. In exceptional circumstances Healthcare staff can be brought in from Brinsford.
- Cancellation of Healthcare meetings and non engagement with meetings of functional areas of the prison regime.
The board has been informed that in recent months priority has been given to staff training and retention and in order to avoid cancellation of clinics and attendance at ACCT reviews during times of short staffing.
- **Cancellation of appointments at outside hospitals which are recorded as clinical incidents. Even though there is an open budget for escort staff in addition to the 2 members of staff detailed for escorts, the Trust will pay only for escort hours and the prison can only call officers in for a full shift. However, with more efficient timetabling of appointments the situation has improved of late and pre operative assessments are now done at the prison thus saving a visit to hospital.**
- Prisoners who are disrespectful or verbally abusive to staff are issued

with IEPs.

- Security clearance for newly appointed staff can take a long time.
- The Care Act. Healthcare staff are now managing requirements of the Act.
- Liaison with DARS. There is close liaison with the DARS team as all prisoners who are found using or in possession of NPS are automatically referred for assessment and early intervention in line with Featherstone's NPS Strategy.
- Complaints. The board does not receive many complaints about Healthcare as these are now investigated externally by PALS with feedback being sent to Healthcare.
- Rest in cell has been reduced considerably following improved communication.
- DNAs. Some cases of non attendance for appointments can often be explained by incidents in the prison or problems with delivery of appointment slips.

6.2 In-reach Mental Health. This service is contracted to South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Trust. 4 mental health nurses run several clinics each week, providing a service to upwards of 50 prisoners who experience more serious mental health conditions such as Schizophrenia, Bi Polar disorder, ongoing depression and Personality Disorder. Issues that have been experienced during the reporting year are:

- The Psychiatrist holds one clinic a week, usually supported by trainees but has recently been offering extra clinics due to a shortage of trainees since July. The present clinics are fully booked to December.
- Reception screening, based on a prisoner's current prescribed medication, has been refined in order to ensure referral to the appropriate team, either primary care or in-reach.
- Room availability in the Healthcare Department is sometimes a problem, simply due to lack of available space at busy times.
- Waiting times for beds in medium secure/units hospitals can be lengthy.

Section 7

SAFER CUSTODY

7.1 Safer Custody meetings are held monthly and are well attended by Governors and Representatives from Chaplaincy, Healthcare, Security, Offender Management, Industries, Activities Hub, IMB, The Shannon Trust, Samaritans and Residential. In addition there are prisoners representatives covering violence reduction, Insiders, Listeners, DARS, Equalities, Over 50's and Veterans in Custody who present their individual reports for the previous month. Matters of concern are addressed. The Prisoners Reps are to be congratulated for their contributions towards making the prison a safer place. An un-announced Safer Custody Audit was carried out in September 2015 and as a result the prison was awarded Green Status.

During the year 253 ACCT plans were opened. A DVD explaining the effects of taking NPS is shown to all prisoners on Induction. The DVD contains sections on Safety, Family, Debt and punitive action related to violent conduct.

- 7.2 The number of Assaults has declined but the severity has increased since the prison became a re-settlement prison. A strict strategy has been introduced to deal with NPS, possession of weapons and Hooch. Zero tolerance is shown to anti-social behaviour and serious assaults are referred to the police immediately. Since the introduction of the Offensive Weapons Policy in Prisons and with it greater accountability for prisoners caught in possession a weapons amnesty took place whereby prisoners were enabled to dispose of weapons without repercussions.
- 7.3 Body Worn cameras have been introduced during the year with a great deal of success. Not only do they assist in deterring prisoners from committing offences but they provide useful evidence of the effects of NPS on prisoners health

Section 8

SEGREGATION UNIT

- 8.1 The Segregation Unit is well run and staffed by professional, committed and caring Officers who have a difficult job dealing with challenging and volatile prisoners
- 8.2 Board Members visit the unit weekly and speak to all prisoners within the unit to ascertain any concerns they may have. Checks are made to ensure that the unit is clean, that there is suitable bedding and that the residents have access to exercise, showers, canteen and the telephone. Members regularly attend reviews and adjudications and are routinely informed of developments where the IMB have specific monitoring responsibility.
- 8.3 A member of the Board attends the quarterly meetings of the SMARG (Segregation Monitoring and Review Group) / Adjudications Standards Meeting where the use of segregation is monitored and reviewed.
- 8.4 Throughout the reporting period 188 prisoners were placed in the unit which is a higher number than in the year 2013/4. The Board feels that the prisons move to a re-settlement prison and the increase in the detection of New Psychoactive Substances are the underlying reasons for the increase.
- 8.5 The average length of stay for prisoners in the unit is 9.4 days which has reduced in the reporting period.. There were no prisoners held within the unit for three months or more.

- 8.6 Many prisoners within the unit have debts or think that there is a better chance of being transferred to other establishments

Section 9

ACCOMMODATION

- 9.1 At HMP Featherstone a total of 703 prisoners were accommodated in 7 house units. Houses 1 -4 accommodate 123 prisoners each; House 5, the Induction Unit, houses 100. House 6 houses 35 prisoners and is for enhanced regime prisoners and House 7 accommodates 76 prisoners and is a healthy lifestyle unit.
- 9.2 Single cell occupancy is the norm, with the exception of House 5 where there are 2 prisoners to each cell. There are also a small number of double cells on Houses 1, 4 and 7. Most cells have integral sanitation, power points and a light switch. Very few issues have arisen because of 2 prisoners to a cell
- 9.3 House 6 has a mix of young prisoners, IPP (Indeterminate Sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection) and Lifers. All seem to get on well and behaviour is to the expected standard. **There are no integral facilities on House 6 which means that prisoners are left unlocked at nights to enable access to facilities on their spur**
- 9.4 House 7 continues to offer enhanced status prisoners a place where they can improve their outlook on life during their time in prison. With several prisoners with disabilities on this House, able bodied prisoners voluntarily take on extra work in supporting those less able than themselves. This gives those volunteering a sense of purpose and the realisation that they can make a useful contribution while in prison.
- 9.5 The Segregation Unit has suffered considerable damage during the year. The expensive repairs carried out in the previous year have failed to prevent further damage. The Board supports the policy to charge prisoners causing the damage with the cost of repairs.
- 9.6 With the prison getting older the need for urgent attention to the upgrading of the facilities for prisoners to take showers in a safe environment becomes essential. **The present facilities are not considered fit for purpose.**

Section 10

ENVIRONMENT IN THE PRISON

- 10.1 Sustainability

During the year Featherstone has continued to work hard to ensure wherever possible financial savings, benefits or improvements are made.

10.2 Kitchens

Information is requested from each house unit on a daily basis to analyse the food not being eaten due to either over production, poor portion control or food being ordered and not collected. All three areas contribute to waste. However the quantity and quality of the information has not lead to potential reduction in waste

10.3 Waste Management

Over the year it is expected that approx. 198 – 200 tonnes of waste will have been prevented from going to landfill. Current national target is 70% with Featherstone's recycling currently running at 73%

This has been achieved by recycling cardboard & paper, metals, plastics, glass, electrical items, prisoner clothing, wood, furniture and many other items. These recycling operations should provide HMP Featherstone with savings of approx £28,500 for the year.

10.4 Biodiversity & Horticulture

The Bee Hives introduced in 2014 have been increased in number and the production of honey should be achieved in the near future.

The Bird and Owl boxes have been effective with various birds nesting during the Spring.

10,5 Bedding plants have been grown and sales have realised over £100

The gardens are producing more vegetables and salad items thereby supplementing fresh food within the prison kitchen.

The Sports Field which was in poor condition has been fertilized, scarified and cut in an attempt to restore it to a an acceptable condition.

Section 11

RISK REDUCTION

- 11.1 Behaviour change programmes are major contributors to the strategies which form the basis for Pathway 7 (Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour) and the part it plays in reducing re-offending. At the start of the Board's year full staffing to deliver the planned programmes was in place but at the end of our reporting period-changes including the loss-of some staff, a perennial problem in this area, resulted in only a treatment manager and three facilitators being in post. Despite this completions for RESOLVE (the offending behaviour programme for violent or aggressive offenders) will be on target. Completions for TSP (Thinking Skills Programme) are also satisfactory assisted by support from a regional facilitator. Staff are to be congratulated on what they have achieved.

- .11.2 The move to a resettlement prison has meant significant change but staff in the Resettlement section are addressing risk reduction issues. The “Through the Gate” team from the Warwickshire and West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company (WWM CRC) work with a number of agencies to ensure prisoners being released are best placed to resume normal life and avoid recall or re-offending. WWM CRC have also introduced a new non-accredited programme called SARM (Self-awareness Relationship Management) which focuses on domestic violence but it is not yet certain how many courses will run.
- 11.3 The Enable Project is in its last year (of three) and assists in finding employment for prisoners with complex mental health issues who need additional support.
- .11.4 It is also appropriate to note that the Violence Reduction Team continues to provide a valuable service. This is particularly so for some prisoners in the Segregation Unit who have concerns about returning to normal location.

Section 12

CHAPLAINCY

- 12.1 Led by an Imam, with a full-time Church of England Chaplain and part-time Priests and Ministers from other denominations, the chaplaincy ensures all religions are catered for within the prison. Prisoners are able to attend regular services for all faiths whenever they wish. Around 12 faiths have services on a weekly basis. All major religious festivals are carefully organised throughout the year and are well attended.
- 12.2 Counsellors attend the Chaplaincy on a regular basis to give advice to individual prisoners. Other organisations also attend the Chaplaincy on a regular basis to ensure advice is given to groups of prisoners eg Foreign Nationals.
- 12.3 Groups of musicians and singers continue to flourish and take part in events held in the Chapel throughout the year, including the annual Carol Service.
- 12.4 Daily visits are carried out in most areas of the prison and there are also extra support classes and help groups (AA group etc) run throughout the year. The Chaplaincy works closely with other departments within the prison to ensure that every opportunity is available for prisoners to seek any help and assistance they require and at the same time offers an area of peace and calm.

- 12.5 The Supporting Offenders through Restoration Inside course (S.O.R.I) is still continuing and regular courses are held throughout the year. Although based in the Chaplaincy, (like other groups mentioned above), it is not a religious course but is facilitated by the members of the Chaplaincy, together with Featherstone staff and trained community volunteers as necessary.
- 12.6 The Chaplaincy team network with all departments in the prison and are attentive and supportive for any issues that may arise throughout the year.
- 12.7 The Board Members, on their regular visits, are always welcomed into the Chapel by members of the Chaplaincy team and the Board feel that the prison is fortunate to have such a forward thinking and supportive Department.

Section 13 CATERING AND KITCHEN

- 13.1 The Board make regular visits to the kitchen area, which provide in the order of 770,000 meals a year providing each prisoner with a breakfast pack, lunch, and an evening meal on a daily basis.
- 13.2 A choice of menus is provided on a rotating four weekly cycle, with the emphasis on healthy eating whilst at the same time maintaining the governments guidelines on nutrition and calorie intake. Comments books are available at each servery counter and are checked by managers and IMB Board members. Catering staff meet regularly with the prisoner food council where recommendations and suggestions made are acted upon where practical.
- 13.3 The catering staff where ever possible endeavour to provide meals for the diverse range of cultures within the establishment, and celebrate diversity by preparing special meals for recognised festivals including Christmas, Ramadan, Eid. Sikh, Chinese New Year and other festivals as appropriate.
- 13.4 IMB Board members taste the food in the course of their regular visits, and witness the serving of meals to monitor portion control and hygiene standards employed. Special attention is paid to make sure that the correct equipment and utensils are used in the preparation and serving of Halal meals.
- 13.5 During the year the IMB Board have been concerned regarding staffing levels due to sickness levels and long term sick leave. These matters have now been addressed and we finish the reporting period with better

staffing levels. Changes have also been made to the employment of prisoners working within the kitchen areas who are now on probation for their first month in the kitchens. If they do not maintain the required standards for working in this area they are removed and given alternative work.

- 13.6 Throughout the reporting period the Board have been very concerned regarding the reliability and maintenance of the older kitchen equipment. Despite assurances given that a survey would be made to see what needs replacing, no progress appears to have been made. Further difficulties now arise with the change of the maintenance contracts which seem to lead to longer lead times in getting repairs carried out.
- 13.7 Towards the end of the reporting year there has been more input and support shown in monitoring Health and Safety in the kitchens area from all involved, and it is hoped this continues. Special attention will continue in the monitoring of all practices by those responsible for the serving of food in the wing areas.
- 13.8 Despite a difficult year with many changes, the catering team provided the daily requirement and standard of meals, met very demanding budget criteria, and were awarded a Five Star Rating for Hygiene, from South Staffs Environmental Health. Recognition for the effort made over the reporting period must be noted.

Section 14

APPLICATIONS TO THE BOARD

14.1 Analysis of Applications 1st November 2014 to 31st October 2015

There were 122 Applications to the Board in the period 1st November 2014 to 31st October 2015 compared to 186 in the previous year. .

- 14.2 There were 14 applications to the Board on health related matters this year compared with 19 last year.
- 14.3 There were 15 applications about Transfers compared to 16 last year with the larger proportion relating to the lack of Category D facilities within the prison estate.
- 14.4 There were 14 applications on Sentence related matters (including Home Detention Curfew, Release on Temporary Licence, Parole, Release Dates and re-categorisation)
- 14.5 There were 28 applications concerned with the delay or loss of property during transfer to Featherstone last year. The loss of property during transfer has been a problem for many years, has been referred to in

previous Annual Reports, and certainly has not improved. Understandable frustration and annoyance for affected prisoners is increased when matters extend over many weeks and even months.

- 14.6 Applications concerning Equality and Diversity show no real change but those concerning visits fell from 17 to 6 There was little change in the number of applications regarding food. Staff/Prisoner concerns fell from 19 to 6
- 14.7 Applications regarding accommodation show little change but the number of applications concerned with adjudications and Training showed significant reductions.

Breakdown of Applications by Subject

Accommodation	4
Adjudications	3
Equality/Diversity	2
Education/Employment	
Training & IEP	5
Family visits/mail/phone	6
Finance/pay	4
Food/kitchen	1
Health related	14
Property (Featherstone)	5
Property (other locations)	28
Canteen	3
Sentence related	14
Staff/prisoner related	6
Transfers	15
Miscellaneous	12
Total	<u>122</u>

Section 15

GYMNASIUM AND SPORTS FACILITIES

- 15.1 The success of these facilities is only attributable to the enthusiasm, dedication and hard work of the Gym Staff. These two areas continue to

be intensely used. Some activities and courses had to be postponed due to shortages of uniformed staff throughout the establishment. Where these occurred Gym Instructors had to be detailed to fill gaps on the house units. Happily the staff situation has improved allowing the re-commencement of normal activities. Classes are provided in kinetic lifting, Health Trainer and level 1 and 2 Diversity courses. Two of the recently qualified Health Trainers are used within the prison

- 15.2 Several sporting activities have links with the outside communities. Last season saw the promotion of the football team to Division 1 of the Staffordshire Senior League. They won the Fair Play Award for the second year running. The basketball team also won their Fair Play Award. Both the players and the staff should be congratulated on these achievements.
- 15.3 This year the Annual 10 mile run raised £1,600.00 for the Childrens cancer Charity the Acorns Trust.
- 15.4 The following competitions witnessed keen competitors in the Over 50s bowls tournament, power lifting and fittest man competitions
- 15.5 Members of the Board continue to be impressed with the hard work and enthusiasm shown by the Gym staff in their efforts to add to the fitness and good humour of the prisoners who attended the many activities.

Section 16

INDUSTRIES

- 16.1 Featherstone continues to support all prisoners with the opportunity of a wide range of working activities which include fabrication & welding food preparation, cooking, horticulture, printing, bricklaying, motor mechanics, painting and decorating, customer services, business administration as well as recycling of all waste product's produced within the prison. Featherstone also operates a call centre giving prisoners the opportunity to develop their communication skills.
- 16.2. The Engineering and Enterprises facilities at Featherstone continue to be actively busy manufacturing a wide range of products for the PSPI and other outside contractors. The introduction of re settlement prisoners has caused some issues as they are usually due for release after a short period in the prison and therefore the department is not able to offer full training and development for these prisoners due to their imminent release dates.
- 16.3 The introduction of a new functional lead for the area from September 2015 hopefully will ensure that Industries and Enterprises can remain

competitive with outside industries and that all prisoners working in the environment can continue to gain the skills and qualifications needed for their future release.

Section 17

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of both staff and prisoners is overseen by a committee chaired by an H & S Manager supported by a small team of Health and Safety professionals. Risk assessments are being updated, fire drills and training are carried out regularly and a member of the Board attends Committee meetings and is supplied with the minutes. The non return of completed risk assessments is concerning and in some areas new assessments are necessary due to relocation of departments within the prison. There are 81 members of Staff currently trained in first aid and of these 8 are trained Emergency First Aiders. Within the 81 first aiders 22 are trained to use Defibrillators. The Department arrange all necessary appointments for injections with Service Providers. There are 50 open litigation cases from areas within the prison where the claim culture seems to be increasing.

Section 18

THE VISITS CENTRE AND THE VISITS

Halow (Birmingham) is the provider of the Visitor Centre Services. Hot food is now available in the Visits Room and this has created a more social setting and improved the atmosphere . In the main visits go ahead on time and are efficiently and professionally organised.

The superb purpose built centre has excellent staff and a team of dedicated volunteers, some who have been at the Centre for many years .

Section 19

DRUGS AND DRUG TESTING

19.1 As from 1st June 2015 the service is provided by Lifeline who operate as one team to cover all aspects of work associated with Drugs and Drug Testing. The team work in a holistic way, focussing on all levels with both drugs and alcohol issues, and on a voluntary basis, for rehabilitation. The team consists of 15 full time members who regularly hold structured clinical reviews with clinical and psycho social staff and the prisoners.

DARS offer a wide range of recovery treatments for both drugs and alcohol abuse

The teams work has increased over the past year since Featherstone became a resettlement prison. This has meant more work on reception

and screening and liaison with Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC's) to ensure the most effective help on a prisoners release and that programme continues

- 19.2 DARS have worked hard in promoting awareness of effects of drug and alcohol misuse. Various leaflets and posters have been produced and circulated throughout the prison to highlight the issues involved and these are regularly updated. They sometimes call upon the prisoners themselves to design the posters so that they have a greater effect on their fellow prisoners – these are then laminated and put up throughout the prison for all to see.

There is still a major problem with the use of new psychoactive substances (legal highs) as these cannot be classed as either “legal” or “safe” and pose a new and significant challenge for the team. The scale and use of different NPS can change very quickly but the position is quickly reviewed through regular meetings. .

As with other establishments the ingress of illicit substances continues to be of concern although constant security and intelligence attempts to keep this to a minimum. Increased fencing and patrols have been introduced and the situation is continually monitored by security.

- 19.3 Programmes within the gymnasium and visitors' centre have been very successful for their service users and these will continue.
- 19.4 The MDT team are responsible for random and frequent testing. Close liaison between the various departments has meant that random testing has been done when there is a suspicion of drug use. This close liaison and networking also allows a referral system to be in place so that anyone can refer a prisoner if there is a suspicion of drug use.

Section 20

EQUALITIES

- 20.1 The Equalities Committee meets bi-monthly and is well attended by Governors and representatives of all departments. It is pleasing to note that prisoners representatives play an active and valued role in these meetings and present functional update reports. Current focus group representation includes Equalities, Over 50's, Veterans in Custody, Violence Reduction and Foreign Nationals. A structured Agenda covers all aspects of Equality and an IMB Board Member regularly attends the meetings.
- 20.2 The Equalities Monitoring Tool on the Prison Rating System covers the following protected characteristics – Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation,

Gender, Gender Identity, Religion and Belief, Age, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity. Close working relationships are encouraged between each characteristic

- 20.3 Featherstone currently has 49 prisoners over 50 representing 6.97 % of the population. There are 11 prisoners over 60 representing 1.56% of the population.
- 20.4 In March Featherstone became the Foreign National Hub for West Mercia. The number of registered Foreign National prisoners is 41 representing 5.8% of the prison population.
- 20.5 There are 269 prisoners with disabilities which equates to 38.3% of the population.
- 20.6 Counselling Sessions, AA meetings, Yoga classes, Travellers meetings, Migration Surgeries and Restorative Justice sessions as well as numerous Religious services, festivals and celebrations are held throughout the year and are attended by all groups.
- 20.7 The Care Act 2015 came into operation in April 2015 whereby all Councils in England were responsible for assessing and providing specified equipment for disabled prisoners. Steps have been taken to identify prisoners to whom the Act might apply and have put in place an appropriate care and support package.

Section 21.

THE WORK OF THE BOARD

- 21.1 The Board has nine Members out of a full complement of sixteen. Three valued members of the Board resigned during the year..
- 21.2 The Board meets on the second Friday of each month. Each week at least one member makes a rota visit or visits while others deal with applications and segregation reviews. All members devote significant amounts of time to their Board duties, which also include attending most of the prison committees and taking additional training when the need arises.
- 21.3 The Board continually reviews its own performance, discusses working patterns and future strategies. This is very useful in keeping the board focused and maximising its performance.
- 21.4 The Board is very mindful of the diverse population in its local area which is reflected in the prison population, but regrets that it still has difficulty in recruiting from minority ethnic groups.
- 21.5 The Board appreciates the good relationship it has with Governor Dada, his senior management team and the prison staff generally whose co-operation makes its task easier.

21.6 Finally I would like to thank my Colleagues for their support and assistance. I have to commend the work done by our Clerk Mrs Helen Forrester. Board members have much appreciated her efforts.

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Ian Marks IMB Chair 2014/2015
HMP Featherstone
November 2015