



**INDEPENDENT  
MONITORING BOARD  
HMP & YOI ROCHESTER**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2015- 2016**

## Section 1

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### STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison 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

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### DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

HMP & YOI Rochester was originally built as a prison in 1874. It was extensively rebuilt in the early 20th century as the Borstal Institution, taking its title from an adjacent village. Some of its buildings still date from this time.

Rochester is a dedicated site for sentenced men serving four years and under from the Kent, Surrey and Sussex area; Rochester being the local release prison for these areas. It also takes Young Offenders with a sentence of up to 5 years from any area. The two groups of prisoners are integrated within the accommodation.

The objectives of the prison are to hold prisoners securely and safely, and to provide a well-ordered establishment where prisoners are treated humanely and with decency. The ultimate aim is to reduce the risk or re-offending.

The original accommodation is a mixture of single and double cells contained in five wings on the 'old' site, and a further four wings on the 'new' site. The Segregation Unit is located on the 'old' site. E wing has recently been established as first night accommodation. Resettlement is accommodated on H wing. The prison's current CNA is 755. However C Wing is partially closed for substantial maintenance, and during the reporting year remedial maintenance on all wings has meant that parts of wings have been out of action throughout the period.

The regime at Rochester is intended to give prisoners training through a structured sentence plan. Rochester is actively engaging prisoners to address their offending behaviour and offer opportunity to engage in training, education and work linked to employment where possible. Increasing the links to real employment vacancies is a continuing aim. Interventions are also offered in regard to substance misuse and resettlement through contracted provision. KSSCRC and RAPT offer services including recovery programmes, housing, finance and mentoring.

It is intended that physical well-being is catered for through physical education at two well-run gymnasiums, offering competitive and recreational activities. Support for prisoners is available from the Healthcare team, In-reach and Chaplaincy, as well as community support from external organisations.

## Section 4

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### 4.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers the period April 2015 to March 2016. It has been a challenging year for HMP Rochester. There has been a change of Governor, an adverse HMCIP Report, staffing shortages and the ongoing battle over the availability of drugs and other contraband circulating within the prison.

In the Board's view the key issue is the availability of new psychoactive substances (NPS), mobile phones and other illicit drugs and items. Its impact is felt across the prison in every way. It has led to higher levels of violence with an increasing number of prisoners self-isolating because of debt-related bullying and intimidation. It is also a factor in the increasing number of prisoners self-harming. The Senior Management Team have gone to commendable lengths to overcome the problem but the open site of Rochester's location provides opportunities for contraband to be sent over the prison fencing. As well as increasing the security arrangements at the prison, more original ways to manage the drug problem have been tried, such as the "See Life More Clearly" campaign and the Guinea Pigs video produced by Rochester inmates, focussing on the unpredictable and harmful effects of NPS. However, despite some significant finds by staff, the dealers are not deterred. The Board continues to have grave concerns about the widespread availability of drugs, especially NPS, throughout the prison.

The establishment of the new Community Development Unit (to provide a safer location for prisoners who either believe or are identified as being at risk), has been a welcome initiative and produced a decrease in the numbers held in Segregation.

The increase of availability of NPS and mobile phones came at the same time as the reduction in prison staff numbers. Regrettably there are fewer experienced officers available to deal with difficult and sometimes dangerous situations. In the Board's view too many prisoners appear to be wandering around the prison unchallenged during times when they should be either at activity or returning to a wing. The Board remains convinced repercussions from ill-judged staffing reductions continue to impact on the prison's effectiveness as a place of rehabilitation. Staffing shortages led to the introduction of a restricted regime with a reduced core day from April to September 2015 and again from March 2016 (which continues into the next reporting year). The restricted regime has brought stability to how the prison can deliver its daily operational responsibilities, however the Board regrets the subsequent loss of association time available to prisoners.

There has been one death (self inflicted) in custody during the year. In addition commendable swift action by Prison Officers has averted other deaths from occurring. Healthcare provision has improved during the year and the department is now fully staffed. The RAPt team are providing good clinical services to meet the needs of the substance users they are able to reach.

To address the criticisms in the HMCIP report the Senior Management team have developed an action plan, the delivery of which the Board is monitoring. The Board recognises many of the criticisms in the report were fair, but it did not fully take into account the problems created by staff shortages, lack of funding and under-valued the good work being achieved through limited resources. For example, Rochester's bicycle workshop won a National Recycling Award for Best Recycling Re-use.

Personal property is a cause of much anxiety to many offenders. On transfer it is frequently left behind and sometimes mislaid. The Board's view is that something needs to be done to

remedy the situation as soon as possible.

Along with many other establishments, the Board is dissatisfied with the performance of maintenance contractor Carillion. Delays seem to be endemic and the bureaucracy wasteful and cumbersome.

## **4.2 Overall Judgement**

The Board considers that HMP & YOI Rochester generally provides a safe and decent environment for prisoners. For the most part staff deal with the diverse population of offenders in their care openly, sympathetically and effectively although there are a few prisoners whose needs are extremely difficult to meet within a prison environment. As stated last year, the Board seriously questions whether Courts should be referring some prisoners, with identifiable mental health needs, to a prison establishment and, given the unsurprising inability of the prison to meet those needs, also questions where legal responsibility for the safety and well-being of those prisoners and their actions on others, might reasonably rest.

The IMB is concerned that the on-going limitation on resources will continue to lead to less satisfactory outcomes in the rehabilitation of prisoners, despite the best efforts of the Senior Management Team and prison staff to mitigate the effects of under-resourcing and under-staffing. The Board urges the Secretary of State to ensure adequate, appropriate and consistent staffing of the prison. Throughout the Report reference is made to difficulties being experienced by the prison and many of these are directly attributable to staffing shortages and/or the consequent lack of purposeful activity.

## **4.3 ISSUES REQUIRING A RESPONSE**

### **4.3.1 Purposeful Activity - "Prisoners are able and expected to engage in activity that is likely to benefit them".**

The Board strongly urges the Secretary of State to ensure that a firm commitment is made, in line with Government policy, to provide the Prison with all the resources necessary to allow full time, high quality, purposeful activity to be provided for all prisoners at Rochester. Having stripped the full-time staff roll to below the operational minimum, staff vacancies and sickness have a significant detrimental effect on the effectiveness of prison activities, which tend to be the area from which staff are drawn in the event of unscheduled demands, such as security incidents and escort duties. The Board believe this to be a false economy. (See Sections 5.2 and 5.6)

### **4.3.2 Illicit Drugs and Other Contraband**

The Board has grave concerns about the continuing discovery of illicit drugs and other contraband, such as mobile phones, that are available to prisoners, despite the endeavours of staff to stem the flow. The Board strongly urges that measures are taken to strengthen the resources available to reduce the flow of such contraband into the prison. (See section 6.4).

### **4.3.3 Healthcare**

The Board strongly urges the Secretary of State to ensure that adequate staffing is made available for prisoners to attend outside health appointments, without stripping the prison of normal operational staff. (See Section 5.3)

### **4.3.4 Kitchen and Catering**

The Board continue to be concerned that the prison is not adequately funded to fulfil its statutory requirements, with regard to food, (within budget). (See Section 5.7.1)

#### **4.3.5 Property**

On transfer a prisoner's property is frequently left behind and sometimes mislaid. This in turn leads to prisoner frustration and can become a source of unnecessary anxiety leading to behavioural issues for wing staff. No significant progress on the management of property transfer appears to be being made. The Board urges NOMS to address this as a priority. .

#### **4.3.6 Works**

The standard of service provided by Carrillion and its cumbersome administrative processes are having an adverse affect on prisoner welfare. The Board strongly urges that measures are undertaken by MOJ/NOMS to improve the level of service which is being provided.

### **4.4 PREVIOUS YEAR'S CONCERNS**

This report covers the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

Throughout this Report reference is made to concerns expressed in previous years. These include:

- The impact of the loss of experienced staff continues to have an impact on all aspects of life within the prison. Offering voluntary redundancy to a disproportionate number of experienced staff continues to look very short-sighted.
- Food Budget - incompatible with Prison Rules 24(2). National Conference Motion 2013 and 2014
- Contraband - further resources required to prohibit the delivery of drugs to the prison, and its subsequent trade within the prison.
- Lack of investment towards rehabilitation - real and substantial savings could be made if greater resources were put behind reducing the 'rate of return' of prisoners by equipping them for life in society outside of prison.

## Section 5

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### 5.1 Equality and Inclusion

The Equality Action Team (EAT) is now combined with the Safer Custody team. The Board are pleased to note that regular separate meetings have resumed to consider the monthly Equality Report. As part of the Safer Custody team, the EAT are now “ring-fenced” from deployment to other duties. Managing diversity has continued to be a demanding, but well managed, challenge for the prison. There are effective partnerships between governors, officers and offenders with open and constructive discussions.

Across the prison’s population, white prisoners remain in the majority (approximately 79% with BME at 21%). For YO’s the mix is slightly different with approximately 67% White and 33% BME. This is a change from last year when the numbers were almost equal. Adult prisoners comprise approximately 88% of the prison’s population – which is about the same as last year.

The number of reported racist Incidents has followed the downward trend from last year and continues to reduce at 18 against 22 last year (NB: 37 in 2013/14). It is unclear whether this is an actual decrease in racist incidents or caused through offenders and staff being less inclined to categorise an incident as racist. There is no supporting evidence either way from our Board Applications or Rota Reports. The Board will monitor this closely next year.

During the year the number of prisoners designated as Foreign Nationals has gradually increased due to the closure of a spur at HMP Maidstone; rising from 9 at one time to 23 in March. Useful services are provided for prisoners who need them from the UK Border Agency; a Migrant Helpline is available and Applied Language Solutions give prisoners access to a telephone service to seek advice.

### 5.2. Education, Learning and Skills

Education Services are provided by Manchester College, which has recently been rebranded as Novus. The HMICP Report commented favourably on the delivery of education and training, especially the relationship between prison staff and the provider. There is a good range of classroom based activity, such as literary, numeracy and IT skills. Training leading to qualifications is provided in construction skills, rail track, waste disposal, and market gardens. Unfortunately fork-lift truck training was discontinued due to funding issues, but the Board is pleased to note training has recently resumed with the identification of a new fund provider. A new Education Manager for 2016 has been appointed who has previous experience of working at Rochester. He brings new ideas and experiences which the Board hopes will be capitalised on. The Library is well used and offers books for all levels of literacy.

During the year, and as highlighted in the HMICP report, too few prisoners actually attend the courses or training to which they have been assigned. This is partly due to staff shortages (with education sessions being cancelled for security and other priorities) but also by too many prisoners remaining in their cells or refusing to leave a wing. This is unacceptable. Attendance rates for Education are generally around 70%; this represents a considerable under-usage of the Education places available. The attendance figures for skills training and work are better. The prison is taking concerted action to ensure that prisoners attend education classes/facilities to which they are allocated, and that all available spaces are fully taken-up. (See also Section 5.6) The Board will monitor whether an improvement is being achieved.



### 5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

In last year's report, the Board was concerned about the level of service being provided by Oxleas. These apprehensions proved unfounded and it is pleasing to note and commend the improvement which has been achieved by all those working in Healthcare and Mental Health. While there is a small increase in applications to the IMB relating to Healthcare, scrutiny of these shows there are fewer complaints about the service itself, and are related to medication or cancelled appointments.

With the exception of Pharmacy, the Healthcare unit is now fully staffed. Complaints about Healthcare are passed directly to them, and these have reduced since full staffing. The subjects of Complaints are similar to those received by the IMB (ie prisoners believing they are not receiving the medication they need or cancellation of a hospital appointment). Improved security is in place for the Healthcare staff; too many were subjected to abuse from prisoners who reacted adversely to medication changes or limitations.

The use of illicit drugs and self harm has increasingly impacted on Healthcare provision. The availability of NPS (Spice) in the prison is a major concern because of the adverse medical affect it can have on prisoners and also on some of the staff in contact with those affected.

Cancellation of hospital appointments due to lack of escorting prison officers is still a significant problem. To mitigate this Healthcare nurses have attended various skills courses (for example in suturing and leg ulcers) to reduce the number of prisoners having to leave the prison for medical treatment. Importantly those prisoners needing urgent hospital treatment are escalated by Healthcare to ensure they receive appropriate medical attention.

A dentist attends for two days per week (plus an extra day at present to tackle the waiting list). A GP attends every day and holds an emergency clinic on Saturday. There is a long waiting list for the Optician, as noted by the HMICP report. Frustratingly, there are still issues about prisoners not attending their appointments, roughly 25% per month between January – March 2016. The causes include prison lock downs; forgetfulness and lack of enforcement, but some do not attend because of their perceived personal safety concerns.

About two in ten prisoners are assessed as having mental health issues, The In Reach support is good, and they are referred to the Dickens Therapy Centre if appropriate. There are three counsellors (two of whom are volunteers) who hold sessions with individuals.

The Drug Recovery unit in A Wing continues to offer drug services to addicted prisoners. However the location of the unit involves the integration of prisoners seeking different outcomes for their drug use being mixed together (and sometimes alongside prisoners with no intention to change). It would, we believe, produce better outcomes for less future offending, if greater resources were targeted at drug-using prisoners allowing for fewer compromises in the treatment programme. The RAPt team provides good clinical and psychosocial services to the prisoners.

The Healthcare Team are at the forefront of the No Smoking in Prisons initiative; two staff from Rochester gave a presentation at a NOMS conference about how to drive the project forward. The policy has been implemented in half of H Wing – with Healthcare undertaking twice- weekly health checks to ensure there is compliance. The team are now waiting for dates to go smoke free wing by wing. As with many prisons, this will be a significant challenge for all those working and living in the prison, and one which the IMB will monitor closely.

There was one death at the prison in the reporting year. (See 5.4 below.) The PPO report identified again the issue that all prison staff understand their responsibilities during a medical emergency to ensure there are no delays in calling an emergency ambulance and that it is given appropriate directions to the prison. It is disappointing to report this is the third time this recommendation has been given by the PPO. The IMB has sought reassurance that appropriate training is being provided and undertaken by all staff.

#### **5.4 Safer Custody**

This has been a busy year for the Safer Custody team, who continue to work hard to ensure high standards of care throughout the prison. The impacts of debt, bullying and intimidation are, unfortunately, significant elements to life at HMP Rochester. It is to be hoped that following its illegality, the predicted reduction in the amount of NPS available in the prison (and the chaotic behaviour it causes) materialises. The Community Development Unit and Safer Custody being located in the same wing appears to have given the team a higher profile within the prison, which the IMB welcomes.

There were 183 incidents of self-harm during the year. This figure has not been collected before and can only be indicative given that it relates to individual circumstances. However, to the Board it does feel higher than in previous years. Between January and March 106 ACCT documents were opened. This is in line with the average of around 35 per month. Research into ACCT triggers show that apart from those related to a mental health issue, the prime reasons are a) debt (either owed or general stress of being in debt) and b) manipulation to obtain a wing move, smoker pack, TV, etc.

The Safer Custody team have identified that many incidents occur during the first weeks after arrival and have increased the number of Red Band prisoners deployed to E Wing, which is now the induction wing. Samaritan-trained Listeners are doing good work in identifying the most vulnerable prisoners when settling in, and support is increased as appropriate.

There are on average around 20 violent incidents per month at Rochester. A Violence Reduction Forum is being introduced – which will be a multidisciplinary group working with the 5 most violent offenders in the prison. The Board will monitor its progress.

Use of force statistics are collected and analysed, and are generally on a downward trend. IMB members are alerted when a forced-removal has taken place and those incidents observed have been proportionate.

There was one Death in Custody during the reporting period. This was self-inflicted. In addition commendable swift action by prison officers has averted other suicide attempts from being successful. (See the comment at 5.3 above.)

#### **5.5 Segregation**

The improvement in the standard of management of the Unit reported last year has continued, as has the policy of segregating the perpetrators of disorder rather than the victims, which has led to an overall decrease in the numbers held on OR. There has also been a drive to reduce the numbers and length of time prisoners spend on GOOD (below those specified in the PSO). As a consequence, concern remains for those who choose to remain behind their doors on the wings and this continues to be monitored.

The opening of the Community Development Unit (CDU) created on C Wing (referred to in the 2014/2015 report as the “enabling community”) has not been without its problems and its value continues to be monitored. The source of many of the 'fears' shared by this group of prisoners should not be overlooked, stemming as they do from problems of bullying and intimidation, often resulting from debts or inherited debts many of which are related to the drug trade in the prison.

Many of the prisoners in the Segregation Unit have been difficult and show signs of being disturbed. The Board monitors this area closely, and regularly attend Governors' and Independent Adjudications, and Good Order and Discipline reviews. With few exceptions, all reviews and adjudications attended were considered to be dealt with carefully, fairly and appropriately. Some officers show exceptional personal skills when dealing with difficult and challenging segregated prisoners.

Communication between the Unit and the IMB has improved although at times it still lags too far behind real-time events.

## **5.6 Purposeful Activity and Time Out of Cell**

A great deal of effort has been directed by the prison at provision of purposeful activity over the last few years but which nonetheless leaves room for improvement. Because of the restricted regimes, the proportion of time spent out of cells in the reporting year was lower than in past years. This was due in the main to continuing staff shortages, and the restricted regime in place at the start of the reporting year and which continued until September 2015.

Throughout the year a significant issue was the lack of attendance by prisoners at the workshops and education. (See also Section 5.2). A second restricted regime introduced at the beginning of March 2016 has reduced the amount of non-work related association time. This appears to be having a beneficial effect on attendance to work. The new regime was naturally met with some complaint by the prisoners, and there was a surge in applications to the board. The position appears to have settled now, but the Board will continue to monitor this throughout the coming year.

The Board welcomes the efforts that have been made to secure new contracts of work and expand existing ones. In addition to workshops in plastics, stone masonry, railway engineering and welding, the prison successfully negotiated a contract with the MOD to produce camouflage netting, which is progressing very well. The bicycle recycling workshop is particularly successful, winning a prestigious Best Recycling Re-use Award at the National Recycling Awards. The Waste Management workshop are working towards receiving a similar award for next year.

The provision of physical activity at the prison is good. The two Gymnasiums are well equipped and run efficiently with suitably qualified staff and football sessions are popular. In addition the open and large estate at Rochester means there is plenty of opportunity for fresh air exercise when walking between wings and activity (which in turn has its downside in the passing of contraband!)

## **5.7 Residential Services**

### **5.7.1 Kitchen and Catering**

The kitchen continues to manage within the unacceptably severe financial constraints on available funding. The IMB still remains concerned over the lack of Servery supervision on

wings which means some of the “weaker” prisoners are not receiving the food they have ordered. There is still reported loss of foodstuff between kitchen and arrival on some wings, the delivery of which is unsupervised.

In general the kitchen manager and her staff have striven to deliver nutritional meals. As in previous years the Board has noted a very basic level of provision in quality and choice, which is almost inevitable given the funding and supplier constraints in operation. The portion sizes, criticised by the HMICP report, are, in our view, perfectly adequate. During the year we have received complaints about the quality of fillings in lunchtime sandwiches and rolls, and having investigated we have found the quality is uneven and at times very poor. This should be addressed.

The IMB continues to believe the prison is not adequately funded to fulfil its statutory requirements, with regard to food, within budget. We remain of the view that catering staff cannot continue to provide good nutritional food, in adequate quantity, as required by Prison Rules, and strongly urge that the catering budget is re-examined as a matter of priority. If prisoners are expected to follow a ‘working day’, their nutrition must be considered a priority. The last research regarding nutrition in prison food was undertaken in 2001 (followed up in 2006) when food budgets were proportionately higher. The Board reiterates its view that a further study is appropriate given reducing budgets and expectations of “full time” working by prisoners.

### **5.7.2 Accommodation**

There continues to be a variation in the standard of accommodation between the older and new wings. However the Board has noted that during this year physical problems, especially around ventilation, heating and water supply are occurring across all the wings. (See also Section 6.5)

The HMICP report in September made critical comments about the prison’s Residential Services generally – commenting that “Rochester needed to get the basics right”. Some of these issues had come to the attention to the IMB throughout the year especially around cleanliness of general areas. But in contrast to the HMICP, the IMB has not felt that “the basics” at Rochester are in such the desperate state as described in their report. However the re-focusing onto Residential Services since the HMICP report has been welcomed, in particular the spot checking of wings by the Residential Governor.

C Wing has been partially closed for several months following an incident which caused damage to the windows and roof. The delay in the repair led in turn to a delay over the establishment of the CDU, which is sited there. Repair work is not scheduled until July 2016.

The HMICP report commented on the poor quality of accommodation in the Segregation Unit. The IMB has noted this criticism but believes that given the age of the Unit and the attention paid to cleanliness by the staff and orderlies working there, the conditions are tolerable if not ideal. The Unit was re-painted last summer prior to the inspection.

### **5.7.3 Sentence Management (OMU)**

It remains frustrating to report that at present there are 200 prisoners who do not have complete OASys reports, having arrived at Rochester either without a record or an incomplete one. This figure is a significant improvement on the position last year, but nevertheless creates difficulties for the Unit which has to overcome this problem on a daily basis. While prisons receiving prisoners from Court have an allocation of time in which to complete this

process, no allowance is made for the receiving prisons such as Rochester. It would be within the 'rights' of Rochester (and others) to refuse to take prisoners for whom OASys reports have not been completed, but the system of inter-prison transfer would soon grind to a halt if this were implemented. The result of this is that OMU with reduced staffing, are expected to complete this important process and consequently information which would assist the prison to accommodate and sentence-plan for a prisoner, may not be available. The IMB note the criticisms regarding Offender Management made in the HMICP report relate to developing strategies and needs analysis by using the OASys system; but given the problem relates to one which is across the prison estate, the Board regards this criticism as unfair. The OMU at Rochester are to be commended for the pragmatic manner in which they approach this issue.

The IMB regularly monitor HDC meetings and are pleased to report these are conducted professionally and fairly. The IMB are indebted to OMU for the efficiency with which they are able to address prisoner queries and show a willingness to re-address queries when new information comes to light.

There will be some changes in how the OMU is deployed and administered next year, with the aim of improving communication with the Wings. The IMB will monitor this change closely to ensure the efficiency of this Unit continues.

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## Section 6

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### 6.1 Staffing

Following the changes that were introduced under “New Ways of Working”, the headline figure for prison officers at Rochester is 124. Recruitment has been relatively successful and at time of writing there are c116 in post. However due to long term sickness, maternity leave, detached duty and other absences, the full and effective staffing number is around 100. While overtime is being undertaken, the fact remains that too few prison officers are working at the prison. Many of the difficulties that arise relate directly back to the staffing shortage. There is no doubt in the Board’s view that the decision several years ago to offer redundancy to such a high proportion of experienced staff was a devastating and appalling error. This has meant the introduction of two periods of restricted regime at a Category C Resettlement prison, where the focus should be on training and engaging prisoners to address their offending behaviour.

The OSG staffing cadre are in fact over-staffed by 2; however they too experience considerable deployment problems through long term sick leave, etc. On the Administrative side there are 3 vacancies, and there are similar attendance problems. The absences of staff in both these essential support areas lead indirectly to unnecessary prisoner frustration.

### 6.2 Reception, Property and Induction

During the year, the prison reviewed how it handled Reception and Induction, and this has resulted in E Wing being designated as the First Night Accommodation Unit and the officers there are alert to all associated issues that may arise. Induction, which now lasts over three days, is working well and has received praise from those attending.

The transfer of a prisoner’s property between prisons remains an issue of national concern. On numerous occasions a transferring prisoner is without his clothing, shoes and family photographs (all of which are detrimental to their well-being) for an unacceptable length of time. The lack of facility to include property on the prison transport vehicles is a major flaw in the transfer system. It is a source of needless frustration for prisoners and it is the hard-pressed wing staff that deal with this frustration. The Rochester Property Department’s performance in dealing with property issues is good, but while additional staff have been allocated to this task, staffing shortages mean they are often relocated to more critical duties. A significant proportion of Complaints generated at Rochester (circa 70%) relate to missing property – a percentage supported by the number of property-related applications to the IMB.

The loss of property within the prison usually arises from a disciplinary incident as the possessions belonging to the prisoner being removed become 'available' to other prisoners and during this time possessions go missing. The IMB continue to monitor these situations closely.

### 6.3 Visits/Visits Centre

The on-line system for booking visits took a while to settle in. Unfortunately there are occasional backlogs. The IMB continue to monitor this closely, especially around bank holiday and weekend periods where there appears to be some inconsistency.

The availability of search dogs has continued to prove its worth in visits, where a number of 'indications' by the dog has undoubtedly led to less drugs entering the prison through this route and provides a deterrent to other visitors attempting this means of trafficking.

The provision of tea-bar facilities in Visits continues to be provided by the charity Changing Paths, and it is a valued service. Successful Family Days are held at the New Gym and on the

Football pitch. They are timed to tie in with school holidays, and facilitated by the Gym staff. This opportunity is well-received by prisoners and their families, with several thank you letters being received at the Governor's office. .

## **6.4 Security**

The openness of the Rochester site presents the greatest challenge for the Security team. It is intelligence led and over the year has achieved some notable successes. Measures have been taken by Security to ensure parcels from outside the prison do not reach prisoners, but it is up against continual innovation by drug traffickers for whom this is big business to a captive and vulnerable client base. Intelligence suggests that more parcels are now being intercepted than are being received by the prisoners. Comparison with last year's statistics is meaningless, but for the record 190 mobile phones and 99 illicit substances were found. In addition there were 41 finds of weapons. To give an indication of the problem, in one month the Independent Adjudicator at Rochester awarded 345 additional days for being in possession of unauthorised items; and 210 additional days for endangering the health of safety of others under the influence of NPS. This is fairly typical of the position each month. Checks on visitors have increasingly become intelligence led. MDT tests are carried out correctly.

The Board strongly supports the funding bid submitted to improve the security fencing, an issue outlined in last year's report. An ability to block or intercept calls to mobile phones would be a significant weapon in security the prison. Liaison with the local Police is reported as improving during the year.

There were several incidents at height in the reporting period. The National Team are recorded as being called to Rochester on 5 occasions. Unfortunately the structure of the Rochester estate does provide opportunities for prisoners to climb as an act of protest.

In the Board's view too many prisoners appear to be wandering around the prison unchallenged during times when they should be either at activity or returning to a wing following a Healthcare visit.

Two campaigns to inhibit NPS usage took place during the year. "See Life More Clearly" involved placing a mass of eye-catching posters across the prisoner, flagging up the adverse health impacts of NPS and how to seek help. The DVD referred to in last year's report "Guinea Pigs" was revised and updated. It is a powerful account of the impact of NPS because it is produced by prisoner for prisoners. It is shown regularly and is a very positive response to a continuing problem within the prison.

## **6.5 Works**

During the year the Works Department was contracted out to Carillion. In our view this is not a success. While originally told the delays to repairs were down to contractual "teething problems" the position is not improving. For example, essential repairs to kitchen dishwashers, washing-machines on wings, and in-cell toilet facilities are taking a disproportionately long time to go through the process system and eventual repair. In our report last year we expressed the hope that the new provider would produce an improved service, as the performance of the Works Department had been unsatisfactorily slow. Our hopes have proved false. Carillion's system of referring all maintenance requests to its office in Sheffield before work can start is cumbersome and even slower than the one previously in place. It is frustrating and creates on-going prisoner resentment, which in turn causes additional difficulties for wing officers. The Board is aware there are maintenance problem across the

prison estate with the Carillion contract and urges MOJ and NOMs to find a solution to an issue which is having a disproportionately detrimental impact on prison life.

## **6.6 Complaints**

The number of complaints to the prison this year was 1341, which is down on last year's figure of 1558. Approximately 70% of these were answered within the allotted time-scale. 74 complaints were recorded against Healthcare. Most of the Complaints (70%) are related to property loss – overwhelmingly about loss or delays during transfer. (See 5.2 above).

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## Section 7

### THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

The Board, which has a complement of 20 members, began the year with 15 members and decreased to 11 by March. During the year 4 members retired/resigned and 1 new member joined the Board. A recruitment campaign was very successful and has led to recommendation for 5 new members to be appointed in the next reporting year.

All statutory visits and visits to Areas of Special Interest (ASI) have been undertaken and reports made to the Board. Observations are also passed to operational staff and when appropriate result in actions to improve/correct the situation. All members attend committees and provide reports on areas of concern. The new Monitoring Framework has been used to adapt the rota and the ASI areas.

There has been a new Chair and Deputy Chair during the year. Board Development Officer arranges monthly in-house training sessions before Board meetings. One member attended the Annual Conference in March 2016. The new Chair and Deputy Chair attended the New Officers Course in February 2016

The Board's relationship with the staff and Senior Management Team has remained good and we express our gratitude to them for their openness and willing support.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	15
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	1
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	4
Total Number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the prison	504
Total number of applications received	485
Total Number of GOOD and OR segregations (IMB figures)	117
Total number of segregation GOOD & OR reviews held* (IMB figures)	Unable to provide
Total number of segregation GOOD & OR reviews attended by IMB (IMB figures)	162

\* not all GOOD or OR segregations result in a review, whilst a number had more than one review.

## Application Statistics

Code	Subject	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Change from 2014-15	% change
A	Accommodation	25	12	12	0	0%
B	Adjudications	15	15	14	-1	-6%
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	9	9	7	-2	-22%
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	55	30	19	-11	-57%
E	Family/visits inc mail & phone	47	33	31	-2	-6%
F	Food/kitchen related	13	6	9	+3	+33%
G	Health related	51	71	75	+4	+5%
H	Property	102	89	115	+26	+29%
I	Sentence related (inc HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	77	70	86	+16	+22%
J	Staff/prisoner concerns inc bullying	22	17	13	-4	-23%
K	Transfers	32	36	16	-20	-20%
L	Miscellaneous	100	51	88	+37	+72%
	<b>Total number of application categories</b> (the number of applications received is lower, as an application can cover more than one category)	<b>548</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>+49</b>	<b>+11%</b>

Due to changes in accommodation, the IMB no longer has the opportunity to speak to prisoners at a weekly clinic, and all Applications are dealt with on the Wings and around the prison in general.

The number of Applications to the Board increased by 11% compared to last year. It may be that in stopping the clinic system, those who previously did not attend the clinic, (because of either a reluctance to follow arrangements to attend or not wishing to speak in a shared environment), had their application addressed through an IMB visit.

There is a welcome continuing reduction in the number of Transfer related applications, and those concerning Healthcare appear to be steady as the new provider and its associated processes settle down.

The increase in property related applications reflects the increasing difficulties in property handling outlined earlier in this report, and is consistent with the increasing numbers received by the prison Complaints system.

The increase in the Miscellaneous figure reflects the change of regime that was introduced in March. There were 11 applications on 30 March all related to the regime change, which rather skew the figures.

**On behalf of the Board**

Sue Fitzjohn

Chairman

**June 2016**

## Section 8

### GLOSSARY OF PRISON-RELATED ABBREVIATIONS USED

(Note – not all terms have been used in this report)

<b>ABS</b> Anti-Bullying System	<b>LDR</b> Latest Date of Release
<b>ACCT</b> Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork – replacement for F2052SH	<b>LED</b> Licence Expiry Date
<b>ACR</b> Automatic Conditional Release	<b>LSC</b> Learning & Skills Council
<b>ARD</b> Automatic Release Date	<b>MAPPA</b> Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
<b>ATOS</b> Company responsible for assessing long-term sick	<b>MDT</b> Mandatory Drugs Testing
<b>BCU</b> Briefing and Casework Unit – PS unit handling adjudication appeals	<b>MSL</b> Minimum Staffing Level
<b>BME</b> Black & Minority Ethnic	<b>MQPL</b> Measuring the Quality of Prison Life
<b>C &amp; R</b> Control & Restraint	<b>NOMS</b> National Offender Manager Service – amalgamation of the Prison & Probation Services
<b>C2W, CTW</b> Custody to Work – pre-release focus on housing, employment and lifestyle issues	<b>NWOW</b> New Ways of Working
<b>CARATS</b> Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Throughcare Scheme – drug & alcohol team	<b>OASYS</b> Offender Assessment System – computerised risk & needs assessment
<b>CC</b> Cellular Confinement – a punishment	<b>OBP</b> Offending Behaviour Programme
<b>CCD</b> Criminal Casework Department (Croydon)	<b>OCA</b> Observation, Classification & Allocations – a Reception task
<b>CLAIT</b> Computer Literacy and Information Technology	<b>OLASS</b> Offender Learning and Skills Service (part of LSC)
<b>CCT</b> Criminal Casework Team (part of Home Office Immigration & Nationalities Dept)	<b>OI/OR/OP</b> Own Interests/Request/Protection – Segregation under Rule 45/49
<b>CMU</b> Case Management Unit – work on sentence planning & progress	<b>PCT</b> Primary Care Trust – National Health component responsible for healthcare
<b>CNA</b> Certified Normal Accommodation	<b>PMU</b> Population Management Unit (central)
<b>CRD</b> Conditional Release Date	<b>POA</b> Prison Officers' Association – the main trade union
<b>CSH</b> Contracted Service Hours (pre-agreed paid overtime)	<b>POPO</b> Prolific and Other Priority Offender
<b>CSU</b> Commissioning Support Unit	<b>PPO</b> Prisons and Probation Ombudsman
<b>DASU</b> Drug And Alcohol Support Unit	<b>PPP</b> Public Protection Panel
<b>DH</b> Dog Handler	<b>PS</b> Prison Service
<b>EDR</b> Earliest Date of Release	<b>PSI</b> Prison Service Instruction
<b>EMU</b> Estates Management Unit	<b>PSO</b> Prison Service Order – see <a href="http://hmprisonservice.gov.uk/resourcecentre/psispsos/listpsos">hmprisonservice.gov.uk/resourcecentre/psispsos/listpsos</a>
<b>EPDG</b> Estates Planning & Development Group	<b>RFW</b> Removal from Wing – a punishment
<b>EGP</b> Ex Gratia Payment	<b>ROAD</b> Remission of Added Days (up to 50%)
<b>ETA</b> Employment & Training Allocation	<b>ROR</b> Restoration of Remission – now ROAD; Risk of Reconviction
<b>ETE</b> Employment/Training/Education	<b>ROTL</b> Release on Temporary Licence e.g. to work in mess; town visits; home leave

<b>ETS</b> Enhanced Thinking Skills – an OBP	<b>RRA</b> Assistant to the RRLO
<b>F2050</b> Prisoner’s basic record	<b>RRLO</b> Race Relations Liaison officer
<b>F&amp;S</b> – Fair and Sustainable	<b>SAU</b> Standards Audit Unit
<b>FLED</b> Facility Licence Eligibility Date (when prisoner may be <b>considered</b> for ROTL)	<b>SCG</b> Safer Custody Group
<b>FOCUS</b> Financial Outstations and Central Unified Systems – the PS accounting system	<b>SED</b> Sentence Expiry Date
<b>GOOD</b> Good Order or Discipline – Segregation under Rule 45/49 (historically GOAD)	<b>SIR</b> Security Information Report
<b>HCC</b> Health Care Centre	<b>SLA</b> Service Level Agreement
<b>HDC</b> Home Detention Curfew – the Tag	<b>SMARG</b> Segregation and Monitoring Review Group
<b>HDCED</b> Earliest Date of Release on HDC	<b>SMT</b> Senior Management Team
<b>HMCIP</b> Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons	<b>TCF</b> Temporary Custodial Facility
<b>IEP</b> Incentives and Earned Privileges – Prisoners can be on Basic, Standard or Enhanced	<b>TOIL</b> Time Off in Lieu (of payment)
<b>IG</b> Instruction to Governors	<b>TSU</b> Technical Support Unit – part of PS responsible for repairs/installation (“Works”)
<b>IMB</b> Independent Monitoring Board	<b>VDT</b> Voluntary Drugs Testing
<b>IMB</b> Independent Monitoring Board	<b>VO</b> Visiting Order – sent out by prisoners; allows named people to visit
<b>JSA</b> Job-Seekers Allowance	<b>Gold Commander</b> – Headquarters controller for serious incidents
<b>KPI/KPT</b> Key Performance Indicator/Target	<b>Silver Commander</b> – Person in establishment in charge of serious incidents
	<b>Bronze Commander</b> – Local Sub Commander for serious incidents
	<b>Operation Tornado</b> – System to provide extra staff and resources for serious incidents