



## **INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

### **HMP WHITEMOOR**

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

**2016**

**(1 June 2015 – 31 May 2016)**

#### **The Statutory Role of the IMB**

The Prisons Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the (Justice Secretary) 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 the authority as the Board 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 this has had on those in its custody.
- (4) To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

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## 1 Executive Summary

- a) Whitemoor is well led; but the prison remains seriously constrained from progressing. Too much managerial time has been devoted to husbanding resources rather than to delivering better prisoner outcomes. Staffing profiles have left no room for manoeuvre and created circumstances in which prisoners' daily lives are negatively affected while staff have been unreasonably stretched.
- b) Whitemoor is seen by prisoners as the High Security jail from which it is impossible to progress. Fewer of its Cat A prisoners are downgraded to Cat B than in other High Security jails, though the proportion may be impacted by long average sentences and prisoners arriving comparatively early in their sentence. Too many Cat B prisoners who have completed their courses are unable to find a Cat B establishment to accept them.
- c) The Segregation Unit is often full, and movement out is slow. The Supreme Court decision on long-term segregation has worked for some but the Prison Service needs a way of dealing with those who are – or make themselves – hard to relocate. We have profound doubts about the use of Designated Cells in Segregation for those in the Close Supervision Centre System. We believe the Segregation Unit is routinely in breach of the Optional Protocol Against Torture (OPCAT) by locking up prisoners for more than 22 hours a day without significant mental stimulation, let alone proper human interaction.
- d) Prisoners are not always able to benefit from a consistent or foreseeable regime, among other things making it hard to maintain contact with their families. Delays in servicing an already ageing infrastructure mean that too many elementary services do not work. Broken showers and washing machines make it difficult to maintain standards of decency. Prison-issue clothing is poor and looks tatty. The TV system is inadequate. Property arrangements are archaic. Whilst prisoners do not get left behind or lost in transit their property too often does, and rectifying problems can take a long time, perhaps underestimating the extent to which personal belongings are a key element of prisoner wellbeing.
- e) Healthcare has improved but the transfer to specialist units of those who are mentally ill remains unacceptably slow.
- f) While staff time for Diversity and Equalities was unchanged, the profiled provision for foreign national support was inadequate for a prison in which 21% are Foreign Nationals. Excluding the Fens Unit, 47% of prisoners are Muslim. A Faith group for them has been positively received. It would help if those of all faiths and none had greater understanding of other people's beliefs.
- g) A stronger, consistent effort has been applied to Reducing Reoffending. More has been done to target basic literacy and numeracy. Limited availability of supervisory uniformed staff has however frequently reduced the operational capacity of Education. And courses on offer to those with more than a few years to release are few. Work opportunities continue to be relatively undemanding. Restorative justice work undertaken by the Chaplaincy has been well received.
- h) The new maintenance contract with Carillion has been shambolic, detrimentally affecting the provision of elementary services and hence living and working standards. Local maintenance resources have been all but eliminated, and the new arrangements leave the Governor powerless to take direct action to expedite repairs.

## **2 Description of HMP Whitemoor**

- 2.1.1 Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Whitemoor lies outside the Cambridgeshire town of March. Opened in 1992 as a maximum security prison for men in Categories A and B, it is one of eight prisons in England that form the High Security Estate (HSE). On 31 May 2016 the prison held 436 prisoners, against an operational capacity of 458. Just under one-third were Category A (140), and of whom 10 were High Risk Category A.
- 2.1.2 All Whitemoor prisoners are accommodated in single cells with integral sanitation but separate showers. There are three main wings. In addition, the Fens Unit (D Wing), accommodates up to 70 prisoners diagnosed with a Dangerous and Severe Personality Disorder (DSPD). Whitemoor also holds up to ten prisoners in one of the three Close Supervision Centres (CSC), managed under a nationally coordinated strategy to provide a secure location for prisoners who consistently and violently disrupt normal wing life. On 31 May 2016 there were 8 prisoners in the CSC, and a further 1 held in Rule 46 cells in the Segregation Unit.

## **3 Issues for the Minister and NOMS**

### **3.1 Issues for the Minister**

- 3.1.1 Would the Minister please incorporate the Optional Protocol Against Torture into legislation and direct that in the interim its standards should be applied?
- 3.1.2 Would the Minister please press for the early reconfiguration of the prison estate so that the categories of jails reflect actual need?

### **3.2 Issues for NOMS**

- 3.2.1 Would NOMS please establish an effective central clearing arrangement so that the movement of prisoners between jails is not overly dependent on the swapping of favours between Governors?
- 3.2.2 Would NOMS please hasten the revision of Prison Service Instructions on property, taking account too that prisoners are a diverse group with different needs?
- 3.2.3 Would NOMS please take early action to improve the services provided by Carillion?

## **4 Last year's concerns**

- 4.1.1 Most of the issues concerning us last year remain – especially in terms of constrained resources and the distortions they cause.
- 4.1.2 Positive changes in Segregation were imposed externally by a Supreme Court decision that caused a more systematic review at higher levels of periods spent in segregation. Despite management efforts to avoid segregating prisoners, the unit was often operating at or near capacity. We note that the prison are exploring ways of providing a separate unit for prisoners who cannot (or sometimes will not) locate on main wings.
- 4.1.3 Dentistry services have improved significantly, and Offender Management has improved to some extent, though further opportunities remain.

## 5 Prisoner Experience and Welfare

- 5.1.1 There was a consistent shortage of staff during the year under report, with a consequential impact on many areas of the prison and thus on prisoner welfare. We welcome that the Governor has recognised that profiles introduced as part of benchmarking, coupled with sickness, staff not in post and staff on restricted duties left little room for resilience when the unexpected occurred; and he has noted the need to minimise redeployment of staff from their particular roles. In practice there was however little room for manoeuvre. The combined effect of absence and vacancies saw shortages as high as 36, 14.5% of the total, further exacerbated by staff on leave. As a result, considerable amounts of senior management time were spent on monitoring staff absences.
- 5.1.2 The impact of staff being given multiple roles and redeployed particularly affected Education, Healthcare, the Segregation Unit and the Close Supervision Centre; but all areas of the prison suffered to some extent. Results included a reduction in time out of cell and off the wing in unplanned ways, often at short notice, and a hindrance to prisoner/family contact through telephone calls.
- 5.1.3 Whilst the Board understand the wish to try to accommodate to the needs of as many prisoners as possible, we note the imperative to respond to minority needs too. We are not always sure what value judgements are being made, or by whom. For example, it seems that preserving Gym time is paramount, whilst Faith (especially for smaller groups) is judged less pressing. Even though Education scores highly in audit terms, it seems to be a regular casualty of staffing problems. As an example of a clash of values at an individual level, a prisoner had to miss taking three GCSE examinations in order to go on accumulated visits. The clash could have been avoided if someone had recognised what the exams meant to the prisoner.
- 5.1.4 Nor is there a shared value about the importance of personal possessions. Moving home is traumatic for everyone, including prisoners. The logistics of transferring their few belongings ought to be straightforward but is not. The system for managing property, including the use of manual property cards, is time consuming and highly prone to error and omission; and when things go wrong – as they often do – it can take a very long time for property to be delivered. To compound the problem, Reception is often a source for staff to be temporarily redeployed. While we are pleased to note that the Governor considers 72 hours should be the norm, in reality a stated maximum of ten days has become the standard to strive for, even for clothes and property which arrive with the prisoner.
- 5.1.5 We note that the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman and the IMB National Council have both published reports detailing changes needed in handling property. The IMB report also underlined the meaningless statement in Prison Service Instructions (PSI) 12/2011 (para 2.1) that *'Prisoners are allowed to have sufficient property in possession to lead as normal an existence as possible within the constraints of the prison environment.'* In practice prisoners are instead severely limited by lists that take no account of how diversified prisoners are – or how needs change over time.
- 5.1.6 In that respect we applaud that the Governor recognised the inadequacy of the service-wide contract system for prisoner clothing purchases, and made special arrangements for prisoners' families to make a one-time special delivery of clothing. We hope that similar priority can be given to addressing technical problems and delays with catalogue orders. Such actions need however to be part of wider moves to showing an understanding of the importance of personal belongings. Similarly,

greater respect might be shown with prison-issued clothing. It is bad enough that it is so drab and demeaning but it ought to be possible to stock sizes suitable for all prisoners. The continuing problem of wing and central laundry equipment is yet another dimension to the problem, regularly causing prisoners to be without clean clothes to wear – a fundamental issue of decency.

- 5.1.7 A further area where we wonder if shortcomings reflect different values is in providing the Foreign National coordinator with only 5 hours per week to deal with the needs of Whitemoor’s 92 foreign nationals, many of whom have limited English, and amongst whom there is a huge range of cultural differences. One issue can take many hours to resolve.
- 5.1.8 Finally, it is encouraging to note that there have been fewer prisoners requiring transfer to a secure mental health facility. When it has been necessary there have however still been delays, often of several months, between a mentally ill prisoner being assessed and accepted, and actually being transferred. PSO1700 states that “*research indicates that a person’s mental health is very likely to decline when they are kept in segregation*”, which has seemed evident for prisoners who already have mental health issues. Delay also places a significant burden on staff and public sector costs, including indirectly. For example, prolific self-harmers often require frequent external hospital treatment, which could be prevented by a more expeditious transfer.

## 6 Mandatory areas

### 6.1 Equality and inclusion

- 6.1.1 During the year under report more consistent attempts were made to draw together the prison’s work on Equality and Inclusion. Resources were however thin and efforts were fragmented. The availability of an officer to deal with racial discrimination was patchy and only by year end was there someone to cope with the backlog of complaints. The Disabilities Officer and funding were withdrawn before alternative arrangements were in place. We have already noted that the Foreign Nationals Officer was given only 5 hours a week to support 92 prisoners.
- 6.1.2 Summary demographics for the prison population are shown in the table below.

Religion	Fens Unit	Other	Race	Fens Unit	Other	Age	Fens Unit	Other
Christian	19	135	White	54	158	22-40	23	245
Muslim	7	177	Black	6	141	41-64	38	121
Other	35	63	Other	1	76	65+	-	9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>375</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>375</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>375</b>

- 6.1.3 88 prisoners declared they had a disability. Responsibility for adult social care of prisoners, including for disability, was handed over to Local Authorities in 2015. Cambridgeshire County Council were very slow to respond, with little progress made during the reporting year.
- 6.1.4 We are pleased to note that the Governor introduced a Muslim faith group, which was well attended and positively received, and will regularly alternate meetings with the multi-faith group.

## **6.2 Education, Learning and Skills, plus Purposeful Activities**

- 6.2.1 As noted in paragraph 5.1.3, the Board question whether sufficient weight is given to Education. There is now a full complement of teachers, all but two of whom are qualified. The education provider, People Plus, has however again operated this year at two-thirds of capacity in the classrooms, accommodating 30 learners rather than 45 because of the lack of uniformed officers for supervision. This means that they have drawn down only 83% of the funding available to the prison from the Skills Funding Agency: money which is lost forever. 14% of teaching hours have been sacrificed because of prison shut-downs. We note too that educational targets are not routinely written into prisoners' sentence plans.
- 6.2.2 Government policy required priority to be given to prisoners assessed at below Level 1 for literacy and numeracy and those in need of improved English speaking skills. In the year to May 2016, the average success rate for prisoners in English and mathematics was 91% for the 35 prisoners at entry level. However, the success rate for these subjects at levels one and two has remained persistently low. In May 2016 the average was only 43%. Success rates in vocational education and employability are considerably higher and up to target. Attainment in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses is 88%, but the number participating is low in comparison to the number of foreign nationals.
- 6.2.3 The Board welcome that new courses in art and carpentry have been added to vocational education in the past year. Unfortunately take up remains low, and it has not been easy to allocate to these courses prisoners who are motivated to get the best out of them.
- 6.2.4 The nature of the work available to prisoners continues to be undemanding, though we recognise that for some prisoners, repetitive manual tasks are popular.

## **6.3 Healthcare and Mental Health**

- 6.3.1 At the end of the last reporting year, Whitemoor's Healthcare provider was changed to Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The transition appears to have gone smoothly with no significant issues. Dependency on agency staff continued throughout the year, but a number of permanent new nurses have now been recruited, which should enable better continuity of care. We are not qualified to judge but record the impression of staff that the services offered equate to those outside. In the case of the Mental Health In-reach Team we suspect that they offer a service very much better than that available to the public.
- 6.3.2 The dentistry service provider was changed during the year, resulting in a significant improvement in service levels, and minimum waiting times. Staff and prisoners are positive about the new provider.
- 6.3.3 Changes in staffing profiles replaced specialist healthcare officers by an approach where officer have multiple roles. There were frequent "guest" officers in Healthcare, who were unfamiliar with the role. We noted occasions when a failure of guest officers to understand key issues relating to individual prisoners could have had significant consequences.

## **6.4 Resettlement**

- 6.4.1 We are seriously concerned at the bottleneck in effecting transfers to another facility. The lack of capacity in Category B establishments results in severely delayed progression for prisoners who have completed all the programmes required of them.

Prisoners are being kept in segregation for excessive periods pending transfers to a prison where they can locate normally, or go into a special unit. This leads to frustration, and a perception that the principles of progression and rehabilitation are not actually practiced. Indeed, prisoners perceive Whitemoor as the High Security jail out of which they are least likely to progress. It is our view that reconfiguration of prisoner facilities to properly accommodate transfers is long overdue. The process for agreeing transfers is ultimately often down to bartering between prisons rather than an orderly managed and controlled system.

- 6.4.2 We are pleased to note that the Offenders' programme "Resolve" has been successfully introduced and some of the backlog reduced. With limited capacity on the course, there remains a large number of prisoners waiting to join to enable their progression.
- 6.4.3 Some wing disciplinary Supervising Officers (SOs) now have a part time role as Offender Supervisors. Full time Offender Management Unit staff (some of who also carry out night and weekend duties) are supplemented by 1-2 days per week from 6 Wing SOs, so that each individual is responsible on average for 45 prisoners. OMU management works hard with the limited resources available, and standards have risen but there remains opportunity for improvement.
- 6.4.4 141 Category A prisoners had their categorisation reviewed, with 13 recommended for downgrading to Category B; 7 were accepted by the central Cat A review team.
- 6.4.5 Being in denial of an offence should not preclude prisoners from being downgraded. From what we have observed, the probability of a downgrade is significantly lower for offence deniers in Whitemoor.
- 6.4.6 283 RC1 reviews of Cat B prisoners were conducted resulting in 53 transfers out of the High Security Estate being approved. 33 transfers took place (26 last year), but unfortunately the limited availability of places in the lower security Cat B estate means that transfers are taking 3-9 months to achieve.
- 6.4.7 537 Sentence Planning Boards were held in the period with a high level of outside Offender Managers participating in the reviews by being present or via video link. The attendance of personal officers/wing officers at the Boards was limited. There were 12 Parole Hearings in the period which is significantly higher than in the past.
- 6.4.8 The Board are pleased to note that more focused attention has been given to Rehabilitation, not least to include a more interdisciplinary approach. We especially commend the work led by the Chaplaincy on Restorative Justice.

## **6.5 Safer Custody**

- 6.5.1 There were no self-inflicted deaths during the year, against national trends. There were two deaths due to natural causes, both of which occurred in external units.
- 6.5.2 In the year under report 144 ACCTs were opened (134 in 2014-15). As last year, the high percentage (43%) of ACCT documents for prisoners on the Fens Unit distorted figures for the rest of the prison. This causes pressure on safer custody resources from the very unit that is already best staffed with its own professional specialists. There were 243 incidents of self-harm (194 last year), though many of these were repetition by a small number of prisoners.
- 6.5.3 Given the nature of the prisoners, the incidence of violence at Whitemoor (43, compared to 44 in 2014-15) remained comparatively low, as did the number of

serious incidents. This is equivalent to 95 incidents/1000 prisoners, versus the national average of 262. That should not deflect however from the truth that Whitemoor has to deal with some extremely difficult individuals – especially in the Seg.

- 6.5.4 We are pleased to note that Safer Prisons Meetings are held more regularly than last year, with a better managed and more focused agenda.

## **6.6 Care and Separation, and Close Supervision**

### **Segregation Unit**

- 6.6.1 The Board wish to note the considerable strain that has been put on the Segregation Unit, and in turn on its staff, throughout the year under report. It has been normal for there to be a few prisoners who are complex cases, presenting multiple problems. Such people are often on ACCTs; some are refractory and need staff to be getting in and out of personal protection equipment. Coupled with staff levels that have little or no resilience to unplanned events and absences, it has been impossible to deliver a consistent regime, resulting in frequent lockdowns, prisoners missing telephone calls, showers, corporate worship and exercise. It is to the credit of staff that they manage as well as they do.
- 6.6.2 Decisions by the Supreme Court in respect of two prisoners formerly held in Whitemoor led to profound alterations nationally in how segregation is approved, managed and reviewed. The key change was that after 42 days the segregation has to be reviewed by the Deputy Director of Custody; and after 90 it has to be considered by the Director.
- 6.6.3 These changes have resulted in more thorough reviews for segregated prisoners, and genuine efforts to establish exit plans for them. However, the practical impact has been qualified. Prisoners remain in segregation for long periods, and in most cases continue to be regularly reauthorised by the Director and Deputy Director of Custody (though the reauthorisation decision is often late). At the end of May 2016, 10 prisoners out of the 18 in Segregation had been there for more than 3 months.
- 6.6.4 Exit plans often necessitate a transfer, and as reported elsewhere, there are severe bottlenecks in the transfer system. In addition to these bottlenecks, there seems to be no overall level of authority that can expedite a transfer. Other prisons refuse to consider individuals, or offer an exchange for a prisoner who does not fit Whitemoor criteria. This leads to unnecessarily long periods of segregation.
- 6.6.5 During the year under report, and taking a weekly sample, the average number of prisoners in the Segregation Unit (Seg) was 19.1, against a capacity of 28. Numbers exceeded 20 in 29 weeks, and the unit was at or near capacity in 6 weeks. The number located there for own protection averaged 4.6 (3.3 in 2014-15, a 39% increase). Underlying this overall own protection average is an increase from 2.3 in the first half of the year to 7 in the second half, a very significant change. The highest figure was 12.
- 6.6.6 “Own Protection” prisoners are segregated for a range of reasons, though pressure from Muslim groups and drug debts are common. They fall into two categories. Some are genuinely under threat, and are awaiting transfer to another facility. On 31 May, 7 Seg prisoners were awaiting transfer, having been segregated for periods from 6 to 24 weeks.
- 6.6.7 The second category are those who refuse to locate. They may genuinely believe

themselves to be under threat (although in the prison's estimation most of them are not), or they may have other reasons for self-isolation. Once their legal segregation ends, they remain in the Unit in "E Wing", under a new "regime" whereby they are on basic IEP, receive no pay, are outside PSO 1700 and so are not entitled to regular governor and other monitoring visits – although the Chaplaincy and IMB continue to see them, and they are visited weekly by the Governor or Deputy Governor. Although the prison plan to provide some degree of association for these prisoners, along with limited recreation facilities and psychological support, in the year under report there was nothing. The physical limitations of the environment will continue to make it difficult to provide support. Indeed, Seg staff who are already challenged by a complex mix of prisoners have to date found it difficult or impossible to deliver a separate regime. Whilst in the eyes of the prison such prisoners are there from choice, the Board are concerned that this very restrictive regime simply enables prisoners to be kept in what is effectively segregation but is outside the rules that govern it.

- 6.6.8 In the year under report there have additionally been a small number of prisoners held long term in Healthcare, although without any particular health needs. These prisoners have also been unable or unwilling to move back to a normal location. The Board see this as a further attempt to get round the problem of extended segregation.
- 6.6.9 Prisoners on ACCTS in the Seg remain a frequent occurrence. In 2015-16, 24 ACCTS were opened for segregation prisoners, compared to 19 in the previous year.
- 6.6.10 Education for prisoners in the segregation unit is very limited. Teachers have to communicate with prisoners through the cell door as there are no adequate facilities for effective teaching. 9 out of up to 27 prisoners carry out in-cell education tasks for a small number of hours a week.

#### **Close Supervision Centre, including Designated Cells**

- 6.6.11 The Board have severe doubts about the continued routine and long-term use of so-called Designated Cells within the Seg that are used to house some of the difficult and dangerous prisoners from the Close Supervision Centre (CSC) system. Although technically the responsibility of the host prison they are in effect managed by a central unit. HM Chief Inspector of Prison's 2015 thematic inspection of the CSC stated:

*"Designated cells in high security prison main segregation units were sometimes used for long periods and we were not assured their use was always justified or appropriate. Prisoners often received little input from the multidisciplinary team and did not engage in any risk reduction or therapeutic work while they were there. They generally had an extremely restricted regime and appeared to be making little progress through the system."*

The Recommendation made was that:

*"Designated cells should only be used for the shortest possible period and only in exceptional circumstances. Rule 46 prisoners in designated cells should receive equivalent care to those held in units."*

While hard-pressed segregation staff do their best to provide an appropriate regime, we have not observed any significant improvement in the way these prisoners are managed. Contrary to the Optional Protocol Against Torture (OPCAT) they are held in solitary confinement for well in excess of 22 hours a day, have limited mental stimulation and little face to face contact with anyone. We judge that prisoners subjected to these conditions are being stored rather than accommodated. We urge

that OPCAT is incorporated into UK legislation in such a way that the enforcement of its standards can be better attained.

- 6.6.12 We have observed significant improvement in the consistency and timing of monthly and quarterly care and management plan reviews for CSC prisoners. The Violence Reduction Programme (VRP) is well managed, though it is disappointing that there is a long wait for progression for those who have successfully completed it. Comments in HMIP's 2015 review have been recognised and actioned, including some improvements to the visits area (though the physical constraints make further change difficult) and modifications to the induction process for new prisoners, enabling them to integrate into the unit more quickly.
- 6.6.13 The wide variety of the needs and types of those held in the main Close Supervision Centre (F Wing), and the psychological volatility of some of the prisoners, make education difficult. There are plans to make a teacher available for half a day per week from August.

## **7 Other areas of the Prison**

### **7.1 General impressions**

- 7.1.1 Although we have highlighted many concerns, we judge that most are the inevitable consequences of constraints on staffing and funding. Although outside our remit, we would express the view that the understandable need to cut public expenditure could be better attained by reducing the prison population, rather than by making it harder to treat prisoners with decency and fairness, or by constraining efforts to rehabilitate them. Given greater scope to establish and manage local contracts, the Governor would be more able to directly influence improvements. The Board acknowledge that, within existing confines, the Governor and staff at Whitemoor display dedication and professionalism. Despite many years of constraints they remain positive. We believe the management team to be committed to delivering a culture and regime that balances the necessary rules and discipline with a culture that encourages a stable environment, enabling programmes and activities to provide prisoners with appropriate development and progression opportunities.
- 7.1.2 We would note with gratitude that Whitemoor staff from the top down continue to allow us to monitor the prison without hindrance. Whilst they do not always agree with us, they are invariably cooperative, listen to our arguments and take care to talk through points, despite the other heavy pressures on their time.

### **7.2 Infrastructure**

- 7.2.1 In common with other prisons in the south, Whitemoor has suffered at the hands of Carillion, to whom has been contracted a wide range of maintenance and supply services. Aside from considerable inconvenience caused by delays such as in repairing damaged and hence decommissioned cells, there are major impacts on decency. Broken showers make it hard for prisoners to get properly washed before starting the day's work or education; a central Laundry working routinely below capacity and at times not at all, has affected the supply of clean clothing and bedding. Health and safety is also often affected, including through broken equipment – including fridges and freezers – in the Kitchen. It is unfortunate that outsourcing of services make the Governor unable to take direct action to facilitate urgent repairs.

### **7.3 Drugs in Whitemoor**

- 7.3.1 There is a widely held perception of widespread availability and substance abuse within the prison system. In Whitemoor, while there is evidence of such abuse, the facts are less dramatic. The Drugs Strategy Team coordinates representatives from healthcare, reception, security, drugs dogs and intelligence, to manage a range of actions to address the supply and use of drugs. These include training prisoner peer advisors, regular mandatory drug tests (MDT), suspicion tests and 'at risk tests' for trusted prisoners, search and detection of visitors, and general surveillance of staff and other visitors to the prison. DST are also developing appropriate training programmes to enable staff to identify warning signs and symptoms of substance abuse. These measures have contributed to meeting or exceeding performance targets in respect of drugs.
- 7.3.2 While this is very encouraging, New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) are extremely powerful and difficult to detect, and will present an ongoing challenge, as they are often supplied in the form of impregnated paper, the sheets of which can be cut into squares and traded in prison for significant sums of money. This can lead to prisoners incurring large debts and subsequent threats of violence. Misuse of steroids is also a significant problem as clinical tests to identify them are expensive.

## **8 The Work of the IMB at Whitemoor**

### **8.1 The Board**

- 8.1.1 Our complement of members is 16. While we started and ended the year with 10 active members, there were some joiners and leavers along the way. Unfortunately, at the end of the year, one of our members is on long term leave on health grounds, and is unlikely to return.
- 8.1.2 New members have proved quick to learn and have rapidly become very productive contributors to the work of the Board, taking on special responsibility areas as well as routine monitoring. As ever, established members were generous in making time to mentor new members. All have been ready to cover for each other at difficult times.
- 8.1.3 A recruitment campaign proved unsuccessful, but we are hoping that a second campaign commenced towards the end of the reporting year will deliver some new members. We are also looking at the possibility of boosting our numbers through dual boarding, as there are a number of prisons in the area with IMB members sufficiently close to Whitemoor.

### **8.2 Board visits by members**

- 8.2.1 With our increased membership from the previous year, we were able to increase the number of visits to the prison visits to 454, compared with last year's 287. Only 2 were for Serious Incidents. We attended all Segregation Review Boards.

### **8.3 Applications to the IMB**

- 8.3.1 The Board dealt with 282 applications, compared to 133 the previous year (see table below). While it is difficult to draw any statistically significant conclusions from this significant increase, it is notable that Adjudications and Segregation, Property, Equality and Diversity and staff/prisoner concerns are all more than doubled, and transfer issues are up 50%. This does tie in with concerns noted in the body of our report.

<b>Applications to IMB</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
Accommodation	12	1
Adjudications (inc Segregation)	33	2
Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	23	4
Education/employment/training inc IEP	15	8
Family/visits inc mail & phone	9	22
Food/kitchen related	11	4
Health related	20	15
Property	39	12
Sentence related (inc re-cat)	18	2
Staff/prisoner concerns inc bullying	29	13
Transfers	31	21
Miscellaneous	42	29
<b>Total number of application</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>133</b>