



The Annual Report of

THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

HMP FEATHERSTONE

1st November 2015 – 31st October 2016

HMP FEATHERSTONE
NEW ROAD
FEATHERSTONE
WV10 7PU

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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

2.1 HMP Featherstone is located approximately 8 miles north of Wolverhampton in the West Midlands It was opened in 1976 as a Category C, adult, male, industrial training establishment and the main residential units comprised Houses 1-4 and House 6 (Currently Enhanced regime). House 5 (Currently the Induction and Initial Assessment needs Unit) was added in 1990 followed by House 7 (Currently Healthy living unit) in 2007. It was built on land originally owned by The Ministry of Defence and occupies part of the same land complex as HMP Oakwood and HMYOI Brinsford.

2.2 HMP Featherstone has an operational capacity of 703 and the certified normal accommodation is 645 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 and 10 years for a variety of offences. The prison also houses a small number of lifer, indeterminate

sentence, and older prisoners. In 2015, it was re-categorised as a Resettlement prison for the Warwickshire and West Mercia area. The Ministry of Justice performance rating for this prison is currently 3. This is on a scale from 1 (Serious concerns) to 4 (Exceptional) and is worked out by the Ministry of Justice taking into account 34 criteria such as overcrowding, purposeful activity etc. The prison staff is from diverse, multi-cultural ethnic backgrounds and at the end of the reporting period the gender split was 62% male and 38% female.

2.3 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 inpatient 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 their fellow prisoners.

2.4 The main contractors/agencies to the prison during the reporting period were:

Care UK – Healthcare provider from 1/4/2016.

Geoamey – Escort transport to/from other prisons.

Bidvest – Catering services.

Milton Keynes College – Education provider.

Lloyds Pharmacy Services - Medication.

Staffordshire Library Service – Library services.

DHL – Ordering and delivering of canteen services.

Amey – Works.

In addition there are numerous voluntary organisations that provide invaluable services within the prison

Section 3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 This report covers the period 1st November 2015 – 31st October 2016.

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

- 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 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. **Following serious damage to the unit it is presently closed for repairs.**
- 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. There is some evidence of a reduction in the use of synthetic substances but an increase in the use of more traditional hard drugs is a worrying trend. The Board is satisfied that the senior management are aware of the situation and appear to be 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 many 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.**
- 3.10 **The Board is very concerned at the level of violence, bad behaviour of some prisoners and the damage which is being caused to both persons and property. Quite clearly some of the responsibility for this is due to a number of factors including the reduction of uniformed officers, the presence of new drugs within the prison and the class of some prisoners transferred from other establishments**

under the Re-settlement provisions. Urgent action is needed to review the current position. Many important meetings are being cancelled very often at short notice and as a result monitoring is curtailed. The Board has been affected due to the resignation of some members who are difficult to replace.

Section 4

RESETTLEMENT

Meetings continuously take place Bi-monthly chaired by the HERR (or his Custodial Manager in his absence) attended and supported by a member of the IMB when available. Attendance by other functions have been haphazard on occasion which has been addressed by the HERR and attendance has improved. The 7 Pathways and their leads provide reports and update the Resettlement folder for access by all staff. All action points to improve and enhance services for prisoners have been met or in place. Offender behaviour programmes are currently on schedule to meet their targets of RESOLVE outcomes.

Communication between departments have improved and sees positive working relations between OMU, CRC's and uniformed staff which reflects on information being disseminated to the prison population and every prisoner now has an Offender Supervisor or Offender Manager depending on their status. Every prisoner can now ascertain from speaking to staff who their OS or OM is and each prisoner has a personal officer designated to them in respect of their wing spur officer.

In 2015 WWM CRC began working in the prison under the contractual management of the HERR who monitors and manages the delivery of the "Through the Gate" services in particular Accommodation, Resettlement plans, Finance, Benefit and Debt and although a recent HMIP report on delivery by CRC organisations nationally was indicating that 80% of CRC's were failing but that the CRC team at Featherstone are well embedded and integrated and delivering above their targeted outcomes monthly in the 90+% and that the CAB working through CRC are achieving positive outcomes on reducing outstanding debts for prisoners and completing HSBC bank account applications. CRC Interface meetings to monitor the contracts have been reduced in numbers due to the good working relations adopted by the HERR and the Lead CRC Manager with further discussions taking place on how to further develop and enhance the services of the CRC within Featherstone. .

Family visits are now open to a greater number of prisoners and not just to enhanced status prisoners and are now held monthly with average attendance of 12 prisoners against previous quarterly visits with attendance of 5 prisoners. However, due to its increased popularity, a review of its eligibility application criteria is currently taking place to ensure that the correct applications are accepted for consideration in order to address the needs of those prisoners truly

deserving this opportunity of enhancing their family links and needs. In addition to family visits, additional family visits for Lifers, IPP and Peer mentors are now also held and tend to follow on in the mid – afternoon / evening and further work in line with prisoners with more complex needs have been introduced by PACT and its FLIP course

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 individual 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 from the establishment.

The department is mindful of the latest trends in learning and skills which enables it to incorporate these into its curriculum.

- 5.2 The department has recently had a change of management with a new manager taking post on the 1st October 2016 It is staffed with well qualified and experienced teachers and trainers and is adequately resourced and equipped.

- 5.3 The curriculum is both wide and varied with new courses having been introduced during the academic year. As the prison currently has a high turnover of short term prisoners this is not affecting the teaching and learning as a large percentage of courses are short and the prisoners are capable of completing them before release or being transferred to other establishments.

Milton Keynes College is the principal provider of education, and enjoys excellent working relationships with the other providers.

HMP Featherstone has been proactive in obtaining the services of Railtrack in providing a course on railway track laying and maintenance. Railtrack have provided railway lines, sleepers and ballast together with their staff teaching prisoners how to perform the various tasks in maintaining the permanent way and will give job opportunities to the prisoners when leaving jail.

- 5.4 The modern Industrial Workshops 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.

During this reporting period the establishment has opened a state of the art print shop which has secured contracts for printing various pamphlets,

news sheets and pro-formas for distribution around other prisons nationally. HMP Featherstone is also looking for further printing opportunities for procuring contracts external to the prison service.

- 5.5 The Board recognises the hard work of both the staff in the Workshops and in the Education department in these times of increasing austerity.

Section 6

HEALTHCARE

- 6.1 Since April 2016 Healthcare has been commissioned from Care UK. A range of Primary Care services are provided as part of the contract e.g. GP, Pharmacist, Chiropody, Opticians Mental Health, and Clinical Substance Misuse. Dental services are directly contracted by Staffordshire Commissioners. The Mental Health Psycho Social Intervention Service is delivered by South Staffordshire and Shropshire Foundation Trust. A Psychiatrist continues to hold a weekly clinic.
- 6.2 A new management team have been in post since 2016. The deputy head of health care was promoted to Head of Health Care in April 2016 with a Deputy being appointed in September 2016 and a Business Manager taking up post in August 2016. The Business manager now deals with contract management and data control. All three roles have made a vast difference to the running of the Healthcare Department. They are well supported by the Governor and his team.
- 6.3 IMB members attend the Health Care Quality Assurance meeting which has replaced the Clinical Governance and Health Care Operational Management meeting. This meeting takes place monthly. The Governor is responsible for chairing the quarterly Local Delivery Board meeting. The first meeting took place in September 2016. Prisoner forums are held monthly and will now be facilitated by the Deputy Head of Health Care and the Business Manager.
- 6.4 A number of Band 5 and 6 nurse vacancies exist, and despite an active recruitment campaign, successful recruitment has been slow. This has necessitated the use of regular agency nurses who know the prison system as well as bank staff (from the substantive pool). This has ensured safe care delivery as stable pool of staff are used and consistency of care is maintained.
- 6.5 Key issues that have been highlighted in the IMB rota reports are as follows. :
- ❖ Some non-attendance at GOOD reviews by Health Care staff due to staffing issues, although on occasion's telephone input has been accepted. Late notification of changes to meeting times have conflicted with booked clinics which make attendance difficult and impact on clinical delivery.

- ❖ NPS is a concern within the Prison with a number of prisoners being affected. It is disheartening therefore that the substance misuse meeting is not always well attended and on occasions the meeting has been cancelled.
- ❖ The prison is not profiled to take enough prisoners to their hospital appointments Only 2-3 escorts a day can be facilitated. The ongoing issue with this benchmark has caused difficulties with cancellation of appointment.
- ❖ There has been a high “did not attend” (DNA) rate for internal appointments mainly caused by prisoners not making such appointments. There has however been a few instances of appointment slips not being delivered to prisoners in a timely manner; This was resolved by the prison. A plan is in place to recruit two health trainers who will be able to disseminate appointments across the houses. It is hoped that by November 2016 the health trainers will be recruited and trained,
- ❖ Despite the department having a shortage of nurses (5 vacancies) and GP hours the team have pulled together to put on additional GP clinics as well as dental clinics. There is now a 5 week wait for a routine dental appointment, no wait for an emergency appointment. A nurse appointment can be obtained the next day. There is a 5 day wait for a GP appointment .The team are to be commended for their service delivery despite having staffing shortages.Advances in health care have been made with the installation of equipment that will allow onsite ultrasounds and x-rays to take place. This will be of immense benefit to the prisoners who now will not have to leave the prison for this service.
- ❖ Telehealth equipment has been installed and used to consult with AE departments and in the future will be used for Consultant appointments. This will solve some of the issues arising from prisoner escorts for external hospital appointments.
- ❖ With the expansion of the health team, as well as external contractors delivering onsite health services the health team are reported to be struggling with clinical room availability. There is no accommodation available within the department that can facilitate group sessions or telehealth conferences as all clinical rooms are regularly booked. In addition it is the recommendation from NHS England and the local commissioners that the health staff working throughout the prison are co-located (mental health, DARS, Psycho-social team, clinical substance misuse team). Alternative accommodation is therefore being explored within the prison.
- ❖ Prisoner concerns are addressed face to face with the opportunity to formalise concerns if the prisoner is not happy with the response. This system is working well. No formal complaints have been received by the health care team. Any complaint received would be investigated by Care UK and if no resolution then it would go to NHS England.
- ❖ 100 percent of prisoners who are eligible for the seasonal flu vaccine have booked an appointment for this vaccine.

Section 7

SAFER CUSTODY

7.1 There were 155 incidents of self harm. The number of assaults (prisoner on prisoner) was 114 and the number of assaults (prisoner on staff) was 40. There has been an escalation in violence since the prison became a Resettlement prison last year. Previously, the establishment had been a more stable and settled community but the move to bringing in prisoners in the last six months of their sentences has changed the whole dynamic of the prison and made it more unsettled and potentially volatile. It now appears to be at odds with its work ethic as a working/training prison.

7.2 Following a serious incident in August, unrest spread throughout the prison and as a consequence 60 disruptive prisoners were dispersed to other jails in an attempt to restore calm and order. Since then, prisoners have been on a restricted regime which has curtailed some of their activities and resulted in more time being locked up. Understandably, this resulted in prisoners feeling very frustrated and tensions were running high. We understood this was an interim measure and had been put in place for the safety of prisoners and staff alike. We have been assured that a normal regime will be resumed as soon as circumstances allow.

7.3 The introduction of benchmarking and its added reduction in staff levels, influx of new staff and experienced staff leaving on voluntary redundancy have all reduced the frequency of contact with prisoners. This has meant a reduction in meaningful negotiation between staff and prisoners. Clearly there is a need to improve the staff/prisoner relationships in Featherstone in order to make it a more safe, decent and secure environment for all.

7.4 A significant number of cells have been vandalised and put out of action by some prisoners. The cost of repairing and the delays in getting them back to acceptable, habitable condition is very concerning and urgent action is needed to address this.

7.5 The Board has seen a significant number of prisoners choosing to remain behind their doors for safer custody reasons. This is normally because they have debt issues relating to NPS usage and fear reprisals from their prisoner suppliers. This adds to the strains put on already overstretched staff in trying to manage them. This behaviour is clearly not good for both their mental health and physical wellbeing. They are supported and encouraged to manage their debt issues and return to normal prison life as soon as possible.

7.6 Sadly, there were two deaths in custody in the reporting period. The Board are satisfied that the families of the prisoners concerned were afforded compassion and support by the Prison service and also that those staff affected were offered counselling and due diligence was paid to their needs.

7.7 The increase in use of NPS by prisoners is still continuing to cause many prisoners problems at HMP Featherstone. This is by no means a local problem and is widespread across the prison estate nationally. It results in a significant drain on the time and resources expended by staff in dealing with the consequences of its usage by prisoners. Every effort has been made to get over to the prison population that NPS is dangerous and could have fatal consequences. There are indications that its use is declining but has been replaced by heroin and cannabis. It remains to be seen if the introduction of The Psychoactive Substance Act in April of this year has any effect on the use and supply within prisons

7.8 Work is progressing towards making HMP Featherstone non- smoking by 2017. Not an easy task bearing in mind that approximately 80% of the prisoner population are smokers. The non-smoking policy is being introduced in stages and support is being given to prisoners such as smoking cessation classes and the availability of patches and vaping supplies.

7.9 Finally, the significant contributions made by the various prison representative groups cannot be understated. They play an integral part within Featherstone to maintain calm and stability and promote a safe, decent and secure environment.

Section 8

SEGREGATION UNIT

8.1 The segregation unit has had a very difficult and challenging year with staff having to struggle with unenviable tasks of dealing with very difficult prisoners who can be vulnerable, violent, abusive and aggressive. Segregation staff are selected because they are professional committed and caring officers who invariably have to strike a delicate balance between supporting quite often vulnerable prisoners and managing those who challenge the good order of the unit. They work hard to engage with prisoners and hopefully get them returned to normal location as soon as possible.

8.2 Due to HMP Featherstone becoming a Resettlement prison last year, we have seen a change in the type of prisoners we deal with. Some are disruptive, demanding more and need much more closer supervision. A significant number of cells were regularly put out of use by prisoners who damaged both the fabric of the cells and its furniture. This put considerable strain on the Unit. The maintenance staff have had a constant uphill battle to ensure that those cells were fit for purpose and human habitation. In May, it was decided to introduce a stricter regime. By making the segregation unit more

austere, less comfortable, reduced phone calls out and prison toiletries only the intention was to deter prisoners from using it as a means of getting transferred out and make life on the House units more attractive. In August, the decision was made to close the Segregation Unit down completely for extensive remedial works to be carried out. It is anticipated that this work will take some time and it may not reopen until after Xmas at the earliest. In the meantime, segregated prisoners are being managed on a spur on House 2 or transferred out to other establishments.

8.3 Board members visit the Segregation Unit every week as part of their Rota visit to the prison and speak to all prisoners to ascertain if they have any concerns. Checks are made to ensure that the Unit is clean, there is suitable bedding and the residents have access to exercise, showers, canteen and the telephone. Additionally, members sit in at the prisoners Segregation review boards, as observers, to ensure that that the process has been followed correctly and the prisoner has been treated fairly. We attended 167 segregation reviews of prisoners throughout the year compared to 214 the previous year. On occasions, a representative of Healthcare was not present. Some prisoners refused to attend their review.

8.4 SMARG (Segregation, Monitoring and Review Group) meets quarterly to review and monitor the use of segregation under PSO 1700. A member of the Board attends these meetings whenever possible as an observer

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 where two prisoners share 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 previous years 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 Changes to Featherstone's prison categorisation to a resettlement establishment has meant that, although it continues to support all prisoners with the opportunity of a wide range of working activities due to the length of time remaining on some prisoner sentence, it is sometimes difficult to give the appropriate training and education in the time available.

10.2 The introduction of a new functional head in the first quarter of 2016 having responsibility for Engineering and enterprises has generated a new focus for the area and a defined development plan is being produced to compliment the development plan introduced by PSPI. This should mean that the area will become more strategically minded and more business focused

10.3 During the year Featherstone has continued to work hard in ensuring wherever possible financial savings / benefits or improvements can be made.

10.4 Information is recorded by the house units 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 eaten / collected. All 3 contribute to waste food, however the quantity and quality of the information provided over the last 12 months has been hit and miss with some house units not supplying any information at all and therefore the information recorded cannot be seen as accurate. Additional meals also requested above the roll on the house unit is also identified and recorded as this also contributes towards waste.

10.5 Over the year 2015 - 2016 it is expected that approx. 170 tonnes of waste will have been prevented from going to landfill. Currently the national target is 70% with Featherstone's recycling currently being at 73%

Section 11

RISK REDUCTION

11.1 Risk reduction is a key feature of activity at HMP Featherstone prison with many aspects.

11.2 Absolutely key, however are two areas; the behaviour of prisoners towards each other and staff and the regimes ability to make adequate arrangements with outside agencies for prisoners being released.

11.3 HMP Featherstone becoming a resettlement prison has had a significant impact on both of these. Becoming a resettlement prison means an increased number of prisoners being transferred with only a short time remaining on their sentences. Many are not interested in taking on work which might lead to a qualification or attending courses (interventions) which aim to modify behaviour. The board has noted the increase in violent behaviour associated with this, both assaults and damage to facilities (smashing cell furniture) the latter causing some accommodation problems. It is the opinion of the board that this situation needs review.

11.4 When it comes to releasing prisoners into the community the Through the Gate Team worked hard to establish contact with external agencies which arrange accommodation and seek work opportunities. The figures with respect to prisoners immediately upon release are encouraging with respect to both aspects but there is no feedback to indicate what happens in the longer term. As a result it is hard to judge how effective resettlement efforts are.

Section 12

CHAPLAINCY

12.1 Led by an Imam and part-time Priests and Ministers from other denominations, the chaplaincy ensures all religions are catered for within the prison. The full time Church of England Chaplain has retired during the year. 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 Currently there are 93 Foreign Nationals within the prison population. There are about 29 different Nationalities within the group. Immigration Officers visit the prison as and when required and surgeries are run every six weeks.
- 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 provides in the order of 700,000 meals each year providing each prisoner with a breakfast pack, lunch and an evening meal on a daily basis. The Governor on taking office, sought to improve the availability of hot meals during the week at lunchtimes which formerly only happened on Fridays. They are now offered on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The catering staff wherever 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.
- 13.2 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 government's guidelines on nutrition and calorie intake. Comments books are available at each serving 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 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.
- 13.4 **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.**

Section 14

APPLICATIONS TO THE BOARD

14.1 Analysis of Applications 1st November 2015 to 31st October 2016

There were 136 Applications to the Board in the period 1st November 2015 to 31st October 2016 compared to 122 in the previous year. .

- 14.2 There were 10 applications to the Board on health related matters this year compared with 14 last year.
- 14.3 There were 3 applications about Transfers compared to 15 last year.
- 14.4 There were 19 applications on Sentence related matters (including Home Detention Curfew, Release on Temporary Licence, Parole, Release Dates and re-categorisation)
- 14.5 **There were 24 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 6 to 4. There was little change in the number of applications regarding food. Staff/Prisoner concerns rose from 6 to 19

14.7 Applications regarding Accommodation. Adjudication and Training show little change.

Breakdown of Applications by Subject

Accommodation	6
Adjudications	5
Equality/Diversity	1
Education/Employment	6
Family visits/mail/phone	4
Finance/pay	8
Food/kitchen	1
Health related	10
Property (Featherstone	6
Property (other locations)	24
Canteen	6
Sentence related	19
Staff/prisoner related	19
Transfers	3
Miscellaneous	18
Total	<u>136</u>

Section 15

GYMNASIUM AND SPORTS FACILITIES

15.1 Whilst compiling this report the department has been one member of staff short since Christmas 2015. The current staffing level is four full time Physical Training Instructors (PTIs) officers with one female officer undergoing training who will be qualified by Christmas 2016. The Governor has submitted a bid for the sixth member of the PE Team as part of the establishments Violence Reduction Strategy

15.2 Again these areas of the prison have been intensively utilised and have proved popular with the inmates.

15.3 With the advent of HMP Featherstone being designated a resettlement prison it has caused instability in the organisation of the gymnasium. The key reason being the comparatively short stay of the prisoners prior to their release.

This has proven difficult when selecting teams for rugby, football and basketball as many of the prisoners have never played these particular sports before and training of players is limited in the time available. This has the disadvantage when trying to field strong teams when playing in competitions. Additionally, when a strong team is formulated, keeping the squad together has become a problem due to players being released. Also the gym staff have difficulty in forming relationships with their players as the rapid turnover of prisoners doesn't lead to harmony, trust and continuity. These sporting activities can be a major link with the local communities and several inmates have gone to play with teams on release which has been invaluable in them becoming accepted into life after prison and preventing re-offending.

15.4 During the year ending October 2016 the staff have cancelled many educational and vocational courses due to unrealistic staffing levels throughout the prison as they have been utilised to fill shortfalls on house units and external escort duties.

15.5 During the latter half of the year, thanks to a sponsored 10 mile run and a visit from snooker's Jimmy White, £3,396.70 was raised and donated to the Acorns Children's Hospice and a further £100 was raised for Suicide Prevention Day. It is only with the innovative PTIs thinking and enthusiasm that these magnificent amounts of money were raised.

15.6 At the beginning of the season several friendly football matches were played, with the rugby season commencing in September. The establishment has been successful in winning rugby matches together with the basket ball season starting in October. The basketball team plays in the West Midland's League with the rugby team in the Staffordshire Merit One League.

15.7 Members of the Board continue to be impressed with the hard work and enthusiasm shown by the Gym staff. They carry out their duties with due diligence and professionalism where their efforts add to the fitness and good humour of the prisoners who attend the many activities

Section 16

INDUSTRIES

16.1 Throughout 2015 factories have continued to be busy sometimes working weekends and lunchtimes to meet the order demands from PSPI and other outside contractors. The MOD is continuing to place large orders for picket post with the opportunity for further new work in the future.

New training records for all prisoners have been introduced. This documentation is retained by the prisoner throughout his training and also when leaving the establishment. This is useful in demonstrating the skills and qualifications gained to any future employer.

16.2 Textile continues to grow with the manufacture of T shirts, Curtains, Fleece and sweat shirts being the main production. The introduction of a piece work system has seen productivity of T shirts increase dramatically.

Printing actively producing print work within the MOD and ministry:- books for prisons, newsletters, posters etc.

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College are also proposing to introduce a course on graphic design to support the print activities.

16.3 Workshops have been created to deliver 1 to 1 maths and learning to read sessions and to develop literacy skills. The Shannon Trust along with Milton Keynes College are working closely with the prison by supplying mentors and support.

Dudley College invested a further £25,000 in training with Milton Keynes College also delivering Manufacturing L2 and Motor Mechanics L2 with the possibility of training an assessor at Featherstone. Warehousing L2 and Fork Lift training have also been introduced.

15.4 Rail Track have introduced training for the new HS 2 line which introduces new skills and opportunities for prisoners once the government approves the project to commence.

Section 17

HEALTH AND SAFETY

17.1 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.

17.2 Featherstone has 43 open Litigation cases of which 37 were from prisoners and £500,000 had been allocated to aforementioned outstanding open cases.

17.3 At present the establishment have 19 staff with Full First Aid accreditation and 52 in date with Emergency First Aid at Work accreditation.

Section 18

THE VISITS CENTRE AND THE VISITS

18.1 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.

18.2 The superb purpose built centre has excellent staff led by a newly appointed centre manager who has an increased team of dedicated volunteers, some who have been at the Centre for many years .

Section 19

DRUGS AND DRUG TESTING

19.1 Drug related work with prisoners continued to be delivered by Lifeline in 2015 and in early 2016 however, this contract was taken over by CareUK in April 2016 with all staff being TUPE'd and continuing in the delivery of the previous contracted services with Drugs, Alcohol and related services both holistic and clinical focusing on all levels and the team continued initially to consist of 15 full time members holding structured clinical reviews and psycho social interventions and were commonly known as DARS.

19.2 In June 2016, a major change programme was commenced which in real terms saw the DARS team change their name to "The Substance Misuse and Mental Health Service" and reduced staffing to 6 full time workers (3 drug workers and 3 mental Health workers) with admin support covering all other prisons and led by a clinical Manager also over seeing Brinsford and Werrington.

19.3 During this major period of uncertainty, certain aspects of the service delivery was affected however, at time of writing this report, all staff have been informed who have been successful in their employment applications and are now in post and that the services in the contract will continue as contracted which should not have a detrimental impact on the needs of the prison population at Featherstone including the services of IDTS clinical drug dispensing.

19.4 The prison health Champions during this period were either transferred or released and for several months, no new prisoners were recruited or trained up for these important roles. However, 5 new prisoners have completed the course and 2 prisoners are working full time as Prison Health Champions and 3 are working part time on the wings in the residential units.

19.5 Like many establishments around the country, there is still a major problem with the use of psychoactive substances as last year's report states, There is still a major problem with the use of new psychoactive substances (previously known as 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.

19.6 The ingress of illicit substances continues to be of concern especially with the increase of drones on a regular basis and 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. Further funding has also been bid for continued replacing of the current windows in houses 1 -5.

19.7 The data obtained from security between October 2015 and September 2016 shows the total number of Mercury Reports submitted that were drugs related is 981. IRS recorded 50 incident of drugs finds and 8 parcels. During the year the threat of ingress by Drones has increased but replacement windows are being fitted to cells to address the situation. A number of parcels have been intercepted or found through searching and the establishment is working with the local Police to identify those involved.

The Drugs of choice have changed during the year from being predominantly Cannabis to NPS as well as a small amount of Heroin and Cocaine. In 2016, the law changed in relation to NPS possession and intent to supply and MDT now allows the prison to test for NPS whereas previously this was not an option.

Section 20

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION.

20.1 The Equality duty under the 2010 Equality Act requires the Board to have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. (Protected characteristics are Age, Disability, Sexual orientation/Gender, Race, Religion and belief, Marriage and civil partnership and Pregnancy and maternity)

20.2 Equality meetings are normally held bi-monthly and chaired by the Governing governor. They are usually well attended by the senior management team lead protective characteristic leads as well as prisoner representatives for the various strands i.e.- Equality, Over 50's, Veterans in custody and Violence reduction etc. A detailed, structural agenda covers all aspects of Equality and an IMB member regularly attends the meetings.

Age (Over 50's)

20.3 The over 50's community at HMP Featherstone currently stands at 52 members. The table below shows a breakdown of the numbers in each age group and percentages of the overall total represented by the different age group.

Number	50-54 (32)	55-59 (10)	60-70 (9)	70 and over (1)
Percentage	62.4%	19.6%	17.64%	1.96

The breakdown of over 50's population per House unit is as follows.

House 1 - 7 House 2 - 1 House 3 - 4 House 4 -7 House 5 - 6 House 6 -9

House 7 -18

The majority reside on House 7. This offers a more stable and quieter environment for this age group. They do integrate well with other ages and their maturity helps to create the behaviour House 7 represents and expects. In common with other prisons, there are a growing number of older prisoners and inevitably their particular needs require identifying and addressing.

Disability.

20.4 There are currently 133 prisoners (20.62% of the prison population) who have self declared varying levels of disability with these being well managed on the residential units. Of those 31(4.8%) have declared more than one disability. The breakdown of disabilities is as follows.

20.5 Mental Illness-36, Learning difficulties inc Dyslexia 20, Reduced mobility 28, Reduced physical capacity 23, Speech impediment 2, Hearing impairment 1, Visual impairment 10, Progressive condition 2, Severe disfigurement 1, and Diabetes 13

Sexual Orientation/Gender

20.6 Sadly, very few members attend the Inside Out meetings. Promotional posters have been placed around the prison to encourage awareness and better understanding

Race.

20.7 The atmosphere around the Establishment remains positive with a low level of racial concerns raised by prisoners or staff. Ongoing monitoring of allocation of work by ethnic background has found that there is no evidence that any particular group gets better or worse jobs. BAME (Black and Asian minority ethnic) are in the process of being arranged. A Black history event was held in October and proved to be very popular and successful. Regular Foreign National meetings are held as well as Home Office Immigration surgeries. There are currently 93 Foreign National prisoners at HMP Featherstone representing 14.41% of the prison population.

Religion/Belief

20.8 There was a Chaplaincy Assurance and Compliance visit in March. The Chaplaincy had an outstanding report and the dedicated and caring team should be congratulated on this achievement. The spiritual care and diverse services they provide to support prisoners and their family is truly impressive.

20.9 DIRF's (Discrimination Incident Report Forms) are carefully monitored and investigated within the given target time. The total number of DIRF's for the reporting year was 19. The breakdown was Disability 4, Sexual orientation/Gender 3, Race 10, Religion and belief 2,

Section 21.

THE WORK OF THE BOARD

- 21.1 The Board has a complement of ten members but two members have had serious health issues during the year which has put pressure on the remaining eight. This coupled with cancellation of prison committee meetings has meant less monitoring of the prison. It is pleasing to note that the ethnic balance of members has improved 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.
- 21.5 The Board appreciates the good relationship it has with 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. The Board now has a new clerk Ms Diane Hazeldine but would like to thank Mrs Melissa Jewitt for her help during the period when we were without a clerk.

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**Ian Marks MBE, JP.
IMB Chair 2015/2016
HMP Featherstone
November 2016**

Section 22

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AA – Alcoholics Anonymous

A & E – Accident and Emergency

BAME – Black and Asian Minority Ethnic

CAB- Citizens Advice Bureau

CRC – Community Rehabilitation Company

DARS – Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service

FLIP – Family, literacy in Prisons

DIRF'S – Discrimination Incident Report Form

GOOD – Good order or discipline

GP – General Practitioner

HMIP - Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons

HMP - Her Majesty's Prison

HMP/YOI - Her Majesty's Prison/Youth Offender Institution

H & S – Health and Safety

HORR – Head of Reducing Offending

HS – High speed

IDTS = Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy

IEP's – Incentives and earned privileges

IMB – Independent Monitoring Board

IPP – Imprisonment (or detention) for public protection

IRS - Incident Reporting System

MOD – Ministry of Defence

NHS – National Health Service

NOMS – National Offender Management Service

NPS - New Psychoactive Substance

OM – Offender Manager

OMU – Offender Management Unit

OS – Offender Supervisor

PALS – Patient Advice and Liaison Service

PECS – Prison Escort and Custody Services

POELTS – Prison Officer Entry level training scheme.

PSO's – Prison Service Orders

PSPI – Prison Service Policy Instruction

PTI's – Physical training instructors

SMARG – Segregation monitoring and review group

TUPE – Transfer of resources to another provider

WWM – Warwickshire and West Mercia