



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at
HMP Highpoint

for reporting year
1 January to 31 December 2016

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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2. Statutory Role of the IMB

The Prison 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 or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

(1) Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.

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

(3) Report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 This report covers the period from January 2016 to December 2016. Evidence comes from observations made on rota visits, attendance at meetings and scrutiny of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, surveys and prisoner applications.

3.2 With a population of over 1300, Highpoint is one of the largest Category C Training and Resettlement prisons in the country. Throughout the year there have remained many challenges within the establishment, in particular staffing vacancies and levels (see Paragraph 6.1.1) and sickness and the availability of New Psychoactive Substances (see Paragraph 6.5.4). During the year the performance of the prison was reduced from Level 3 to Level 2. The Board is aware that staff shortages have had an impact on the safety and security of the prison, which led to it being downgraded. The number of reportable incidents has increased significantly during 2016 (see Paragraph 6.5.6) and some prisoners and staff have reported feeling less safe (see Paragraph 5.5.4). However, by the last quarter of the reporting period the prison appeared much calmer and more settled.

3.3 Despite the challenges faced by the prison:

- Overall prisoners receive fair treatment in this establishment, but there are areas where a lack of consistency or provision may result in different experiences and opportunities for prisoners (for example see Paragraphs 6.7.4 and 5.7.2.5).
- The prison, through its leadership, has a strong commitment towards humane treatment and a dignity agenda. However, there are examples where in practice this is undermined by delays in arranging maintenance, repair or specialist cleaning (see 5.7.2).
- Preparation for release is variable across the prison. There are some very good examples of new vocational courses, initiatives and innovations that

potentially make a very positive contribution (see Paragraphs 5.2.1.7 and 5.2.3 and 5.6.3). However, the Board has concerns about the capacity of the prison to manage effectively the work associated with sentence planning (see Paragraphs 5.6.1 and 5.6.2).

3.4 Main areas for development:

To the Minister:

3.4.1 Staffing

Understaffing is impacting significantly on the ability of the prison to perform to its potential and make the identified improvements required. The Board seeks assurance from the Minister that funding for increased staffing will take into account the particular dynamics and contextual factors of Highpoint (see Paragraphs 6.1.1 and 4.0).

3.4.2 Resettlement and Offender Management

Will the Minister review the process of, and arrangements for, sentence planning and QASys to ensure that prisoners transferring from other establishments arrive with a complete and up to date OASys? This would improve the efficiency of the OMU and contribute to improving opportunities for rehabilitation by allowing Offender Supervisors to work more productively with prisoners to achieve their plans for resettlement. See Paragraph 5.6.1.

3.4.3 Works Maintenance

The Board has seen no improvement in the service provided by Carillion during the reporting period. The Board is also aware that some statutory maintenance works, which should be undertaken as part of the agreed contract, are outstanding. Will the Minister review the performance and contractual arrangements of Carillion to bring about a better service and one that is more supportive for the prison management, who are reliant on their service? See Paragraph 6.2.2.

3.4.4. Property

It is regrettable that it is necessary to highlight property issues again in this report. Much effort and many prison resources are engaged in remedying failures that could be avoided by more careful handling of prisoners' property and by more rigorous monitoring of contractors. Will the Minister review arrangements for the handling and transportation of transferring prisoners' property and communication between establishments when property goes missing? See Paragraph 6.8.

To the Governor

3.4.5 Personal Officers

Implementation of the Personal Officer scheme is inconsistent across the prison and prisoners do not have equal access to a Personal Officer. The Board feels that an improved personal officer scheme would provide a number of benefits and there would be better opportunity to discuss issues of concern with an officer who knows them and with whom they have developed a relationship. The Board asks the Governor to ensure implementation of the Personal Officer scheme across the prison (see Paragraph 6.1.0).

3.4.6 Canteen Meetings

There have been no canteen meetings held on either North or South this reporting year. Issues have been raised with the Board about aspects of the canteen service. This issue was raised in the previous annual report and the Board requests again that meetings are re-instated and take place on a regular basis (see Paragraph 6.4).

3.4.7 Accommodation and Decency - Units 3 and 4

There is still a lack of privacy with the in-cell lavatory arrangements in doubled up cells on Wellington Unit 4 and Javelin Unit 3. The communal lavatories in Units 3 and 4 are also in urgent need of descaling and thorough cleaning. Under the prison's 'Decency Agenda' the Board requests that this work is undertaken as a matter of some priority (see Paragraph 5.7.2.4).

3.4.8 SMARG Meetings and Statistics

During this reporting period no Segregation Monitoring and Review Group meetings have been held despite time allocated within the 2016 meetings calendar. Allegedly this is because there is only one officer who can collate the statistics to be presented at the SMARG meeting, which has meant that meetings are not taking place on a regular basis. The Board asks the Governor to take action necessary to enable these meetings to be reinstated and take place on a regular basis (see Paragraph 5.5.4).

To the Prison Service

3.4.9 Access to Justice Computers

The Board asks that the obsolete Prison Service Order/Prison Service Instruction be updated and re-issued to give clear national guidelines on 'Access to Justice' for prisoners so that prison management and prisoners know the conditions under which they can request an 'Access to Justice' computer (see Paragraph 5.7.3).

4. Description of the Prison

4.1 HMP Highpoint was originally opened as a prison in 1977 and has undergone a number of estate reconfigurations over the years. The prison is sited on a former Royal Air Force base using many of the original buildings and is split over two adjacent (North and South) sites. It is situated some 10 miles south east of Newmarket in rural Suffolk.

4.2 Highpoint is a male Category C Training and Resettlement prison for London and Essex. The operational capacity for the reporting period was 1325.

4.3 During the first part of 2016 the establishment was classified at Level 3 in terms of performance. However, this was reclassified in December 2016 to Level 2 as a result of Internal Audit and Assurance visits around Safer Custody and Security. The revised classification reflects that overall, performance of the prison is of concern.

4.4 Accommodation at the prison varies considerably in terms of fabric and facilities (see Paragraph 5.7.3). On the South side there are ten residential units and on the North there are five. Most units have in-cell sanitation except for Vickers and Halifax on the South and Lysander, Hawker and Dominie on the North, which have 24-hour access to lavatory and shower recesses. Two units with en-suite cells are available on the South. Most cells are single occupancy, however there are some doubled up single cells on both the North and South sites. In-cell television is available to all prisoners with the exception of those on Basic regime.

4.5 The dynamics of Highpoint with its split site, large population (with some 80% coming from London or Essex) held some distance from home and in a remote and rural location creates significant performance challenges for the prison and makes Highpoint a complex establishment.

4.5 Agencies and contractors for the prison include:

- Resettlement providers - London and Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC).
- Drugs rehabilitation services are provided by LifeLine.
- Ormiston provides services for prisoners' families and children.
- Healthcare is provided by Care UK Ltd.
- Escort Contractors include Serco Wincanton and G4S
- Learning and Skills - Education and Training is provided by Novus.
- Maintenance is provided by Carillion.

5.0 Required Reporting – Evidence sections

5.1. Equality and Inclusion

5.1.1 The prisoner population as defined by ethnicity at Highpoint is: White British 39%, Black 31%, Asian 9%, White Other 8%, Mixed 7%, Other 4%, Gipsy, Roma & Traveller (GRT) 2%. This compares with 10% Black in the prison population as a whole and 2.8% Black in the general population. For Asian the prison population as a whole is 6%. At Highpoint there is a disproportionate number of Black and minority ethnic prisoners.

5.1.2 Highpoint has a dedicated Equalities Department covering all the protected characteristic groups. An independent Community Diversity Officer (CDO) from ISCRE (Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality) is also based in the establishment, twice a week. The role supports the department to ensure that Highpoint meets its statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2010. The CDO works with the department to develop innovative ways to deliver equality focussed interventions to support marginalised, vulnerable, isolated and disadvantaged prisoners whilst in custody. The CDO also provides an independent review of the Discrimination Incident Reporting Form (DIRF) complaints system. The Board notes that the role of the CDO provides an effective way of ensuring equality matters are embedded at all levels at Highpoint. However, and as reported last year, staff shortages and frequent re-deployments within the prison have impacted on the work of the team and in particular on the provision and regularity of Prisoner Forums for these groups.

5.1.3 During the reporting period 128 complaints were received. 53 were DIRFs and 75 submitted as Complaint 1 or 2 forms. Overwhelmingly, they related to race as the issue of complaint (94) with others being; Religion/Belief (17), Age (5), Disability (4) and Sexual Orientation (1). 2 DIRFs were upheld during 2016. The Board found that investigations were thorough and transparent, but the investigatory process did not always result in matters being addressed in a timely manner, causing some frustration for the prisoners. Recent changes to the DIRF system, including a 5 working day turnaround, are an attempt to improve this.

5.1.4 The Board is aware that some protected groups feel that the reception and induction process could be improved in terms of enabling disclosure. The impact of this would help the prison to better meet and support the needs of these individuals.

5.1.5 Representatives for each diversity area are normally available on the Units to give advice to fellow prisoners. For prisoners in need of disability assistance there are 16 dedicated carers. The Board is aware that it is sometimes orderlies who report a prisoner's mental health problem.

5.1.6 The Board found that Highpoint seeks to be inclusive and continually strives to do so. This is evidenced by a range of attempts and initiatives to meet diverse needs. Discrimination at any level is not tolerated.

5.1.7 Highpoint has an average of 183 Foreign National Offenders (FNOs) at any one time, which represents 14% of the prison population. There are always detainees who have finished their sentence still held at Highpoint, because of the complexities of their case. The Board was aware that during 2016 one FNO was 80 months over sentence. The Immigration Service has an office at Highpoint with 3 members of staff.

5.2. Purposeful Activity

5.2.1 Education, Learning and Skills

5.2.1.1 The effectiveness of Education, Learning and Skills at Highpoint is graded 2. There is a strong emphasis on developing employment skills and this focus is reflected through the Education Department and Vocational Training Centre. Across both the North and South sites there is capacity for 356 places within the Education, Learning and Skills programme, which provides access for approximately 27% of the prison population at any one time. Within this, 34% of provision is English, Maths and ESOL and 66% Employability and Vocational related with industry recognition. The majority of academic courses are part-time, while most of the vocational courses are full-time.

5.2.1.2 All prisoners are supposed to receive an initial English and Maths assessment on entry to the prison. The Board is aware that some prisoners are not attending for this initial screening and that opportunities, by the prison, to follow-up on this are not always taken. This results in incomplete information about a prisoner's educational levels of attainment and missed opportunities to address issues that may impact significantly on rehabilitation, future life chances and experiences.

5.2.1.3 Access to some Education and Vocational courses is criteria related depending on prior educational attainment and learning. However, there are fair opportunities to attend and progress through the programmes offered. Some vocational courses are only offered on one site, but equitable arrangements are in place for prisoners to transfer to undertake courses to meet their needs. Across the reporting year 3207 learners engaged in the Education and Learning and Skills programme with 89% achieving success.

5.2.1.4 Analysis of data shows that achievement at ESOL Entry Level 1 & 2 is high and above the national average. However, achievement in Functional Skills Level at 1 and 2 in English and Maths, is below the national average. More recent data (November 2016) suggests that this is improving as there is less reliance on supply staff and improved monitoring of teaching quality. However, this remains a cause for concern as it is so closely tied to progression to vocational opportunities and impact on employment prospects.

5.2.1.5 While the Education and Learning and Skills programme operates close to 95% of its capacity, with an 85% attendance rate, there is an issue, raised by both the education department and 357 prisoners surveyed in the annual needs analysis. This relates to the need to incentivise attendance at education or vocational courses through pay. While the rate of pay for Education has recently increased, most of the education courses are part-time and this can discourage attendance in favour of the increased pay that can be earned through full-time work.

5.2.1.6 Prisoners consulted, by IMB members, across the reporting period about their Education and Learning experiences are generally very positive. In addition, the needs analysis survey reported that 68% of prisoners thought that education and skills courses will or may assist them with gaining employment on release. There are also examples (eg related to prisoner pay) of the department and prison management responding to prisoner feedback.

5.2.1.7 Understaffing and curtailments have both had an impact. Curtailments, in some cases, have disrupted courses and extended the planned end date creating issues in the drawdown of funding. Understaffing within the department has impacted

on the quality of learner experience and range of courses offered. For example, Street Works and Plumbing courses have not been able to run. Not only does this reduce the number of activity places available, but reduces rehabilitative opportunities and employment post release.

However, during the reporting period there have been a number of positive developments to the curriculum on offer, which have further enhanced employability provision and preparation for release. Partnership working has secured vehicle donations to support the Light Vehicle Motor Maintenance Course and a project with MACS Plasterboard Company has resulted in employment outcomes for prisoners (see Paragraph 6.4).

5.2.2 Library

5.2.2.1 Library and Education staff work cooperatively and changes to the core day during 2016 have enabled the library to introduce additional education class visits in both North and South libraries. Day-time visits from units have fallen during the reporting period, despite the fact that curtailments have generally had less of an impact than in previous years.

5.2.2.2 During the reporting period 90% of prisoners on the North visited the library to take out a book, whereas only 60% did the same on the South. The Board is aware that arrangements for induction to the library and the communication and dissemination of library information within the Induction Unit have been problematic, with staffing issues, sessions not running or poorly attended. This is of concern because a lack of opportunity to engage with the library, early on, could impact on longer term use.

5.2.2.3 The Board acknowledges the good work of the library to support prisoners maintaining contact with their families through the *Stories for Families* initiative, which has proved very popular. Shannon Trust sessions continue to help with improvement of reading confidence and there is evidence that the prisoners who attend these sessions are making improved progress in Education. The Reading Ahead activity (Six Book Challenge) has proved very popular across both sites.

5.2.3. Gym and Physical Activity

5.2.3.1 Prisoners make good use of the well-equipped weight training and cardiovascular facilities, but at the end of the reporting period some repairs identified in the 2015 report were still outstanding. The impact of the damage to the South sports-hall floor has again been to reduce the type of physical activity that can be undertaken. Opportunities for basketball, volleyball, indoor football or walking football have been limited because of inadequate indoor space. The Board understands that work to repair the damaged floor will be carried out early in 2017.

5.2.3.2 Towards the end of the reporting period some outdoor all-weather gym equipment was installed outside 3 units on the South. The Board has observed this to be well used.

5.2.3.3 Prisoners have lost some gym and physical recreation sessions during 2016, because of staff shortages requiring regime curtailments and regular officer re-deployment to other duties. The impact of this is gym classes being cancelled at short notice. Due to the unpredictability caused by general staffing issues, there have been no physical activity related vocational training classes running this year.

5.2.3.4 The IMB has not been informed of any gym meetings held during the 2016 reporting period.

5.2.3 Industries and Employment

5.2.3.1 The Reducing Re-offending team continues to develop employment activities and the number of work places available at the prison is improving. 7% of prisoners eligible for work on the North are unemployed and 13% of prisoners on the South. The occupation providing greatest employment is as a Unit Domestic.

5.2.3.2 All workshop industries are located in Highpoint South prison as listed below:

- Workshops 1, 2 & 8: Clothes recycling employing about 150 prisoners.
- Workshop 3: Tailors, employing 30 prisoners.
- Workshop 4: Welding, employing 12 prisoners manufacturing clothing recycling bins for LMB and window grills, employing 7 prisoners.
- Workshop 5: Currently closed, under negotiations for re-opening.
- Workshop 6: Waste management employing 30 prisoners.
- Workshop 7: Food packs for distribution around the prison estate employing 22 prisoners.

Overall the industries generate a good income for the prison, whilst employing 268 prisoners. Instructors work closely with the prisoners employed in their workshops and in the best, make a significant contribution to a prisoner's work ethic, motivation and sense of worth. The Board acknowledges the good working relationships they establish with the prisoners.

5.2.3.3 The Board feels that the work regime at Highpoint generally encourages appropriate routines and sets achievable expectations, which help prepare prisoners for employment demands post release. Some of the work available, but not all, provides very good opportunities for prisoners to develop transferable skills. The Board is aware that, subject to the appropriate clearance, prisoners have fair opportunity to progress and transfer to work in more purposeful, motivating and challenging workshops.

5.3. Healthcare and Mental Health

5.3.1 Primary Care

5.3.1.1 Care UK, is contracted by NHS England to provide primary care (GP service) to HMP Highpoint. A Board member regularly attends the Healthcare Forums, Governance and Service Delivery and Pharmacy meetings, when they are held. Regular multi-agency meetings ensure prisoners' health needs are met and communicated appropriately. The service is taking positive steps towards prisoner rehabilitation by undertaking random checks on medication held by prisoners and by attempting to address long term prescription drug medication.

5.3.1.2 The Board notes that service delivery, as far as is possible, mirrors that which would be found in the community. The waiting time to see the GP is 7 days from putting in an application; an emergency is seen on the same day. During the reporting period 12% of GP, 18% of Dental, 18% Optician and 19% of Physiotherapy appointments were missed. The Board is aware that changes in regime because of staffing levels, the roll being incorrect and canteen being distributed can all result in missed and wasted appointments, GPs having to spend time just waiting for prisoners to arrive and an increase in the length of waiting lists. Arrangements to ensure that clinic time is more effective, including notification to prisoners of appointments, could be improved.

5.3.1.3 Nurse led clinics are run regularly for Asthma, BBV/Hep B, Spirometry, Blood Pressure, Physio Triage, Diabetes, Smoking Cessation, Pre-release, Integrated Drug Treatment Service (IDTS), Sexual Health and NHS Health Checks (Patients 45-75). This year Ipswich Hospital has been able to send a Nurse Specialist to HMP Highpoint, every week, to hold a Hep C clinic instead of the patient having to go to out to the hospital. Clinics are held regularly for Dentistry, Opticians, Podiatry and Physiotherapy. Waiting lists, especially for dentistry, have at times been too long, but new initial health screening procedures have improved the situation.

5.3.1.4 New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) incidents continue to impact on the stretched resources of Healthcare and cause concern. In one month during 2016 they had to deal with 94 incidents and 10 in one day. Such incidents impact on the smooth running of the services and create additional pressures and backlogs.

5.3.1.5 The Board notes that the Complaints system is working properly with the first option, of speaking to a senior nurse within 5 working days, being the most used and normally managing to resolve the matter. Applications to the Board regarding health matters total 79 and relate to various issues, which are normally resolved.

5.3.1.6 The Board has a concern about the high temperature in the pharmacy during the summer months. This can rise so high that it can compromise the safe storage of medication. The impact of this is costly and potentially disruptive in terms of service provided. The Board understands that the prison is looking into a cooling system.

5.3.1.6 During the reporting period the Board has also been concerned about the accommodation in the waiting rooms and by the lack of monitoring, by officers, of prisoners in the waiting rooms. The layout of the Healthcare building means opportunities to address issues around the waiting room are limited. However, officers are now patrolling the waiting rooms more frequently.

5.3.1.7 As healthcare is only contracted to provide a GP service, the prison has to use the out of hours 111 service and the Suffolk Ambulance Service during the evening and night time. The Board raised concerns about this in its 2015 report because of the impact on staffing, prisoner well-being and wider community. During the reporting period incidents requiring out of hours service have not decreased and the Board asks again for the existing contract to be revisited and amended to provide a 24 hour healthcare service.

5.3.2 Mental Health

5.3.2.1 There has been an increase in referrals to the Mental Health team during the reporting period with the team triaging between 40 – 50 patients a week. The Board is aware that since Highpoint became a London prison, more prisoners are arriving

with complex secondary mental health needs. No prisoner has been sectioned during 2016. The team have been asked to contribute to the training of POELTs, which will help new officers to more fully appreciate the role of the Mental Health team and better understand and support prisoners' needs on the units (see also Paragraph 5.1.1).

5.4. Safer Custody

5.4.1 The Board is very aware that Highpoint and the dynamics of its population make it a complex environment (see also Paragraph 3.5) and this is reflected in the safer custody challenges it has faced during 2016. For example, issues caused by gang membership impact daily on the management and running of the prison.

5.4.2 External audits undertaken during the reporting period with regard to Safer Custody identified a number of weaknesses, particularly in relation to the management of Assessment Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) documents. Issues around the management and monitoring of prisoners on an ACCT have been a concern for the Board, particularly the requirement that the ACCT always accompanies the prisoner, which was not always happening. However, the Board has noticed that the prison has responded robustly to the criticism and concerns raised. Training for the ACTT procedure is on-going and there is far more monitoring and quality assurance of the ACCT process and of those at risk of self-harm and self-segregation.

5.4.3 Incidents of self-harm have increased by 45% compared with the previous year (see Paragraph 6.6) with 396 ACCT documents being opened. During the reporting period inquests have been held on four prisoners who took their own life at Highpoint between April 2013 and September 2014.

Three of the verdicts delivered recorded concerns regarding these deaths. Of these one was accompanied by a Prevention of Future Deaths Report. The concerns were varied, but included:-

- Insufficient recording and sharing of information between departments at Highpoint.
- Inadequate staffing levels, training and awareness of protocols
- Failures with the follow up of referrals to the Mental Health Department and inadequate support and supervision to that department.

Additionally, the fourth verdict was accompanied by a Prevention of Future Deaths Report and raised concerns generally about the infrequency of Parole Board assessments and hearings for IPP prisoners and whether their mental health needs are being met and managed appropriately within the prison system.

The Board acknowledges that since these deaths, procedures within the prison have been reviewed and there is now greater monitoring that procedures and instructions are followed and that staff are meeting their duties and responsibilities. The Board has observed instances where very good support and care has been given to vulnerable and distressed men. However, on visits to residential units the Board, at times, also sees staff under pressure to complete all the essential tasks in the time available. It also notes that when staff are re-assigned to a unit they are often not

fully familiar with the background of prisoners in their care (see also Paragraph 6.1.1).

5.4.4 At times during the reporting period both prisoners and staff have reported to the Board feeling unsafe in the prison and Board members were aware of periods when the prison was very unsettled. 2016 shows an increase in the number of violent and reportable incidents (see Paragraph 6.6). The number of prisoner on prisoner assaults increased by 41% and assaults on staff by 6%. However, the Board has also noted that during the last quarter of the reporting year the prison has generally appeared more settled and calmer.

5.4.5 The Board is aware that during 2016 the number of approved Rule 45 requests was 3% from a total of 291 applications submitted. The Board found requests to be investigated thoroughly. Where approved the prisoner was immediately segregated for their own safety. Where rejected, the prison looked to manage the issue internally, usually involving a unit move.

5.4.6 In the early part of the reporting year Lifeline was given the contract for providing drug and alcohol programmes. The new programmes seem to have bedded in well and course participants speak very positively of the impact on their lives. Also during the year the decision was taken to move the Lifeline programmes, and resident participants from Blenheim Unit to D wing on Tempest Unit. This is a smaller unit and the move appears to have been beneficial. The Board has noted a more settled atmosphere.

5.4.7 The Board has found the Safer Custody team committed and responsive to concerns raised by the Board. They are familiar with the needs of prisoners identified as at risk of self-harm, but staffing inconsistencies and shortages on the units does not always ensure this situation.

5.5. Segregation and Assessment Unit

5.5.1 The Segregation Unit is run by an established and dedicated team led by a Governor and supported by a Custodial Manager (CM).

5.5.2 The management and organisation of the unit has changed during the reporting period, which has had a positive impact on its day to day operation and its effectiveness in dealing with the most challenging and difficult prisoners and situations. A stronger focus on a progressive regime for each prisoner accommodated has generally kept time in the unit to a minimum. The unit is generally a much calmer and a less volatile environment. The Board considers that the staff are very professional and supportive to the prisoners that are in their care and accommodated on the unit.

5.5.3 The Board is now regularly informed of new prisoner arrivals on the unit and is, therefore, better able to discharge its specific monitoring duties. Board members continued to attend and monitor the Segregation Reviews held for those on GOoD and have found the process appropriately managed and documentation accurate.

5.5.4 During the reporting year numbers accommodated in the Segregation Unit have varied with fewer accommodated during the latter part of the reporting period. This reflects the prison's changed approach to the segregation of its prisoners. Data relating to segregation monitoring and review has been difficult to access because

there have been no Segregation Monitoring and Review Group (SMARG) meetings held during the year.

5.5.5 During the reporting period 3986 adjudications were held. Of these, 60% were proven. The Board has found adjudications to be carried out fairly and with respect.

5.6 Resettlement and Offender Management

5.6.1 Although during 2016 measures were put in place to try and improve the backlog of work associated with sentence planning, the Board has concerns about the capacity of the prison to manage this effectively. Prisoners have reported that they still don't have sentence plans even though they have been at Highpoint for months.

5.6.2 75% of prisoners arrive at Highpoint without their sentence plan being completed. The impact of this is to compound further the heavy work load of the Offender Supervisors at Highpoint. Additionally, for prisoners nearing release date or parole hearings and looking to demonstrate their compliance, it is worrying, demotivating and a source of frustration.

5.6.3 The Board is also aware, through IMB Applications received, of difficulties prisoners experience in being able to access and /or meet with their Offender Supervisors/managers. This leaves them feeling unsupported and disengaged. Prisoners waiting for parole hearings and re-categorisation are given priority.

A recent initiative has enabled prisoners to access Offender Management Unit (OMU) surgeries run by a trained prisoner orderly. These take place on the units or in the library, on a booked rotational basis. While this initiative is to be commended and has been successful in reducing the backlog of low level matters and concerns, there remains a concern over the capacity of the OMU to meet their targets and effectively address prisoners' needs regarding sentence planning.

During the reporting period 2 Prisoners were granted Release On Temporary Licence (ROTL) to attend work every day and between 5 -10 prisoners a week, on average, are granted Cat D status.

5.6.4 The Board is pleased to report that the Partnership initiative has maintained its commitment and momentum and continues to establish new contacts, projects and courses, which have had a positive impact on rehabilitation and future employment opportunities for prisoners. For example:

- MACS Plasterboard Systems Ltd started Dry Lining and Plastering Training courses at the start of the year. As a result of these the Board was pleased to learn that to date 40 men have been offered full time employment after release.
- Kier – Making Ground Programme continues to run regular assessment days for prisoners. Their last such event during the year was attended by 5 men, three of whom were offered an interview on release.
- Timpson's have held interviews, with one prisoner being offered a second interview on release.

- Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) are scheduled to introduce a LifeWorks course in 2017 for ex-veterans.

The Partnership initiative and its members also provide valuable support to Highpoint by investing both staff resources and equipment with, for example, UK Power Management donating a vehicle to the Light Motor Maintenance vocational course (see also Paragraph 5.2.1).

5.6.5 The Board acknowledges the very positive contribution and difference that the Business & Community Engagement team has made to improving rehabilitative opportunities for prisoners at Highpoint. It is pleased to note that the Amends Awards Initiative recognises the performance and commitment of partnership members and prisoners.

5.7 Residential Services

5.7.1 Catering and Kitchens

5.7.1.1 The Board notes that the two kitchen teams that prepare the meals work under challenging conditions and are to be commended. Across the two sites approximately 2600 meals are served each day.

5.7.1.2 Concerns remain about the fabric of the North kitchen trolley bay and the floor of the South kitchen. Although the floor has recently been replaced, it remains very slippery and there have been a number of falls resulting in minor injury. Across both sites, broken equipment, or the unreliability of essential catering equipment, has impacted on the food menu and in some cases forced the kitchens to stop producing certain items (for example bread rolls) and buy in more expensive alternatives.

5.7.1.3 The Board receives relatively few (1.6%) complaints about the food and is satisfied that all reasonable requests for special diets are addressed and complied with and that the food is of an acceptable standard, quantity and quality.

Prisoners have opportunity to raise issues about the food via a Food Comment book kept in the unit servery and at food meetings, which are held monthly and to which most units send a representative. The kitchen staff endeavour to incorporate suggestions, but this is not always possible due to financial restraints.

5.7.2 Accommodation

5.7.2.1 Although positive efforts have been made to improve the look and feel of some of the units, through a programme of painting and the installation of kitchenette areas in some of the enhanced units, the physical condition of some units at Highpoint remains poor. Without intervention this will deteriorate further and to the detriment of prisoners' wellbeing. The Board believes that there is still work to be done to improve facilities, particularly in some of the older units.

5.7.2.2 The Board has noted that cleanliness of the communal areas, especially the lavatories, within the units has been variable and within the same units. In some cases it is excellent and even in difficult to clean and maintain areas. The Board is aware that cleanliness is often contingent on the availability and provision of appropriate equipment and the monitoring of cleaning quality by staff and has concerns that this does not always occur.

Litter thrown from windows outside Units 3 and 4 has continued to be of concern to the Board especially as this has often included discarded tin cans and lids, which could easily pose a risk to health and safety for staff and prisoners alike.

5.7.2.3 Disappointingly, no improvement has occurred to the showers on Unit 5 since the last report. The showers consist of a communal trough, side partitioned creating 4 cubicles. The waste water system is unable to cope with the quantity of water generated resulting in the trough liable to overflow, as well as prisoners standing in the dirty water from others. The doors to the cubicles are often damaged or missing and the closure mechanism for privacy is not substantial enough.

Drainage and temperature are still on-going problems with the communal showers on The Tempest Units (A – D).

5.7.2.4 There is a lack of privacy with the in-cell lavatory arrangements in doubled up cells on Wellington Unit 4 and Javelin Unit 3 and as reported last year, remains a concern to the Board. The communal lavatories in Units 3 and 4 are also in urgent need of descaling and thorough cleaning.

5.7.2.5 Prisoners have also raised with the Board a lack of perceived equity with regard to self-catering equipment provided within the units and in line with IEP status. There does not appear to be consistency of opportunity in terms of prisoner access to toasters, grills, hotplates and microwaves.

5.7.2.6 The Board is pleased to note that during the reporting period on both Vickers Unit 6 and Halifax Unit 7 there has been a significant improvement in the recreational and cooking facilities and services available to prisoners. This coincided with a regime initiative to encourage a more self-governing and regulating approach to facilitate preparation for release and transfer to D category establishments. Prisoners have commented very positively on the enriched facilities and opportunities.

5.7.3 Access to Justice Computers

5.7.3.1 During the reporting year the Board has dealt with several applications from prisoners who have tried to access a computer under 'Access to Justice' and found this problematic. Although there is a computer available for prisoners to use, usually to prepare papers for an appeal, there are no clear guidelines as to how or when the computer can be accessed or for how long and what actions and tasks can be undertaken. In addition, some prisoners have found that files sent from their solicitor or the CPS are not compatible with the software installed in the computer. This leads to frustration on behalf of the prisoner who is often left unable to prepare a quite complex case for his defence. The PSO/PSI that covers Access to Justice Computers is now marked 'Obsolete', so it is difficult to advise a prisoner of his rights.

6.0 Other Areas

6.1 Staffing

6.1.1 Throughout the reporting period the Board has been concerned about the impact of understaffing on the safety and security of the prison and on the quality of the prisoner experience. At the end of the reporting period there were 42 Band 2 Orderly Support Grade (OSG) and 26 Band 3 vacancies. At times during the year staffing was boosted by the addition of detached officers seconded from other

establishments, but the Board understands that towards the end of 2016 a decision was taken to cut the quota by 50%.

Understaffing has impacted in a number of ways:

- The Board has observed regimes being curtailed on a regular basis, with prisoners locked up for longer periods and with less opportunities for association in the evening and some prisoners missing out on gym and library. The Board is aware that prisoners' frustration is intensified when they feel that they have not received timely communication about impending regime changes.
- Officers are often deployed from other units, within the prison, who are unfamiliar with the unit's day to day running, on-going issues and the needs and knowledge of individual prisoners. The Board is aware that prisoners find this lack of continuity frustrating.
- The Board remains disappointed about the inconsistent implementation of the personal officer scheme across the prison. Prisoners do not have equal access to a Personal Officer. In part this appears to have been undermined by the impact of understaffing. Nevertheless, a number of prisoners claim not to know who their personal officer is and some designated personal officers are not always familiar with issues relating to their prisoner. The Board feels that an improved personal officer scheme would reduce the number of Complaints and IMB Applications submitted because there would be better opportunity to discuss issues of concern with an officer who knows them and with whom they have a relationship.
- The Board is aware that understaffing has also resulted in limited officer presence and visibility in some units and on the landings. This impacts on the opportunity for officers to interact with prisoners, build a rapport and deal with some of the more routine issues or concerns they may have. In some cases the Board is aware that it also impacts on prisoners' perceptions of their personal safety and security (see Paragraph 5.4.4).

6.1.2 The Board is aware that many of the issues raised are acknowledged and being addressed at a ministerial level. However, the Board feels that the issue of understaffing is at the root of many of the concerns that the Board has about the treatment of prisoners at Highpoint, their optimum care and the adequacy of the programmes and arrangements preparing them for release.

6.2 Works Maintenance

6.2.1 The Board has seen no improvement in the service provided by Carillion during the reporting period. The Board is also aware that some statutory maintenance works, which should be undertaken as part of the agreed contract, are outstanding. For example:

- Testing for legionella
- Checks on fire equipment and CCTV

Potentially this impacts on the health and safety of prisoners, but also on all those who work at Highpoint. The Board feels that these matters should be addressed immediately.

6.2.2 The Board is also aware that general maintenance to the fabric of buildings, specific damage sustained and plumbing and electrical repairs are often delayed by systemic difficulties with procuring the necessary materials. Again, these delays impact on prisoners' living arrangements and accommodation and, in some instances, their health, safety and well-being.

6.2.3 The Board is also aware of difficulties over Carillion's administration of Service Line, the company contracted to carry out repairs and maintain the kitchen equipment, which has had an impact on kitchen efficiency (see Paragraph 5.7.1).

6.2.4 The Board is aware that while the Carillion on-site team attempt to meet the requirements of the contract, external constraints and management militate against this. Although regular meetings are held with the prison senior management team, the Board understands that the overall situation is not improving and specific concerns remain unaddressed.

6.3 Complaints and Applications Procedure

6.3.1 The Board has been aware of the delay in response, from other establishments, regarding complaints enquiries made by Highpoint prisoners following transfer. This issue usually relates to follow-on property, which has not been received from their previous prison. While outstanding responses are chased, it is not unusual for prisoners to have to wait well beyond the target date for a reply. The impact of this is that:

- Prisoners are often caused unnecessary distress because along with clothing and personal belongings, their property often includes irreplaceable items such as photos of family, phone numbers, legal papers and letters.
- It overloads the Highpoint complaints system as the prisoner becomes frustrated and submits more complaints.
- Prisoners have to wait longer for compensation.

6.3.2 The Board has found that internal complaints are generally managed within the proscribed timescales. However, responses are still variable in terms of their legibility, helpfulness and quality. In the worst examples, the issue raised by the prisoner is not specifically addressed in the response. Some prisoners have reported a lack of confidence in the process.

6.4 Canteen

6.4.1 There have been no canteen meetings held on either North or South this reporting year. The Board is aware that some prisoners are unhappy about aspects of the canteen service and has some concerns:

- the quality of fruit/vegetables has reportedly declined during this reporting year
- the Board would expect the pricing of items contained with the canteen list to be broadly equivalent to those found in large supermarkets, they are not

- The Board would expect that recognised branded products would be available, they are not always
- The Board is aware that there is inconsistency between units as to what items are included on the canteen lists.
- Prisoners reported asking for additional items to be included on the canteen, but have received no response from the prison management.

6.5 Security

6.5.1 During the reporting year, audits undertaken at Highpoint identified that there were some security weaknesses. Increases in the finds of weapons (131), hooch, drugs and mobile phones, whilst being positive, raises concerns over the ease of trafficking and availability of such items.

6.5.2 The Board acknowledges the good working relationship established between the Police and Highpoint, which is having a beneficial effect on disrupting drugs trafficking. Also acknowledged is the vigilance of many staff who have observed suspicious activity and reported it. During 2016, and following intelligence, there was a successful prosecution of a non-uniformed member of staff for trafficking illegal items.

6.5.3 A serious barricade incident occurred during the reporting period requiring the involvement of the national Tornado team. The incident was resolved and involved the use of pyrotechnics. An outcome of the resolution for some of the prisoners was bruising and for one, a serious injury resulting in a period in hospital. The Board had some concerns about the management of the incident because pyrotechnics were used when healthcare were not on duty or present. Injuries were sustained and the prisoners were not seen by healthcare until the next day. The Board has repeatedly asked to view the recording of the event, but to date this has not been made available.

6.5.4 Figures below show that, with the exception of heroin, there has been an increase in attempts to get drugs in to Highpoint.

Table 1

Drugs Recovered	Cannabis Resin	Cannabis Herbal	Heroin	Subutex	NPS
2016	23g	670g	0.2g	35,1g	4,135g
2015	0	141g	7.7g	2g	1,999g

The availability of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) continues to have a profound and damaging effect and remains of great concern to the Board. Risk to physical wellbeing and debt and bullying are spin-offs of a drug culture and the unpredictable, challenging and sometimes violent behaviour associated with NPS presents a real risks to the users, staff and other prisoners at Highpoint.

6.5.5 There was an 81% increase in the total amount of 'hooch' recovered compared with the previous year:

- 2016 approx. 409 litres
- 2015 approx. 226.7 litres

The Board is aware that, in part, this could be a reaction to increased interception and recovery of drugs by the prison.

6.5.6 Given the Safer Custody (see Paragraph 5.4) and Security contexts, it is unsurprising that the range of reportable incidents have increased on those reported during 2015 (see Table 2)

Table 2

Reportable incident	2016	2015	2014	2013
DIC	1 	0		
Assaults/fights	336 	245	213	200
Self-Harm	419 	289	186	235
Barricade	117 	77	50	43
Damage	271 	186	148	143
Tool loss	6 	2	5	4
Food refusal	6 	3	9	6
Escape/TRF	0	0	0	0

Incident at height	39 	13	9	8
Other - weapon, phone, sim, tattoo equipment etc	821 	338	520	474
Total	2009	1327	1259	1206

The Board acknowledges that when staffing and resources are stretched, it can be difficult to consistently maintain strategies such as MDTs and testing on suspicion of usage and have the capacity to undertake searches and act upon intelligence within appropriate time limits. This is a concern.

6.6 Transfers

6.6.1 Although the prison has a very clear policy on transfers, the Board has found that this is not always understood well, by prisoners. Highpoint's designation as a training and resettlement prison for London and Essex creates difficulties for some prisoners in their training phase as they may be located some distance from their homes and families and in a rural area where public transport is less accessible. The Board is aware that the transfer process is sometimes protracted, but has found the process to be applied equitably and based on the stated eligibility criteria.

6.7 Visits and Visitor Centre

6.7.1 The rural location of Highpoint makes this a challenge for some visitors. Newmarket, is the nearest railway station, but is not on a direct line from London and there is no longer a dedicated bus run on Sunday. A bus service will pick up visitors, if pre-booked, from Newmarket Monday - Saturday.

6.7.2 The Visitor Centre outside the prison gate processes visitors for both North and South sites. It offers a waiting area for visitors, but it provides an austere welcome. There are lavatories, but no refreshment facilities, vending machine or water dispenser available. There is not a designated play area for children or anything else to occupy them. The carpet is in a stained condition.

6.7.3 The well qualified and committed staff from Ormiston Families make a significant contribution to the success of visits where children are present. In 2016 an average of 195 children visited each month.

6.7.4 Opportunities for prisoners and their visitors vary between the North and South site visit halls. The South visit hall provides far better facilities for families and young children. It has an excellent children's play area, which is run and managed by Ormiston and attached to the hall. This is not the case for the North visits hall where there is no dedicated children's play area or Ormiston presence. There are also no highchairs available to accommodate young children. An unsupervised toy trolley is

available. However, and because of this, designated days such as Lifer Days, Family Days and Children's Visits take place on the South site for prisoners from both sites, although transporting prisoners from the North to the South site has resulted in some delays. The Board notes that such days are well organised, valued by the prisoners and their families and contribute to the maintenance of family links and ties. Prisoners have to apply for consideration for designated Lifer, Family and Children's visits and the Board feels that within the criteria for eligibility, there is fair access and opportunity.

The Board is aware that there has been some confusion among prisoners who attend 'Lifer Days' about the taking and provision of photographs with their families. The prison agreed to take photos of prisoners with their families. However, there has since been an issue regarding printing the photos, which has not been resolved and has been on-going for 6 months.

6.7.5 The Board is aware that visits do not always start promptly, particularly on the North site. This impacts on the time families have together and can be a source of frustration especially when families have travelled long distances.

6.8 Reception (and property)

6.8.1 Property continues to be an ongoing problem at Highpoint. In 2016 there were 957 Complaints to the prison relating to lost or mislaid property, 274 of these being the result of prisoners transferring to Highpoint from other establishments. The Board also received 164 Applications relating to lost or mislaid property, which represents 22% of the total received. It is not clear if the fault lies with the failure to secure and transmit property with the prisoner, or a failure of the transport contractor to carry the contracted amount of luggage with the prisoner.

6.8.2 While the majority of Complaints and Applications were about follow-on property not being received at Highpoint, after transfer, there were a significant number about the handling of property, within Highpoint, and the time taken for prisoners to receive property from Reception once it has arrived.

6.8.3 The ability to have access to their personal property is very important to prisoners as it is seen as a vital link with the outside world. Therefore the efficient management of their property makes an important contribution to the fair and decent treatment of prisoners and the harmonious atmosphere within the prison.

6.8.4 The Board finds it necessary to highlight property issues again in this report and it appears that this is a national problem, with prisoners transferring to different establishments. Valuable resources are wasted chasing property, which can take months to catch up with its owner. The Board re-iterates its previous requests for a complete review of the handling, transportation and re-issue of prisoners' property and better communication between establishments when property goes missing.

7. The Work of the IMB

7.1 Board Statistics – 2016

Recommended complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board Members at start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board Members at end of reporting period	12
Number of new Members joining within the reporting period	2
Number of Members leaving within the reporting period	3
Number of Members transferring out within the reporting period	0
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	11
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during the reporting period	10
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board Meetings	81
Total number of rota visits conducted	154
Total number of visits to the prison (includes 105 B/Meeting attendances)	702
Total number of Applications received	762
Total number of segregation reviews attended	104

7.2 Applications received by the Board

Code	Subject	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
A	Accommodation	26	62	107	69	73
B	Adjudications	9	23	12	13	12
C	Diversity related	16	20	30	10	26
D	Education/employment/training	53	48	85	40	34
E	Family/visits	35	31	15	20	14
F	Food kitchen related	11	17	14	11	12
G	Health related	89	84	94	79	79
H	Property	170	164	208	150	164
I	Sentence related	121	250	336	94	97
J	Staff/prisoner related	103	61	85	36	45
K	Transfers	90	108	137	80	93
L	Miscellaneous	185	154	116	32	205
Total number of subjects in Applications		908	1022	1239	644	854
Total number of Applications		831	863	1053	672	762

7.3 Board Activities and Development

7.3.1. Two new members were appointed during this year and received in-house training and mentoring. During the year two members of the Highpoint Board have been seconded to support the IMB at HMP Hollesley Bay.

7.3.2 During the year Board members visited the following prisons:

- Norwich
- Warren Hill
- Whitemoor

7.3.3 Board members have attended the following training sessions this year:

- In-house training for officers on the management of ACCT documents
- Serious Incident planning exercises.
- IMB New Members course
- Board Leaders course.

7.3.4. The Board invited speakers to address them prior to the Board Meeting and these included the following topics:

- Business & Community Engagement.
- Amends initiative & programme.

7.3.5 The Board conducted its Annual Team Performance Review in November 2016 with a focus on the National Monitoring Framework. This involved a review of its performance of duties and approaches to monitoring and planning to implement different approaches to its monitoring role.

8. Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACCT	Assessment Care in Custody and Teamwork
ADTP	Alcohol Dependence Treatment Programme
ATPR	Annual Team Performance Review
BDO	Board Development Officer
C&R	Control and Restraint
CALM	Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it
CPA	Contract Package Area
DIRF	Discrimination Incident Reporting Form
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment Service
IEP	Incentive and Earned Privileges
ISCRE	Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Race Equality
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NCS	National Careers Service
NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NVQ	National Vocational Training
OASys	Offender Assessment System
OMU	Offender Management Unit
PALS	Patient Advice & Liaison Service
ROTL	Release on Temporary Licence
SAU	Segregation and Assessment Unit
SMARG	Segregation Monitoring and Review Group
SMT	Senior Management Team
VO	Visiting Order