



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at
HMP Stafford

for reporting year
1 May 2016 to 30 April 2017

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

INTRODUCTORY SECTIONS

	<u>Page</u>
Contents	1
Statutory Role of the IMB	2
Executive Summary	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the Report• Main Judgements• Main Areas for Development• Improvements from the 2015 – 2016 IMB Annual Report	
Description of the Prison	5

EVIDENCE SECTIONS

	<u>Page</u>
Safety	6
Equality and Fairness	7
Segregation/Care and Separation Unit	10
Accommodation (including Communication)	11
Healthcare (including Mental Health and Social Care)	12
Education and other Activities	17
Work, Vocational Training and Employment	19
Resettlement Preparation	21
The Work of the IMB at HMP Stafford	24
Applications to the IMB	26

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

- The Prisons Act 1952 and the Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Justice Secretary from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

- The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is specifically charged to:
 - 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

 - inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom they have delegated authority, as it judges appropriate, any concern it has

 - 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 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction to the Report

This report presents the findings of the IMB at HMP Stafford for the period 1st May 2016 to 30th April 2017. IMB evidence came from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, attendance at meetings and prisoner applications.

Main Judgements

- Overall prisoners receive fair treatment in this establishment and feel safe (see page 6).
- The prison's positive emphasis on humane treatment is well recognised. The Board would wish to acknowledge the exceptional care shown by staff and prisoner carers towards very frail and terminally ill prisoners (see page 13).
- Preparation for release is beginning to be a positive aspect of this prison except for the provision of permanent resettlement staff which came late in the reporting period (see page 17).

Main Areas for Development

To The Minister

Will the Minister review:

- the care of very frail and terminally ill prisoners in a non-specialist healthcare setting (see page 13).
- the provision of treatment programmes for sex offenders (see page 18)
- the reduction of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentencing (see page 18).
- the provision of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) for sex offenders (see page 18).

To Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service

Will HMPPS review:

- the safe and effective transfer of prisoner property between establishments (see page 10).

- the process for communicating the smoke free status of establishments to transferring prisons and prisoners (see page 11).
- the lack of available space in resettlement jails for sex offenders approaching the end of their sentence (see page 17).

To the Governor

Will the Governor address:

- how the prison ensures that the staff use the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) process to better effect (see page 8).
- how the prison ensures the workshop experience is further maximised for prisoners completing, for example, routine and unskilled assembly tasks, by the opportunity to gain appropriate qualifications (see page 16).
- the apparent inequality and lack of clarity in prisoner pay (see page 16).
- how the prison ensures a continuing improvement in the preparation of prisoners about to be discharged (see page 17).

Improvements from the 2015 – 2016 IMB Annual Report

- As a result of partnering with Care UK, it is very pleasing to report that all healthcare issues shown as areas of concern in the 2015 – 2016 report have improved substantially. Waiting lists for services have reduced due to the provision of additional clinics, some routine services, such as X-ray, have been brought in-house and the level of cancelled escorts to external medical appointments has reduced considerably (see page 11).
- Purposeful activity has shifted its focus from earning to learning through schemes such as the 1:1 mentoring scheme in Maths and English in some workshops (see page 15).
- Active citizenship provided prisoners with a range of responsible roles which would improve their resettlement opportunities and gave them pride in their own prison setting (see page 16).

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

HMP Stafford is a category C, adult male, sex offender establishment with a certified normal accommodation of 751. On 30 April 2017, 745 vulnerable prisoners were held in Stafford. The prison is a national sex offender hub. It is near Stafford town centre and is one of the oldest in the country; many areas are listed for planning purposes.

The prison includes 7 residential wings, one of which is used for induction and accommodates the Healthcare Centre, also the Segregation Unit located below. Each wing has in-cell sanitation and a shower block. Most cells accommodate two prisoners.

A new portacabin for the older prisoners, called Brookside Cabin, is in full use. Older prisoners are supported by the installation of a chair lift in the Chapel and wheelchair access lifts in D wing and the Oral Hearing room, also various access ramps throughout the prison.

As at 30 April 2017 the number of full time or equivalent staff was 273, 15 more than the previous year.

Healthcare facilities are provided by Care UK, education services by Milton Keynes College and library services by Staffordshire County Council. Transport for prisoners is provided by GeoAmey and canteen by DHL.

There are many voluntary organisations supporting the prisoners. Among them are Samaritans (support for Listeners), Halow Trust (visitors' centre), Lincolnshire Action Trust, Shannon Trust ('Toe By Toe' reading project), official prison visitors, chaplaincy volunteers, Bereavement and Loss Counselling Service and refreshment provision in the visitors' centre by Friends of Stafford Prison.

EVIDENCE SECTIONS

SAFETY

- The Board believed that HMP Stafford was a safe prison during the reporting year. This judgement was confirmed in the monthly Violence Diagnostic Tool and the latest HMIP (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons) report, both of which evidenced the low level of offences and negative behaviour in:
 - assaults on prisoners
 - assaults on staff
 - prisoners on basic level IEP
 - prisoners on ACCTs (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork)
 - use of force
 - self-harm
 - negative MDTs (mandatory drug tests)

Prisoners benefitted from this calm, safe environment

- Newly arrived prisoners, when questioned by Board members, frequently stated that they were surprised by how well they were treated on arrival and on the Induction Wing, making specific mention of the Reception area and the staff and prisoners employed there. This impacted positively on prisoners who settled quickly into the regime and were then well managed, as detailed in the last HMIP report.
- The Board saw huge improvements in induction during the reporting period, once again evidenced by the very positive prisoner comments during post-arrival conversations with Board members.
- The Board took the opportunity, in the reporting period, to monitor round the clock safety of prisoners by completing overnight visits.
- During the reporting period the IMB only had to monitor one serious incident (which was at height).

EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

- Discrimination Incident Reporting Forms (DIRFs) have increased by 63% over the last year (a breakdown of the DIRFs is shown in the table overleaf). The Board cannot judge whether this is, on the positive side, due to minority groups having a better understanding of the complaints process, or because their awareness was raised around the protected characteristics, especially race; or whether on the negative side, they had more to complain about. The Board will continue to monitor this.
- For 2 years running, 33% of DIRFs were upheld by the prison following investigation. The quality of the responses to DIRFs was monitored by the Board on a monthly basis. Responses seemed appropriate and reflected suitable investigation by the prison. The Board was pleased to note that concerns raised to the IMB by prisoners regarding DIRFs were minimal. This might reflect confidence in the process

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	TOTAL FOR 2016/17	TOTAL FOR 2015/16
Religion and Belief	8	4
Race	41	17
Gender	1	0
Disability	8	7
Age	1	1
Gender Reassignment	*21	1
Sexual Orientation	13	4
TOTAL	93	34
<i>*Towards the end of the reporting period, HMP Stafford held 10% of the national transgender prisoner population</i>		

- HMP Stafford continued to actively support the Equality Action Group (EAG). The Board was pleased to see the addition of 4 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) representatives to the EAG, ensuring that this group had a greater voice in the prison. The presence of these groups reflected the support by the prison for protected groups and impacted on prisoners

involved with them by instilling confidence and giving them a positive forum in which to mix with their peers and staff.

- HMP Stafford responded positively to the increasingly aged population, prisoners over the age of 60 accounting for 22.5% of the population, an increase of 1.5% since the last reporting period, with one prisoner over the age of 90 and one over 100. The prison improved the facilities for those who were no longer able to attend the workshops by providing better seating for the elderly in the purpose built Brookside Cabin. More gym sessions were made available for those who wanted to participate and in-chair exercises were offered for the less fit prisoners. The impact was that most of the physical activity needs of elderly prisoners were met.
- The prison has started to meet the training needs of staff re dementia care, but less so far for prisoner carers who had requested to study for a recognised qualification in this area. The Board recognised the excellent efforts of both staff and prisoner carers in supporting prisoners with this condition and the positive impact they had on them.
- The number of disabled prisoners was gradually increasing, with 61% registered at the end of the current reporting period (an increase of 44 prisoners since 2015-2016); 17% had some form of mobility problem and an increasing number required wheelchairs and prisoners trained to push them.
- The Board believed that the Incentive and Earned Privileges (IEP) system could be used as a better measure for prisoner behaviour if applied more judiciously. The IEP averaged through the year showed 49.5% of prisoners on enhanced status, 49.5% on standard and 1% on basic. The Board felt that the number of enhanced prisoners was still high. The impact was that prisoners might lack the impetus to improve behaviour or contribute more as the threat of being downgraded on the IEP system was rarely used
- It was pleasing to see improvements beginning for families visiting HMP Stafford. The Board had been very concerned that visitors had to queue outside the Visitors Centre in all weather, vulnerable to abuse from members of the public. The reason that visitors queued early on visits

days was based on a first come, first served tally system. Improvements included:

- at the very end of the reporting period, a new process was introduced to replace the tally system and, along with a new shift pattern for the Operational Support Grade staff, the Board hoped for an improved visit experience for prisoner families and therefore prisoners. This would strengthen and support the important family ties that contribute positively to resettlement.

- a new children's worker was in post who worked with parents and children at the Visitors Centre and in the main Visits Hall. The impact of this was that prisoner families received appropriate support during their time in the prison.

SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

- The Segregation Unit was being used less frequently; 112 instances in this reporting period compared to 154 in the previous year.
- An experienced, capable team of 6 officers engaged effectively with prisoners to ensure their speedy return to the residential wings. This minimised damaging periods of isolation.
- The Board noted the violence reduction data that continued to emphasise the safety of the prison:

AREA	2016 - 2017	2015 - 2016
Use of force	66	69
Adjudications	481	486
Dirty protests	0	0
Special accommodation	0	0

- The Board continued to attend the Review Boards and Adjudication Hearings, all of which were carried out professionally, with Governors listening to prisoner concerns and attended by relevant personnel the majority of the time. Prisoners were afforded the opportunity to speak to the IMB and also state their case, a fair and humane approach. The prison was always willing to invite the IMB to all such hearings and we were notified 100% of the time of prisoner numbers in the Segregation Unit and prisoners on constant supervision.

ACCOMMODATION (INCLUDING COMMUNICATION)

- The Board was pleased to see prison accommodation had shown continued improvement. The prisoner work parties, run through the Active Citizenship Programme, had an impact on the quality and cleanliness of the accommodation. Minor repairs, e.g. grouting, were attended to on a timely basis to encourage the prisoners to respect their surroundings. These improvements impacted positively on prisoner well-being, many of whom described to Board members on rota duty their cell as their home.
- Catering was a strength of the prison. There were very few complaints about the food, portion control, variety, hygiene and temperatures of food, as evidenced by the food comment books on wings and by the rarity of food related applications to the IMB. Prisoners had a forum to address any catering issues monthly; a member of the Board monitored some of these meetings and welcomed the positive response to any issues raised. The impact was that prisoners were, in the main, satisfied with the food they received and many new arrivals commented positively about it.
- Disappointingly, despite comments in previous IMB reports, there was still an issue with one of the essential copper kettles in the kitchen. This problem had been ongoing for many months and the lack of progress seemed to be a result of poor support from the contractor, Amey. This situation impacted on what the prison catering team were able to provide to prisoners.
- Evidenced by IMB rota reports, shower access was good for the population but the Board felt that some of the showers could be totally refurbished as they were showing their age. However, cleanliness of the showers was not an issue as wing cleaners appeared to take a pride in creating as clean an environment as possible. The impact of this was that prisoners were able to use an appropriate though aging facility for their daily needs.
- Unfortunately 'locate flat' and single cell availability was challenging due to the layout of this Victorian prison. This made allocation of some prisoners testing, due to health, social or care needs. The impact of this

on prisoners was that men, particularly the elderly, who might have needed to be on a ground floor cell, had to use stairs to access their accommodation.

- Laundry and phone access was generally well managed. The Board was pleased to note that phones were relocated to ensure privacy and hard of hearing prisoners were supported by the provision of phone hoods in noisy areas. The impact for prisoners was that important communication could be made effectively and family ties strengthened. This was especially crucial as many men had no/few visitors due to the sexual nature of their offence.
- The Board found itself impotent to support prisoners relocating personal property as this often did not travel with them on transfer due to the constraints in size of the transporting vehicles. During the final 4 months of the reporting period, the Board dealt with 12 applications, representing 27% of all applications, regarding lost property on transfer without resolving any. This was an unacceptable situation for members. Prisoners were frustrated and angry by the loss of their property and it made for a very poor start. The Board was aware from regional discussions that this was a national issue and were hopeful that, as a result of Board reports, HMPPS would recognise the scale of this issue and its negative impact on prisoners.
- The Board positively welcomed the introduction of Prisoner Information Desks (PIDs) and book trolleys. However they worried that the provision was inconsistent across wings as evidenced by many IMB rota reports. The Induction Wing PID continued to be better resourced, whereas the remaining wings varied in PID resources and opening hours.
- In view of the inconsistency of provision between the two main areas of prisoner residence, the Board welcomed the temporary addition of a further level of line management covering residence.

HEALTHCARE (INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE)

- The Board was delighted that prisoner health was considered such a priority that the establishment chose to go smoke free at the earliest opportunity, from 5th Dec 2016. Whilst the transition process went smoothly, with 49% of prisoners attending 1:1 smoking cessation sessions, evidence from prisoners completing their induction suggested that some sending establishments failed to advise prisoners of the smoke free status. Whilst smoking cessation was offered as soon as practicable to new arrivals, the fact that they were unable to smoke and had not been advised, caused stress and gave a poor start to prisoners on arrival at HMP Stafford. The overall impact of smoke free should be improved health for all prisoners and staff.
- Following the change, the only other issue that was brought to the attention of the IMB was the quality of e-cigarettes available on the canteen list. The impact of this was that prisoners were buying more e-cigarettes, thereby adversely impacting on their available money. The problem was recognised by the Governor and was taken to regional level by the establishment and reported to the Implementation Lead.
- The Board was pleased to see the number of GP sessions offered in healthcare rose from 3.5 per week to 8.5 per week. The GP waiting list time was comparable to the community; additionally, Care UK managed this in a positive way by the use of nurse-led triage appointments for routine conditions such as sore throats. The impact of this was reduced waiting times for prisoners and greater availability of appointments.
- The employment of only one GP by Care UK created vulnerability in the system. When he was absent, regular locums were brought in to cover the clinics. However, whilst the reliance on one employed GP did cause some concern to the Board, evidence of cancelled GP sessions and prisoner complaints did not support these concerns, though on-going monitoring was in place.
- The IMB was pleased to note an improvement in the dental service provision and also the fact that additional dental sessions were offered by

Care UK as part of their contract. During the development of a new dental suite, arrangements were made for emergency dental treatment to be carried out externally and five prisoners were escorted to these. The IMB was pleased to note that the Healthcare Commissioners had approved additional dental sessions for when the new facility opened to deal with the backlog of routine appointments. Improved dental services had impacted positively on prisoner well being.

- In the last annual report, the Board expressed concern regarding the number of escorted visits to external medical appointments which were cancelled by the establishment. Whilst the number of external appointments in this period increased by 13%, the number of cancelled appointments fell from 20% to 11%. Given the pressure on staffing levels, this was a pleasing result, though clearly any cancelled appointments were cause for concern to the Board in view of the likely impact on the prisoners. In the reporting period, prisoner's health was less at risk due to the reduction in cancelled appointments.
- Due to the high number of escorted external medical appointments, there were occasions when the regime was impacted by the unavoidable late return of staff and prisoners. Staff detailed for wing duty were still on escort duties, leading to wings occasionally being locked down and prisoners not being able to benefit from association.
- Care UK brought in additional services/clinics to avoid the need for escorted external visits. These services included x-rays and ultra sound scans; telemeds was also introduced, though at the time of this report, only 3 prisoners had benefitted from the latter. The x-ray and ultra sound clinics offered 10 to 15 appointments per day, avoiding the need for escorted external visits and the risks/impact on regime of these.
- Health screening offered in the community was also brought into the establishment. 132 prisoners over the age of 69 years expressed an interest in receiving a bowel cancer screening kit, 54 prisoners were screened for abdominal aortic aneurism (AAA) and 40 prisoners received the NHS Health Check. Care UK promoted preventative medical care/testing as in the community, a positive offering for prisoner health and well being

- In 2016 the Board was concerned about the process of repeat prescriptions which, on occasion, left prisoners without their medication. These issues came to the Board’s attention through the IMB applications process, and in discussion with Care UK, it was clear, at that time, the process in place was not fit for purpose. However in the reporting period, a new process was embedded involving a single point of contact, which was a positive achievement, considering approximately 41,500 items were dispensed from the offsite pharmacy to the establishment in that time. This new process reduced the incidence of prisoners not receiving their repeat medication and prisoner applications to Care UK regarding their medication reduced substantially.
- Staffing in healthcare was challenging. A fully employed team was only achieved at one point in the reporting period. Vacancies were often covered by “bank” staff, in particular, nursing staff, a situation that was replicated across the healthcare sector nationally. Whilst this was not ideal, issues were slightly offset by the same “bank” nurses being used for periods of time. This consistency of care impacted positively on the population.
- Given the older prison population at Stafford, the provision of palliative care became more important. This area was very well led by a specialist nurse, sponsored by Macmillan. She ensured that a monthly meeting was held for healthcare and establishment staff to review prisoners with reduced life expectancy and chronic conditions. This support became very important at the end of life for a prisoner, and for the IMB, it illustrated effective working between the prison and an external provider. This was evidenced during the reporting period by positive comments from the local Coroner when investigating the 3 deaths in custody, all due to natural causes.
- Because of evidence to show a slight rise in deaths in custody from 2 to 3, also in the increased admissions to hospital and to the local hospice, the Board was pleased to learn that a bid from the establishment for an on-site palliative care suite was successful. Healthcare, prison staff, prisoner carers and external carers showed a great deal of care towards prisoners who were very ill and being cared for in the establishment. The IMB, however, would question whether the establishment was the right place to care for some of these very frail and terminally ill prisoners, and

whether staff and prisoner carers could ever feel confident in delivering this care.

- Prisoners with the most serious issues in their mental health were seen within 24 hours of assessment, a time frame that was comparable to the community.

EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The Board was pleased to note that vocational training and other learning opportunities had improved. Barbering, horticulture and yoga, plus Art and ICT at level 1 for senior prisoners were added. The impact on prisoners was their improved preparation for resettlement as well as contributing to the increased number of prisoners who were able to complete purposeful activity.
- Prisoners began to have an oversight of their own progress through Success for Training, Education, Progression and Support (STEPS). Records were introduced for prisoners which documented “soft skills”, education, personal targets and employability skills. The Board looked forward to seeing a time when input into these documents could be made by, for example, workshop instructors and prison officers. Prisoners would then be able to follow their own progress on a wider basis that would contribute positively to thoughts about their resettlement.
- Initial literacy and numeracy education assessment fed into a sequencing spreadsheet which incorporated information from the sentence plan, existing qualifications, activities and OMU. This evidenced that the Education Department had improved the recording of progression and needs. It impacted positively on the Department’s ability to help prisoners progress towards resettlement.
- Virtual Campus and distance learning use improved, thus maintaining prisoners’ computer skills and positively supporting job search/applications in readiness for release.
- Level 3 courses, completed by self-study, were increasingly facilitated which improved higher education opportunities for prisoners. During the reporting period, these increased from ½ a day to 3 days per week. A range of courses was made available for prisoners, which they selected to suit areas of personal interest and which might also contribute to their successful resettlement.

- The Board was pleased to note and observe overall improvement in:
 - average attendance in education (+90%).
 - full take up of courses and student surveys indicating a high level of satisfaction.
 - prisoners' engagement and interest in lessons, as observed by IMB members.

- The Board saw that prisoners could be stimulated by opportunities for reading through:
 - book trolleys on every wing supplemented by excess library stock, so all prisoners had daily access to reading material.
 - the increased use of library facilities by education classes.
 - the employment of a new librarian who improved the environment of the library (books, shelves, displays etc.).

- The Board was concerned that some evening library sessions were not able to be utilised because of prison regime, resulting in some prisoners not able to access evening sessions. Evening sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays were only available for 46% of the reporting period.

WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

- The Board acknowledged the continued success of the prison workshops. During the reporting year there was a provision for 35% of prisoners to be employed for 9 sessions a week in the 8 fully staffed workshops. Additionally, there were opportunities for 16 prisoners in the reclamation/recycling area and a further 19 prisoners in the gardening party. This was a total of 295 purposeful activity places for prisoners, 39.6% of the total roll, with an average attendance rate for the year of 94%. The impact of this was that prisoners developed a work habit and were provided with some stimulation and social contact. This would assist positively in their future resettlement.
- Turnover generated from external customer contracts increased over the previous year by 14%, placing HMP Stafford 3rd nationally in the value of turnover in the non-cluster prison establishments. These regular contracts often allowed prisoners to experience the benefits of team working in readiness for resettlement and the income generated allowed for reinvestment in the establishment which should benefit future prisoners.
- Learning started to become a key aspect within purposeful activities, without losing the focus on earning. During the reporting year an internally developed functional skills programme was introduced into all work areas. The day to day running of this programme was carried out under supervision of the workshop instructor who developed it, supported by a team of 5 Active Citizen prisoner mentors. The aim of this programme was the improvement in the standard of English and Maths for prisoners assigned to purposeful activities, for instance 1:1 mentoring in Maths. This would impact positively on prisoners as returning citizens on release.
- Prisoners were somewhat disadvantaged by a lack of opportunity to study for recognised external qualifications (e.g. NVQs) in workshops which only offered routine, repetitive, basic assembly tasks. The Board was disappointed by this lack of qualifications which might have further assisted in resettlement preparation. In contrast prisoners working in reclamation, where for the 2nd year running 100% of prison waste was either recycled or sent to “energy from waste”, were encouraged to obtain relevant NVQ qualifications in Recycling/Reclamation; 14 prisoners

obtained Level 2, which seemed unfair given that prisoners in other areas could not.

- The Board was concerned about the apparent unfairness of prisoner pay based on comments made by newly arrived prisoners during induction and during rota visits to workshops. Given that in February 2016 HMIP perceived some “unfairness and inequality” in this area, the Board would continue to investigate this with the hope of addressing prisoner resentment; there was also some lack of clarity in the prisoners and the Board concerning the reasons for different pay levels.
- The Board was happy with the 5 Vocational Training Areas (VTC) under the supervision of Education. These were full time courses providing comprehensive training with awards of City and Guilds Certificates at either Level 1 or 2 after successful completion. The Board judged that these VTC experiences might positively assist prisoners on release. In a 10 month period, 57% of prisoners achieved exam success, with 21% awaiting results. The dropout rate of 5% was largely due to health or transfers.
- The Board was pleased to note that employment links between the prison and employers were developing in the reporting period. However as HMP Stafford was no longer a resettlement prison, it did not have the necessary resources to monitor the success rate of prisoners gaining employment from work or courses completed in the establishment.

RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

- The Board was very concerned, for the 2nd year running, that HMP Stafford was not resourced as a resettlement prison, yet 182 prisoners were released directly from the establishment, thus impacting unfairly on their resettlement opportunities. Often release was from the establishment as space in resettlement jails could not be found for sex offenders. Given that discharged prisoners would automatically be on the Sex Offender Register, resettlement opportunities were already a greater problem at Stafford, requiring more support, not less, in the eyes of the Board.
- It was pleasing to note that, despite a lack of resettlement resources, all except 2 of those prisoners released, had accommodation on the day of release. The Board understood that these prisoners attended their local probation office who found them hostel accommodation for their first night. This at least ensured a safe start to their first day of non-custodial life
- Of the 182 prisoners released from HMP Stafford:
 - 8% wished to continue in education
 - 10% were retired and not looking for work or education
 - 2% were disabled and not looking for work or education
 - 12% were released with employment
 - 68% were looking for work or education

The Board was concerned that the majority who were released from HMP Stafford, 68%, had no work or education on release. The absence of employment or education for the majority of the sex offenders released increased their vulnerability in the community

- Towards the end of the reporting period, resettlement was developing, as evidenced by the weekly interaction that had been established with the National Probation Service (NPS) to discuss resettlement outcomes from the preceding week. Towards the end of 2016, the Governor was able to release some local funding which enabled the appointment of a Resettlement Officer from Lincolnshire Action Trust. The Board was very optimistic that resettlement would start to improve with these initiatives.
- Prisoners benefitted from being seen at the 6 and 3 months' point prior to release, to ascertain their needs in relation to accommodation, finance

and debt, employment, education and training and for setting up bank accounts. This provided basic resettlement preparation for prisoners.

- ‘Kick-Off’ business courses had been established during the last quarter of the reporting period. These courses were aimed at those prisoners wishing to set up their own business; 95% of prisoners taking the course completed it. The Board was hopeful that the courses would assist prisoners to set up their own businesses on release as employment for sex offenders continued to be challenging and self-employment offered a positive option.
- For the 3rd year running, the Board deemed that the provision of sex offender training programmes (SOTP) places was highly unsatisfactory. National commissioners continued to fail in the provision of adequate places for SOTP. Some sentence plans therefore could not be completed despite the fact that up to 26% of prisoners per month were “ready and willing” to engage with SOTP, as evidenced in the monthly report to the Board from the Programme Team.
- During the reporting period, the serious concerns of the Board were evidenced by the fact that no more than 2.4% of prisoners in any one month were given an SOTP place. In light of HMP Stafford being a national resource for sex offenders, these figures were unacceptable. However on a positive note, collaborative working had begun with HMP Whatton to transfer some prisoners from HMP Stafford to complete sex offender courses.
- The Board was extremely frustrated that prisoners held under IPP terms had been noted as a concern on the Annual Report every year since 2011. It was not just treatment to detain prisoners post their release date; it was both unfair and inhumane. This treatment could only increase tension and resentment in this group. In the last reporting period 6.7% of the population in custody at HMP Stafford were IPP prisoners; of these, 80% were post tariff. The Board recognised that the Independent Parole Board, not HMP Stafford, decided their final release date.

- The Board was disappointed that ROTL could not be granted for prisoners convicted of sex offences held in closed prisons like Stafford. ROTL would assist their reintegration into society on release, strengthen the important family ties and would also assist the establishment in securing links with local employers. The impact of ROTL on prisoners would be an opportunity to prepare better for their successful release and support the prison's focus on them as returning citizens to the community.

THE WORK OF THE BOARD AT HMP STAFFORD

- The Board appreciated the co-operation freely given by the Governor, management and staff during the course of its work. Each week Board members attended the prison to monitor Rule 45 reviews, adjudication hearings and to observe meetings. The Board responded to prisoner applications on a weekly basis and rota visits were undertaken fortnightly. The Board felt that prisoners benefitted positively by members each having an area of special responsibility which they monitored closely.
- The Board regularly attended induction for new prisoners and explained the role of the IMB. The opportunities that prisoners had to engage with the Board were outlined and sometimes members were able to make themselves available for questions at the end of the presentation. Additionally the Board met fortnightly with prisoners post induction to monitor and report on whether their initial experience had continued positively.
- The Board held a monthly meeting, which the Governing Governor or Deputy Governor attended, in order to brief members on prison matters and to discuss issues arising from monitoring.
- The IMB Clerk was always present at Board meetings and was very efficient. Her support was much appreciated.
- One Board member attended the IMB Annual Conference in London during April 2017.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair attended the quarterly Area IMB Chairs meetings. Both Chair and Vice-Chair also attended Senior Management Team meetings, as did other interested Board members.

- HMP Stafford was represented on the IMB Sex Offender Working Group. It gave the Board a chance to understand the national picture for sex offenders and to pool knowledge.
- All members took part in a programme of training provided by visitors who attended the monthly Board Meetings.
- The prison offered the Board places on relevant internal training courses though staff places were always prioritised. The Board welcomed these opportunities.
- Members took up in-depth projects on areas of concern, this year focusing on visits, healthcare and OMU.
- Staff allowed Board members to shadow a day of their normal work so that all the Board could learn what their job entailed and how it impacted on prisoners.

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	579
Total number of segregation reviews attended	57

APPLICATIONS TO THE IMB: SUBJECTS

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation (incl. laundry, clothing, ablutions)	11	13
B	Discipline (incl. adjudications, IEP sanctions)	29	4
C	Equality	12	10
D	Purposeful Activity (incl. education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell)	6	12
E1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	6	
E2	Finance (incl. pay, private monies, spends)	13	
E	Family/visits (see Note 1)	19	5
F	Food and kitchens	0	2
G	Health (incl. physical, mental, social care)	22	27
H1	Property within the establishment	17	
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	11	
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	2	
H	Property (see Note 1)	30	36
I	Sentence management (incl. Home Detention Curfew, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation)	6	21
J	Staff/prisoner concerns (incl. bullying)	17	14
K	Transfers	2	24
L	Miscellaneous	1	32
	Total number of IMB applications	156	200

Note 1: Categories E1, E2, H1, H2, and H3 were not reported on separately in 2015/16. Categories E and H for 2016/17 are the sub-totals of E1 and E2 and H1, H2 and H3 to show the comparison with the previous year

Note 2: In Category B, the increase is due to the Board being able to categorise a larger number of applications into B in this reporting year, rather than them falling into L, Miscellaneous, as in the previous reporting year