



**Annual Report**  
of the  
**Independent Monitoring Board**  
at

**HMP Belmarsh**

for reporting Year  
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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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### 1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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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.

## **2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The Board is pleased to present the annual report and would like to give thanks to the Governor and staff for their cooperation and openness in their relations with the Board. The Board is pleased to report that the new Governor, Rob Davis, has made a positive impact on the prison, he has the support of the majority of staff and is working hard to improve the critical staffing shortages and working to achieve a sustainable regime.

The Board is also grateful for the work done by the Clerk with availability of 14 hours per week.

It is recognised that prison staff perform a very difficult role and it is regrettable that there have been some violent incidents through the year resulting in injuries to both staff and prisoners.

### **Main judgements**

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#### **Are prisoners treated fairly?**

The Board believes that generally prisoners are treated fairly.

#### **Are prisoners treated humanely?**

The continuing level of staff shortages places pressure upon the prison system in numerous ways, most significantly in the frequent reductions in the basic regime. The Board is consequently very concerned about the safety of staff and prisoners where houseblocks are being managed with considerably reduced staffing levels. These shortages also impact on most areas of prison life such as access to property, attendance to activities, time spent in dealing with prisoners' applications. (4-9, 4-10, 6-2, 6-11, 7-3, 7-5, 8-4)

The poor processes in place across the entire prison estate for the management of prisoners' property are a major issue, with an inconsistent approach across the estate. Where prison staff in Belmarsh have to be redeployed to cover other areas, property management is always the first area to be affected. (6-6, 7-5, 7-6)

The Board continues to report that it is not decent to place prisoners in three-person cells designed for two people. (7-2)

#### **Are prisoners prepared well for their release?**

Although there have been some improvements towards the end of the year, attendance at activities is unacceptably low, the quality and variety of activities available both in Education and Work is poor. Some prisoners being held in Belmarsh are not able to attend courses to allow them to progress with their sentence planning as they are waiting a long time for transfer to a more suitable establishment. (9-1, 9-2, 9-3, 10-all, 11-5)

### **Main Areas for Development**

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#### **TO THE MINISTER**

1. Will the Minister increase the staffing levels in Belmarsh and support the prison in recruiting additional staff to a level that would enable a full regime to be maintained throughout the year? (4-9, 4-10, 6-2, 6-11, 7-3, 7-5, 8-4, 9-2, 9-3, 10-2)

#### **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

1. Will the Prison Service finalise the role of the High Security Unit to enable the Governor and staff to move forwards with improving the HSU environment? (6-9)

2. Will the Prison Service give consideration to reducing the number of triple-occupancy cells in use that were designed for two people? (7-2)
3. Will the Prison Service speed up the process carried out by Shared Services for dealing with Counter Terrorism Clearance? (7-4)
4. Will the Prison Service ensure common procedures are adopted throughout the prison estate in relation to the amount of property each prisoner is allowed and ensure that property is transferred (between establishments) with adherence to the relevant PSO? (7-6)
5. Will the Prison Service review the current maintenance contract which provides a poor service within the prison? (7-8, 10-4)
6. Will the Prison Service review the budget for Education to enable the prison to provide an adequate service? (9-1)
7. Will the Prison Service ensure that “through the gate” services are reintroduced to ensure that prisoners have appropriate support on release? (11-3)
8. Will the Prison Service ensure that there are sufficient places available throughout the estate for special training courses, enabling prisoners to make preparation for their release? (11-5)

## **TO THE GOVERNOR**

1. Will the Governor improve the access to Listeners and/or Samaritans’ phones, for prisoners in the High Security Unit? (4-11)
2. Will the Governor consider reintroducing the Equalities Consultation meetings and urge the Senior Management Team to work on the Equalities streams? (5-3)
3. Will the Governor put steps in place to ensure that a Healthcare representative is always in attendance at GOOD reviews? (6-5)
4. Will the Governor put steps in place to ensure that the delays in transferring property from houseblocks and Reception to prisoners in all residential areas are reduced? (6-6)
5. Will the Governor consider what could be done to integrate the review process for prisoners in the segregation areas, so that Board members and other interested parties can attend? (Ref 6-10)
6. Will the Governor review what further could be done to improve purposeful activity for those in the Segregation and HSU Segregation Units? (Ref 6-3, 6-12, 6-13, 10-3)
7. Will the Governor review the reasons for delays in the approval of Pin numbers for those in the HSU Segregation Unit? (6-14)
8. Will the Governor give consideration to alternative arrangements to replace the daily breakfast pack? (7-10)
9. Will the Governor continue to strive to improve the quality and variety of Education and Work available to prisoners and the attendance of prisoners to activities? (9-2, 10-all)
10. Will the Governor continue to bring pressure to bear on the maintenance contract providers to ensure the repairs to the workshop roofs are carried out? (10-4)
11. Will the Governor review the work available to Vulnerable Prisoners? (10-5)
12. Will the Governor give consideration to offering gardening activities similar to those in the High Security Unit, to other low-risk prisoners? (10-6)
13. Will the Governor consider whether a designated resettlement area can be made available for Community Rehabilitation Company staff to interview prisoners? (11-3)

## **Improvements**

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1. The response time for Healthcare complaints has been reduced to 10 days.
2. Body-worn cameras are being rolled out for use by prison staff.
3. Following a detailed monitoring exercise by the Board and recommendations being made to the prison, the Board is pleased to note several improvements to the phone booking system and has been advised of further plans for more progressive improvements in the future.
4. The disability pay rate has been increased to £5 per week and, although still low where this is the only remuneration available to prisoners who are not able to do any activities, it is a significant increase on the previous year.
5. The Board is pleased to see that Patient Council meetings are now held on a regular basis, with involvement from prisoners.
6. The process for reviewing prisoner records prior to their transfer to Belmarsh has improved with the appointment of a security analyst and more staff members who are able to pre-check details for transferees.
7. The Board is pleased to see the use of the new Violence Diagnostic tool enabling staff to focus on the causes of violence and follow up appropriately.
8. The Board is pleased to see that prisoners are no longer managed under the Duty of Care regime.
9. There is some additional opportunity for 1 to 1 work with Education now on offer for prisoners in the High Security Unit.
10. There is less likelihood of adjudications being ineffective now that these processes can be managed by teleconference with the independent adjudicator.

### **3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON**

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Belmarsh opened in April 1991 at a cost of over £105m. It occupies some 60 acres on the old Ministry of Defence Woolwich Arsenal site in South East London, 47 acres of which are within the perimeter wall.

It is a core local prison within the high security estate. It primarily serves the Central Criminal Court and Magistrates' Courts in South East London and parts of Essex, as well as holding high security risk prisoners on remand and awaiting trial. All category prisoners may be housed in Belmarsh.

The Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) is 760 and the Operational Capacity i.e. the maximum population it can hold is currently 906.

The main providers of contract services to the prison are:

Carillion – maintenance

Oxleas – Healthcare

Novus (Manchester College) - Education

## Evidence sections 4 – 11

### 4 SAFETY

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1. Incidents of self-harm were quite significantly down over the first nine months of the year (the latest for which figures are available), a reduction of nearly 40% was noted on the comparable months last year. The prison deserves to be commended for the great efforts it has made in this direction.
2. Belmarsh's unusually long run without any Deaths in Custody (DICs) came to an end during the reporting year, with three in short succession after Christmas. The Board has identified no particular themes running through these DICs that need to be addressed specifically, however one had an element of a more general area of concern, which is that ambulances are not always immediately being summoned when a "Code Red" or "Code Blue" is radioed in to the Control Room. The Board noted that the prison provided appropriate support to the families of the deceased.
3. Regular Safer Custody meetings take place, with input from the responsible Governor, the Safer Custody Team, the Healthcare department, and representative Listeners from each houseblock. These meetings are structured around an agreed agenda which ensures that relevant data and emerging trends are examined and discussed on a regular basis.
4. The problems previously encountered with extensive delays in inquests appear to have eased. However the Board is concerned that the probable need to hold jury inquests in relation to the most recent deaths in custody will jeopardise the progress made by the Coroner on inquest delays. In particular, it continues to be of concern to the Board that HM Coroner for Inner South London has only a single courtroom suitable for jury inquests available to him and his assistant coroners at Southwark.
5. The number of ACCTs opened during the reporting year remained steady. The Board's impression of completed ACCTs examined on rota visits was that the quality of the paperwork was much improved – rarely now are officers writing that a prisoner whose safety they are checking on "appears asleep". Further, recorded conversations (where required as part of an ACCT plan) read as having been genuinely meaningful in many cases. It is more difficult for the Board to assess quantitatively whether prisoners in crisis are being better cared for in substance, but anecdotally a great deal of good work was seen with prisoners in crisis.
6. Attacks with weapons continue to be effectively tackled by the restrictions imposed on razors – the Segregation unit now only has electric hair trimmers, which is a good step towards keeping potential weapon materials from some of Belmarsh's more dangerous prisoners.
7. As appears to be the case across the prison estate, new psychoactive substances (NPS) continue to cause difficulties at Belmarsh. No deaths have yet resulted, but staff have reported feeling unwell after breathing in the fumes of "spice" being smoked, and the distinctive sweet smell can sometimes be detected around the prison. In one case a prisoner suspected of being under the influence of NPS caused serious injuries to staff trying to restrain him and had to be placed in special accommodation. The Board are concerned that even at a prison where all staff and visitors are searched at the gate and drugs dogs are readily available, NPS, conventional drugs, and mobile phones continue to be encountered with alarming regularity inside.
8. The Board is pleased to report that the "Duty of Care" regime has been terminated. Prisoners who have conflicts with others are now being managed consistently with those in other prisons, in accordance with the normal processes set out in the prison rules. This has eased the pressures on staff of providing a number of different regimes and has facilitated a better regime in the vulnerable prisoners' wing.

9. One of the biggest risks to a safe custodial environment that the Board has encountered in Belmarsh is caused by overcrowding and staff shortages: prisoners are locked in cells for longer periods of time, sometimes unpredictably, and this can cause tensions to rise.
10. Towards the end of the reporting year the Payment Plus scheme was rolled out in the prison as an emergency method of boosting effective staff numbers through extra bonuses for overtime. This was welcomed by the Board, in particular that the scheme was only used to support the normal regime. This improved staffing levels and reduced frustrations due to late cancellations of planned regime activities. The impression of the Board is that this has led to a calmer prison atmosphere and thus a reduction in violence, but it is too early to be able to provide any robust statistical evidence of this. The Board is concerned, however, that this is a very short-term measure to tackle a very long-standing problem of understaffing and over-commitment in terms of prisoner numbers.
11. Retention of the hard-working Listeners in the prison remains difficult to achieve due to the profile of much of the prison's population, but there is planning for their succession with regular rounds of recruitment and training. Access to them was generally good, with the major exception of the High Security Unit: no prisoners on the unit have been trained as listeners and prisoners held there do not have access to listeners elsewhere in the prison. Additionally no Samaritans phone is available. The Board considers that prisoners held on the HSU ought to receive as near as possible to the same provision in this regard as prisoners held elsewhere in the prison and more could and should be done here.

## 5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

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1. The prison takes steps to ensure that prisoner needs are fully assessed upon induction into the prison and where necessary appropriate steps are taken to ensure that any special needs are put in place.
2. By reviewing applications to the IMB and by their regular visits to the prison, the Board is able to monitor whether prisoners are treated fairly on the basis of their protected characteristics (disability, race including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality, sex and sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment). The Board considers that prisoners do not suffer unnecessary disadvantages. Additionally the prison holds regular Prisoner Consultation meetings at which it is possible to highlight specific concerns held by individuals.
3. Despite the belief that prisoners are being treated fairly, the Board considers that the processes for the management of equalities are insufficient. The Board is unaware of any Equalities Consultation meetings being held during the year, nor of work being taken forwards in respect of the equalities streams. It is therefore regrettable that the prison is unable to demonstrate and back up its work in these areas with firm evidence of issues taken forwards and of impact assessments carried out.
4. The prison and the Board receive a high number of complaints and applications, with the highest number of complaints being received about property, healthcare and complaints about staff. A breakdown of the IMB applications is shown at the end of the report.
5. Regarding prison complaints, the Board is satisfied that the process for managing these is appropriate and, generally, complaints are responded to within 5 working days. On occasion the Board has not been satisfied with the quality of the response given and in these instances refers them back to the Business Hub manager.

## **6 SEGREGATION AND HIGH SECURITY UNIT**

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### **SEGREGATION UNIT**

1. At the start of the reporting year, the prison sought to introduce a progressive segregation scheme to focus on rehabilitation, interventions and psychological treatment. Unfortunately, incidents at other prisons in the High Security Estate led to the arrival of a number of particularly challenging individuals. The unit was frequently at near maximum capacity with 15 or 16 occupants and the presence of several multi-unlock prisoners meant that, despite their best efforts, staff were often focused on containment and immediate needs rather than progression.
2. On numerous occasions, members recorded that occupants were not being offered daily showers or exercise and prisoners frequently complained that they were being asked to choose between the two. This is neither decent nor humane and it adds to the already heightened sense of isolation that these individuals have, in turn making them more difficult to manage. Staff shortages are not an acceptable reason for the denial of basic entitlements.
3. The nature of the unit means that opportunities for purposeful activity are severely limited. The Board recognises that many of those held in segregation pose too great a risk to be permitted to attend education or workshops with the main population. However, this is not true with all individuals and more could be done on a case by case basis, as occurred for example, with a prisoner who was able to paint in the special cell.
4. At Good Order and Discipline (“GOOD”) Reviews, the Board continues to be impressed by positive multidisciplinary discussions that take place. However, the Board notes that information concerning an individual’s offending or prison service history is often not available, making it difficult for the Segregation governor to make a meaningful decision and leading to delays.
5. There were several occasions recorded in rota reports where the Healthcare representative either failed to attend the review or arrived too late to play any useful part in the meeting, despite their presence being mandatory.
6. The Board received numerous substantiated reports of unacceptable delays in the transfer of prisoners’ property from the houseblocks or Reception. This is particularly egregious when an individual lacks their legal papers or a change of clothing, as occurred on several occasions. The lack of proper staffing allocation to process property in Reception has been previously documented, but in many cases an officer simply needs to retrieve the items from the houseblock. The Board has been unimpressed by the frequent explanation that nobody is available for this straightforward task.
7. The Board observed a number of adjudications during the reporting year. Most were conducted professionally, but there continue to be delays and dismissals caused entirely by a failure to complete the relevant paperwork or where nobody has made arrangements in advance for the reporting officer to attend the hearing.
8. The Board was pleased to hear that body-worn cameras have arrived to be used in various interventions to protect staff and prisoners and ensure that there is an independent record. It is unfortunate that the requisite training that is needed before the cameras can be used is taking several months to complete.

### **HIGH SECURITY UNIT (HSU)**

9. The future role of the HSU remains under review. Options being considered are as a contingency function for the Separation Centre and a possible remand unit. The High Risk and Exceptional Risk functions will remain in place. The Board is concerned that these discussions have been ongoing for several years and some clarity is needed so that governors and staff can move forward and improve the HSU environment.
10. For the majority of the reporting year, the unit has operated a split regime with 2 spurs in operation and the occasional use of the HSU Segregation area, with a total of around 13 to 15 prisoners. More could be done to integrate the review process for prisoners

held in the HSU Segregation Unit with that for the main unit so that the Board and other interested parties can participate.

11. Unfortunately, the already severely limited regime has frequently been curtailed, meaning that prisoners have often not had daily access to showers, exercise, association, telephone calls and / or some form of purposeful activity. The situation has clearly deteriorated from previous reporting years. The reasons given by the prison relating to staffing numbers are not acceptable given the need to maintain basic levels of decency.
12. In general, HSU prisoners' access to purposeful activity has been poor. Whilst they have had access to the small gym, for reasons of security they are not able to use the workshops or attend the education department.
13. For a large part of the reporting year, fortnightly education and weekly chaplaincy classes simply did not take place, but the Board is pleased to see that the new unit governor has made efforts to ensure that these are back up and running. The education provided is in any event at a very basic level which is unsuitable for many of the individuals held in the unit. More could be done to encourage these prisoners to participate in longer courses of study and to facilitate access to relevant materials.
14. Frequent long delays have been reported with the approval of prisoners' telephone PINS so that they can call friends, relatives and legal advisors. Part of this appears to be due to police involvement but the process needs to be integrated and streamlined. Prisoners also complained of significant hold-ups where telephone calls in a foreign language need to be monitored. This is confusing as it is understood that such calls are recorded for later translation. There was no Samaritans telephone in the unit for much of the reporting year but the Board is pleased to hear that this is now being addressed.
15. The Dedicated Search Team ("DST") carried out a wholly disproportionate search in the first part of the reporting year in which they almost completely destroyed the horticulture area. It has taken a lot of hard work on the part of a small but committed group of prisoners and staff to restore the fruit and vegetable planters in time for the summer. The Board has yet to be given a coherent explanation as to why a suitable location cannot be found elsewhere in the prison for low risk individuals to take part in similar gardening activities.

## **7 ACCOMMODATION (including communication)**

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1. Belmarsh has a capacity for 906 prisoners. The houseblocks contain 281 single person cells, 67 dual-occupancy cells and 147 triple occupancy cells
2. The Board recognises that there has been a reduction in the use of triple-occupancy cells but continues to have concerns about cell sharing, in particular about triple-occupancy cells, originally designed for two people. As noted in several previous reports, the Board considers that over-crowded cells are not decent.
3. The Board continues to have concerns about staffing levels. Understaffing impacts on the provision of a full regime for prisoners and on the ability of staff to manage prisoner attendance at planned activities. The staffing shortages impact across the prison and whilst the Board recognises the short term effect of Payment Plus initiatives, this does not mitigate the long term effect of such low staffing levels.
4. A further impact on staffing is the poor management of Counter Terrorism Clearance. This was initially due to inefficiencies within Belmarsh and is compounded by the length of time for clearance to be processed by Shared Services in the MOJ.
5. Regarding management of property, the Board is concerned that getting property to prisoners is unnecessarily delayed because officers assigned to distribute it at weekends are often redeployed to help run the regime on the houseblocks.
6. Overall maintenance of prisoners' property is a great concern to the Board but is not specific to Belmarsh as many of the issues are associated with property not being managed appropriately when prisoners transfer from other establishments. With only 3 bags of property being allowed on transport per prisoner, prisoners can wait many weeks for the rest to reach them. The Board has been advised of further measures being put in place concerning volumetric control (the amount of property each prisoner has) and the encouragement they are being given to send home excess property. It is essential that similar measures are adopted across the prison estate. The highest number of applications to the Board is about property issues.
7. Accommodation throughout Belmarsh is dated and in need of improvement. There is a rolling painting programme in place, which is to be welcomed, but more could be done in ensuring it is kept to a decent standard. The replacement programme for showers is finally underway and the gradual improvement of these facilities for prisoners is to be welcomed.
8. Whilst there are discernible improvements in completing minor repairs, the maintenance contract provider remains unable to complete planned works, nor procure larger replacement items within a reasonable timescale. The Board considers that, under the maintenance contract, a piecemeal service is provided and the provider does not have the required numbers of staff to deliver funded projects in a timely and effective manner.
9. In the reporting year, the food budget per head was maintained at £2.02. Considering this supplies 3 meals a day to an average of 894 prisoners, the kitchen should be commended on carrying out an excellent job.
10. A breakfast pack is still handed to each prisoner with their evening meal. The Board considers this is a disincentive for prisoners to get up for daily activities.
11. One manager, seven chefs and up to 30 prisoners work in the kitchen. The average number of prisoners is usually around 18. Interviews for another chef are currently taking place.
12. The Board has spent a considerable amount of time monitoring the facilities and processes for visits and has made some recommendations to the prison. As a consequence, improvements have been introduced to the visits booking system, additional phone lines have been installed and visitors can book their next visit in the Visitor Centre, immediately after their visit has finished. Further recommendations have been made concerning the quality of information available to visitors (including a more consistent approach to recommendations about what is acceptable to wear for a visit) to enable them to plan effectively for their visits. The Board has also made

recommendations concerning the notices around the Visitor Centre available to visitors when they first come into the prison.

13. Although there are still many areas relating to visits requiring improvement, the Board has recently been advised of a series of plans which address all of the Board's concerns and even go much further, for example provision of a cinema room in the Visits Hall, a private meeting room for families, improvements to the visitors' reception area. For these reasons the Board will not be raising any issues associated with visits but will watch with interest as new improvements are introduced.
14. The café in the Visitor Centre has in the past provided fresh food, made to order, but this service was temporarily suspended by Spurgeons, due to staffing issues. The bought-in sandwiches and salads have not proved popular and it is hoped that the service will improve when taken over by a new service provider.

## **8 HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care) (HCC)**

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1. Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust has been the provider for healthcare services since 1st April 2015 operating an out-patient clinic and an in-patient facility. The Board continues to report a good working relationship with the Head of Healthcare.
2. The Board remains concerned about the high volume of mental health in-patients. For example in May 2017, of 33 beds, 27 were occupied by those with serious mental health issues. Although a number are transferred on to more appropriate locations on a monthly basis, the additional care these patients require affects the regime of those in HCC and other areas of the prison when staff have to be mobilized to HCC.
3. A significant area of concern remains non-attendance to out-patients appointments. For example:
  - of 401 dental appointments, 98 were cancelled by the unit (either due to staff shortage or sickness) and 150 PDNA (patients did not attend);
  - of 226 immunisation and vaccination appointments, 78 cancelled by unit, 67 PDNA.
4. Often the reason given for PDNA is lack of staff available to escort prisoners to appointments and for other reasons beyond HCC's control.
5. For those prisoners that have to attend appointments outside the establishment, coordinating these appointments has proved challenging. At the present time there are two prisoners requiring dialysis three times a week.
6. The optician, who has worked at Belmarsh since it opened considers that PDNA is at its lowest level.
7. Healthcare applications to the Board for the reporting year numbered 61, a significant decrease of nearly 40% on the previous year. There are still a substantial number sent directly to HCC.
8. HCC has reduced the response time for complaints to 10 working days as opposed to 28 days during the previous reporting year, which the Board welcomes. The complaint form now includes a box where the prisoner can indicate if he agrees information can be shared with the Board. The Board also now receives a copy of the complaints spreadsheet which gives sufficient details enabling effective monitoring of complaints.
9. Patient Council Meetings are held monthly and are for the most part well-attended. A Healthcare Newsletter for prisoners has been introduced, giving various information including Outpatients Clinics Timetables and results of surveys undertaken by HCC on the houseblocks.
10. The Board notes that further improvement is planned through the implementation of the Health & Wellbeing Model. This will provide a single point of assessment bringing all services together.

## 9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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1. The Board considers the budget for Education to be inadequate (£758k compared with £1.3m for Woodhill and £2.2m for Wandsworth). There is no planned reallocation of budgets until August 2018. This impacts the service that can be provided.
2. The Board is concerned at the poor levels of attendance at classes. This continues to be a focus for management with many efforts to reduce the number of prisoners declining to attend. Some of the reasons for the poor attendance figures are as follows:
  - prisoners continue to be dissatisfied with the level of courses on offer with little between basic and higher level learning and consequently, further development to the curriculum is needed to make it more relevant;
  - at times pressure on staffing across the prison has affected the ability of prisoners to attend classes;
  - devising workable prisoner timetables continues to be challenging with some activities clashing;
  - prisoners who are transferred before finishing a course do not get any credit for the work they have completed;
  - the prison is aware that the selection of prisoners to attend education needs to be improved.
3. Educational provision in the HSU is inadequate and often inappropriate. At most the unit gets two hours per week but staff illness has reduced this to nil on too many occasions.
4. The Board has observed improvements in the following areas:
  - teaching standards have improved and regular joint monitoring by the lead governor and education management should ensure continued progress;
  - recruitment of teaching staff has improved, however there is still a vacancy for a mathematics teacher;
  - the new Catering and Painting and Decorating Courses have begun and are popular with prisoners;
  - the success rate for prisoners who complete courses is good;
  - the achievement of prisoners who completed courses during the year indicates that the department is on track to achieve within the top three in the London region and is well above the national average;
  - support for prisoners engaged in higher level courses has continued with 8 hours of one to one support available and access to Virtual Campus;
  - the introduction of a staff mess, in which prisoners are trained in catering and as baristas, provides a service that is appreciated throughout the prison.

## **10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT**

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1. When fully operational and fully staffed the workshop capacity should be 126. For most of the year there were seven vacancies for staff including that of Industries Manager. This meant a maximum of four workshops were open offering 89 places and the Board considers this inadequate for the number of prisoners held (c800):
  - breakfast packing - 35 prisoners;
  - lighting maintenance and breakfast packing - 18 prisoners. This workshop spent much of the year making up breakfasts packs since the supply of lighting from the customer was sporadic;
  - VP workshop: breakfast packing - 26 prisoners;
  - Yards: general cleaning and collection of waste material - 10 prisoners.
2. The following workshops were inoperative:
  - the Floplast workshop could not open owing to staff shortages and as a result the lucrative contract with Floplast was withdrawn. This contract was for the assembly of injection-moulded plastic components such as guttering. The workshop would have employed 35 prisoners per session with the potential for jobs on release at Floplast's factory in Kent;
  - The British Institute of Cleaning Sciences (BICS), which takes 18 prisoners and is the only workshop to offer a qualification, has not been open all year owing to the loss of both instructors and the delayed work on the workshop floor by Carillion;
  - the Recycling workshop – potentially 16 prisoners.
3. Average attendance has been as low as 30% of the full target of 126, or almost 50% of the reduced capacity. However, when work is available attendance can be 80% against capacity.
4. The maintenance contract providers have failed to repair the roof over the workshops for the entire year. As a result all the workshops are regularly flooded during bad weather and cannot function.
5. The Vulnerable Prisoner (VP) workshop has a long waiting list. The opening of more workshop space would allow capacity to increase to 35, but another staff member and the installation of CCTV would be required. At the moment less than half of the VP population can participate in workshop activity.
6. Category C prisoners are still not employed in the upkeep of the gardens. All garden maintenance continues to be contracted to the maintenance provider.

## 11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

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1. Chaplaincy has had two part-time staff vacancies for Church of England and Catholic workers over the year, but so far the work of the Chaplaincy has not been affected. The chaplains continue to provide an excellent service with the provision of religious workshops for a wide variety of faiths and also for pastoral care for all prisoners regardless of faith.
2. Pathways to Recovery had a successful year with a caseload of 250. There has been a conflict, however, between Education and Pathways attendance lists. When Activities puts a prisoner on the Education list, he is not allowed to attend Pathways, even if he attends Education only once a week. Accordingly attendance at Pathways can be inconsistent.
3. The Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), which deals with resettlement services for prisoners approaching their release date, has been fully staffed since March after an 18 month wait. There is concern that staff are unable to ask sensitive questions on the wings and would like to have a designated resettlement area where prisoners could be interviewed in private. A further concern is that “through the gate” services have lapsed since the contract with the provider has been withdrawn, leaving vulnerable prisoners at risk on release.
4. Gym attendance has improved greatly over the year, following the implementation in February of a new induction process in the First Night Centre. There has also been an increase in the variety of activities, including the introduction of a rugby course. Vulnerable Prisoners are now getting their fair share of gym time.
5. Prisoners remaining at Belmarsh for more than a year do not get the kind of in-depth long-term training that might be available to them at other prisons. The Board urges the prison service to introduce appropriate courses, directed at these prisoners, enabling them to be able to address their offending behaviours and make preparation for their release. Alternatively, they should be relocated to another establishment already offering these courses.

## B Section – Work of Board

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1. The Board has unfortunately lost 4 experienced long-term members during the year and is now under pressure to complete the regular duties required of it, with the remaining 12 members (two of whom are dual-boarding).
2. There are two members assigned to rota visits and a further two to applications each week. Additionally members attend a meeting each month, part of which is attended by the Governor or Deputy Governor and normally with a training session given by a member of staff from a specialist area within the prison.
3. There continue to be a high volume of applications and in addition there appear to be a growing number of Freedom of Information requests. The Board reviewed the management of applications and reiterated the guidelines to members to ensure a consistent approach was used.
4. A training day was held in October when the process being followed for application and rota visits was re-examined and enhanced.
5. A recruitment exercise was carried out in December resulting in 4 new members being appointed. Unfortunately none of these has as yet received full Counter Terrorism clearance and consequently cannot start work on the Board. The delays in processing CTC applications was initially due to inefficiencies within Belmarsh and following that with the extremely slow processing of these in Shared Services in the MOJ.
6. The Board is assisted by a clerk 14 hours per week.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	16
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	395
Total number of segregation reviews attended	50

## C Section - Applications

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<b>Area</b>	<b>Totals for 2016-2017</b>	<b>Total for 2015-16</b>
Accommodation	11	16
Assault	11	25
Attendance to Activities	19	18
Bullying of Prisoners	0	5
Bullying of Staff	0	0
Canteen	7	9
Category Status	5	4
Compensation	0	0
Complaints about Staff	33	66
Drugs and DST	0	0
E List	6	5
Food	6	9
Foreign Nationals	23	0
Healthcare	61	100
Housing Issues	15	0
IEP/Discipline	24	14
Legal Matters	5	6
Licence Recall	3	3
Mail	5	25
OMU	38	27
Others	18	36
Personal Finance	41	41
Property	156	155
Racial Discrimination	1	6
Regime & Adjudications	33	48
Resettlement	2	1
Safer Custody	16	10
Telephone/Pins	31	29
Transfers	50	54
Visits	29	27
<b>Totals for years</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>739</b>