



Mrs Sally Osborne-Town
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Stafford
54 Gaol Road
Stafford
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25 September 2017

Dear Sally

**HMP STAFFORD: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 MAY 2016 – 30 APRIL 2017**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 30 April 2017. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for all the hard work that has been put into capturing your helpful observations.

I am grateful to the Board for highlighting the exceptional care shown by staff and prisoner carers towards frail and terminally ill prisoners, but note your concerns about the provision of care and whether a prison setting is the right environment to hold these prisoners. The Governor of HMP Stafford has a duty to hold those committed by the courts and is satisfied that the prison can deliver an adequate level of care to these men. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons said in his recent Annual Report that '*Support for prisoners with palliative and end-of-life needs was good in most prisons we inspected, and exemplary in Norwich, Whatton and Stafford.*'

Healthcare staff work hard to respond to the needs of the population and are confident in providing such care; this will remain a priority. As noted in your report a palliative care unit will be introduced at HMP Stafford and this is expected to be in place by the first quarter of 2019. The Governor is currently preparing a business case to deliver enhanced care to prisoners; this includes adapting six cells and exploring options such as widening doorways for easier wheelchair access (anticipated to be in place by the above timeframe). To further improve the care provision, HMP Stafford is working with the Older People and Person Centred Integrated Care at NHS England, and with Manchester's Institute for Collaborative Research on Ageing.

With regard to your request that the provision of treatment programmes for sex offenders be reviewed, as explained to the Board last year the new treatment programmes, Horizon and Kaizen, were commissioned to replace the Core and Extended Sex Offender Treatment Programmes (de-commissioned in March 2017), and have been developed applying the most recent research. HMP Stafford will deliver 80 Horizon programme places in 2017/18 and, expecting a minimum of 72 prisoners to successfully complete the programme. Kaizen is expected to expand in 2018 /19, providing an additional 22 places annually at the prison.

It is important to note that not all sex offenders will be suitable for an accredited programme, be willing to attend or be at a point in their sentence when they will benefit from an intervention. For some their risk may be better addressed through other services or activities. In addition to accredited sexual offending behaviour programmes and general offending behaviour programmes, a range of other programmes and services are available for this complex group of offenders, including strong public protection measures through Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements tailored to address individuals' risks and needs,

and specialist services such as anti-libidinal drug treatment, therapeutic communities and circles of support for offenders on release from prison.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is continuing to oversee positive changes to the management and progression of prisoners serving imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentences through the application of the joint HMPPS and Parole Board IPP Action Plan. HMPPS is focused on giving IPP prisoners the support, opportunities and motivation they need to progress more quickly when they are reviewed by the Parole Board so that they have the best possible prospect for securing release. HMPPS and the Parole Board have implemented a joint action plan, the purpose of which is to deliver further improvements and efficiencies in the effort to help IPP prisoners' progress towards release.

HMPPS recently completed a pilot on a new approach to casework, to augment and enhance existing case progression activity specifically for IPP prisoners. This has facilitated closer working with the Parole Board for the more complex cases, to ensure that parole hearings happen on time and with good quality, current risk assessments and reports. HMPPS is now embedding the lessons of the pilot into all its casework processes.

In addition, significant resources have been made available to help address the most challenging IPP cases. HMPPS has established a central team of psychologists and policy experts to undertake case reviews for those IPP prisoners who have had two or more parole reviews on completing their tariff and have not yet progressed to open conditions. To date the psychology team have completed over 1,100 reviews.

IPP prisoners have continued to be released in increasing numbers. This clearly indicates that the work being undertaken under the joint IPP Acton Plan is achieving its aim. During 2016/17, 46% of all IPP prisoners considered by the Parole Board were released and 24% recommended for a move to open conditions. In 2011/2012, 28% of all IPP prisoners considered by the Parole Board were released. The IPP population in prisons was 3,353 at the end of June 2017. This is reduced from 3,528 at the end of March 2017 and 3,683 at the end of December 2016. This group continue to achieve release in high numbers, with 576 first time IPP releases in 2016, the highest figure since the sentence was introduced.

Your request for a review of the release on temporary licence (ROTL) provision has been noted. Evidence suggests that good use of ROTL can increase an offender's chances of successfully reintegrating into society by helping them secure accommodation; find employment; and maintain links with their family. We are currently reviewing ROTL as part of the Government's prison reforms. We want to work with governors and ROTL providers to make sure the policy empowers governors to match suitable offenders to the right ROTL opportunities within a robust risk assessment framework.

It was encouraging to receive your comments that overall prisoners at HMP Stafford are treated fairly and that it is a safe establishment. I am also pleased that the healthcare issues you raised as a concern in your 2015 to 2016 report have substantially improved and further note that vocational training and learning opportunities have also improved. I welcome the Board's positive comments about developments in the resettlement service and note the good work being carried out by Lincolnshire Action Trust.

HMPPS comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex. I also note you have raised some local issues of concern in your report which the Governor will continue to keep you aware of as work continues.

The Justice Secretary and I appreciate the valuable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are very grateful for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP Stafford.



SAM GYIMAH MP

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Prisoners' Property

HMPPS understands the importance of property to prisoners and strives to ensure it is managed as effectively and efficiently as possible. It is in the interests of both prisoners and staff that property is dealt with promptly, fairly and with attention to detail. Work on producing a new prisoners' property framework was delayed so that it could take place alongside a national project to reduce HMPPS annual litigation expenditure. A national cost reduction project began in early 2017, with work streams focusing on improving the handling of claims and preventing the causes of litigation. This work is feeding into the prisoners' property review. HMPPS now expects to publish the new framework early next year.

Locally, HMP Stafford has recently conducted a review on prisoners' property. A new system has been introduced to accurately track and record dispatches of property post transfer. Where property has not arrived, staff at HMP Stafford will make efforts to contact the sending establishment to arrange for the property to be sent. Occasionally there has been insufficient space on the contractor's escort vehicle, the prison has arranged for a driver to collect from, or to take, property to other establishments.

Smoking Free Status

HMPPS is grateful to the Board for bringing to its attention the problems that some prisoners have faced as a result of apparent failure to communicate that HMP Stafford is a non-smoking establishment. Extensive efforts are being made by both prison and healthcare staff to support prisoners quitting smoking or trying to manage their smoking. As I am sure you appreciate it is a challenging task to introduce a ban on tobacco across England and Wales and a great deal of effort and thought has, and continues, to go into the planning and preparation of the roll out. One of HMPPS's reasons for rolling out in broadly geographical regions has been to address the issue of transfers between prisons, for the very reasons you have highlighted. However, this still presents challenges due to the general population pressures, of which you will be aware, and also the need to match individual prisoner needs. In planning and implementing we have made every effort to communicate widely with staff, prisoners and stakeholders about the rationale for banning tobacco and the practical details of when each prison will be going smoke free.

HMPPS's Population Management Unit (PMU) is part of the operational delivery Board that manages the national roll out and is consistently reminding staff of the smoke free establishments and the need to manage moves accordingly. HMPPS is also working closely with escort contractors, Courts and the police to ensure that prisoners are aware of the ban and how it affects them. As the prison estate becomes more smoke free the whole process should become more manageable. It is planned that by the end of October 2017 70% of the prison estate will be smoke free with the remainder by the summer of 2018.

Locally, HMP Stafford is working collaboratively with the HMPPS PMU to ensure sending prisons are aware of its smoke free environment. The prison continues to offer smoking cessation support to those transferred in.

Resettlement Prisons

As the Board will be aware from last year's response, HMPPS has streamlined the process by which the National Probation Service (NPS) is able to purchase resettlement services for the offenders they manage. The NPS, Community Rehabilitation Companies and prisons are working together to improve the services available. We recognise there is more to do and that's why we are doing further work to improve services and make sure ambitious reforms are protecting the public and reducing reoffending.

The availability of places for prisoners convicted of sexual offences and their resettlement forms part of the work of the Prison Estate Transformation Programme (PETP). PETP will support the reform of the prison estate during the current spending review through to 2020. It is important that activity to address shortfalls in capacity are co-ordinated and you are already aware work is underway to ensure that the capacity of the estate is realigned to cater for demand for places, including those convicted of sexual offences.

The Governor has also been exercising his powers by moving existing staff into resettlement support roles and commissioning Lincolnshire Action Trust to support his staff in improving preparation for release.