



Ministry
of Justice

Sam Gyimah MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State for Justice

Mr Colin Read
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Warren Hill
Grove Road
Hollisley
Nr Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP12 3BF

5th November 2017

Dear Colin,

**HMP WARREN HILL: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2016 – 31 MAY 2017**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 May 2017. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for all the hard work that has been put into capturing your helpful observations.

I note your continued concerns about prisoners' property. HM Prison and Probation Service (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 and HMPPS now expects to publish the new framework early next year.

I appreciate your repeated suggestion that release on temporary licence (ROTL) be provided as part of the Progression Regime. A number of prisoners in the progression regime have been placed there because of their history of absconding or serious failure on ROTL and the regime has been specifically and carefully designed to support them, and others, who are generally struggling to progress. It gives them opportunities to build evidence, to the satisfaction of the Parole Board, that it is now possible safely to manage the risks they pose if released into the community. In the absence of exceptional circumstances, allowing further spells in open conditions and into the community on ROTL for those guilty of such substantial breaches of trust would undermine public confidence in the administration of justice. For those not subject to exclusion from open conditions, then access to ROTL can be considered if or when they transfer to an open prison following a recommendation by the Parole Board.

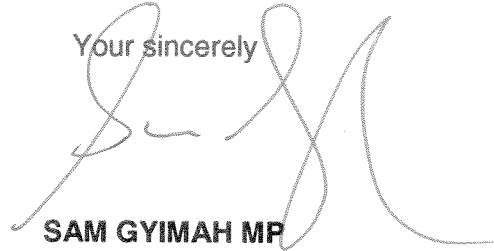
It was encouraging to receive your positive comments that HMP Warren Hill provides a safe, fair, decent and constructive environment, and has been successful in developing and embedding the progression regime, preparing those serving life or indeterminate sentences for release. The increase in number of prisoners successful at parole hearings, is very positive.

I was also pleased to read that prisoners feel the prison is safer, and considered helpful and more positive towards their rehabilitation, with relationships between officers and prisoners generally very good. It is positive that the requests of prisoners are heard and the new key worker scheme is proving successful already. I also note the improvements to education over the reporting period.

I 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. HMPPS comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

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 Warren Hill.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Gyimah', written over the typed name 'SAM GYIMAH MP'.

SAM GYIMAH MP

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FOR 1 JUNE 2016 – 31 MAY 2017**

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Catering

Although national guidelines are published, the overall responsibility for the provision of meals and budget allocation remains the responsibility of Governors and their catering teams. At HMP Warren Hill the quantity of food provided has been improved, however it is accepted the quality of the baguettes provided at lunch and the temperature of food still remains a concern, despite the prison purchasing new hot trolleys. A bid for a dedicated kitchen for HMP Warren Hill was unsuccessful due to the cost involved and consideration to HMP Warren Hill making their own baguettes for lunches was not progressed as this would require splitting the joint budget, creating a commercial space and the funding of a member of staff.

Oversight of the quality of food continues by supervisors in the kitchen at HMP Hollesley Bay and the Catering Manager, who holds monthly catering forums attended by prisoners and staff. A shop has been set up for prisoners to purchase their own food out of their weekly earnings and cooking areas have been created on the wings to allow prisoners to cook for themselves and enhance the community ethos. Separate lunch menus for HMP Warren Hill will be discussed and considered at future prisoner forums.

Staffing Levels

HMPPS are investing £100 million to increase the number of prison officers by 2,500 to deliver new ways of working in public sector prisons, we are also working with governors to help them retain their experienced staff. The prison has also been identified as a priority site under the Offender Management in Custody Model and been given the funding for the equivalent of 10 Band 3 Officers. A project team has been set up to within the establishment to prioritise how this funding will be spent.

HMP Warren Hill is still operating with vacancies at present and continues to provide support to other establishments through detached duty. Although the Offender Management Unit (OMU) is under pressure due to the increased number of prisoners being released, the OMU is the least affected by staff shortages and is work underway to fill any vacancies. A business case is also being prepared to increase business administration support.