



Ministry
of Justice

Sam Gyimah MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State for Justice

Mr Stephen Beyer
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Wealstun
Church Causeway
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West Yorkshire
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¹²
24 October 2017

Dear Stephen,

**HMP WEALSTUN: 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, particularly as you were short of Board members during the reporting period.

I understand your concerns about HMP Wealstun's staffing levels presenting a risk to the safety of prisoners and staff. As part of the Government's Prison Reform Programme HMP Wealstun will receive significant additional staffing over the next year to support the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model. Although numbers have not been finalised it is clear that this will have a significant and positive impact on the number of front line staff, who we know play a vital role. In addition, management grades will be increased to ensure support and leadership is in place to drive the change programme.

Under the new Offender Management model we will ensure that every prisoner has a dedicated officer who can engage with them on a one-to-one basis. These dedicated officers will have a caseload of six prisoners and will act as their mentors. They will listen out for problems, support changes in attitudes and behaviour, and defuse tension and frustration. This one-to-one support from a dedicated officer is at the heart of the prison reforms making sure that prisoners get the help they need to quit drugs and get the education and skills needed to find work and leave crime behind. The OMiC model will not just provide additional staff, but will support safety by providing residential prison officers with the time and training to engage, support and challenge their mentees'.

The OMiC model will be launched at HMP Wealstun next Summer. The number of Band 3 to 5 prison officers in post at HMP Wealstun has increased from 187 (headcount) at the end of October 2016 to 212 at the end of June 2017, with further individuals booked onto future training courses which have joined the establishment since June. Staff that have joined in the three months to the end of June will now have completed the prison officer entry-level training. Tele-health also went live in September 2017 and if used effectively should reduce the need for hospital escorts for some prisoners. The Governor will be monitoring the results of this initiative and will continue to keep you informed of staffing developments.

Turning to the positives in your report, I am grateful for the Board's assessment that prisoners are treated fairly and that you consider the management team is doing a good job, despite the challenges they are faced with. I was pleased to read that the kitchen is a real asset to the prison, providing excellent job opportunities for prisoners, and a very few complaints are lodged about the quality of food.

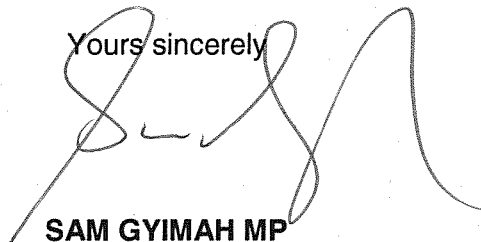
It was also pleasing to read that despite the changes early in the reporting year to the senior management in the Segregation Unit, the team were awarded National Team of the Year – Segregation Unit Team, at the Prison Officer of the Year awards 2017.

I welcome the new initiatives introduced at HMP Wealstun such as the Construction Skills Certification Scheme, the Pop-up Shop supplying baked items and surplus vegetables to the general public, the furniture restoration initiative with the Children's Hospice and outreach sessions in English and mathematics to learners employed in prison industries and NOVUS workshops. The Resettlement Hub is another good initiative and I am grateful to St Giles Trust for the resettlement support they provide.

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. HM Prison and Probation Service (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 Wealstun.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Gyimah', written over the typed name below.

SAM GYIMAH MP

**HMP WEALSTUN: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Building Improvements

Wings A and B

The Crown Premises Fire Inspection Group (CPFIG) served an enforcement notice on HMP Wealstun in March 2017 as the maintenance was lacking on the premises to keep the fire preventive and protective measures in an efficient state and good working order. Immediate action was taken to address CPFIG's findings. The facilities management provider has improved their processes on site to ensure all fire preventive and protective measures are suitably maintained. Some improvements to A and B wings have been made to meet the Building Regulations requirements. Contract managers have improved their monitoring and escalation process, and a lessons learned event was held which has allowed HMPPS to share improvements across the prison estate to prevent reoccurrence. HMPPS takes fire safety very seriously and the Executive Director of Prisons has written to all Prison Group Directors, Governing Governors and Senior Leaders to highlight fire safety responsibilities.

In the past six months over £500k has been invested in upgrading shower facilities, food preparation areas and high definition CCTV. In addition, over £100k was invested on fire suppression equipment, fire door upgrades and other modifications to pass the CPFIG's inspection. Other work remains outstanding, in particular the installation of a smoke extraction system.

An Estate Investment Proposal (EIP) bid to replace the cell windows on A and B wings is currently being assessed by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Estates team. A full physical building condition audit of the establishment has been commissioned by the Regional Prison Group Director to identify all upgrade / refurbishment needs within the establishment. However, this piece of work is extensive and is currently ongoing. Further EIPs will be submitted to MoJ Estates on completion of the physical building condition audit review. MoJ Estates will then consider proposals submitted and which options, i.e. upgrade of buildings or replacement of buildings, is the most appropriate cost effective option to take. All projects are assessed for inclusion in investment programmes against compliance and strategic priorities.

The Segregation Unit

A new Custodial Manager post (segregation based) has been created to drive forward improvements. Funding of £150k has been approved; the scope of works will include redecoration of the unit, addressing the damp issues in the unit, installation of in cell electrics for small electrical devices such as radios and television points, safer cell standard furniture, upgrade emergency lighting and a full decoration of the unit.

Kitchen Flooring

An emergency EIP was submitted in September 2017 to address this issue. A meeting was held at HMP Wealstun to establish the scope of the works, including the use of an entire portable kitchen to be remotely situated on site within the prison grounds, the flooring requires replacing throughout the main preparation area and the floor may also require a new drainage system. HMPPS currently awaits the full project details from MoJ Estates. The work will take several months to complete.

Facilities Management

The facilities management (FM) contract has pre-determined response times for resolution of reactive repairs and a planned maintenance regime to cover regular and programmed maintenance. The FM provider's performance is closely monitored and reviewed each month via the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) review meeting. KPIs are one of the primary performance drivers that is used and, when not achieved, results in financial penalties made against the FM provider. HMPPS is now engaged in a National 'Contract Reset' programme to improve delivery and better align the FM contract to the needs of establishments and the organisation. This is a major programme; recommendations and solutions will be reported this year to HMPPS's Final Approval Board.

In terms of repairs, the FM provider carries out a significant number of repairs each month. Regular meetings are held with the provider for the purposes of directly raising and resolving issues and the provider attends weekly operation meetings and reports on progress. The provider is currently working through the backlog of reported issues. This new refreshed way of working is helping to drive forward improvements in terms of delivery. Any shortfalls and complaints will be monitored by the Compliance Team. Complaints of poor quality workmanship are investigated when reported via the FM provider's helpdesk facility.