



Mrs Catherine Porter
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMYOI Wetherby
York Road
Wetherby, West Yorkshire
LS22 5ED

23 October 2017

Dear Mrs Porter

**HMYOI WETHERBY: 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 have been short of Board members during the reporting year.

I understand your continued concern about the number of young people arriving late at HMYOI Wetherby from court. The Youth Custody Service (YCS) agrees that children should be moved as quickly as possible, but there may be good reasons why this is not possible or appropriate immediately after sentencing, including the conclusion of court processes, welfare of the child, logistics, but above all, to ensure that the placement decision is appropriate to the needs of the child.

The objective of minimising the time prisoners spend waiting in court cells is reflected in the Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) contract, with the contractors fully aware of their obligations to escort prisoners from court at the earliest opportunity. PECS contract specification requires contractors to prioritise movements of young people and women over adult male prisoners. Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Commissioning is currently working on a project to re-tender the PECS contract and is committed to ensuring that the new contracts are designed to ensure young people's journeys to and from court are minimised and that their safe arrival at custody is prioritised.

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has done a lot of work recently to review the Prisoner Escort Record (PER) to address recurring recommendations around late night arrivals, long waits at courts and extended journey times. This has included the identification and recording of a new set of timed key events including when court hearings finish, court Youth Offending Team (YOT) interview completion times, receipt of warrants, placement authorisation receipts, etc. This review has now concluded and the changes and identified amendments will be incorporated into the Electronic PER review programme which is being undertaken separately. The additional information being collated will enable prioritisation and highlight areas where delays are occurring the most for targeted improvement actions.

PECS has instigated quarterly meetings at the establishment where representatives from both escort contractors attend and review with management and PECS, specific instances of late arrivals and examine patterns of lateness. The PECS Contract Delivery Manager (CDM) also conducts weekly reviews of arrival times and those received very late are raised by the CDM with the contractor as official

complaints through PECS. PECS and the YCS will continue to monitor all aspects of the contractors' performance and any failures in meeting the agreed levels will be raised with the contractor.

The use of video-link (on a case-by-case basis) is being considered for young people. If it does go ahead and HMYOI Wetherby has the capacity to run it, one of the factors making a young person eligible for video link is the distance from court that they would otherwise have to travel.

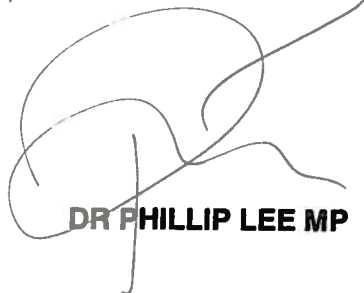
A new staffing profile is being designed which will increase HMYOI Wetherby's night complement of staff allowing for care and support to be provided to late arrivals and those new into the custodial setting. Furthermore, a peer support scheme is being introduced and more information is being made available in a variety of languages.

It was reassuring to receive your comments that dedicated officers ensure that the young people in their care are listened to, kept safe and that their needs are met. I was pleased to read that significant improvements have been made in many areas of the work on the Keppel Unit since your last report. It was also encouraging to read that the catering department continues to provide a very good service and that art classes have encouraged young people to apply themselves, producing impressive paintings.

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 HMYOI Wetherby.

Yours sincerely



DR PHILLIP LEE MP

**HMYOI WETHERBY: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Violence

HMPPS is fully committed to making prisons safer and addressing the significant increase in violence and assaults by increasing staffing levels and the ways of working in our prisons. The safety and welfare of every young person in custody is our absolute priority and we are clear that more needs to be done to achieve this.

We have created a new Youth Custody Service, with an Executive Director for the first time in the Department's history, to make sure this vital area is given the priority and weight it deserves. The new Director will lead on reforms to the running of the youth estate, including boosting the number of frontline staff by 20% - all of whom will be specially trained to work in the youth estate. We are developing a new 'youth justice specialist officer' role so that more staff can be specially trained to work with young people. This will ensure we have the capacity in the system to reduce the levels of violence and deliver our reform ambition.

As part of a comprehensive approach to managing behavior, a number of key initiatives are already underway across all the under-18 young offender institutions (YOIs). These include, and for HMYOI Wetherby in particular:

- Better use of local psychological teams to carry out assessments of young people involved in multiple perpetrator/serious assaults.
- Continued development of the Interventions Model to promote desistance in young people with all sites now delivering a portfolio of approved interventions including Life Minus Violence-Enhanced at Wetherby. Interventions staff were also trained in Aggression Replacement Training in March 2017 and delivery has since commenced.
- Implementation of the Conflict Resolution Model with Prison Officer Specialists trained to apply Restorative Justice principles to resolve conflicts and reduce the need for security measures such as 'keep apart' and enabling young people to engage in the full range of rehabilitative services available.
- Planning for training is already underway in preparation for the roll out of the Custody Support Plan, an evidence based and needs-led single care planning initiative in Keppel Unit over the next two months.

A review and amendment of the local bullying strategy which will be known as Rethinking and Understanding Threats and Harassment Strategy has taken place. This will be implemented once approved by the Governor and Prison Group Director and should offer more effective support helping young people feel safer and have more confidence that they will be supported appropriately. In addition, the Care and Support Plan (CASP) has been developed for young people identified as being targets of intimidating, threatening or unacceptable behaviour. The CASP will be bespoke and drawn up specifically

for young people taking into account their main concerns and identifying interventions and support for effective management.

Mental Health Transfers

Children and young people's mental health services are expanding at their fastest rate in over a decade, including new eating disorders clinics, shorter waits for specialist care, and a major increase in specialist inpatient facilities for underserved parts of the country. Improving mental health care for children and young people is an absolute priority for the NHS.

NHS England expect to publish the procedure for the transfer from youth detention accommodation of children and young people to and from hospital under section 47 and 48 of the Mental Health Act 1983 later this year. A Department of Health version of this document already exists. The procedure suggests that given the urgency required when responding to a young person with mental disorder, a transfer should be made within seven days from the start of the first medical and risk assessment. For young people aged 17, early action is particularly important because at 18 they will be too old to be admitted to the National Secure Forensic Mental Health Service for Young People, referred to as the National Medium Secure Network.

The NHS England Health and Justice team are working in partnership with the provider and the Prison to establish and develop the Secure Stairs Framework across the establishment as a whole. This enhanced care model will provide additional psychological support and oversight for the Children and Young people and the caregivers supporting them

Segregation of Vulnerable Young People

A review of segregation procedures and practices in under-18 YOIs was recently conducted by HMPPS Psychology Services. The implementation of the recommendations of the review are currently being considered. However, new procedures have already been introduced to assist establishments with identifying, managing and addressing the short term needs and risks associated with young people's behaviour and aid effective reintegration into mainstream services or inform referrals to more suitable accommodation.

One of these new procedures is that Psychology Services attend multi-disciplinary reviews for separated young people. Where the young person is expected to be separated for longer than seven days a Short Term Assessment of Risk and Needs (STARN) is completed by a psychologist (or one in training under supervision). The STARN involves an analysis of the function of the young person's behaviour resulting in separation with recommendations made to meet need and reduce risk thereby aiding reintegration. Where appropriate, such recommendations include referrals to interventions to address the need and risk.

Additional staff resource is being sought to co-ordinate services to meet the needs of the most challenging children and young people in the estate with the aim of reducing the disproportionate risk they pose to themselves and others. In addition, work around Care and Separation Units, Enhanced Support Units and Re-integration units is being taken forward as part of the wider youth justice reforms.

Staff Vetting

There has been an increase in the timescales being encountered for applicants in achieving clearance to work within HMPPS which is being addressed with the HR Service supplier SSCL and follows the implementation of e-vetting in February this year, which is a part digitised process.

For the majority of staff in establishments holding young people under 18 years of age, such as HMYOI Wetherby, an additional Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance is required. This adds time to vetting timescales for those candidates working in these locations. All healthcare professionals require the

highest level of DBS check, however it is expected that as healthcare professionals (and given it is mandatory prior to practise) many will hold an existing DBS check. Where they do not hold the DBS certificate this adds additional processing time prior to deployment.

The Prison Officer Recruitment and Retention Programme is working closely with SSCL to address these issues and take positive steps to reduce the amount of time candidates taken in pre-employment checks.