



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HMP Dovegate

for reporting Year
1 October 2016 – 30 September 2017

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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.

The Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Dovegate is committed to treating all with respect and fairness, regardless of race, colour, ethnicity, religion, belief, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IMB members have had free and unconstrained access to all areas of the prison and had the full co-operation and support of the Director, his Senior Management Team and all Prison Officers and staff. This has been greatly appreciated, as has the help, guidance and support given by the HMPPS Controller and her team. (Dovegate is a privately managed establishment operated by Serco.)

In compiling this report, it should be noted that the Board has again been very short of members during the year and some areas have had little or no in-depth reviews of the operations.

Overall judgement

With a new Director, Deputy Director and other Senior Management, Dovegate underwent a complete review of its operations this year, resulting in many changes to previous working and operational practices. It was also the year that a complete ban on smoking occurred. As can be seen in the conclusion, the Board believes that significant positive progress has been made as the year has progressed.

Key areas for review were:

Three House Blocks
Work/Education/Other Activities
Staffing Levels/Recruitment
Healthcare
Smoke free implementation
Segregation

House Blocks

The three main blocks were reorganised so that Blocks 1 and 2 housed sentenced prisoners, including those on long-term sentences, and vulnerable prisoners who are all engaged in employment, education or who have retired.

House Block 3 is now for sentenced prisoners who are unemployed and awaiting allocation of employment or education, first night prisoners, remand prisoners and those with sentences of 4 years or less.

These changes have given prisoners in House Blocks 1 and 2 more purposeful activities during the day time and less restricted regimes.

Work/Education

The purpose of the reorganisation of house blocks was to achieve full employment, even if part-time working, or education for those sentenced prisoners located (or relocated) to House Blocks 1 and 2.

House Block 3 now mainly provides for local prison requirements, i.e. remands and short sentenced prisoners in addition to first night and detoxification wings'.

There were some early issues with prisoners on full-time working having to go on to part-time to accommodate more workers, but this has now been resolved.

Staff Levels/Recruitment

Following a number of recruitment campaigns, Dovegate staffing is at a high level with a good retention rate. However, this has led to an above average number of young, inexperienced staff and profiling is taking place to review the balance of age/ gender/ experience.

Seven staff, including one Assistant Director, were sent to the Turks and Caicos Islands, in the aftermath of the hurricane, to rebuild their prison operation. Staff were also loaned to HMP Lowdham Grange to help cover their staff shortages.

Therapeutic Community

The community has a capacity of 200 prisoners, but during this report year, the numbers have been less than capacity.

Following 5 failed audits an in-depth review of the operation has taken place and major changes are planned to be implemented in the next year/years. IMB has, due to member numbers, been unable to monitor anything more than the day to day requirements.

Healthcare

Healthcare in Dovegate is provided by Care UK, who sub-contract to South Staffordshire and Shropshire Foundation Trust, to deliver mental health services.

Health services generally have continued to improve, but the wait for dental appointments is significantly longer than last year, even allowing for a transient prison population. External hospital appointments continue to be cancelled due to profiled escort staff being deployed to emergency escorts.

In addition failure to attend internal GP appointments continues to rise with 31 being missed in the 6 months to September 17. This was again caused by lack of escort staff.

Smoke Free Implementation

Dovegate became smoke free on 29th July 2017, having been heavily promoted and advertised for all of 2017 with prisoners offered help and advice, including the use of Vapes during this time.

The changeover went very well with a small rise (8 to 10) in minor assaults in August, but this figure reversed in September (19 to 9). A noticeable increase in NPS intoxication occurred between June and September (26, 37, 42 and 109 cases respectively) which may have been as a result of the smoking ban.

Segregation

There were concerns of a regime of bullying in Segregation and 6 prisoners put in written complaints of assault by Officers. All were investigated (2 by an investigator independent of Dovegate) and partly due to lack of any visual or audio recordings, none were proven. However, a revamp and re-organisation of the operation has taken place and processes implemented to make sure that the necessary information would be available if any further incidents occurred. IMB were consulted and had input to the re-organisation of the operation.

Positives October 2016 to September 2017

- ACCTS down
- Self-harm down
- Prisoner assaults down
- Serious staff assaults down
- Violent incidents down
- Key lock incidents down
- Incident Reporting System on NOMIS 100% in September 2017
- Smoke free completed without any major incident
- Staffing levels at a maximum
- Staff sickness below 10 days per annum for the first time
- Improved Intelligence reporting

Negatives October 2016 to September 2017

- NPS (New Psychoactive Substances) still high
- Lack of purposeful activity in Segregation and Healthcare
- Long waiting times for dental appointments
- Prisoner property losses (both internally and when transferred) far too high
- Insufficient capacity in secure hospitals to provide timely transfer for those needing hospital treatment
- Availability of profiled escorts for internal Healthcare and external hospital appointments

Conclusion

To summarise, the Board believes that Dovegate has seen significant positive progress made in the year 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017 and the prison appears to be settled and reasonably calm.

Staffing levels, sickness and absence, prisoner on prisoner and prisoner on staff assaults all buck the national trend and major changes such as the smoking ban have been completed successfully.

The Board hopes that the changes and new initiatives planned for the New Year will continue to add positive value to the Dovegate Operation.

Main Areas for Development

TO THE MINISTER

- To work with healthcare providers to ensure there is sufficient capacity within secure hospitals to provide timely transfer for those needing hospital treatment.
- To develop a national policy to address the needs of the older prisoner population.
- To confirm when the revised Policy on Prisoners' Property will be published (this was due in the Financial Year 2016/17). Thirty-five percent of prisoner complaints in Dovegate, to the IMB, are for loss of property (internally and on transfer from another prison).

TO HMPPS

- To produce a strategy to provide/increase meaningful activity in Segregation and residential healthcare.

TO THE DIRECTOR

- To significantly improve purposeful activity in Segregation and Residential Healthcare to include new performance measures.
- To reduce the continuing internal problems with prisoners' property, that has increased by 22% year on year.
- To provide sufficient officers to meet the escort requirements for internal visits to Healthcare and external visits to hospitals.
- To upgrade the Healthcare unit waiting room, toilet and wash hand basin. This has been highlighted on the two previous Annual Reports.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

HMP Dovegate is located near to Uttoxeter, Staffordshire and is a male Category B training prison holding male prisoners aged 21 and over.

The main prison consists of convicted prisoners, mainly determinate, a remand facility and 130 local and remand prison places.

There is also a purpose built Therapeutic Community that takes repeat and mainly violent offenders, who come from any prison in the country, and volunteer to address their offending behaviour through group and individual therapy. All prisoners go through assessment to make sure they are suitable for the Therapeutic Community.

The Certified Normal Accommodation of the main prison is 860 and that of the Therapeutic Community is 200, giving a combined total of 1060. There are also 73 APP's (Additional Prisoner Places).

The number of prisoners held in the main prison over the reporting year has been on, or very close to, the Operational Capacity.

The number of prisoners held in the TC has been below its Operating Capacity.

The main prison consists of three house blocks. The two original house blocks 1 and 2 each have 5 wings built around a central "bubble". Each wing has 2 floors, each floor having 20 cells, 4 showers, a food serving area and laundry on the ground floor. There are fixed tables and chairs, a pool table and exercise machines in the recreation area plus an outside exercise yard. Cells in these 2 house blocks were designed for single occupancy and have an in-cell wash basin and toilet.

A further 20 cells are larger and can accommodate 2 prisoners.

The new house block 3 has its wings built around a control "bubble". This block has a dedicated drug treatment wing. The cells are larger, complying with European standards, and have integral showers. All the wings have the same facilities as in blocks 1 and 2.

HB1	Cat B Trainer
A Wing	Long-term sentences (over 10 years and enhanced IEP)
B/C/D/E Wing	Sentenced prisoners engaged in employment/education
HB2	Cat B Trainer
F Wing	Sentenced prisoners engaged in employment/education
G Wing	Long term sentences (over 10 years and enhanced IEP)
H Wing	Vulnerable prisoners (Sex Offenders) employed/unemployed/retired
J Wing	Sentenced prisoners engaged in employment/education
K Wing	Over 50 years of age/pre-and post-Therapeutic Community
HB3	Local Prison Provision
L Wing	Unemployed sentenced prisoners awaiting allocation of Employment/Education
M Wing	First night centre and ISMT detox
N Wing	Sentenced 12 months or less/in resettlement period (could also be in employment/education)
P Wing	Remand

The Therapeutic Community, which is separated from the main prison, by an internal fence, consists of 3 house blocks all having single occupancy cells, with in-cell toilets and showers. The Therapeutic Community shares some of the main prison facilities, e.g. Healthcare and gymnasium.

ATMs (Automated teller machines) are installed in all the residential areas, allowing prisoners to check their accounts, order meals, doctor/dentist appointments and many other functions.

HMP Dovegate has its own kitchen and laundry.

The Healthcare Centre has 12 cells for in patients and the usual range of Outpatient Clinics.

HMP Dovegate has a large Education and Training facility, Dovegate College, 4 workshops, a recycling centre, a gymnasium and multi faith centre.

The Library Services are provided by Serco in partnership with the Staffordshire Library Services.

Vocational Training is run by 2 sub-contractors:

- Construction and Skills Solutions (CSS)
- N-ergy (Finished November 2017)

HMP Dovegate has a contract with Serco Integrated Services for facilities.

HMP Dovegate has very well maintained and attractive gardens with productive vegetable and flower growing areas.

B Evidence sections 4 – 11

4 SAFETY

	1 st Oct 16 to 30 th Sept 17	2016	
Self-harm incidents	555	638	-13.0%
ACCTs opened	709	655	+ 7.6%
Assaults prisoner on prisoner	84	156	-46.0%
Assaults prisoner on staff	56	61	-8.2%
Violent Incidents	220	280	-21.4%
Deaths in Custody*	0*	1	

Contrary to a background of increased self-harm, assaults, weapon finds, NPS drugs across the entire prison estate, HMP Dovegate is showing a decrease in all areas, other than ACCTs, with a significant (-46%) reduction in prisoner on prisoner assaults. Assaults on staff have gone from a high of 11 in November 16 to an average of 2.5 over the 4 months to September 17. ACCTs have reduced from a high of 79 in March to 47 in August and 39 in September 2017.

The work carried out by prison staff, the Violence Reduction Reps and the Listeners, including initiatives on NPS awareness and seeing all “first night” prisoners, has helped achieve the reductions.

Prisoners on constant supervision ACCTs has also been significantly down on last year with a total of 6 from April 17 to September 17 and 8 in the previous 6 months.

There were no deaths in custody during the reporting period (1 October 2016 – 30 September 2017).

*However there have been three deaths in custody in the last three months after the end of the reporting year. They are under investigation and the Board will be reporting on them in its next annual report.

5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

Following a review of arrangements it was considered that the Equality and Diversity arrangements were under developed and the length of time between meetings and response to discrimination incident forms was too long. A re-organisation has taken place and as from July 2017 the DEAT (Diversity, Equality Action Team) have been meeting monthly with the following monthly forums feeding into the DEAT meeting(s):

- Race, Religion and Belief
- LGBT and Disability and Age
- Foreign Nationals
- Veterans in Custody

There are 29 Equality Rep's who attend the protected characteristic forums.

Foreign National's surgeries held every 6 weeks with invited UKBA personnel attending.

Celebration events held in 2016/17 included :

- World Autism week
- Remembrance Day
- Transgender Day.

6 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

Following a number of negative comments in last year's review and a number of assault claims made by prisoners against staff (all unproven), a complete review and some reorganisation has taken place resulting in the following:

A segregation strategy with the following objectives:

- Engage with prisoners to ensure that a robust, but reformative approach is practised.
- To guide and direct prisoners to have expectations displayed to them in order for them to have a chance of engaging with regime positively.
- Officers to behave in a pro-social manner at all times in order to deliver a reformative service.

Within these 3 objectives the principles and aims and objectives have been clearly defined.

Operational areas have also been clearly defined, including the wearing of body cameras at all times in Segregation; unlocking procedures; planned intervention; fixed meeting times; spontaneous C&R (Control and Restraint); paperwork completed appropriately and on time; time spent in segregation kept to an absolute minimum

Indicators of success have been identified as:

- Reduction in violent incidents across the establishment
- Reduction in number of C&R incidents in the Segregation Unit
- A happier, more motivated workforce in the unit, with less frustration
- Prisoners reflect that they feel safe and supported at Dovegate.

7 ACCOMMODATION (including communication)

The misplacing of property, a subject highlighted in all Dovegate IMB, and most other HMP establishments' recent reports, continues to be an issue of constant frustration to both prisoners and the Board. Problems arise both on internal moves and prison to prison moves.

A detailed review of prisoner property was commissioned by the previous Director and its recommendations accepted and acted on. Unfortunately, this initiative has not worked and property complaints have actually increased year on year.

Property complaints internally have increased from 46 to 59 this year, an increase of 22%.

Property complaints during transfer have increased from 40 to 43, an increase of 7%.

The residential accommodation is visited on a regular basis throughout the year and the Board is pleased to report that, with the odd exceptions, there have been no major problems with respect to the fabric on the wings.

There were problems with fridges that have now been replaced.

Some water dispensers are still out of order (having been reported months ago) but a lack of spare parts seems to be the problem.

Faulty showers take too long to repair.

With the exception of the fridges; dispensers and showers the contract with Serco Integrated Services for the maintenance of the facilities is generally working well.

A number of prisoners have, in addition to a Dovegate Maintenance Team, volunteered to decorate kitchens and cells to maintain standards.

8 HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)

Healthcare in Dovegate is provided by Care UK, who sub-contract to South Staffordshire and Shropshire Foundation Trust, to deliver mental health services.

This year has seen the appointment of a new Healthcare Manager, this time from a clinical background, and the appointment of a new Deputy Head. There is a continuing effort to ensure that there is the appropriate skillset amongst the staff, but retention and recruitment of nursing staff is a problem. There are regular meetings between healthcare managers and the Senior Management Team.

Health services generally continue to improve. The Board welcomes the use of monthly surveys of healthcare service users, and focus groups to inform service delivery. From December 2016 to August 2017 the "Family and Friends Recommend" score rose steadily between 88.5% and 94.1%. Healthcare Champions also provide valuable feedback from prisoners.

Prisoners can book into triage clinics on each house block or attend a 'walk-in' clinic in the healthcare centre every day.

Prisoner healthcare concerns are followed up by a personal visit by one of Care UK staff which often allays fears and promotes understanding.

Prisoners do give compliments to healthcare staff about how they have been treated, though by far the most negative feedback is with the waiting room in the healthcare unit. Prisoners report long waits on hard slatted benches with little distraction. The toilet and washbasin are a disgrace on which the Board has commented for at least two years. At last there is some progress, though decisions were taken months ago to upgrade this facility, progress seems painfully slow.

The healthcare unit is primarily staffed by operational staff though there is normally a registered nurse on duty 24 hours a day. However, Board members visiting the unit have come across occasions where no nurse has been present apart from having done a round earlier in the day.

A significant number of in-patients have long-lasting mental health problems. The Board has been concerned that, despite visits from library and education staff, there is so little stimulation and therapeutic activity for these patients. Though the Board recognises there are risk assessments necessary, it should be possible to enrich the regime in the unit.

The ending of housing Rule 450I prisoners on the house blocks has removed the Board's concern expressed last year that Reviews were occurring without a member of the healthcare staff in attendance. Healthcare staff are invariably in attendance at Segregation Reviews in the CSU.

The Board reported its concern last year that prisoners who should be assigned on reception to M wing because of alcohol or drug dependency were being housed initially on other wings. This problem has been resolved. However, the issue remains on the risk register as some prisoners are being removed before they are stable.

There is prison-wide encouragement of well-being; special health promotion days, healthy eating initiatives and especially the involvement of prisoner Health Champions are welcome initiatives. The Healthcare Champions, one per wing, have access to scales, BP monitors, are able to measure BMI and generally offer information and encouragement.

The Board welcomes the willingness of the Integrated Substance Misuse Team (ISMT) to take initiatives such as the provision of sleep hygiene groups to help prisoners avoid reaching for illicit substances when sleepless, using acupuncture and mindfulness.

Waiting times: the average wait for routine GP appointment between June and September was 14, 26, 12 and 5 days respectively, though prisoners seeking urgent appointments were seen within 3 days on average in this period. The wait for dental appointments is significantly longer: 36, 54, 46 and 18 in the same period. Again, urgent dental appointments were down to 4 days in September.

A continued concern, which prisoners report, is the failure to attend appointments to the healthcare centre because of lack of escort staff. Two officers are designated for duties in the healthcare unit, one of whom should collect prisoners from the wing. This number of officers has not increased despite the rise in population/appointment numbers. The average number of DNA's per month caused by failure of staff to get the prisoner to his appointment in the last six months to September was 31 for the GP alone. This pattern is reflected in access to other health professionals.

The contracted number of escorts for external (hospital) appointments remains at 4 per day (x2 AM, x2 PM) including any emergencies. This inevitably means that appointments are cancelled, a situation exacerbated when there are bed watches or hospitalised prisoners. In the months June - September the number of cancellations were 9, 10, 13 and 15 respectively. There have been occasions when the doctor has advised that all prisoners who book to attend hospital need to attend; Serco management were informed but an appointment was cancelled anyway. As we reported last year this represents a risk to prisoners' health; hospital visits are deemed necessary for good reason, either investigative or procedural.

The availability of NPS in the prison, as in the rest of the prison estate, represents a serious threat to the good order of the wings and serious health risks to prisoners. There has been a significant spike in the incidence suspicion of NPS intoxication in the last few months, June to September (26, 37, 42, 109 respectively). This may coincide with the smoking ban that came in July. Tobacco is in short supply and healthcare staff expressed concern last year that, having no tobacco with which to cut the NPS, incidents would increase. A prisoner found under the influence is automatically placed on Basic Regime and should attend an NPS Awareness Course if he wishes his IEP status to be reviewed before 28 days. It is difficult to retain nursing staff. Getting new staff security cleared and able to draw keys takes time. There are obviously disadvantages in using Agency nurses as the working environment of a secure prison is very different from other healthcare settings.

Monthly meetings of the Quality Assurance Information Group are well run and usually attended by an appropriate member of the prison's operational staff.

9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Due to very low IMB member availability, no in-depth assessment has been made of these areas.

However, the Board have had only 19 applications regarding Education/ Employment and Training for the year. Prisoner comments on Education and Employment are, in the main, positive.

All prisoners are assessed for Maths and English as it is a minimum requirement to pass Level 1 in both subjects to be able to get a work placement.

The Prisoner Art Exhibition was again held at the Brewhouse in Burton on Trent in February and received excellent reviews.

10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

The prison has 4 workshops and all 4 are currently in operation, giving employment to all those prisoners who want it. All prisoners need to attain Level 1 in literacy and numeracy and complete courses in Health and Safety, Manual Handling and an Induction to the Workplace course before commencing work.

11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

Again, due to very limited IMB member numbers this area has had very limited review. The information reported on is for the 6 months to September 2017.

Number of prisoners discharged Apr 17 – Sep 17 = 321

Number of prisoners not found accommodation = 65 = 20.2%

Going forward special accommodation is being considered for some ex-prisoners.

Number of prisoners discharged	321
Found Employment	36 (11.2%)
Training	0
Education	1

Since April 2017 the following number of prisoners have completed one of four programmes:

Thinking Skills Programme	20
Medium Risk Violent Offenders	22
Building Better Relationships	15
Self-Change Programme	10
(High Risk/ Violent Offenders)	

C Section – Work of Board

As can be seen from the following Board statistics, we have been significantly below the recommended complement of Board Members. This has resulted in undue pressure being put on a very small number of individuals and their exceptional hard work and effort is much appreciated.

The very low number was not helped by the latest advertising and recruitment and appointment process taking 8 months from start to finish. Even allowing for some delay in the final appointments sign-off by the Minister, due to the General Election, this is, in our view, unacceptable.

In addition, the previous recruitment campaign also took months to complete and of the 7 new members recruited, only 2 remained after the first year. The Board believes that the recruitment process, including the interviews, requires urgent re-evaluation to speed the process up and stop the loss, locally and nationally, of 60% of new appointees not lasting 2 years in the role.

All Board members use the secure www.cjsm.net service for information and, although the system speed has improved, the storage space on the system is frustratingly low. The Board has introduced a number of computerised reporting systems for Applications, Rotas, Segregations, Complaints over the years and these are in the process of being reviewed and updated to give us even more information.

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	7*
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendees at Board meetings during reporting period	6
Total number of visits to the Establishment	376
Percentage of Segregation reviews attended	99%
*one Board member on sickness absence for 8 months	

Section - Applications

Applications by Subject		2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Code	Subject	12 months	12 months	12 months
1	Accommodation	7	11	0
2	Adjudications	2	2	4
3	Equality and Diversity including religion	3	2	0
4	Education/employment/training including IEP	19	17	10
5	Family visits Inc. mail and phone	22	25	16
6	Finance/Pay	17	16	21
7	Food/kitchen related	7	2	4
8	Health related	48	20	37
9	Property within current establishment	59	46	56
10	Property during transfer/in another establishment	43	40	45
11	Canteen, Facilities, Catalogue Shopping, Argos	4	8	4
12	Sentence related (Inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc	12	13	5
13	Staff/Prisoner/Detainee concerns Inc. bullying	25	10	15
14	Transfers	7	3	10
15	Miscellaneous	10	21	17
16	Blanks	8	21	14
	Total number of IMB applications	293	257	258
Increase on last year of 14%				