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Chair, Independent Monitoring Board  
HMP Lindholme  
Bawtry Road  
Hatfield Woodhouse  
Doncaster,  
DN7 6EE

**MOJ Ref:** SUB 89187

9 July 2021

## **HMP LINDHOLME: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 FEBRUARY 2020 – 31 JANUARY 2021**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 January 2021. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations, especially as you were short of Board members. I was saddened to hear there were two deaths in custody during the reporting year. Every death is a tragedy and my officials take recommendations from the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman very seriously.

I acknowledge the Board's continued concerns about the number of Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (IPP) prisoners at HMP Lindholme. My officials have confirmed that at the time of writing HMP Lindholme holds 37 IPP prisoners (a reduction from the 60 IPPs referred to in my predecessor's response to the Board last year), nine of which have never progressed from closed conditions. These individuals have a complex set of needs with some refusing to engage in their sentence plan/recommended interventions aimed at reducing their risk to the public. Others have completed interventions with limited success and continue to display attitudes / behaviours causing disruption to prison rules and regimes.

Nationally, the most recent IPP published figures across the custodial estate show that the number stood at 1,784 at the end of March 2021. This is reduced from 2,039 at the end of March 2020. This is very good progress considering that the population of unreleased prisoners serving IPP sentences was, at its highest in 2012, over 6,000.

As part of the psychology work stream, consultancy/case file reviews are written on all priority IPP prisoners in custody where they have failed to make any progress after two or more post-tariff parole hearings. This cohort has been expanded to include all short tariff prisoners (less than two years), irrespective of previous hearing outcomes. These reviews reinvigorate cases that are not progressing and, where necessary, with consultation, practitioners agree and identify appropriate individual progression pathways. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is continuing to monitor the four Progression Regimes located across the country. It may also interest you to note that the IPP licence period differs from licences for other indeterminate sentences in that, after 10-years from first release by the Parole Board, individuals can apply to the Parole Board to have the licence terminated. The minimum 10-year period is not paused or reset if a person is recalled to prison or serves a subsequent sentence for further offences. Those recalled will continue to be reviewed under their IPP sentence in custody until the Parole Board has directed their re-release. They will then remain on IPP licence unless they are successful in applying for their licence to be terminated.

Despite the Board's main concerns, it was encouraging to receive your comments that staff in the education department did an excellent job in putting together learning modules for many prisoners and although the pandemic presented a challenge, healthcare responded well to this in the delivery of continued care to prisoners. I was pleased to note that the average occupancy of the care and separation unit has been reduced, with shorter periods of stay on the unit. Your comments about the telephone PIN number backlog and the work you did, is appreciated.

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 Lindholme.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Chalk'.

**ALEX CHALK MP**

## HMP LINDHOLME: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 FEBRUARY 2020 – 31 JANUARY 2021

### HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

#### **Overcrowding**

Despite a fall in the national prison population of approximately 5,800 since March 2020, primarily driven by a reduction in inflows from the courts during lockdown, this has meant there has been a reduction in the number of people in prison sharing cells. This has enabled HMPPS' compartmentalisation strategy to be implemented. HMP Lindholme has continued to operate in excess of its certified normal accommodation level (i.e. its uncrowded capacity) because of regional capacity pressure. HMPPS recognises the concerns raised by the IMB; while these places meet HMPPS standards for crowded accommodation, holding two men in a cell designed for one prisoner to accommodate national population pressures is not desirable. The wider problem of overcrowding in prisons is a longstanding issue that will not be easily addressed. However, HMPPS welcomes the Government's recent announcement to commit over four billion capital funding to make significant progress in delivering 18,000 additional prison places across England and Wales by the mid-2020s. This includes creating four new prisons over the next six years and expanding another four prisons over the next three years. Construction work is well underway on HMP Five Wells, the new prison at Wellingborough in Northamptonshire, and have started on the site of the former HMP Glen Parva, in Leicestershire. These additional prison places will have a positive impact on lowering the proportion of crowding within the prison estate by providing accommodation that is safe, decent and uncrowded. However, the extent to which the proportion of prisoners held in crowded accommodation will reduce will be dependent on levels of demand in the system.

Latest population projections indicate HMPPS will have significant challenges in dealing with demand once the population returns to pre Covid-19 levels and therefore it is likely that HMP Lindholme will continue to be required to hold prisoners over its uncrowded capacity in the future. However, HMPPS will continue to monitor this position.

Locally at HMP Lindhome, there are no plans to reduce the number of certified double occupancy cells. Privacy curtains are being replaced as they become damaged and this is an on-going process.