



██████████
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Gartree
Market Harborough
LE16 7RP

MoJ ref: ADR 79705

6 July 2020

Dear ██████,

**HMP GARTREE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 DECEMBER 2018 – 30 NOVEMBER 2019**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 30 November 2019. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations, especially as you continued to be short of Board members during the reporting year.

I understand the Board's request for funding to improve the building fabric, living environment and complete installation of CCTV. The leaks in the wing offices have largely been investigated and fixed, and the roof of the Gartree Therapeutic Community Unit has been replaced. However, it is recognised that there are other roofs at HMP Gartree in need of replacement and whilst funding has been approved to fix some of the most affected roofs during the current financial year 2020/21, there a bid for further funding to fix all the roofs is needed. There is also an identified need for the shower areas to be refurbished, but due to the limited capital funding and the value of all bids across the prison estate exceeding what is available, work is having to be prioritised. In the meantime, HMP Gartree is working closely with the facilities management provider, Amey, to help with minor refurbishment and localised repairs have been completed to allow the showers to continue to be used. The prison also has a decoration programme and painting parties have made a noticeable improvement to the living conditions, which is beginning to make HMP Gartree a more decent environment, alongside a newly installed TV distribution system providing prisoners with a better TV signal.

In addition, funding has been allocated for enhanced gate security and an x-ray body scanner to reduce the entry of contraband into the prison. Funding has also been allocated for CCTV in G and H wings and the main link corridor. The specification and request for quotation are currently being prepared to allow contractors to submit costs for the required CCTV work to be delivered this financial year 2020/21. For the areas still left without CCTV these will be dependent on funding and will be prioritised once available.

I recognise the Board's concern about those that remain in prison serving indeterminate sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP). HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is committed to doing all it can to support the progression of IPP sentenced prisoners and to help them reduce their risk to the point where the independent Parole Board determines that they may be safely released. The work to improve the management and progression of those serving IPP sentences has been underway for some time and is continuing via the joint IPP Action Plan, developed in partnership with the Parole Board. HMPPS is prioritising post-tariff prisoners in accessing rehabilitative interventions which includes Psychology Service led reviews and enhanced case management for those prisoners who have a complex set of risks and needs. Progression Regimes have also been developed at four prisons across

the country, which are dedicated to supporting indeterminate prisoners who are struggling to achieve release via the usual routes.

Across the custodial estate, the population of prisoners serving IPP sentences was over 6,000 at its peak in 2012. The latest published figures show the unreleased IPP population stood at 2,039 at the end of March 2020, a further reduction from 2,223 at the end of September 2019 - demonstrating the improvement in opportunities available to IPP prisoners to progress in their sentence. Locally, HMP Gartree continues to provide appropriate psychological services to support the work that is being undertaken to manage and progress IPP prisoners and the prison now has a dedicated IPP Lead to take forward the local IPP action plan put in place to help prisoners progress.

However, it is important to note that, as the unreleased IPP population continues to decrease, those remaining in the prison population present the most complex and challenging cases. Many of these prisoners are still assessed as posing a high risk of committing further violent or sexual offences. HMPPS will continue to work with these individuals to offer them opportunities to reduce their identified risks but ultimately these risks must be addressed before the Parole Board can consider the prisoners' release.

In addition, HMPPS is currently rolling out the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model which is implementing a new Key Worker role to provide more dedicated time to support individual prisoners. Their key purpose is to engage prisoners in their rehabilitation and the coordination of their sentence. Whilst it is acknowledged that managing IPP sentenced prisoners can be a challenge, the improvements via OMiC, such as the introduction of the Prison Offender Manager and Key Worker role, will enable the prison to offer IPPs better management of their custody time and hopefully progression.

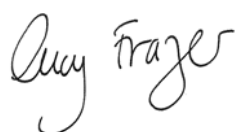
Turning to the Board's concern about the relationship between health and social care provision, the National Partnership Agreement for Prison Healthcare in England sets out a detailed programme of work, agreed by health and justice partners, to deliver safe, decent and effective provision for prisoners. The agreement takes a whole system approach to healthcare provision and recognises the physical environment, staffing levels and regime within prisons. I can assure the Board that the Ministry of Justice and its health partners are continuing to work together to deliver the programme of work underpinning this agreement and the resource requirements are continually reviewed.

Despite your concerns, it is encouraging to hear that the new healthcare provider is welcomed and improvements are being made, such as reducing appointment waiting times. I was glad to receive your comments that overall prisoners continue to be treated fairly and humanely and that since the introduction of in-cell phones, feedback indicates prisoners feel more connected with friends and family. I was also pleased to note that the Governor has put in place a more predictable regime and that the new workshop activities have increased the opportunities for prisoners to learn new skills and engage in purposeful activity.

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 Gartree.

Yours sincerely



LUCY FRAZER QC MP

HMP GARTREE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 DECEMBER 2018 – 30 NOVEMBER 2019

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Healthcare Commissioning

As previously advised NHS England & NHS Improvement commissions healthcare services within public sector prisons, such as HMP Gartree. However, as indicated in the Minister's response above the Ministry of Justice and its health partners are continuing to work together to deliver the National Partnership Agreement for Prison Healthcare in England 2018-2021. It is worth clarifying that one of the ten key priorities of this agreement is to *“Review and improve commissioning between health and justice partners (including a review of the healthcare arrangements in the five private sector prisons where MoJ contracts these services) and links with local authorities, probation services and health commissioning in the community, so that health and social care services are aligned for better and more consistent provision before, during and after custody”*.

NHS England and NHS Improvement Health and Justice commissioners in the Midlands have already undertaken activities to ensure that healthcare services are commissioned in accordance with relevant legislation and meet the needs of the patients for which the service is commissioned. In addition, a Lived Experience panel has been commissioned, as well as engagement taking place with stakeholders (including healthcare providers and HMPPS stakeholders) to ensure that the commissioning cycle is structured to optimise the market potential whilst delivering service excellence. Prior to any future healthcare procurements at HMP Gartree, there will be further market engagement and work with key HMPPS stakeholders such as the Governor.

Prisoners' Property

It is unfortunate and regrettable that prisoners' property continues to be an issue. The development of the new Prisoners' Property Policy Framework is being informed by a project which was undertaken in summer 2019, involving stakeholders across HMPPS and the escort services. The project involved visiting 14 prisons, consultation with staff and prisoners, and engagement with external stakeholders such as the Independent Monitoring Board Secretariat and Prisons and Probation Ombudsman. Its purpose was to support the policy review and identify areas where immediate and more long-term changes may be required to improve operational practice. Following the conclusion of the project, HMPPS has worked closely with stakeholders to consult on proposed changes to the policy. Discussions ahead of consultation with IMB members began with the IMB Secretariat in late February 2020, who proposed meetings take place with Board members in April. In light of the pressures placed on Boards by COVID-19, HMPPS agreed with the IMB Secretariat to pause this consultation. This work is now moving forward again and the IMB Secretariat have proposed that the meetings now take place between August and September. The feedback received from IMB members at these meetings will then be considered alongside the comments received earlier this year from other stakeholders, with the intention that the revised draft policy framework will be circulated for wider consultation at the end of 2020.

The Prisoner Escort and Custody Service (PECS) take steps to transport all property which falls within the agreed volumetric limits with prisoners when they transfer between establishments. A new fleet of vehicles are being provided through the PECS 4 Generation contract which starts in August 2020. These new vehicles will be able to transfer an additional half box of consumable items for each prisoner e.g. products purchased in the prison shop. In addition to this, HMPPS is considering what more can be done to encourage prisoners to send out or dispose of excess items to reduce the amount of their property that cannot transfer with them. Steps are also being taken to ensure a consistent approach when prisons forward on any excess items to prisoners at their new establishments after transfers have taken place.

Locally, a dedicated Reception staffing group has been created at HMP Gartree to improve the handling of property. The processes for handling property, such as cell clearances has also been improved with a stronger message to staff to ensure property is treated with care and respect.

Staffing

HMPPS Effective Practice and Service Improvement Group continues to offer specialist support to prisons to make best use of their staff resources. Since the initial benchmarking in 2014, HMP Gartree received a further benchmark revisit in May 2016 where staffing adjustments were made by the prisons Senior Management Team following the revisit report recommendations. The prison has also received ongoing support on how best to model their local staffing as additional resource was provided for the Offender Management in Custody model. HMP Gartree has since put in place a new staff profile which has helped to provide a more predictable and consistent regime. It is also worth noting that despite HMP Gartree reporting a 5.2% sick absence and an overall non-effective rate of 28.77% at the end of Quarter 4 2019/20, with the take up of Payment Plus and staff accruing Time Off In Lieu the prison was operating at 99% of their required resource.

However, it is unfortunate that due to the current COVID-19 pandemic HMPPS has had to temporarily cease recruitment of Prison Officers due to the closure of all Assessment Recruitment Centres and the impact of social-distancing on our face-to-face interviews. Candidates currently in the pipeline are being kept engaged through regular communications and the MoJ Resourcing Team is undertaking a review of the current selection tools and the outcomes of this will support the recovery of recruitment activity across operational roles. HMPPS also remains committed to the retention of its valuable staff talent by developing and encouraging internal career progression, improving their capability and offer clearly defined career paths. Newly recruited Prison Officers will be given the opportunity to develop their professional skills as HMPPS aims to enroll all new recruits onto the Custody and Detention apprenticeship. Once recruitment resumes this will also enable HMP Gartree to further improve the prisons staffing and regime.

Purposeful Activity

It is acknowledged that HMP Gartree experienced a loss of some external contracts throughout the year which has resulted in reduced activity places. However, there remains 578 full time activity places and the prison is currently working with HMPPS Public Sector Prison Industries and other contractors to increase the number of places available in its workshops, such as within the print shop. Funding through the Prison Education Dynamic Purchasing System has also been made available and will be used to increase the current education places, including looking at the opportunities for those prisoners who find it difficult to engage in the existing activity places.

Violence

As part of the wider safety strategy for prisons, a training programme is in development, that aims to provide prison staff with the knowledge that they need to identify signs, signals and indicators of existing, or emerging, gang or harmful group behaviours (GHGB). Following this training, staff will better understand and recognise the characteristics of gang membership and the safety risks. Additionally, staff will be better equipped to record and use intelligence, allowing local targeted actions in response to the GHGB threat, sharing this intelligence and developing knowledge with local crime partnerships.

Alongside this, HMPPS is providing prisons with tools to improve the way data is used in risk identification. A Safety Diagnostic Tool (SDT) was rolled out across the prison estate last year, which enables staff to see detailed information on safety issues, from establishment level to individual level. The Challenge, Support and Intervention Plan's (CSIP) are also being used to manage those who pose a raised risk of being violent and provides a framework centred around the individual and their specific needs to help them manage and move away from violent behaviours. The SDT is being used in prisons alongside CSIP to help identify those who may benefit from proactive case management and to prevent violence happening as opposed to waiting for a person to act violently before action is taken. HMPPS has also refreshed its partnership with the Samaritans that supports the Listeners scheme through which

selected prisoners are trained to provide emotional support to their fellow prisoners. This support mechanisms can benefit those prisoners who are feeling frustrated rather turning to acts of violence.

Reducing violence and making the prison safer is a top priority of HMP Gartree and the local Safety Function has been re-organised to ensure there are clear accountable lines and responsibility. Funding has been provided as part of the Enhanced Security project, including an increase in active dogs and handlers, as well as x-ray body scanners to be installed to detect drugs from entering the prison and help reduce any associated violence within the prison. In June 2020 a search of some residential units involving Dedicated Search Teams from other LTHSE prisons took place at HMP Gartree where weapons and illicit items were recovered. Additional supportive action such as this will remain an option in future where intelligence and risk assessments deem it appropriate. In addition, the improvement in staffing referred to above and the introduction of Key Workers being identified as a priority by the prison will help increase safety and reduce violence by providing more dedicated time to support individual prisoners and better management of their time in custody.

Complaints

Since the appointment of a new Governor there has been an improvement in the handling of complaints with new arrangements put in place to ensure that prisoner complaints are dealt with promptly. Complaints and Discrimination Incident Report Forms are now monitored daily and quality assurance checks have been introduced.

Mental Health

HMPPS acknowledges that some prisoners at HMP Gartree have complex mental health issues and may remain in segregated conditions for protracted periods of time if, following individual risk assessment, this is deemed the most appropriate location. However, the Long Term and High Security Estate (LTHSE) Pathway to Progression initiative aims to better meet the needs of the most complex and vulnerable prisoners, including those who often end up in segregation for protracted periods. A needs analysis of this prisoner cohort has been conducted and has led to improved specialist services and units across the LTHSE. A key aspect of this work is to enhance the links with specialist health pathways for prisoners as well as developing the existing specialist units, to offer suitable alternatives to segregation. The Offender Personality Disorder pathway jointly commissioned between HMPPS and NHS England is one of these services, which provides appropriate prisoners access to specialist help, such as a Democratic Therapeutic Community (DTC), an adapted DTC for those with learning disabilities and a progression Psychologically Informed Planned Environment for those who require a period of consolidation before moving to the next phase of their treatment.

Alongside these developments all segregation units receive additional support from the Pathways to Progression team. This has seen improved outcomes for many complex men within the LTHSE and at HMP Gartree there are clear examples of improved joint working which has enabled the progression of complex cases both to health services and specialist units in custody. The Psychology team at HMP Gartree is also continuing to work together with the Healthcare provider to provide local bespoke support for prisoners with complex mental health issues.

Fire Safety

HMP Gartree is currently assessed as 100% statutory compliant in all standard baselines affecting Fire Safety Regulations and all deficiencies at the last full compliance audit were addressed by way of an action plan. Fire doors within the residential accommodation have already been replaced and in preparation to upgrade fire safety systems at HMP Gartree materials have already been procured in readiness for a fire safety improvement project. However, COVID-19 has impacted commencement of this work which will begin once it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Windows

The scale of replacing all windows is too large to address through localised funding and, as such, capital funding would need to be sought by HMP Gartree through the bid process. As indicated in the Minister's response this funding is limited and the value of all bids across the prison estate exceeds what is

available and is resulting in work having to be prioritised. To consider window guards, as well as funding, consideration will need to be given to any implications in respect of fire safety as these have the potential to hold discarded waste that could then present a fire risk which would not be acceptable. In the interim, HMP Gartree has introduced cleaning parties which are removing litter to help improve the cleanliness around the outside of wing areas. The prison is also working with the Prison Council to improve awareness amongst prisoners about litter being thrown out of windows.