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Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Send, Ripley Road
Woking
Surrey
GU23 7LJ

MoJ ref: ADR81121

3 September 2020

Dear ██████████,

**HMP SEND: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 APRIL 2019 – 23 MARCH 2020**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 23 March 2020. I have noted that the pandemic ended the reporting year early and that the final week of March 2020 will now be included in next year's report. I met the Governor and staff when I visited HMP Send on 12 September 2019 and I was pleased to discuss some of these themes in more detail with them. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations.

Further to last years' response, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) remains committed to supporting prisoners serving an indeterminate sentence for public protection (IPP) in their progression and efforts to reduce their risk to the point where the independent Parole Board determines that they may be safely released. The latest published figures show the unreleased IPP population standing at 1,969 at the end of June 2020, a reduction from 2,039 at the end of March 2020 and 2,134 at the end of December 2019. This is good progress and it is important to note that as the unreleased IPP population continues to decrease, there is a growing proportion of the most complex and challenging cases remaining in the population and therefore the current release rate may not be sustainable.

As the Board are aware, many of these prisoners are still assessed to pose a high risk of committing further violent or sexual offences, and have a complex set of risks and needs, and these must be addressed before the Parole Board can consider release. This is not a simple task and HMPPS continues to work with these individuals to offer them opportunities to reduce their identified risks. Through the joint HMPPS and Parole Board Action Plan, HMPPS is prioritising post-tariff prisoners in accessing rehabilitative interventions, and to date HMPPS Psychology services have completed reviews on all women subject to an IPP sentence.

At HMP Send, the Women's Estate Psychology Service (WEPS) works closely with the prison and others to provide a proactive response to the parole process for this cohort of residents. The WEPS team has recently expanded at HMP Send providing greater capacity for the completion of individual psychological interventions with prisoners who require bespoke offence-related work to address their risks. There is a total of eight women at HMP Send subject to an IPP sentence and four of these were in open conditions and progressing to release with Release on Temporary Licence arrangements until March and the subsequent pandemic put a significant hold on this. Also, currently on hold are 'parole open days', where members of the Parole Board attend a forum with women to talk through the parole process, their expectations in hearings, and how women can best prepare themselves for hearings. These events proved very useful to help women progress and HMP Send hopes to resume this when possible.

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.

Although there has been an increase in violence and self-harm at HMP Send, I was encouraged to receive your comments that the Board considers HMP Send to be a safe prison, that prisoners are treated humanely and living conditions are decent, and that the Board has observed many instances of kindness and consideration from staff together with high levels of personal attention provided by staff to women in crisis. I was further encouraged to read that the ingress of drugs has been made difficult with the photocopying of prisoners' mail, that there is a low number of prisoners on a Challenge, Support and Intervention (CSIP) plan, and the impressive reduction in waiting time for dental appointments from fifteen to six weeks.

I was also pleased to receive your comments that there is a flourishing Women's Institute group, an art collaboration with the Watts Gallery in Surrey through which prisoners' exhibit and sell their art annually, the Unlock Drama programme, the increased provision of black hair products following feedback from BAME focus groups last year, and the success of the Making Connections (chaplaincy-based) programme that is now being rolled out to other female prisons and has been recognised as good practice by HM Inspectorate of Prisons.

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 Send.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Frazer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

LUCY FRAZER QC MP

HMP SEND: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 APRIL 2019 – 23 MARCH 2020

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Staff Recruitment

Probation Officer Provision

Securing and retaining sufficient probation officers at HMP Send has proved extremely challenging. These difficulties reflect the position in many parts of the South East and Eastern Division and particularly in the Surrey local delivery unit (LDU). As the Board will be aware, the cost of living in the area is high, and consequently staff have left the LDU for equivalent posts in Hampshire where properties are slightly cheaper. Hampshire and London also tend to be more attractive for those looking to join the service either as qualified Probation Officers or on our trainee pathway. As noted by the Board, the staff at HMP Send have made every effort to prioritise delivery of Offender Management services with the resources at their disposal. This has been supported by the deployment of agency staff where possible, sessional report writers, and an additional prison Offender Supervisor.

Unfortunately, divisional recruitment campaigns failed to attract suitable applicants. Since the start of the year HMPPS has conducted two local recruitment campaigns in tandem with the LDU. These have included financial incentives in recognition of the difficulties outlined above. As a result, HMP Send now has four Probation Officers in post against their benchmark of 4.5 following the addition of another full-time probation officer on 6 July. This places Offender Management delivery in the year ahead on a much more stable footing.

Prison Staff

As mentioned in the probation officer provision section above, the establishment remains one of the harder to recruit regions for many grades due to its semi-rural location and proximity to Guildford and Woking which have more competitive labour markets. Since February 2019 there have been nine recruitment campaigns for Operational Support Grades (OSG) for the prison, including four campaigns delivered with HMP Coldingley to increase applications from surrounding areas. The most recent campaign launched in February 2020 offered flexible working arrangements to specifically target candidates who would be attracted by flexible working patterns such as nights, evenings, and weekend working. Due to the current pandemic this campaign was not extended.

As part of MoJ Resourcing Team's efforts to achieve target hires for OSG's at the prison, a scheme was discussed with HMP/YOI Feltham where candidates on the reserve list for HMP/YOI Feltham would be offered deployment to HMP Send for a period of two years. The scheme would include the offer of a bonus payment and reimbursement for additional expenses accrued, however the initiative was not implemented due to Covid-19. Difficulties in recruitment is not limited to Operational Support Grades, but also affects other lower paid grades and specialist posts such as Waste Management, Business Administrators, and Vocational Instructors.

Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

Following the introduction of the new ROTL policy, there has been a 21% year-on-year increase in the number of releases in the fourth quarter of 2019 across the estate. HMPPS understands that use of ROTL at HMP Send did increase immediately after the new policy came into effect but then fell back due to concerns about compliance, and since March 2020 most ROTL use across the estate has been suspended to help tackle the effects of Covid-19. HMP Send however has seen a marked increase in the number of women accessing Childcare Resettlement Licence (CRL) following the policy change. From

June to December 2019 an average of 8.7 women were released on CRL per month as opposed to an average of 1.4 women from January to May 2019.

Integrity Hotline

The new Integrity Hotline is an important tool in ensuring HMPPS uphold the highest standards of staff conduct and provide a mechanism to report suspected wrongdoing. Work to widen the availability of this service is underway, including adding the hotline to the national permitted PIN phone numbers. HMPPS is currently proposing a trial at a number of prisons, of which HMP Send will now be included, to better understand the volume of calls likely to come into the independently-administered hotline. Should an assessment of the volume exceed the capacity to process calls, we will explore alternative solutions including the current line on the prisoner PIN accounts. While we look to open the service to prisoners, their families/friends are able to access the policy framework on the Gov.UK website and report any suspected corruption or wrongdoing to HMPPS' Counter Corruption Unit should they want to.

Canteen

HMPPS' Retail Team are aware that HMP Send is having difficulties with the delivery of prisoners canteen. The contractors, DHL, are actively seeking to fill the vacant canteen distribution posts however are finding it extremely difficult to recruit the necessary staff. The canteen for HMP Send is currently picked and packed in the Retail workshop at HMP Ford (previously HMP Coldingley), which traditionally produces a very good canteen service and has recently received positive feedback from HMP Send colleagues. The Retail Manager is working closely with both HMP Send and DHL to resolve the issues, and this will continue until a satisfactory conclusion has been achieved.

HMPPS would like to assure the Board that we continue to review our practices and do all we can to recruit the right people with the right skills through increased advertising and market facing supplements. The MoJ Resourcing Marketing and Attraction team continue to tailor our attraction and communications to address different employment markets and continue to seek to attract a more diverse candidate pool.

Prisoners' Property

It is unfortunate and regrettable that prisoners' property continues to be an issue. As the Board will be aware, the development of the new Prisoners' Property Policy Framework involved a large project undertaken in summer 2019. 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 in August or 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.

It was noted from the report that there are issues with some sending prisons. The issue of property has been raised with the Director of HMP Bronzefield and the Reception Custodial Manager now speaks to their counterpart at HMP Bronzefield on a monthly basis to ensure any outstanding issues are being progressed appropriately. Furthermore, HMP Send have a system where property handed in or sent in is issued to prisoners in the order it was received. Prisoners should not be removed from education or work to attend reception, and consequently property is regularly issued in the evenings and weekends. This is however subject to staff redeployment to other work areas, according to priority, and where there is insufficient staff on a particular day.