



[REDACTED]
Co-Chairs, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP High Down
High Down Lane,
Sutton
SM2 5PJ

MoJ Ref: ADR 80134

29 July 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

**HMP HIGH DOWN: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JANUARY 2019 - 31 DECEMBER 2019**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending December 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 continuing concerns about the number of prisoners that have a personality disorder. I would like to reassure the Board that the joint HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and NHS England & NHS Improvement Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) programme has continued to invest in services targeting prisoners and those supervised by the National Probation Service (NPS) in the community. The strategic approach is to target those meeting specific criteria, which for men includes the likelihood of a severe form of personality disorder and is assessed during their current sentence as presenting a high risk of harm to others and of serious re-offending. The OPD pathway builds upon an approach of early identification of cases meeting the criteria; workforce development to support staff; and input from NHS providers working in partnership with prisons and the NPS to deliver treatment interventions, progression and support options.

I am pleased to update the Board that a considerable number of additional OPD pathway places nationally have been commissioned for 2020/21. The response last year indicated 757 places within the Category B prison estate, and a further 243 places in Category C prisons. Planned for 2020/21 are 208 places in prisons managing category A and B men; 769 in category B prisons; 503 in category C prisons; and 100 places in open prisons. Additionally, there are 278 places for women in prison and 1,435 places for men and women in the community. Although Covid-19 has affected the availability of some of these places, plans are being put in place to re-establish existing services and start-up the new ones. Development opportunities for HMPPS also continue to be provided via the Knowledge and Understanding Framework, a national strategic framework for training around personality disorder and additional support and training will be put in place once the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) arrangements are re-established as part of the HMPPS Exceptional Delivery Model due to Covid-19.

Locally at HMP High Down the responsibility for screening sentenced prisoners for inclusion into the OPD Pathway has moved to Prison Offender Managers (POMs) as part of OMiC. The Probation POM team has attended regional training on how to undertake a screening and how to prepare formulations and will be supported by psychology colleagues where required. It was intended for this training to be extended to include the remaining Band 4 POMs but this has been delayed due to Covid-19. Referrals to specialist settings such as the Psychologically Informed Planned Environments (PIPE) are routinely made for those with a personality disorder and probation POMs have attended the London Pathways Unit at HMP Brixton

to better their understanding of the settings for prisoners of high risk/high harm with complex needs. In addition, the Healthcare department offers Step 4 therapy on a one-to-one basis for those at HMP High Down identified as requiring this treatment.

I recognise the Board's concern about those that remain in prison serving indeterminate sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP). HMPPS is committed to doing all it can to support the progression of IPP prisoners to help them reduce their risk to the point that 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 to be delivered via the joint IPP Action Plan, developed in partnership with the Parole Board, which is regularly reviewed. HMPPS is prioritising post-tariff prisoners to access rehabilitative interventions, including Psychology Service led reviews and enhanced case management for those prisoners with a complex set of risks and needs. Progression Regimes have also been developed at four prisons across the country, HMPs Warren Hill, Buckley Hall, Humber and Erlestoke, 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 at its peak in 2012 and numbered over 6,000. The latest published figures show the unreleased IPP population stood at 1,969 at the end of June 2020, which is itself a reduction from 2,134 at the end of December 2019 - demonstrating the improvement in opportunities available to IPP prisoners to progress in their sentence and an increasing number of releases in recent years. However, 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 prison population. Many of these prisoners are still assessed as posing a high risk of committing further violent or sexual offences, and have a complex set of risks and needs. These must be addressed before the Parole Board can consider their release but HMPPS will continue to work with these individuals to offer them the opportunities to reduce their identified risks.

Despite your concerns, it was encouraging to receive your comments about the improved level of tidiness and cleanliness in communal areas. I was pleased to read that there has been positive feedback from both staff and prisoners since the introduction of OMiC and that excellent work by prison officers has been witnessed across the prison, particularly in dealing with distressed prisoners. Likewise, I was pleased to note the improvements to GP, substance misuse and mental health appointments with those missed reducing to below 10%. It was also encouraging that there has been a calendar of events to raise awareness about equality and inclusion and that the social groups for veterans and over 60s have proved popular. I also recognise the uncertainty about the delayed re-role to a category C prison and can provide assurance that the prison has a re-role plan in place, which will be activated once prisons return to business as usual.

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 High Down.

Yours sincerely



LUCY FRAZER QC MP

**HMP HIGH DOWN: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JANUARY 2019 - 31 DECEMBER 2019**

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Identifying Prisoners with Autism

HMPPS has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for prisoners with disabilities and introduced a new Learning Screening Tool at the end of October 2019 to help identify those who may be more likely to have Learning Disabilities (LD). Although this does not replace a comprehensive assessment and diagnosis, the tool aims to help prisons be more responsive to those who might need support or adjustments to their care. HMPPS also plans to introduce the 'About Me' tool across the prison estate which will prompt and support prison officers in one to one sessions with prisoners. This will help staff to better identify and understand any difficulties the prisoner is facing, such as those related to autism, directing them to consider further referrals for support. The tool will place a focus on personalised conversations, rather than asking 'yes/no' questions and will link to alerts on the new Prison National Offender Management Information System (new-NOMIS), where information can be flagged to draw the attention of staff. New-NOMIS will also include a more complete list of conditions in line with the World Health Organisation and Government Statistical Services, which will allow HMPPS to more accurately record impairments such as Autism, enabling staff to better understand and support the prison population and the individual's needs.

In addition, as part of the new prison staff apprenticeship for all new prison officers, an autism-specific session will be included. This will help prison officers to identify possible signs of autism, and understand key considerations when dealing with an offender on the autism spectrum. HMPPS is also looking to refresh the overall safety training for all staff later this year, with the development of an improved modular approach with a specific module taking a more in-depth look at mental health and neurodiversity.

Locally, all prisoners at HMP High Down receive an initial health screening upon arrival and are asked whether they have any learning difficulty or disability. Where they are suspected of having a disability, they are referred to the Mental Health team and the LD Nurse to provide additional support. The Healthcare provider is also currently developing an Autism Spectrum Condition Pathway and when working with prisoners with Autism, staff are encouraged to link in with the LD Nurse. In addition, the Senior Probation Officer also plans to include training on working with prisoners with Autism and other disabilities when future POM training events are scheduled.

Activity Places

It is recognised that there are currently insufficient work activity places at HMP High Down to meet the current population. However, the prison is continually looking to introduce new work as well as maximise the existing activity places. The implementation of the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) has enabled new projects to be introduced, including up to 80 Barista training and 80 coffee machine engineering course places per year. Activity places in recycling has already been increased by five, as well as an increased number of places in the Textiles Workshop now totalling 35 places, which is currently being used to manufacture personal protective equipment (PPE) for the NHS. This includes 4,000 goggles and 3,500 face shields produced by prison staff, as well as 7,960 scrub tops and bottoms with HMP/YOI Downview's contribution. A Railtrack course, for up to 48 learners per year also plans to be introduced and recruitment by both the prison and its partners, will allow increased activity places in industrial cleaning of up to 130 course places per year. Building plans are also being considered as part of the re-role project to potentially increase activity places, alongside the expansion of the textiles workshop which plans to provide an additional 30 textile places.

In addition, extensive work has taken place between the Prison Estates Transformation Programme and the prison to get a full understanding of what HMP High Down could offer a resettlement population. With the investment that has already been secured, and applying the resettlement benchmark, 1,063 activity

spaces have now been identified and it has been agreed that the operational capacity of the prison would be reduced to more closely match this following its reconfiguration to category C site.

Showers

An MoJ Estate Investment Proposal was submitted in January 2018 for the refurbishment of the shower blocks incorporating improvements to the ventilation system at HMP High Down. Unfortunately, this project has not yet been mandated due to the volume of bids across the prison estate exceeding the limited capital funding that is available resulting in work having to be prioritised. However, in the interim, £150K has been allocated within this financial year to start refurbishments to the showers most in need which will be to the new Wandsworth specification. Three of the residential units also now have showers with privacy screens and one set has so far been installed on Houseblock Two. These installations formed part of a rolling programme of improvements to the showers, but was temporarily paused to allow for essential maintenance work to be completed. Due to Covid-19 it is possible the focus of these improvements may have to be prioritised elsewhere, such as the installation of Perspex screens at medication hatches.

In addition, the ventilation in the showers has been improved via the creation of stable doors, which has reduced the impact of condensation. However, due to the constant use of the showers and the inadequate original ventilation this affects any decoration undertaken. Prisoner painting parties have tried to improve the decoration within the shower rooms with different types of paint used to explore longevity, but this has led to a quicker deterioration in the quality of the work in some instances. The Facilities Management team will therefore be including the showers under their painting programme and advising painting parties on correct materials in future to improve longevity. Staining on some of the units is also a recognised issue, but the use of jet washers is effective in dealing with this which will be rolled out more widely once the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

Self-Harm

HMPPS has recently piloted changes to the Assessment, Care in Custody, Teamwork (ACCT) case management system, improving the focus on individual needs and effective multi-disciplinary working. Following evaluation of the pilot earlier this year, HMPPS will be rolling out these changes nationally across the estate in due course.

Locally, the three-tier ACCT management check, which was introduced at 2018, was streamlined at the start of 2020 enabling HMP High Down to improve the quality of case reviews and care plans. In April 2020, a fortnightly scrutiny meeting was implemented to identify staff who require additional support or training, as well as identify best practice and a weekly Safety Intervention Meeting now allows the allocation of enhanced case managers for prisoners with complex support needs, who display an increased risk of self-harm. The Samaritans branch, supporting the local Listener scheme, are also involving in the monthly safety meetings and since October 2019 prisoners have been able to contact the Samaritans 24 hours a day from their in-cell phones.

The local Safety Team has also improved their analysis to gain a better understanding of safety issues. When compared with comparator prisons for 2019, HMP High Down had consistently lower numbers of prisoners on an open ACCT and acts of self-harm. The level of self-harm at the prison also remained consistently less than the number of open ACCTs and each month over half of all ACCTs open were without any act of self-harm occurring. Transfers to HMP High Down accounted for 8% of all ACCTs opened and a further 29% were opened on Reception to provide those new to custody with additional support and safeguarding. It was also recognised that the main increase in ACCTs being opened was during August - September 2019, when the prison sadly experienced one self-inflicted death in August 2019, to support those prisoners who knew the deceased or had been affected by his death.

Nightly Roll and Welfare Checks

Night procedures are currently under review and will be reissued with clear role briefs for individual members of staff. In the interim, a roll check is currently completed on two occasions during the night

period and these are documented and quality assured by the Security Team. Where night staff have any concerns, they will contact the Night Orderly Officer who will attend their location and offer support. Welfare checks are also completed overnight on prisoners who are on an open ACCT document, subject to the observation level set during reviews.

It is also recognised that during the first half of 2019 there was no formal welfare check process in place with occurrences recorded on Prison NOMIS, rather than being centrally collated. The system of welfare checks and the format of reporting was therefore improved in June 2019 and comprehensive welfare checks are now carried out. All welfare checks are quality assured by Safety Team managers and regular welfare checks continue to monitor and support the prisoner where required using the same staff for consistency.

In addition, in response to the current Covid-19 restrictions a welfare check has been complete on every prisoner at HMP High Down. Regular welfare checks are also being conducted for those prisoners that have been referred to Mental Health services or have complex needs; have social care needs; are on an open ACCT; are newly arrived – located in the Reverse Cohorting Unit; are located in the Shielding Unit, due to medical issues making them vulnerable; are located in the Protective Isolation Unit due to displaying COVID-19 symptoms; and those prisoners who are isolating for other reasons.