

██████████
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Guys Marsh
Shaftsbury
Dorset
SP7 0AH

MoJ Ref: SUB 87100

26 April 2021

Dear ██████████,

**HMP GUYS MARSH: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 DECEMBER 2019 – 30 NOVEMBER 2020**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 30 November 2020. 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 during the reporting year. I was saddened to hear there had been a death in custody; every death is a tragedy and my officials take recommendations from the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman very seriously.

I acknowledge the Board's comments on redevelopment plans for HMP Guys Marsh. My officials advise that the construction of the new houseblocks will provide accommodation for an additional 180 men and this work is anticipated to be completed late 2023. Within the mobilisation element of this project, an increase in staffing numbers is being considered. The new offender flows went live on 28 September 2020 across the adult estate and this will help by ensuring men are in the right type of prison and receive appropriate support and rehabilitation at each stage of their sentence. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) have provided a helpful summary in the attached annex outlining the current and future work plans.

Turning to the Board's ongoing concern around recruitment and retention, I can confirm that recruitment has recommenced and HMP Guys Marsh has a campaign to recruit new prison officers. To support HMPPS through these unprecedented times, former prison officers and probation staff have been invited to return to the service temporarily. We want prison officers to stay and progress their careers and have improved induction processes to support staff and offer additional training. The move from the Prison Officer Entry Level Training course to a 15-month Custody and Detention apprenticeship will be rolled-out across the estate this year. The apprenticeship will involve much more practical skills development and then further learning back in the workplace. As part of the rollout, every prison will have an apprenticeship coach who will mentor and support new officers. Work to develop clear career paths and professionalise the prison service continues, and this should provide development and promotion opportunities for experienced staff.

I note that the Board remains concerned about people in prison with severe mental ill health and those with educational / physical needs. The complex needs of some men do present a challenge for both HMPPS and the NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I).

A White Paper titled, Reforming the Mental Health Act, was published on 13 January 2021, which builds on recommendations made by Professor Sir Simon Wessely's Independent Review in 2018. The White Paper provides a commitment to take forward the Review's recommendation to introduce a statutory time limit of 28 days for transfers to mental health hospitals when someone becomes unwell in custody or experiences a relapse in an existing condition. More broadly, the National Partnership Agreement for Prison Healthcare in England between the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Department of Health and Social Care, HMPPS, NHSE/I and Public Health England sets out a co-ordinated approach to deliver safe, decent, effective healthcare for people in prison.

Although transfer waiting times currently remain a national issue, this has been a priority area for NHSE/I South West (SW). The Nursing and Quality team have been working with commissioners and the SW Provider Collaborative Leads to establish an escalation protocol. To support the needs of people in prison with neurodivergent conditions and to establish a clearer picture of the prevalence and national provision for this cohort, the MoJ has approached HM Inspectorate of Prisons and HM Inspectorate of Probation to conduct an independent review of neurodiversity in the criminal justice system. The findings of this Call for Evidence to be published in summer 2021 and will inform a training toolkit for frontline staff, which will include upskilling on speech, language and communication needs.

Additionally, this will feed into a cross-government Autism Strategy due for publication 2021, which will highlight further work to enhance data capturing, staff training on autism, and across the estate continued promotion of the National Autistic Society, Autism Accreditation programme. NHSE/I have conducted a recent health needs assessment of the population at HMP Guys Marsh, noting there are several individuals with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis, and are having conversations with providers about improving the pathways for those with ASD or sensory impairments. It is accepted that individuals with a possible learning disability, autism or both, are identified as early as possible and supported appropriately. I am pleased to announce that NHSE/I have secured funding for Long Term Condition nurse posts which will help to establish pathways for individuals at HMP Guys Marsh and they will be looking at accessibility of easier reading material for the Dyslexia cohort.

Turning to some positive comments captured in your report, it was encouraging to hear that despite a difficult year the Governor and his staff were able to keep the people in prison safe from Covid-19 and special measures were put in place to maintain family contact. I am delighted to hear that many lives have been saved through the custodial officer immediate life support training programme initiative. I also note and welcome the considerable improvements that have gone in to use of force and equality work.

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 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 Guys Marsh.

Yours sincerely,

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

ALEX CHALK MP

HMP GUYS MARSH: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 DECEMBER 2019 – 30 NOVEMBER 2020

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Redevelopment Work

The fire improvement project to replace the fire damaged Wessex wing is currently progressing and is estimated to be completed towards the end of 2021. All central heating (including replacing of boilers site wide) and showers will be upgraded, as well as the communal area and cellular accommodation, where required. On completion of the project, Jubilee, Saxon and Gwent wings will return to single cell accommodation, reducing the number of double cell occupancy from 113 to 71.

To tackle the supply of drug packages thrown into the grounds of the prison, safer custody windows are being fitted to some targeted areas. Following a national survey, the laundry has been identified as requiring work so that it can continue to meet demand; this is likely to be met through the local maintenance budget. Likewise, there is a concern over the reliability of the district heating main and an investment bid will be made to the MoJ Estates Directorate. Asset Investment Board funding has been allocated for this financial year for the creation of exercise yards for Mercia, Anglia and Dorset units and erect fencing. To further develop the modular Rainbow accommodation, funding has been identified for the following:

- 1) Fire alarm system
- 2) Creation of a Servery
- 3) Installation of bespoke tarmac walkways
- 4) Installation of prisoner PIN phones
- 5) Installation of washing machine and tumble driers
- 6) Association space - a Portacabin to be installed
- 7) Additional fencing

Offending Behaviour Programmes

The number and type of offending behaviour programme (OBP) places on offer at HMP Guys Marsh are under constant review and staff continue to work towards delivering the local target of six OBP programmes per year in accordance with the national and local needs analysis. Covid-19 has undoubtedly impacted on the delivery capacity but HMP Guys Marsh's staff have adopted small group work activity keeping to the social distancing rules.

The current population needs analysis indicates that the existing moderate intensity provision matches the demand for such programmes. People in prison are being prioritised for places in line with the programme eligibility criteria i.e. level of risk and date of release / length of their licence. Processes are also in place to support individuals to access high intensity programmes, such as Kaizen, in specialist treatment when this need is identified.

A new national population database is being implemented imminently, enabling staff to identify population OBP programme needs more clearly and further improve the processes for referring people in prison to high intensity treatment sites according to need. The information arising from this database will be used to inform future decisions about programme provision at HMP Guys Marsh and support non-accredited

interventions for their younger population, which offers a further pathway for sentence progression for this distinct group.

Education and Training Provision

The education contract is currently managed through a hybrid approach of local level management and assurance by the prison Governor through weekly and monthly performance meetings. This process is supported by the national prison education Contract Management Team (CMT) and via national level meetings with the providers. Quarterly management meetings (at prison level) are also held, and chaired by the Prison Group Director.

The Improvement Notice process is managed by the CMT in partnership with on-site local operational staff. Considerable support has been provided to HMP Guys Marsh from the CMT and regional level learning and support staff. Accepting the impact of the pandemic on delivery of face to face teaching, progress has been made in the delivery of English and Maths courses and a plan is in place to return to accredited delivery as the prison progresses through the Exceptional Delivery Model stages.

It was identified that at the point the Improvement Notice was issued, there was a 50% delivery rate for Functional Skills English and Maths against the commissioned Annual Delivery Plan. Actions that have been completed on the Improvement Notice include; staffing recruited to deliver key functional skills including English and English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), implementation and monitoring of a staff development plan, approvals for Information and Communications Technology and ESOL courses, and the 2021/22 Annual Delivery Plan agreed. In addition, corresponding quality/performance against planned delivery is reviewed regularly through many channels.

Issues relating to recruitment and retention of staff were also identified as part of the Improvement Notice. Weston College has successfully achieved improvements in this area. Furthermore, they have also put in place robust systems for monitoring staff attendance for both unplanned and planned absences in addition to a schedule of Continuous Professional Development to improve the quality of the teaching at the prison, the impact of which will be monitored as face to face teaching resumes. Outstanding actions relating to attainment, attendance and observation of teaching will be reviewed upon recommencement of classroom delivery.

A two-tier Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD) assessment process has been introduced to support men with sensory impairment. However, it is acknowledged that there is additional work to be done to correctly identify and support learners with LDD needs. The CMT are working with Weston College to ensure that recording processes are applied correctly and that there is a clear record of the support offered to learners with LDD needs.

Property Framework

Following a pause in the development of the new framework project due to Covid-19, a meeting with IMB representatives took place in August 2020. The feedback received from those members was considered alongside the comments received from other stakeholders, and comments from subsequent operational engagement. HMPPS has now circulated the draft framework with internal and external stakeholders, including the IMB representatives previously consulted for their comments.

Locally, the Head of Residence has put in place additional assurance checks to improve the effectiveness of cell clearances. Additional training has been implemented for Reception staff as they regularly handle property and an additional layer of governance through the Reception Custodial Manager.

Disabilities

Regarding national work taking place around disabilities, a new policy framework is expected to be released this year 2021 and will advance the requirement for governors to collect, record and provide reasonable adjustments for people in prison. It will further enhance the need for establishments and regions to advance opportunities for people in prison with disabilities and learning difficulties.