



██████████
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Wandsworth
Heathfield Road
Wandsworth
London
SW18 3HS

MoJ Ref: SUB 82996

9 November 2020

Dear ██████████,

**HMP WANDSWORTH: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2019 – 31 MAY 2020**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 May 2020. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations, particularly as you remained short of Board members and the Covid-19 pandemic impacted on your ability to gather information.

I understand the Board's concerns about the age and condition of HMP Wandsworth and the request for cells to be single occupancy if it is not possible to replace the existing prison with a new build. Although there are currently no plans to reduce the operating capacity at HMP Wandsworth which would allow for all cells to be used for single occupancy, HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) recognises the concerns raised about the use of crowded cells. While these places meet HMPPS standards for crowded accommodation, holding two prisoners in a cell designed for one prisoner in order to accommodate national population pressures is not desirable. However, the Government's announcement of up to £2.5 billion investment in new prison construction to create up to 10,000 prison places is welcomed. Construction is already underway at HMP Five Wells and at the former HMP Glen Parva site. In addition, it has been announced that one of four new prisons will be built at HMP Full Sutton alongside the existing site. New houseblocks are also due to be built at HMPs Guys Marsh, Stocken and Rye Hill, as well as a new workshop at High Down to free up existing space. These will increase capacity by more than 930 places.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Estates and HMPPS Prison Maintenance Group are also committed to investing in improvement works and the prison continues to make bids for refurbishment projects to improve conditions. Over the past two years conditions have been improving with refurbishment of all the cells, landings and showers on A and B wings. During this financial year funding has been allocated to continue the refurbishment of another six shower rooms, five serveries and to provide two further adapted cells. In addition, a project began in September to replace the flooring in cells and landings on D wing and other major work is being funded including upgrading the TV system, replacing the CCTV and Perimeter Intrusion Detection System, making fire safety improvements and providing a new Healthcare building. The Healthcare building project has already begun and is estimated for completion in November 2021.

In addition, it is recognised that the reconfiguration of HMP Wandsworth was due to start this Autumn, but operational decisions taken to manage the Covid-19 pandemic has meant the Reconfiguration Project's work slowed across the whole estate. The HMPPS Medium-Term recovery plan does include the Reconfiguration Project's New Offender Flows for the adult male estate to support the progressive

prisoner transfer process re-starting. While other critical pathways in the project must occur to enable HMP Wandsworth to reconfigure, work is in planning for courts served by HMP High Down to transition in to 2021 subject to a robust readiness assessment process.

Regarding the Board's ongoing concern about the delays in transferring those with mental ill health, I would like to reassure you that the MoJ and HMPPS are determined to improve the transfer process, ensure delays are reduced and avoid prison being used inappropriately. The Secretary of State for Justice is committed to working with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and health partners to articulate a coherent picture of how healthcare is delivered throughout the criminal justice pathway. The Government is also committed to reforming the Mental Health Act and we are working closely with Department for Health and Social Care to respond to the recommendations of the independent review, chaired by Professor Simon Wessely which includes recommendations about improving the secure transfer process. A joint White Paper will be published in the coming months.

Further to my letter in January 2020 in response to last year's report, the 2011 Prison Transfer and Remission guidance has been amended following the comprehensive consultation process and is waiting publication as the planned publication in March 2020 was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. In the meantime, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) continue to monitor the time taken from referral to transfer and provide support where needed. The Health and Justice team in the London region is currently working more closely with the Mental Health Trusts, the Provider Collaboratives and NHSE&I Specialised Commissioning team to ensure that the prison population remain a priority for transfer and to strengthen existing relationships with key stakeholders and partner agencies. Where there are any challenges delaying the transfer of care these are escalated within the Trusts and the Clinical Commissioning Groups on an individual basis.

Turning to the Board's concern about the Addison Unit, it is recognised that there are periods where cells are out of action usually due to damage by patients on account of their mental health presentation. Repairs are always undertaken by the Facilities Management Provider, Gov Facility Services Limited, but it is acknowledged that the Unit now lacks enough rooms for the number of prisoners that currently require the level of supervision of a clinical setting and the damage caused to cells can emphasise this capacity issue. For this reason a business case has been submitted to NHSE&I to consider an expansion of the Unit. In the meantime, the Mental Health In-reach staff continue to closely monitor patients on the waiting list for admission to the Addison Unit and patients are prioritised by their clinical need.

Despite your concerns, it was encouraging to receive your comments in support of the Governor and staff for their initiatives to improve conditions at HMP Wandsworth. It is also pleasing to read that you commend prison staff for their commitment in responding to Covid-19 and the communication with prisoners to keep them fully informed. I too am grateful for all their efforts during this difficult time.

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 Wandsworth.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucy Frazer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Yours sincerely".

LUCY FRAZER QC MP

HMP WANDSWORTH: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JUNE 2019 – 31 MAY 2020

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Adapted Cells

Further to the response in January 2020 to last year's report, two further adapted cells are being funded during the 2020/21 financial year and will be progressing to commercial tender in due course. Whilst this will bring the total of adapted cells to seven, HMP Wandsworth will also continue to bid for improvements to meet the clinical needs of its prisoner population. In addition, both the disabled platform lifts have been reinstated and are now fully functional.

Prisoners' Property

It is unfortunate and regrettable that prisoners' property continues to be an issue. 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 consultation with IMB members took place in August. Consultation with operational colleagues is also expected to resume soon, subject to any further Covid-19 impacts on recovery. The feedback received will 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. While digital improvements are being explored, the nature of that work means that any digital changes are likely to take longer to develop.

It should be noted that sending prisons are responsible for recording property and sealing bags before they become the responsibility of Prisoner Escort and Custody Service (PECS). The PECS 4 Generation contract also began during August 2020 with a new fleet of vehicles which allow for an additional half box of consumable items to the limit of 7.5kg to be carried for each prisoner on top of the existing agreed volumetric limits. In addition to this, HMPPS is looking at what more can be done to encourage prisoners to send out or dispose of excess items to reduce the amount of property that cannot transfer with them. Steps are also being taken to ensure there is a consistent approach when prison staff forward on any excess items to prisoners at their new establishment after a transfer has taken place.

Locally the prison has adapted processes within Reception to try and mitigate lost property and the response time in answering complaints has been improved. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak resulting in regime changes and less property being handed in to the prison it has made it difficult for HMP Wandsworth to make comparisons with previous years to assess the impact of the improvements made, however, the prison is continuing to monitor the situation.

Canteen Provision

The relationship with the national retail provider, DHL, is already formally reviewed on a monthly basis. This involves HMPPS Prison Retail who have oversight of the service and performance, including that at HMP Wandsworth. The shortfall of DHL distribution staff at HMP Wandsworth has been a result of recruitment difficulties and DHL continues to use every avenue to recruit staff to these posts. In addition, the Covid-19 outbreak has prevented progress with consistency in delivery due to workforce impacts. However, DHL management has been working on improvement plans with the prison and HMPPS Prison Retail in order to support HMP Wandsworth in providing an improved canteen service. The most recent recruitment campaign is also beginning to result in improvements.

Audit Report

With regard to the audit report that the Board wishes to have sight of, this was not commissioned at the request of the prison but was a contractual management commission to audit the services provided by delivery partners of the Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs). The Board were informed on 21 August 2020 following a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request that the report would not be disclosed as it is exempt from disclosure under section 43(2) of the FOIA, because it would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person.

I understand that the London CRC Director of Interventions separately wrote to the Board on 31 July 2020 providing an update on their plans for HMP Wandsworth resettlement services which provided a summary of the findings of the audit report. The HMPPS Senior Contract Manager for Thames Valley and London also wrote to the Board on 24 August 2020 providing a commitment to discuss and work through the concerns that the Board has regarding delivery of services by the London CRC for HMP Wandsworth.

Resettlement Provision, Planning and Performance

It is recognised that resettlement planning was not always of sufficient quality and undertaken in sufficient time to address all the identified needs of individuals for their release. However, the London CRC has taken important steps to ensure improvement. As noted above, the CRC wrote to the Board on 31 July 2020 explaining its work with its supply chain providers to develop and strengthen Through the Gate (TTG) delivery arrangements. Since the 1 August 2020, Catch 22, a provider with a proven track record in resettlement work with prisoners, took over these services from the CRCs previous supplier, Penrose. The CRC plans to embed some of the providers wider services into the services that HMP Wandsworth offer, including a London gang exit service, employability service and peer mentoring opportunities for those coming to the end of their sentences. The CRC has also introduced improved quality assurance processes across all its London prisons, which will allow it to continue to monitor areas for improvement and identify good practice. HMP Wandsworth is hopeful that the introduction of a new provider will result in an improvement in delivery and early indications at the prison are positive. In terms of performance, for probation the latest data was published on 30 July 2020 which covers the 18 CRC performance measures as part of the Community Performance quarterly statistics -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-performance-quarterly-update-to-march-2020>.

CCTV

As the Board is aware funding for the full replacement of the CCTV and PIDS Systems at HMP Wandsworth has been approved. Commercial tenders are currently being evaluated and it is anticipated that work will commence within the 2020/21 financial year.

Individual Learning Plans (ILP)

HMPPS is currently enhancing and upgrading the functionality of the Virtual Campus in prisons. As part of this work a digital ILP for all learners has been implemented that can be transferred between prisons as learners move around the estate. While a version is available to all establishments now a new enhanced version is due to be released this calendar year. Prisoners are currently able to access a record of any learning they have undertaken in custody which is held on the Virtual Campus via a facility that enables continued access following their release from prison.