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Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Bure
Jaguar Drive
Badersfield
Norwich, NR10 5GB

MoJ Ref: SUB 084388

29 December 2021

Dear ██████████,

**HMP BURE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 AUGUST 2019 – 31 JULY 2020**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 July 2020. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations, particularly as you continued to be short of Board members during the reporting year and the Covid-19 pandemic impacted on your level of monitoring.

I understand the Board's continued concern about prisons operating above their certified normal accommodation (CNA) level, particularly HMP Bure's Residential Unit 7. Further to my response in January 2020, reducing overcrowding is a central aim of the estate modernisation. The delivery of 18,000 places that are uncrowded provides HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) with an opportunity to take steps towards reducing crowding. Construction of modern, decent, uncrowded prison places are 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.

It is recognised that the latest population projections indicate HMPPS may face challenges in dealing with demand for prison places should the population return to the levels prior to Covid-19. It is therefore possible that HMP Bure may be required to hold prisoners over its CNA level in the future. However, it remains HMPPS's intention not to crowd Residential Unit 7 unless it becomes absolutely necessary. Since early June 2020 HMP Bure has been operating below its CNA level following a fall in the overall prison population due to a reduction in new receptions from courts. In addition, approval has been given to the Governor at HMP Bure to remove the bunk beds from the cells in Residential Unit 7. Whilst this is not a maintenance priority, the Governor will be working with the facilities management provider to allow this work to be programmed.

As an update to my previous response regarding the ongoing concern about the rehabilitation provision for people convicted of sexual offences, new Offender Flows went live across the adult male estate on 28 September 2020. A key principle is that all prisoners, including men convicted of sexual offences (MCoSO), will spend more time in a Resettlement Prison closer to home, giving them a greater opportunity to rebuild or reinforce their relationships with friends and family prior to release. It is acknowledged that to enable MCoSOs to progress more smoothly through the prison system this will largely be dependent on new resettlement capacity coming on line and this will begin with the opening of HMP Five Wells in early 2022.

In the meantime, the National Probation Service has improved commissioning rates and set minimum levels of funding for Through the Gate (TTG) services from Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC) for those people leaving non-resettlement prisons. To support prisoners in their resettlement the local CRC now has staff dedicated to HMP Bure for a minimum of three days a week and the CRCs provider, Anglia Care Trust, has further dedicated provision for a minimum of two days a week. Due to Covid-19 HMPPS put in place an Exceptional Delivery Model (EDM) for TTG services to take into account revised safe systems of work. However, I can reassure you that staff continue to work effectively on a remote basis as necessary and are able to communicate with prisoners and staff. The EDM focuses on ensuring discharged prisoners are released as safely as possible under the prevailing circumstances. The HMPPS CRC Contract Management Team has also provided assurances that prisoners continue to have their resettlement needs identified and that the CRC are maintaining a positive dialogue with the prison management.

Turning to the Board's concern about ventilation in Residential Units 1 to 6, a recent programme of repairs to broken cell windows has ensured that all the ventilation mechanisms have been made operable to enable fresh air into the cells. In addition, a full survey of the environmental ventilation system has been completed and works to address issues with the filters in the system have commenced. This includes work beginning on the replacement of the in-cell filters on Residential Unit 1, with the aim to continue to replace the filters on all other units. Whilst it is recognised that the windows at the end of each residential unit landing cannot currently be opened in isolation of the smoke extraction system, the contractor has identified a cost-effective solution to rectify this. The required work has been approved and it is anticipated that this will be carried out in Spring 2021. Further works including comprehensive cleaning are also being developed and the Governor will continue to keep you updated as work continues. HMPPS Prison Maintenance Group will also continue to monitor progress to ensure that work to the system remains compliant and will provide the necessary improvements in air quality.

It is acknowledged that there were delays in the completion of psychology reports in some cases prior to the Covid-19 outbreak. However, the reasons for these delays are numerous and not just linked to any resource shortfall within HMPPS Psychology Services. Inevitably, Covid-19 has caused some further disruption, as it has done with a range of other services, which has mainly been due to risk assessments to ensure both staff and prisoners remain safe during assessment. It also remains the case, both pre and post Covid-19, that some complex cases can take longer to complete. Psychologists are, however, balancing assessment efficiency with ensuring the needs of the prisoner, as well as Covid-19 matters. Following regional and national recruitment campaigns in the last 12 months two new Band 5 Trainee Forensic Psychologists are now based at HMP Bure. A campaign for Band 8 Senior Psychologists is also taking place, with a post to be based at HMP Bure. However, to cover any shortfalls in staff there is a framework for commissioning assessments which is well embedded both in the region and at HMP Bure, and the prison has been proactive in enabling assessments to take place throughout the pandemic. The demand for reports continues to be reviewed weekly by a team of senior psychologists.

It is also important to clarify that provision of offending behaviour programmes (OBP) has a separate funding arrangement to the delivery of wider Psychology Services. Where psychologists are involved in the assessment and delivery of such work, this is resourced separately. It is also the case that at the start of the pandemic OBP delivery ceased both at HMP Bure and nationally. OBP recovery work recommenced in the autumn in line with the OBP EDM and prisons are now delivering as many OBP places as possible, within the constraints of safe systems of work and the availability of trained staff. A process is also in place to identify high priority prisoners who require a transfer for an OBP treatment place. There is also no link between the delay for Parole Board directions for psychological risk assessments and provision of OBP.

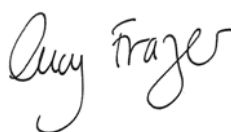
While the demand for psychological risk assessments directed by the Parole Board is not consistent and HMPPS is not able to influence the flow of Parole Board directions, joint partnership has been working to resolve issues relating to assessments. This has enabled HMPPS to better plan for Parole Board directions earlier and has continued through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite your concerns I was pleased to read that the prison environment is clean and in a good state of repair having been enhanced by artwork and murals by prisoners. I was reassured by your comments that prisoners receive fair and humane treatment, feel safe, and recognise the reasons for restricted regimes due to Covid-19. Despite these restrictions and the difficult circumstances, I am encouraged that staff continue to be supportive of prisoners through good relationships, the introduction of Help Understand Bure (HUBs), and the resident's council which is prioritising prisoner's wellbeing. I was also encouraged to note that the work of the Safer Custody Team has been recognised as outstanding in supporting prisoners and their families.

It was pleasing to note that the prison had the opportunity to mark the 10th anniversary of the Memorial Garden and I also wish to congratulate the prison on its recent HMPPS Operational Innovation Award for its Neurodiversity Support Group project. I was also reassured by the positive work of the Chaplaincy, encouraging a greater understanding of diversity and equality and that complaints have reduced, particularly about property following this being a concern last year. HMPPS comments in response to other issue raised in your report is 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 Bure.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucy Frazer".

LUCY FRAZER QC MP

Annex

HMP BURE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 AUGUST 2019 – 31 JULY 2020

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Palliative Care and Reduced Mobility

Whilst there are no plans for palliative care accommodation at HMP Bure, the Board has previously been advised that NHS England has ensured that all healthcare providers are sighted on arrangements for end of life care which remains the case. In Norfolk, this is through collaboration with a local hospice to ensure that specialist end of life care is available in the same way as in the community.

To provide better conditions for those prisoners with reduced mobility HMP Bure has facilitated improvements to cells for disabled residents by fitting equipment identified during Social Care Assessments carried out by the local authority. In addition, the new prisons being built at HMP Five Wells and Glen Parva, as well as the four further planned sites will provide greater accessibility for those with reduced mobility issues and enhanced medical needs. They will also include more lifts and level access, improved decoration known to aid way-finding and orientation for those with reduced cognition or visual impairments, as well as layouts which are more suitable for disabled and elderly prisoners.