



██████████
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMYOI Feltham
Bedfont Road
Feltham, Middlesex
TW13 4ND

MoJ Ref: SUB 085373

10 February 2021

Dear ██████████,

**HMYOI FELTHAM: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR
1 NOVEMBER 2019 – 31 AUGUST 2020**

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

I understand the Board's further request that the current capacity of children and young people and the staffing levels at HMYOI Feltham A are maintained. As set out in the Urgent Notification action plan in August 2019 the operational capacity at Feltham A was reduced and new placements paused to assist improvement measures and refurbishment initiatives. It was also agreed that placements would resume when the Prison Group Director and Governor judged that the establishment had achieved the necessary operational stability and can offer a full regime to all young people. It is recognised that the latest population projections indicate HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) may face challenges in dealing with demand for prison places should the population return to the levels prior to Covid-19, however, the agreed operational capacity of Feltham A currently remains at 120 places. The operational capacity of Feltham A will only begin to return to 180 places when it is appropriate to do so and this will be kept under review. In the meantime, there continues to be an ongoing recruitment campaign for Youth Justice Workers to achieve and maintain the full staffing complement.

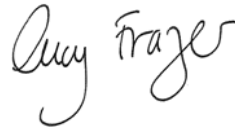
Despite this concern, it was encouraging to receive your comments about the levels of violence and self-harm being lower in comparison to previous years, particularly at Feltham A. It was reassuring to note that the environment provided during the first national lockdown was as safe as possible and that trust in staff has improved. I was pleased to read about the recognition given to staff at all levels for their dedication and commitment as the pandemic has continued, and I am grateful to everyone for their continued hard work during this difficult time.

It is recognised there has been reduced time out of cell, however, HMYOI Feltham has continued to maintain a decent and productive regime whilst keeping all staff and young people safe. It was also pleasing to read that healthcare services are improving with good communication between the prison and healthcare team. I was also encouraged to note that the number of discrimination incident report forms submitted has reduced and that despite the first national lockdown the prison kitchens were able to effectively accommodate those fasting for Ramadan.

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 refurbishment, training and property 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 HMYOI Feltham.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Frazer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'F'.

LUCY FRAZER QC MP

Annex

HMYOI FELTHAM: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 NOVEMBER 2019 – 31 AUGUST 2020

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Refurbishment

The significant investment is continuing with refurbishment works currently being undertaken on four of the five remaining residential units on Feltham A, including replacement windows on three units (Albatross, Bittern and Curlew). The refurbishment programme on three of the residential units at Feltham B (Lapwing, Osprey and Teal) have also started, and this also includes the replacement of windows. It is recognised that further funding will be needed to roll out the window replacement programme to all remaining units and a funding request will be submitted shortly for the 2021/22 financial year.

Following a review of the two self-contained shower pods fitted as a trial, 56 additional shower pods are now planned. HMPPS Prison Maintenance Group is currently procuring the shower pod units and consideration is being given to how many of these units can be installed during 2021. It is anticipated that this work will run alongside plans to improve room ventilation.

In other areas, refurbishment works have been completed in legal and closed visits on Feltham B and to the training kitchen facility within education, making it more hygienic and user friendly. It is anticipated that the Feltham A library will be fully open by spring 2021 and the other modular buildings, which will provide the Feltham A workshops, will be completed early in the 2021/2022 financial year. The upgrades to the CCTV to provide better coverage is continuing and some funding has now been allocated to begin replacing boilers and heat exchange units across HMYOI Feltham. Whilst the project is currently out to tender, it is anticipated that the upgrade work will be scheduled to begin in the next financial year.

In addition, whilst several areas of HMYOI Feltham received patched roof repairs throughout 2020, a site wide roofing survey was completed in October 2020 to establish the full scope of works required. This programme of roof replacement works is scheduled to begin in spring 2021 and is expected to take between 52 – 80 weeks.

Training Opportunities

With the creation of new vocational and educational areas for Feltham A this will mean that Feltham B will have access to more of the existing workshop space. Roof repairs will be taking place to avoid workshop activity being curtailed and further funding has been made available to reconfigure the workshop layout. This will create additional learning areas to increase the vocational offer Feltham B is able to provide to young adults. Plans are underway to ensure that this vocational offer meets HMYOI Feltham's Prisoner Needs Analysis and mirrors the current job market to maximise resettlement opportunities. Participation in educational or vocational training will also form part of all young adult's sentence planning targets and participation will be encouraged through the local incentives scheme.

As part of the re-opening of the closed residential units, purposeful activities are being considered and the Head of Reducing Reoffending is working on a plan to increase working places. It is recognised that this will require additional staffing and different options are being explored as to whether these additional courses will be delivered by HMPPS or through the education provider Novus. Whilst HMYOI Feltham currently has one vacancy for an instructor and another instructor is on maternity leave, there are a total of 12 Instructors allocated to deliver courses to young adult prisoners. The HR Business Partner is working to fill existing vacancies as well as any new hires that may be required and support will be given from the centre where needed.

Prisoners' Property

Having completed discovery work by visiting around 15 prisons HMPPS has been working closely with stakeholders to consult on proposed changes to the policy. Discussions ahead of consultation with IMB members began with the IMB Secretariat in February 2020, who proposed meetings take place with Board members in April that year. In light of the pressures placed on Boards by Covid-19, HMPPS agreed with the IMB Secretariat to pause this consultation. A meeting with IMB representatives took place in August 2020 and the feedback received from those members is being considered alongside other contributions. There has been a slight delay in HMPPS being able to circulate a revised draft policy framework because of the need to ensure sufficient operational engagement. That work is now progressing well and it is anticipated that the draft policy framework will be circulated for wider consultation shortly.

The Prisoner Escort and Custody Services 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. As previously advised, HMPPS is also taking steps 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. While digital improvements are being explored, the nature of that work means that any digital changes are likely to take longer to develop.

Locally HMYOI Feltham has escalation routes in place should the need arise via the Head of Operations and Deputy Governor to ensure resolution of the majority of property matters. The issues experienced following transfers from HMP Pentoville have been raised at the appropriate level. It is also recognised that there were some issues with property being sent in to prisoners by their relatives during the national lockdown during 2020, however, a recent review of all complaints indicates that the matter has now been resolved.