



██████████  
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board  
HMP Stafford  
54 Gaol Road  
Stafford  
ST16 3AW

MoJ Ref: ADR 081931

9 October 2020

Dear ██████████,

**HMP STAFFORD: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR 1 MAY 2019 – 30 APRIL 2020**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 30 April 2020. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations, as I note you remained short of members during the reporting year.

I acknowledge once more the Board's ongoing concern about prisoners' property. I understand your concern and hope to reassure you that HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is working closely with stakeholders to consult on the proposed changes to the policy. Discussions ahead of consultation with IMB members began with the IMB Secretariat in late February 2020, however, in light of the pressures placed on Boards by Covid-19, HMPPS agreed with the IMB Secretariat to push consultation back until August 2020. The feedback obtained from IMB members will then be considered alongside the comments from other stakeholders. It is intended that the revised draft policy framework will be circulated for wider consultation at the end of this year. Locally, staff at the prison will continue to work hard to resolve property related issues.

Turning to the Board's remarks on resettlement, I am pleased the Board has recognised that although HMP Stafford is not resourced as a resettlement prison, staff have continued to improve the provision for those discharged directly and this was also recognised by HM Inspectorate of Prisons during the inspection in January 2020. I note and welcome the successful arrangements with the local Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), and other organisations and agencies as highlighted in your report.

It is accepted there are circumstances where prisoners are not transferred to a designated resettlement prison prior to release, but CRCs do provide prisoners with access to appropriate resettlement services. More broadly to aid the provision of resettlement HMPPS has implemented an enhanced Through the Gate service, including prisoners released directly from non-resettlement prisons like HMP Stafford. An additional £22 million has been invested per annum for the remainder of the CRC contracts to ensure they deliver this service and provide complete specific, tailored, tasks to help prisoners resettle successfully back into the community. The National Probation Service continues to work towards increasing the commissioning of these services, including setting minimum levels of purchasing, to encourage full use of the appropriate rate cards. The new Governor is also seeking other ways in which to improve the resettlement services on offer.


Although, in response to last year's Board report, HMPPS confirmed the reconfiguration of the adult male estate position, including plans for HMP Stafford, due to Covid-19 the Reconfiguration Project team has slowed its planning and implementation activity. However, as soon as the operational landscape allows, prisons, partners and stakeholders will be contacted to discuss once again plans across the prison estate.

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.

Turning to some positive comments captured in your report, it was encouraging to hear that HMP Stafford has continued to promote fairness and equality and prisoner representatives feel confident in their role and play an active part in supporting the protected characteristic groups. Likewise, it was pleasing to note that during the Covid-19 lockdown some prisoners helped produce uniforms for a charity supporting the NHS. I was also encouraged by the continued success of the Resident Information Desks and that prisoners employed in Fulford's Bistro can achieve qualifications in catering.

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 Stafford. The Governor would also like to thank you for being very supportive towards the prison's direction in the reporting year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Frazer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**LUCY FRAZER QC MP**

## Annex

### HMP STAFFORD: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 MAY 2019 – 30 APRIL 2020

#### HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

##### **In-Cell Telephony**

HMPPS recognises the importance of having in-cell telephony across the estate as it allows easier access to family and friends. Installing infrastructure into the prison environment is complex and often time consuming due to local restrictions and security implications that must be adhered to. It takes up to 12 months to install in-cell telephony into each prison. The in-cell telephony project team have completed just over 60% of the estate, on that basis there is still some way to go and funding needs to be secured. HMPPS determines the priority order of deployment and HMP Stafford is unfortunately not in scope at present.

##### **Prisoners' Pay**

HMP Stafford has a very good work and education offer and very minimal unemployment, with the vast majority of prisoners being employed full time and attending work daily. This provides very little flexibility in the pay budget to improve weekly pay rates offsetting against lower unemployment rates. The Governor will look at ways within the budgetary constraints in which he may be able to improve the rates in some work areas.

##### **Older Population**

HMP Stafford continues to explore other activities for retired prisoners to be involved in whilst not attending the Senior Support Group. Funding has been approved to develop a nursing wing which will support prisoners with adult social care needs in a clinically led environment. It is anticipated that this work will commence over the coming months.