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Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Stocken
Stocken Hall Road
Rutland
LE15 7RD

MoJ Ref: SUB 083737

4 December 2020

Dear ██████████,

**HMP STOCKEN: 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, especially as you were short of Board members during the reporting year.

I acknowledge the Board's concern about the need for increased capacity within secure hospitals and the Category D open estate. NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) national and regional teams are working closely with NHS-led Provider Collaboratives. Currently the strategic direction continues to be maintenance of existing bed capacity, not an increase, albeit with improved geographical distribution. The focus is on improving efficiency, appropriate length of stay and reduction in transitions. The Provider Collaboratives will be key in managing the patient pathway and addressing the needs of their local population. My officials are working with their counterparts in the Department of Health and Social Care to ensure patients are returned back to prison as soon as possible after they complete treatment. We are also continuing to work in close collaboration with health partners to make sure that, where appropriate, vulnerable offenders are diverted away from custody and, where possible, from the criminal justice system altogether.

Additionally, NHSE&I will continue to monitor the time taken from referral to transfer and ensuring there is effective liaison with specialised commissioning. New performance metrics are being developed by NHSE&I via a strategic reporting tool to monitor those being assessed under the Mental Health Act (MHA) and tracking assessment and transfer waiting periods. The Prison Transfer and Remission Guidance 2011 has now been refreshed and is awaiting publication, as the planned date for publication was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Alongside this work, the new mental health service specifications have been published for low and medium-secure hospitals. The NHS led Provider Collaboratives service for adult medium and low secure care gives local ownership to providers for the whole pathway. This includes the interface with the criminal justice system, and resources for their own populations, enabling them to make commissioning decisions to improve and integrate services. In terms of high secure care, a strategic commissioning plan will be developed by April 2021. This will describe the clinical model, pathways and the required capacity for implementation during 2021/22.

The Government is also committed to reforming the MHA and we are working closely with Department for Health and Social Care to respond to the recommendations of the independent review, chaired by Professor Sir Simon Wessely. A White Paper will be published in the coming months.

Regarding the future vision of the open estate, further to my response to the Board of 30 October 2019, HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) continues to work towards achieving more capacity which covers expansion of the open estate. HMPPS is assessing which sites may be suitable for expansion under the programme to deliver 10,000 additional prisons. I am pleased to announce HMP Haverigg completed its re-role this year providing so far 230 additional Category D prison places.

I note the Board's ongoing concern that far too many prisoners at HMP Stocken are located far from their homes and families, and your request for additional prison capacity across London and the South East area. HMPPS remains committed to accommodating prisoners as close to home and families as possible and will see this through the modelling of the prison estate using closeness to home as a priority. However, this is not always possible for many reasons as set out in last year's response. This will mean some prisoners will continue to be sent to prisons some distance from their home to obtain access to the services and the support they need. Most prisoners nearing release will be returned to their home probation area to receive bespoke resettlement support.

It is expected that HMP Five Wells, the Category C adult resettlement prison under construction in Wellingborough, will help resettle prisoners who have originated from London back to their local communities. We also have an outline planning permission for a new 1,440 place prison to be built on land adjacent to HMP Full Sutton. HMPPS will be looking for sites in the North West and South East of England which is where we expect to see the greatest demand. Work is also underway to determine other appropriate sites and all new developments are subject to receiving planning permission.

Turning to the Board's comments about in-cell telephony, HMPPS recognises the importance of having this technology installed across the whole estate to enable better family/friend contact. As I am sure the Board will appreciate, installing infrastructure into the prison environment is complex and there are restrictions and security implications. The project team has now completed just over 60% of the estate; there is still some way to go and this is dependent on further investment funds. Additional establishments will be added to the scope for in-cell telephony when further funding becomes available. It can take up to 12 months to install in-cell telephony into each prison and HMPPS will determine the roll out priority order. I am pleased to announce a further development at HMP Stocken, the whole site will be fully equipped with this technology over the next 12 months. Installation work for this project is imminent.

It was encouraging to hear that HMP Stocken is a relatively safe prison compared with other establishments of a similar function and has been consistently rated as one of the top prisons for successfully embedding the Key Worker scheme. I would like to personally thank the Governor and his staff for their dedication during this pandemic, professionalism and for adopting purposeful rehabilitation practices. I also note the many other positive findings captured in your report such as the thriving art academy, and your comments on the vocational training and education provision as being excellent.

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 Stocken.

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

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

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Transfers of Re-categorised Prisoners

Category B Moves

As the Board has identified, singleton moves of Category B prisoners are not made within desirable timeframes. The current policy, *Categorisation and Recategorisation Of Adult Male Prisoners* (Prison Service Instruction 2011-40) does not outline a specific required timeframe beyond normal review timeframes. However, prisons make every effort to expedite moves in a timely manner, although there may be times where a speedy transfer is not always desirable as it may reinforce negative behaviours from men, particularly where cellular confinement has been awarded as a result of poor behavior. Staff at HMP Stocken work hard to secure places with its partner prisons. Every effort is being made by HMPPS to secure onward moves as quickly as possible.

HMPPS is implementing a new policy framework for categorising prisoners. As part of the work, a Digital Categorisation Service (DCS) has been developed that supports prison staff in identifying relevant risk information and reaching a decision on an individual's security needs. It enables better access to information for those making categorisation decisions, particularly by taking advantage of data from partners and making more use of information known by prison security teams. It also includes a specific assessment for open conditions. Once a prisoner has been given a security category, they are then generally allocated to a prison of the equivalent security category that is able to meet their individual needs, which would include any needs that they have in respect of their age or any disability they may have. The implementation of the new framework and DCS is expected to be completed in the coming months for adult and young adult males, and during 2021 for female offenders.

Alongside the DCS, the recently updated Offender Flows and Interim National Allocation Protocol (NAP) went live across the adult male estate (age 18 above) on 28 September 2020. The flows focus on prisoners transferring, including on initial allocation from Reception prisons (once sentenced), on a 'time left to serve' basis. This is to ensure that prisoners are sent to the most appropriate prison for their needs, including social care, and have enough time in custody to engage with the available services and interventions. Prior to transfer prisoners will be assessed on their most appropriate categorisation. Although the Offender Flows and NAP do not specifically focus on the aged population or disabilities, all prisoners transferring to other establishments must be clinically assessed prior to transfer. Some prisons are more able to accept prisoners in these categories due to, for example, prison layout and accessibility to required facilities.

Category D Moves

Whilst there remains capacity within the open prison estate these spaces are not always where there is the greatest demand. Subsequently it will not always be in the best interest of the prisoner to move to an open prison that is far from their home area. This means that where appropriate, men categorised as 'D' may be held in a closed prison. This is decided on an individual basis, although priority is given to indeterminate and longer-sentenced prisoners who are coming towards the end of their sentence and who have gradually worked their way down the categories. The Prison Escort Court Service (PECS) provides resources as required by HMPPS Population Management team. The resources provided meet operational requirements.

HMP Stocken makes a weekly request for open estate places for prisoners who have been approved Category D status. Prison staff are unable to influence when spaces become available due to prisoner flows and PECS ability to facilitate a move. Movements to the open estate have been severely limited this year by Covid-19. HMP Stocken recognised the impact this had on the population and acted by securing regular placements to HMP Sudbury of twenty prisoners per month. More recently placements have been secured at HMP Springhill and these arrangements are planned to continue. Requests for further Category D placements have been placed with HMP Hatfield, HMP Prescoed, HMP Ford and HMP Standford Hill.

Resettlement

HMPPS acknowledges the Board's continuing concern about the support for those released directly from the prison and remains committed to releasing prisoners from a resettlement prison. Where this is not possible it should not interfere with a person's access to resettlement services. In circumstances where a prisoner has not been transferred to a designated resettlement prison prior to release, the contract with Community Rehabilitation Companies is to provide prisoners with access to appropriate resettlement (enhanced Through the Gate) services via rate card purchasing. The National Probation Service continues to work towards increasing the commissioning of these services from the rate card for prisoners leaving from a non-resettlement prison, including setting minimum levels of purchasing. Provision is currently restricted due to Covid -19 restrictions, but every effort is being made to help meet prison leavers' resettlement needs within an agreed Exceptional Delivery Model.

Maintenance and Repairs

It is acknowledged that the commercial process for obtaining financial approvals for repairs and refurbishments is sometimes prolonged due to the commercial application process. In the event of an urgent repair concerning serious health, safety and security, HMPPS will pre-authorise expenditure for Amey to provide a make safe until a permanent solution is found.

Amey completes on average 700 planned maintenance tasks and 550 reactive tasks each month. 99% of planned tasks and 90% of reactive tasks are completed within the month of allocation. However, recently there has been a slight dip in performance due to the impact of Covid-19 and the roll out of the new computer aided facilities management (CAFM) system. The dip in performance is being managed through an action plan and key performance indicators monitored by the Service Delivery Manager. It is hoped that the change in CAFM systems will bring around positive outcomes in relation to the timeliness of planned and reactive maintenance, alongside some recent management changes both within HMPPS Prison Maintenance Group and Amey's Commercial team. HMP Stocken's contract meeting will continue to identify issues that the performance measures would not necessarily identify or rectify.

HMP Stocken has been allocated £1,343,000 for major maintenance and capital projects to be delivered this financial year.

Family Contact

Unfortunately, the visiting hall capacity was reduced to meet the Covid-19 social distancing requirements (from 30 tables down to 17 tables). To reduce the impact on prisoners and visitors, social visits were held Monday to Friday during the morning and afternoons, and there were plans to reintroduce weekend visits when staffing levels permitted.

Currently, due to the second wave of the pandemic all visits have been paused. 'Purple Visits' video calling facility has been introduced on all wings and this is proving increasingly popular with the prisoners.