



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Full Sutton

**For reporting year
1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021**

Published April 2022



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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Full Sutton is one of five high security dispersal prisons for category A and B adult men, and forms part of the long term and high security prison estate. It is situated about 11 miles east of the city of York. It has a certified normal accommodation (CNA) of 601 and has an operational capacity (OpCap) of 586. At the end of 2021 the number of prisoners accommodated stood at 575.

Nearly all prisoners at Full Sutton present significant risks to security or the public at large. A small number of prisoners have committed offences connected with or sympathetic to terrorist goals and some have achieved significant criminal notoriety for other reasons.

HMP Full Sutton opened in 1987 as a purpose-built high security establishment. There are six main wings: A, E and F are general wings, and B, C and D wings accommodate vulnerable prisoners. The supporting transition and enabling progression (STEP) unit is a reintegration wing for those complex prisoners who are leaving long-term segregation. There is also a segregation unit, a close supervision centre (CSC) and a healthcare unit.

The site also comprises a kitchen, education rooms and workshops, chaplaincy, gym, library and visitors' centre. A reception area for prisoners' visitors is located outside the main gate.

The prison is part of the public sector, and although Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) is responsible for the operation of the establishment, the main service providers are:

- Milton Keynes College, for learning and skills
- Spectrum Community Health CIC, for health services
- GeoAmey, for escort provision
- AMEY, for provision of facilities management and site maintenance

The prison also works in partnership with:

- POPS (Partners of Prisoners) for visitor centre services
- Samaritans for the provision of training for prison Listeners
- Leeds Beckett University for the 'Learning Together' initiative
- Origin Fitness for the supply of gym equipment
- Sportsafe for the maintenance and repair of gym equipment

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

This report, which covers the period January to December 2021, is written against the background of the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. A national lockdown began again on 4 January 2021; in February several wings and then the prison as a whole were declared an outbreak site by Public Health England. During the course of the year, the prison has operated at all restriction levels, from Stage 4 down to, briefly, Stage 1, but the transition was not linear. Different levels of restrictions were applied at different times during the year, when necessary, on a wing-by-wing basis, depending on levels of infection and the need to contain the spread.

2021 has, therefore, been another testing and tiring year for management, staff and prisoners, with constantly changing restrictions and regimes. The prison has a dedicated Covid team, which has been operating since the start of the pandemic, and which monitors levels of infection in staff and prisoners, manages changing operational requirements and which oversaw the introduction of vaccination for prisoners and the regular testing of staff. This team has worked hard and professionally throughout and has made a real contribution to keeping prisoners and staff as safe as possible.

While the pandemic, and managing the prison through it, has in many ways been all-encompassing for prison management, managers have also tried to manage for the future. Improvements continued to be made to the fabric and decoration of the building, thus improving the environment for prisoners, and at the end of the year, preparatory work had been undertaken for an array of solar panels for electricity generation to be installed and operational during 2022. Additionally, six electric vehicle charging points were installed.

Staffing has at times been tight. There has been additional staff absence due to Covid, continued staff turnover, and a number of staff are new or have less than two years' experience. The Governor has sought to address staff absence and recruitment issues. The deployment of prison staff has focussed on ensuring that changing regimes ran decently and safely. This was largely achieved. It meant, however, that some functions, including drug testing regimes and the safer custody and equalities teams, had to operate on significantly reduced staffing at times. Training in some areas was curtailed due to national restrictions placed on training.

In December 2020 the IMB withdrew from visiting the prison on a regular basis in the light of national restrictions and the advice to work from home where possible. During that time, we continued the arrangements for monitoring remotely that we had established in 2020: regular attendance, by teleconference, at morning management meetings and rule 45 boards, regular telephone contact with governors, functional heads and wing custodial managers, and receipt of prison monitoring and management information. In March we conducted a prisoner survey to enable us to understand how prisoners were experiencing lockdown. We returned to visiting the prison again, on a limited basis, in June 2021. After our return, we maintained our telephone contact with prison staff, but also attended meetings involving prisoner welfare in person and met prisoners again in some units and on exercise yards. In December 2021 we withdrew again. We continued throughout to deal with

applications from prisoners, made to us in writing or through the 0800 telephone application service.

The Board is grateful for the support and cooperation it received from the Governor and prison staff which enabled it to continue working remotely, and for their open and inclusive approach to communication. We have tried to cover all aspects of prisoners' welfare during this difficult time, whilst also ensuring we understood the pressures on staff and the decisions of managers. Nevertheless, in some areas, coverage may have been less than usual.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

Safety within the prison was maintained in 2021. The prison continued to manage restrictions and the effects of the pandemic professionally. Incidents of violence between prisoners were higher than in 2020, reflecting the fact that at times prisoners were again able to mix together. By contrast, the number of challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) opened to investigate potential violence or bullying between prisoners reduced, as did assaults against staff. The same number of those assaults were classed as serious as in 2020 (paragraph 4.2.1). The number of incidents of self-harm rose in 2021 compared with 2020, but continued to be below pre-pandemic levels. We are satisfied that prisoners who were vulnerable or whose needs were particularly complex were regularly reviewed and supported, albeit against a backdrop of sometimes reduced staffing levels. Overall, there was good sharing of information between staff. No prisoner in Full Sutton took their own life in 2021. The use of force increased slightly during the year.

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

Our assessment is that prisoners were treated humanely and fairly within the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic. Careful thought was given to the way regimes, which had to be restricted because of Covid, were run, and this ensured prisoners received showers, exercise and access to the telephone.

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

Prisoners' health needs were generally met, with clinics continuing to run. Prisoners with mental health needs were supported by the mental health team and vulnerable prisoners supported through visits by wing officers. Access to the gym continued whenever possible. Activities designed to promote wellbeing, for example, the older prisoner's group, could not be held during times of restriction, and planned Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous groups could not be held.

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

The provision of education has been very patchy and irregular during the year; rostered face-to-face learning took place on the wings from April when restrictions allowed, but there has been very little classroom learning, which only restarted in September 2021 on a restricted basis. Lower than expected numbers enrolled for in-cell learning. Whilst some progress has been made, including engagement with prisoners who have been difficult to reach in the past, a culture of education and learning amongst the wider prisoner population will need to be re-established in the

coming year. The ability to work was also severely restricted, with workshops, except DHL and the kitchens, closed or operating with reduced numbers for most of the year. Prisoners were furloughed while workshops were shut. Offending behaviour programmes restarted during the year but on a reduced basis; steps were taken to mitigate the impact. The prison ensured that contact between prisoners and their families was maintained by secure video calling, the availability of which increased, and by reopening face-to-face visiting as soon as safely possible.

3.3 Main areas for development

The Board is carrying forward the areas for development identified in its 2019 and 2020 reports, which have not been able to be implemented because of the pandemic. We will monitor progress in these areas when we can in the coming year, and report on them in our 2022 report.

TO THE GOVERNOR

To continue to improve the provision of meaningful work and the breadth of education for prisoners. *(Recommended in 2019 and 2020. Recommendation carried forward.)*

Continue to develop the STEP unit, and ensure its role in the Pathways to Progression programme is adequately funded and maintains a clear referral system, so that it can resume fully its intended role of breaking the cycle of segregation. *(Recommended in 2020. Recommendation carried forward.)*

Ensure that the equality forum and equality action group resume, to enable equality issues to be aired, and that an equality advisory group is established to support staff understanding.

That action is taken to communicate examples of best practice in complaint handling in order to improve the quality and fairness of responses.

That action is taken to ensure that staffing levels allow all forms of drug testing, (random, suspicion and reception) to take place to the required levels.

3.4 Progress since the last report

Despite the pandemic there has been some progress against the main areas for development and improvement identified by the Board last year. Plans are more firmly in place to open a broader range of workshops including a wood mill (which has been planned for several years), a recycling workshop, work producing LED lighting components and a barista station in the industries and college area. It will be important that there is no further delay in the establishment of these workshops, as for several years, and currently, there is insufficient work for prisoners to do.

There has been some improvement in the provision of education, even though the delivery of learning has been severely interrupted. Further progress is, however, required in 2022 to ensure that a culture of learning and education is re-established.

Some improvement has been made to the operation of the STEP unit during 2021, despite the difficult circumstances of the continuing pandemic, but its funding needs to be put on a secure footing

In our report for 2020 we made an additional two recommendations to the Prison Service:

- First, that the cost of telephone calls should be re-examined with the provider, with a view to reducing their cost. The Prison Service responded that, while the PIN phone system is not directly comparable to any other public payphone service, requiring security and monitoring which was essential to the specific requirements of HMPPS, services and cost were being reviewed. In August 2021 call charges in Full Sutton were brought into line with charges applied in prisons where there is in-cell telephony, resulting in cheaper calls for prisoners in Full Sutton.
- Secondly, that the Prison Service should improve systems for the management and tracking of prisoners' property. The Prison Service responded that the development of a new prisoner property policy framework was paused due to Covid, although consultation took place later in 2020. A new draft framework was due for further consultation in 2021. The IMB will monitor the handling of prisoner property in 2022.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.1.1 Prisoners with complex needs and those who present a risk because of vulnerability or violent behaviour are regularly reviewed. Complex needs/safety intervention meetings are held weekly, led by the Governor responsible for safer custody. The meetings are multi-disciplinary and attended by representatives from the safer custody team, the mental health team, wing custody managers, the residential and segregation governors, offender managers, chaplaincy and, when possible, the IMB in its monitoring role. The meeting reviews particularly complex prisoners whose behaviour may be causing concern; monitors, through input from the wings, prisoners on CSIPs and prisoners subject to ACCT assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents; and reviews prisoners of concern in the segregation unit, transgender prisoners, and any violent incidents that have occurred in the previous week. The meeting also considers any relevant information about new prisoners about to transfer into the prison or those who have just transferred in. The meetings are effective and the IMB has witnessed good sharing of information; the meetings ensure that staff from the relevant disciplines are regularly aware of the circumstances of particularly complex prisoners.

4.1.2 The number of incidents of self-harm rose from 125 in 2020 to 144 in 2021, and involved 45 prisoners, some of whom were at risk, or self-harmed, on more than one occasion. The number of ACCT documents which were opened during the year, and which identify and set out the actions needed to support prisoners at risk, fell from 151 in 2020 to 137 in 2021. Both the 2020 and 2021 figures represent an improvement on pre-pandemic levels. The IMB attended very few ACCT reviews during the year, because of absence during the pandemic.

4.1.3 In all, 15 Listeners were in place to support their fellow prisoners, slightly fewer than 2020. Although the safer prisons support meeting, normally attended by Listeners, could not be held regularly because of restrictions, some were able to take place, and Listeners continued to be provided with regular information on issues relating to self-harm, and to support prisoners when needed.

4.1.4 There were two deaths in custody during 2021, both believed to be the result of natural causes. The inquests on both deaths remain outstanding. Because of delays caused by the pandemic, inquests into deaths which occurred in the prison in 2018, and two in 2020, have also yet to be held.

4.1.5 The IMB has assessed that, overall, Full Sutton maintains a safe environment for prisoners and staff, despite the obvious challenges.

4.1.6 In 2021 the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman conducted an investigation into the death of a prisoner at Full Sutton in 2020. The Ombudsman's report was published in 2021. The Ombudsman reported that an early morning roll check of prisoners had not been carried out as required, although this inaction did not contribute to the death of the prisoner. The IMB is satisfied that prison managers took appropriate action when this came to light. Other findings from the investigation are set out in paragraph 6.2.5.

4.2 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.2.1 During the year, 139 CSIPs were opened to investigate potential violence or bullying between prisoners, compared with 213 in 2020. The number of CSIPs open at any one time has reduced and the continued relevance of individual plans was regularly reviewed. Prisoner against prisoner assaults rose from 10 in 2020 to 29 in 2021. Incidents of violence against staff reduced from 34 in 2020 to 30 in 2021, and there were five assaults which were more serious in nature in 2021, which was the same as in 2020. Four of the serious cases occurred in the segregation unit. The restricted nature of the regime in 2020, in which prisoners only mixed regularly with the same small cohort of fellow prisoners, meant there was less opportunity for wider scale disputes, bullying and debt-related issues to arise. As restrictions relaxed in 2021, and there was greater mixing between prisoners, there was more opportunity for disputes between prisoners to occur and this is reflected in the figures above. There were also occasions when there were pushbacks by individuals against the continuing restrictions, and there was one concerted incident of defiance against the need to return to the wing after exercise. For the most part, however, the atmosphere within the prison remained calm.

4.3 Use of force

4.3.1 Use of force by prison staff continued to be reviewed regularly at use of force meetings. Separately, a sample of incidents of use of force is selected by the IMB for review with senior staff, as part of a use of force scrutiny panel. During 2021 only three panel meetings were held because the IMB was not attending the prison in person for part of the year, and therefore could not review CCTV or body-worn camera footage. Scrutiny panel meetings will resume as soon as soon as possible in 2022.

4.3.2 Incidents of use of force increased from 193 in 2020 to 226 in 2021. These figures were inflated by the regular movement of particular prisoners from the CSC, who can only be moved under restraint, to the healthcare unit, and by one prisoner who engaged in long-term passive non-compliance as part of a protest.

4.3.3 The IMB is satisfied that the prison's focus on security and safety, as well as safety issues arising from the pandemic, was maintained in 2021. Security issues that arose during the year were, for the most part, low-level and minor.

4.4 Preventing illicit items

4.4.1 During 2021, 79 potential weapons were found across all areas. This is fewer than in 2020 (114) and includes all items that had the potential to be used as a weapon, for example, discarded tin lids. Of these, 15 were categorised as actual weapons, and reported as such. Again, this is fewer than 2020 (38). Target searching continued where there was intelligence.

Substance misuse

4.4.2 No mandatory drug testing took place between January and April because of restrictions. Testing recommenced in May and continued until December but was hindered by continuing restrictions on contact with prisoners on the wings and staff pressures; in all, 289 testing days were lost during the year. No reception tests were carried out. In cases where staff had raised suspicions, only 35% of prisoners were subsequently tested, and there are concerns that, in future, staff will be deterred from reporting suspicions if they see no action being taken. The prison is looking at ways of addressing this in 2022. Overall, 10 tests were positive. This is fewer than in 2020, although slightly fewer tests were carried out in 2021 than in the previous year. The majority of positive tests were for synthetic cannabinoids. There was a higher incidence of hooch making towards the end of the year. Hooch making is often seen as an indicator that other substances are not available.

4.4.3 The disruptions to normal prison life and testing in 2021, brought about by the continuing pandemic, mean that the IMB can make no direct comparison between substance misuse in 2021 and pre-pandemic levels.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1 The standard of accommodation is generally good, and all prisoners occupy single cells. Wing cleaners cleaned the wings and, for most of the year, prisoners who had particular problems or who were coping less well formed corridor cleaning parties, an initiative of the safer custody team. During the year, the time created by the absence of normal activity was used to continue redecorating parts of the prison. Overall, the prison is well decorated and clean.

5.1.2 The kitchens have continued to operate well during the pandemic and the uncertainties it has brought. There is a 'can-do' attitude among staff and prisoners who work in the kitchen, who showed flexibility when there was a brief shortage of supplies and problems with utilities. They continue to cater well for festivals and specialist diets. Some prisoners praised the food prepared during Ramadan in 2021 as the best yet.

5.1.3 Before the onset of the pandemic, prisoners could elect to self-cook. The option to do this ceased in March 2020. It was re-introduced in August 2021 on a more limited basis to ensure a Covid-safe environment was maintained but suspended again in December 2021.

5.2 Segregation

5.2.1 The IMB is satisfied that the segregation unit continues to provide a stable and decent environment, with prisoners receiving the required access to showers, exercise and the telephone. As segregation prisoners do not leave the unit for association, education or work, some restrictions in place for other prisoners did not affect them directly.

5.2.2 Mental health support has been available according to specific need, and some psychology input has been available, but this has at times been limited because of

Covid restrictions. Restrictions have also limited the ability to offer prisoners education and other purposeful activity in-cell. This remains an aim of the unit in 2022.

5.2.3 The average number of prisoners in segregation on a daily basis in 2021 was 23, the same as the previous year. On occasions, the unit reached its operational capacity. Some prisoners transferring in from other establishment had very complex problems and behaviours. Four out of the nine incidents of serious assaults on staff in Full Sutton in 2021 occurred in the segregation unit. There were also some cases of dirty protest and food refusal. Where this has occurred the IMB is satisfied that plans were put in place to manage those individuals decently, and with a view to enabling them to progress.

5.2.4 Segregation staff and management have been proactive in identifying pathways out of segregation for prisoners, either to wings or units within Full Sutton or to other establishments better suited to their needs, although for most of the year opportunities for prisoners to transfer out have been limited by Covid restrictions. By the end of the year, however, discussions about the transfer of prisoners in segregation to other establishments resumed, which enabled some transfers to take place. The average length of stay in the segregation unit in 2021 was 16.5 days. Staffing levels in the unit have been maintained.

5.2.5 During 2021, IMB members' ability to attend the prison regularly was affected by Covid restrictions and direct contact with segregated prisoners was mainly through rule 45 boards, and latterly through visiting the unit to see prisoners outside on the exercise yard. Members have attended all rule 45 boards held during the year, by teleconference between January and July and in person between August and December. During the first half of the year when no in-person rule 45 boards were held, the IMB was satisfied that prisoners were able to make written representations which were then brought to the attention of the review board. Although review board discussions about a prisoner's welfare were generally satisfactory, they would be enhanced by consistent attendance and participation by all relevant prison functions.

5.2.6 During 2021 the IMB received 38 applications from segregation unit prisoners, similar to 2020. The figure represents a significant reduction from pre-pandemic levels.

The STEP Unit

5.2.7 The STEP Unit is a small unit opened in 2019, as part of the long -term and high -security estate Pathways to Progression programme. It aims to break the cycle of long-term segregation and prepare prisoners to re-enter mainstream location through a high level of purposeful activity and other services.

5.2.8 In its 2020 report, the IMB considered that, because of staff and managerial changes, the STEP Unit was not in position to fulfil its purpose. In 2021, the staffing position became more stable, and prisoners in the STEP unit benefited from a bespoke project-based learning programme; the education department also worked with prisoners to develop some social activities, which resulted in positive outcomes for those who participated. The Governor has sought to define the purpose and future of the unit and ensure its funding. The IMB will continue to monitor its progress in 2022.

Close supervision centre

5.2.9 The CSC is a small self-contained unit sited away from other prison wings and units; it houses serious offenders who have committed acts of violence in prison.

5.2.10 The small size of the unit means that prisoners there already form the equivalent of a small cohort. This has enabled, at times, more time out of cell and a less restricted regime for prisoners housed here than for prisoners on residential wings.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships, key workers

5.3.1 Almost three-quarters of prisoners responding to the IMB's welfare survey (paragraph 6.5.5) agreed that, overall, they were treated fairly by staff, and with respect. While slightly more prisoners (78%) said they were able to talk to staff if they had a problem, only 55% reported that a member of staff had talked to them in the previous week about how they were getting on.

5.3.2 From January to May 2021, complex prisoners (around 45 in number) received a weekly key worker check from the safer custody team, and vulnerable prisoners received a weekly check from a wing-based key worker; both reduced from May to November as the regime opened up. All other prisoners received a fortnightly welfare check from wing staff; this moved to weekly in March if staffing levels allowed, but in reality this was difficult to achieve.

5.3.3 Welfare checks ceased in July, with prisoners receiving a full or shorter key worker session as appropriate. In November, the prison intended to reintroduce 30-minute key worker sessions for all prisoners as the regime was relaxed. In fact, this could not be achieved as infections began to grow and restrictions increased.

5.3.4 The IMB is satisfied that robust monitoring and quality checks by the assurance team are in place; these examine the quality and effectiveness of case notes, and the frequency of entries. However, there has not always been enough staff available to carry out all programmed sessions. Overall, from March 2021 the average number of weekly welfare/key worker checks was 478 against a prison population which averaged around 575.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 Members of the equalities team each have special responsibility for a particular protected characteristic, as defined by the Equality Act. While the team sought to carry out weekly checks of those with protected characteristics who were particularly in need, this reduced to fortnightly when available staff days were reduced. The equalities team lost just under 100 allocated staff days during the year.

5.4.2 There were 225 discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) submitted by prisoners in 2021, more than in 2020 and 2019. Just over 50% related to race. By contrast the IMB received only six applications during the year relating to equality issues, fewer than in 2020.

5.4.3 The IMB carried out some independent scrutiny of the prison's responses to DIRFs and found 32% to be good, 43% to be satisfactory, and 8% to be

unsatisfactory. Findings were reported back to the prison. The prison is seeking, but has been unable to find, any other body able to offer external independent scrutiny.

5.4.4 In its report published in June 2020 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons recommended that focus groups and forums for prisoners with protected characteristics should take place regularly, supported by prison managers. Prison managers accepted this recommendation. However, equality forums and action group meetings (regular meetings between prisoners and staff), which ceased in March 2020 at the start of the pandemic, did not restart until November 2021 and could not continue because of restrictions that were reimposed at the end of the year.

5.4.5 The resumption of these meetings will be important as some prisoners from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds remain of the view that staff treat them differently from their White counterparts, sometimes in subtle ways, for example in how they are spoken to or because staff were unaware of cultural issues. Full Sutton is under-represented in terms of BAME prison officers although there are BAME staff across other functions. The prison's intention to set up an advisory group for staff to aid understanding of BAME issues was delayed because of restrictions of 2021. The Board will monitor progress on the reintroduction of both the equality forum and action groups and the advisory group for staff in 2022.

5.4.6 The IMB has witnessed some good discussions and interventions to support transgender prisoners and prisoners with special needs or disabilities. Staff have maintained checks on older prisoners, but the older prisoners' group could not be held during 2021 because of restrictions.

5.4.7 2021 saw an increase in the number of younger prisoners being housed in Full Sutton, some with very long sentences. In March 2021 only 30 prisoners were under the age of 30 (around 5%); by October 93 prisoners fell into that category (around 18%). This has, and will, present challenges as these younger prisoners assimilate and become used to their sentences.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 The chaplaincy team has been in attendance throughout the pandemic and has continued to support prisoners individually and collectively when possible. Corporate worship stopped at the beginning of the year and began again in July, largely on a wing-by-wing basis to lessen mixing and restrict the spread of the virus.

5.6 Complaints

5.6.1 Prisoners at Full Sutton know how to access the prison's and Spectrum's (the healthcare provider) complaints systems, and how they can appeal if necessary.

5.6.2 There has been a focus on the timeliness and quality of responses to prisoners' complaints this year. Monthly quality assurance (QA) reviews have been undertaken by the senior management team (SMT). The Governor also invited the IMB to conduct an independent quality assurance review of responses. Although this was primarily aimed at improving the standard of responses, it also enabled the IMB

to judge whether prisoners were treated fairly by those responding to their complaints. The SMT used the outcomes of the IMB reviews to give feedback to their staff.

5.6.3 The IMB found that the majority of prisoners' complaints were treated fairly. Most responses (around 70% at the end of the year) were satisfactory or good, and the proportion of good responses remained reasonably consistent at between 30% and 35%. Good responses not only clearly addressed the issues complained of, but were also polite, respectful, constructive and, where appropriate, offered an apology. In replying, staff also resisted the temptation to rise to any inflammatory comments in the complaint.

5.6.4 Although there was a decrease during the year in the proportion of complaints that the IMB found to be unsatisfactory, from around 50% at the beginning to around 25-30% at the end, there remained a persistent minority of responses that needed improvement. In those cases, prisoners were not always treated fairly. The authors variously did not appear to recognise the need to answer complaints in a formal manner or answer them fairly, and showed a lack of respect and understanding about the impact on the prisoner of the matter complained of. Some responses lacked clarity, displayed apparent frustration with the complainer, used an impolite or belittling tone, failed to address the prisoner by name, or failed to offer an apology where appropriate.

5.6.5 Through its monitoring, the IMB has found that there are examples of good practice within the prison that should be used to inform complaint handling more broadly, particularly in operational areas, so that a more consistent quality of response and fairness is achieved. In 2022 the prison should maintain its focus on improving the quality of responses, and the IMB will continue to monitor their quality and report findings to the SMT.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

6.1.1 Spectrum Community Health CIC provides primary, general and mental health services within the prison, including outpatient services, chronic disease management, health promotion programmes and referral to secondary care consultant services. Towards the end of the year, Spectrum took responsibility for providing all psychiatric support services for prisoners in the CSC.

6.1.2 At the end of 2021 there were four full-time equivalent posts staffed by agency or bank nurses, similar to 2020. These staff were appropriately experienced, having worked previously either within the long term and high security estate or in psychiatric care environments.

6.1.3 Spectrum also operated the prison's eight-cell in-patient unit, comprising six healthcare cells and two safer custody cells as well as a palliative care cell.

6.1.4 Overall, the IMB received fewer applications in 2021 about the provision of healthcare and the availability of staff. 6.1.4 Overall, the IMB received slightly fewer applications in 2021 about the provision of healthcare and the availability of healthcare staff.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 Despite the restrictions in place at the start of 2021 and the need to minimise contact to restrict the spread of the Covid, regular clinics continued to run, albeit with fewer prisoners waiting together in groups. GP, nurse and podiatry clinics continued and there were regular dentist and optician clinics. Prisoners continued to be referred to outside hospitals when needed, and more use was made of telephone consultations. Chronic disease management operated as usual, including MRI scanning, with the mobile unit visiting the prison four times during the year.

6.2.2 The vaccination of prisoners against Covid was carried out to the same timescales and on the same basis as vaccinations in the community. By the end of 2021, 71% of prisoners were double vaccinated and 62% had had a third dose. Prisoners can choose not to be vaccinated, in the same way as members of the community.

6.2.3 Healthy living groups, which were planned to address such things as diet, weight gain and exercise, could not become established as planned during the year. The Board will monitor the progress of these plans in 2022. In an attempt to encourage a healthier lifestyle, prisoners' monthly 1kg allowance of sugar was reduced to quarterly.

6.2.4 The implementation of revised NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guidance for reducing or removing the use of opiate-based pain killers such as co-codamol to treat long-term chronic pain initially resulted in prisoners' prescriptions being summarily withdrawn, or them being given notice, without any face-to-face consultation. This caused anxiety and concern and resulted in a number of prisoners making applications to the IMB. After discussion, Spectrum changed their management of affected prisoners, who now receive a face-to-face consultation prior to withdrawal of medication.

6.2.5 In 2020 the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman conducted an investigation into the death of a prisoner at Full Sutton. The Ombudsman's report was published in 2021. The Ombudsman found that the care the prisoner, who had recently transferred into Full Sutton from a secure hospital, received was not equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community. He did not receive an initial health assessment on his first day at Full Sutton, and there was no care plan appropriate to his complex physical health needs. When the prisoner began a period of isolation after he arrived, in accordance with Covid procedures at the time, daily welfare checks and clinical observations were not recorded as they should have been.

6.2.6 As a result of these findings, procedures have changed and been reinforced, including a new reception process. Training for prison reception officers and Spectrum staff has taken place; performance is monitored regularly.

6.3 Mental health

6.3.1 Around 10% of prisoners are on the mental health team's caseload and approximately 4% participate in drug rehabilitation or addiction programmes. This is broadly similar to last year. There was usually mental health input at rule 45 boards in the segregation unit, and in those ACCT reviews that IMB members attended.

6.3.2 Until lockdown restrictions were significantly eased, potentially vulnerable prisoners, including those with mental health problems, were visited weekly by wing officers to maintain contact and check on their wellbeing. The IMB has reviewed assurance monitoring reports, and is satisfied that the prison maintains oversight and that monitoring is regular.

6.3.3 Prisoners were also able to self-refer to the mental health team and referral forms were made available to prisoners in the prisoner newsletter.

6.4 Social care

6.4.1 The Board is aware of a number of examples of social care assessments being undertaken during the year for prisoners in need of adaptations or aids, and of in-cell adjustments being made. In some cases, prisoners had been left without their disability aids on transfer into Full Sutton, often a result of inadequate preparation by the transferring prison.

6.4.2 Access to social care assessments for prisoners appears to be straightforward, with good interaction between the disabilities liaison officer and the local authority social services department.

6.5 Exercise, regime

6.5.1 The regime for prisoners varied during the year depending on restriction levels, which either mirrored the position in the community, or were the result of levels of infection amongst prisoners and staff and within prison wings and units.

6.5.2 The prison moved to Stage 4 restrictions (the highest level) in January 2021 which meant, as in 2020, that the regime operated in cohorts, with defined, smaller groups of prisoners leaving their cells only for showers, phone calls and exercise on the yards. There was no face-to-face education (paragraph 7.1.2) or use of gym facilities. Only essential workshops were open (paragraph 7.2.2), and during that time, PE instructors offered activities on wing exercise yards. Stage 3 restrictions were applied in April, which allowed the resumption of attendance at the gym, barbering, and limited face-to-face education, but there was no association time. The regime gradually became less restricted until November when a Stage 1 regime (very close to the pre-pandemic regime) was put in place, which enabled part-time working, education and association to resume. This was, however, short-lived because of the renewed spread of infection. The prison reverted to Stage 2 on 16 December, Stage 3 on 24 December and Stage 4 at the beginning of 2022.

6.5.3 The IMB is satisfied that during all levels of restriction prisoners continued to receive access to showers, exercise and the telephone, and that prison managers sought to reduce restrictions quickly when it was safe to do so. Recognising that being able to use the gym helps with prisoner health, mood and their ability to cope, the prison sought to enable prisoners to return to the gym as soon as possible after each period of restriction. Prisoners themselves were very pleased to return, even though the gym had to operate in a Covid-safe manner and there were limitations on the equipment that could be used and on the numbers attending. Plans to run some accredited YMCA courses on wellbeing, fitness and sport could not be implemented in 2021, and have been held over until 2022.

6.5.4 New equipment was installed in the gym, the wings and the CSC, and improvements made to the fabric of the gym area. A multi-function room was established in the workshop and college area for use by discrete groups of prisoners, such as the over-60s.

6.5.5 In March 2021 the IMB conducted a prisoner lockdown survey to assess prisoners' experience and how they were coping. A year had passed since lockdown restrictions had begun, during which time the Board's ability to visit the prison had been severely reduced. Questionnaires were sent to 233 prisoners, 35% of the prison's population. Seventy-six completed forms were returned, a rate of 37%.

6.5.6 The majority of those replying appeared to have coped reasonably well. Most agreed that the additional restrictions were necessary and felt they had been kept safe from the virus. The majority also experienced no problems with the availability of showers, exercise, soap and hand sanitiser, receipt of mail, contact with families by video link, or the wearing of masks. However, a significant minority, 43%, reported experiencing difficulty accessing the telephone.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

6.6.1 The planned introduction of Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous groups, planned for 2021, did not take place due to lockdown restrictions. It is intended that they will be established in 2022. The Board will monitor this.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education

7.1.1 At the beginning of January 2021, the prison was at Stage 4 restriction levels, which meant there was no face-to-face contact between prisoners and tutors. Learning was in-cell and was marked remotely with feedback given in writing. Although numbers enrolling for in-cell work were lower than expected, success rates and achievement levels were high. Those that undertook the in-cell learning reported high satisfaction levels (92%). From April, tutors began to deliver face-to-face sessions separately on each wing on a rota basis.

7.1.2 Classroom-based teaching did not begin again until September 2021. It was then conducted with groups of prisoners from only one wing at a time on a rota basis, to lessen the risk of infection, and prisoners undertook two weeks' classroom learning and six weeks' in-cell work to complete their course. The number of learners was limited because of Covid restrictions and, at times, because of a shortage of prison officers who could be deployed to the education area.

7.1.3 It was not until 6 December, four weeks after the prison moved to Stage 1 restrictions, that mixed groups of prisoners, (i.e. from different wings) began to receive tuition in a classroom setting in the education area. However, that was short-lived. As a result of a national directive made in the light of increased infections in the community, and the reinstatement by the prison of Stage 3 restrictions, all face-to-face education and training ceased, and reverted again to in-cell learning. At the time of writing, the end of January 2022, this remains the position.

7.1.4 All in all, therefore, since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, and looking across 2020 and 2021, prisoners have received very limited learning opportunities.

7.1.5 Before the pandemic, in 2019, both the IMB and Ofsted, as part of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons' inspection of Full Sutton, were critical of the educational provision at the prison, and recommended that the breadth of provision needed to improve. While the continued erratic nature of both the pandemic and the restrictions has without doubt presented difficulties, there is a need to re-establish a culture of education and learning amongst prisoners. The IMB will continue to monitor this in 2022.

7.1.6 The education peer-mentoring scheme, introduced last year, has been successful. Two mentors have progressed to a level where they can now plan and deliver some teaching and are working towards an award in education and training.

7.2 Vocational training, work

7.2.1 In the IMB's report for 2019 we recommended that the provision of meaningful work for prisoners be improved. Plans to provide more workshops in 2020 had to be postponed because of the pandemic, and this happened again in 2021.

7.2.2 At the start of 2021 the only work available for prisoners was in the kitchen, in the DHL distribution hub (which supplies goods to other prisons), or as a cleaner, laundry orderly or painter. Jobs were therefore not available to most prisoners. Apart from the kitchens and DHL, all workshops remained closed until mid-July, when two others opened on a very limited basis. After a further pause because of Covid outbreaks, the textiles, bicycle repair, Ministry of Defence and contract services workshops gradually reopened in September, with prisoners from only one or two wings being allocated to each workshop, to limit mixing. Prisoners were employed on a part-time basis, working either in the morning or afternoon, to enable as many prisoners as possible to be able to work. However, workshops did not remain open continuously due to staff shortage.

7.2.3 Workshops closed again at the end of 2021 as the prison moved to stage 4 restrictions and, at the time of writing, the end of January 2022, they remain closed.

7.2.4 During the first half of the year when most workshops were closed, prisoners who already had a job were furloughed and remained on full pay (usually £13.20 per week). All other prisoners who were eligible to apply for work, even though none was available for them, were paid a 'jobseekers allowance' of £6 per week. When workshops reopened, prisoners continued to be paid full-time pay although they could work only part-time, reflecting the fact that full-time work was not available and thus their ability to earn was restricted. These arrangements will cease in 2022.

7.2.5 The policy applied by the prison to the allocation of work during the year was rigorous but fair, and the pay arrangements in place for most of the year recognised the difficulties prisoners could face through the absence of paid work. During 2021 the IMB received relatively few applications (14) about work and purposeful activity.

7.2.6 In 2022, the rate of pay a prisoner will receive will be dependent on engagement with a number of factors, including his sentence plan, education, interaction with staff and attitude to work.

7.2.7 Plans remain in place to open the new, delayed, workshops in 2022, in particular two wood mills, a recycling centre, work producing LED lighting components and a barista station in the industries and college area. The prison hopes to be able to offer prisoners accreditation in some areas of work.

7.2.8 The IMB will continue to monitor closely the availability and allocation of work.

7.3 Offender management, progression

7.3.1 In 2020 we reported that, because of national HMPPS Covid restrictions, there had been an almost complete lack of opportunity for prisoners to progress through their offending behaviour programmes (OBPs). In the second quarter of 2021, OBPs restarted under a nationally-adopted framework. Programmes were offered to those

within defined priority groups, for example those whose programmes had been suspended in 2020 mid-treatment, and prisoners who were due for release or parole within the next 12 months. Covid prevention guidelines meant that programmes were delivered in smaller groups or on a one-to-one basis. Therefore, the delivery of OBPs in 2021 was still much reduced on pre-pandemic levels.

7.3.2 Some steps were taken to mitigate the impact of the reduced availability of OBPs. Between 40 and 50 prisoners took the opportunity to complete self-analysis workbooks, first introduced in 2020, which enabled them to provide evidence of their strengths and progress, and how they were managing their own risk.

7.3.3 All prisoners are in possession of an up-to-date sentence plan, which promotes engagement with key workers, prison offender managers (POMs) and psychology staff. Written contribution forms, introduced at the start of the pandemic, were retained and allowed prisoners additional participation in the preparation of their OASys (offender assessment system), category A, parole and re-categorisation reviews, even when Covid-safe meetings were reintroduced. This ensured they had the maximum opportunity to be involved in issues which they rightly saw as being pivotal to their journey through their sentence. Work began in 2021 to link more closely sentence plans with education, training, employment activity and other risk prevention work. This enables the progress of prisoners serving long-term sentences to be recognised, as risk reduction work is not always feasible early in their sentence. POMs, psychology staff and interventions staff are now co-located to promote better and more extensive communication and consultation.

7.3.4 Improvements in sentence planning are to be welcomed, particularly in the context of reduced access to OBPs, referred to above. Nevertheless, Covid restrictions have impacted on POMs' ability to engage fully with prisoners when completing assessments and relevant reports. Staff feel that this has impacted upon the prisoners' ability to demonstrate their progression/input into the sentence plan.

7.3.5 Category A reviews were paused for six months between March and September 2020. This had a knock-on effect and led to further disruption of reviews in 2021. Prisoners who had been due to be reviewed in those months had to be given new dates; in some cases, this resulted in an 18-month gap between reviews.

7.3.6 The numbers of indeterminate sentence for public protection (IPP) prisoners continued to decrease and now stands at 10. All are over tariff. Bi-monthly meetings to review their support needs continued in 2021, although, as with other prisoners, their access to specialist support and OBPs has been limited.

7.4 Family contact

7.4.1 The scheme known as 'Purple Visits', by which prisoners have face-to-face contact with their family by video link, which was established in 2020, remains popular, and the number of available sessions increased during the year. Face-to-face visit sessions resumed in April but were restricted to family members only; in August prisoners were able to receive visits from both family and friends, and the length of a visit was increased in November. The prison has been sensitive to prisoners' needs for the resumption of face-to-face visiting, and reduced restrictions when it was safe to do so; availability was also adjusted to suit demand.

7.4.2 The additional weekly telephone credit of £5 introduced by HMPPS in 2020 at the start of the pandemic, but later reduced, was reintroduced in December. However, as referenced in 6.5.6, 43% of respondents to the prisoner lockdown survey reported experiencing difficulty accessing the telephone.

7.5 Resettlement planning

7.5.1 Very few prisoners are released directly from Full Sutton. Most move to a lower category prison prior to release, but some require continued management in high security conditions. The IMB is aware of satisfactory resettlement work this year for those who were released directly from Full Sutton.

The work of the IMB

The work of the IMB has again been curtailed this year as the pandemic continued. The Board's systems, established in 2020, for monitoring remotely by attending meetings via teleconference and through regular telephone contact with governors, wing managers and functional heads continued until we were able to return to the prison in person in June 2021. Although our attendance was more limited than before the pandemic, IMB members again attended meetings concerning prisoner welfare and rule 45 board reviews in person, and saw prisoners in person on exercise yards. However, normal visits to residential wings and smaller units were not possible, because of levels of infection and restrictions, and because workshops and the education area remained closed for most of the year.

The number of members reduced again by one this year. Some recruitment took place towards the end of the year, and we look forward to a new member starting early in 2022. Further recruitment will take place in 2022.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	17
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	9
Total number of visits to the establishment	182
Total no of monitoring telephone calls	262
Total number of shifts on the 0800-telephone line	1
Total number of segregation reviews attended	26

Applications to the IMB (including via the 0800 telephone line)

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	9	11
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	10	17
C	Equality	10	6
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	10	14
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	14	16
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	4	8
F	Food and kitchens	3	8
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	26	24
H1	Property within this establishment	7	4
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	13	6
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	5	1
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorization	4	5
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	22	28
K	Transfers	8	4
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	16	38
	Total number of applications	161	190

Note: 14 of the above applications were received via the 0800-telephone application line.



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