



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Warren Hill
Grove Road
Hollesley, Nr Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP12 3BF

MoJ ref: SUB 92679

6 January 2022

Dear Chair,

**HMP WARREN HILL: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2020 – 31 MAY 2021**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 May 2021. 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 and I note the challenges faced. I was saddened to hear that there was one death in custody during the reporting year. My officials take recommendations from the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman very seriously.

I acknowledge the Board's repeated concerns regarding the delay in publication of the new Prisoners' Property policy framework. Further to my predecessor's response earlier this year, the Board will be aware that following a pause in the development of the new framework due to COVID-19, a meeting took place in August 2020 with IMB representatives. The feedback received from those members was considered alongside the comments received from other stakeholders, and comments from subsequent operational engagement. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has now circulated the draft framework with internal and external stakeholders, including the IMB Secretariat and the IMB representatives previously consulted, and the large number of comments received are being considered. As a result, the framework is expected to be published early next year.

The framework will provide greater direction and standardisation on a national basis and has been designed with procedural justice at its core. It strengthens guidance on known problem areas such as volumetric control and seeks to ensure prisoners' property is managed efficiently, effectively, consistently and with care and respect.

Although it has been another challenging reporting period, I am pleased that once again the Board considers HMP Warren Hill to be a safe prison for both prisoners and staff. It was encouraging to read the Board's comments praising the efforts of managers and staff in supporting prisoners during the pandemic. I too am grateful for their continued hard work and professionalism during these difficult times. I was pleased to read that family members have been able where appropriate, to participate in case reviews by conference call and that this development has now been embedded in the new Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork process. It was also encouraging to hear of the excellent support provided to faith groups and individuals during the Board's reporting period.

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 Warren Hill.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Victoria Atkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'V' and a long, sweeping 'A'.

VICTORIA ATKINS MP

HMP WARREN HILL: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JUNE 2020 – 31 MAY 2021

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

In-Cell Laptops

A key strategic objective of the 2021-2022 *Digital, Data, and Technology Strategy* is to give the people in our care the digital tools and technology to support their rehabilitation. Within that strategy, we have committed to making laptops available in prisoners' cells in nine prisons through the In-Cell Technology programme and we now have laptops in four prisons, through which prisoners can access canteen ordering, make applications, and support learning. Unfortunately, HMP Warren Hill is not one of the prisons involved in the programme this year.

We aim to continue our work on this programme and continue rollout to more of the prison estate in the coming years. It is imperative to note that this opportunity cannot be realised without significant investment in digital infrastructure, in cell devices and the implementation of an operating model to support what amounts to an estate wide transformation. So whilst nine prisons will be digitally enabled by April 2022 the equipping of the balance of the estate is currently unfunded. We are investigating sources for future funding but realistically we will have a considerable share of the estate unable to offer in-cell laptops without further funding.

Provision of Food

We recognise the logistical issues within the current arrangements of supplying meals from another establishment. The quality and temperature of meals is monitored on a daily basis so that they are adequate in both quality and meeting dietary requirements. To enhance the offer to prisoners, three new meal trolleys have been purchased which maintain temperature better and the purchase of a further three trolleys has just been approved. HMP Warren Hill will investigate and resolve complaints locally so that prisoners are not adversely impacted.

As part of the establishment's progression through the national framework for easing coronavirus-related restrictions, 'opt out' has been re-introduced where stage three prisoners, those on the highest levels of the enhanced behaviour monitoring (EBM), are given the choice to cook for themselves. This has been well received. Any future capacity expansion for HMP Warren Hill will include a submission for the on-site preparation of meals.