



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Risley

**For reporting year
1 April 2021 – 31 March 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 Risley is one of the largest category C training prisons in the UK, housing 1,014 male prisoners.

The prison continues to be a hub for foreign national prisoners in the north west and Home Office Immigration Enforcement (formerly UK Border Agency) staff are permanently based in the prison. The population profile showed that, at the end of this reporting year, there were 100+ foreign nationals, approximately 400 prisoners who have committed sexual offences, 50 prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP) and 70 lifers.

The Risley site consists of seven residential wings, two of which house vulnerable prisoners. There is also a care and separation unit with its own outside exercise area. The training facilities within the establishment provide 12 workshops and 14 education classrooms, together with a library. There is also a health centre with full-time doctors and nursing staff. In addition, dental, podiatry and physiotherapy services are provided. Other facilities include a sports hall and two gyms. To cater for the various faith groups of the prison, there is a multi-faith centre, which is supported by several ministers from the various faiths.

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

3.1.1 Board evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, surveys, and prisoner applications.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

3.2.1 It is the opinion of the Board that the overall safety of the prison meets a high standard throughout. As the following report will demonstrate, the prison's reception processing unit works closely with the transport contractor, with consideration being given to the risks posed by Covid-19.

3.2.2 Initial health screenings for new arrivals were undertaken promptly by a registered nurse. Immediate healthcare needs were identified, including mental health and substance misuse, as well as completion of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents if deemed necessary. Initial cell-sharing risk assessments were also carried out.

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

3.2.3 It is the opinion of the Board that, overall, prisoners were treated fairly. The relationships between staff and the prisoners were good, courteous, and respectful.

3.2.4 The prison's ongoing focus on decent and humane treatment was demonstrated through the decency agenda introduced by the safer living department.

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

3.2.5 It is the opinion of the Board that the prisoners' health and wellbeing services were good. Healthcare needs were addressed by the health centre staff, which included full-time doctors, nursing staff, dental, podiatry and physiotherapy services, plus a full mental health team, who provided an invaluable service.

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

3.2.6 Prisoners were encouraged to develop skills through good educational provision and training in a range of workshops. All agencies were aware of prisoners' imminent release. The employment advisory board will help to drive forward the changes needed to modernise the work and training offered within the prison.

3.2.7 Family contact was impacted; to maintain family links and based on planned improvements, the roll out of in-cell telephony was introduced.

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

3.3.1 Can you advise what discussions are being held with Home Office ministers in order to help improve the ongoing repatriation/deportation procedures for foreign nationals? This question was referred to the Minister in last year's report.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

3.3.2 To resolve the continuing ongoing issues regarding the loss of prisoners' property, in spite of the new property framework. Does the Prison Service have any plans to introduce a streamlined system for handling prisoners' property when being transferred between prisons to reduce distress to prisoners and minimise the number of compensation claims?

TO THE GOVERNOR

3.3.3 The Board still has ongoing concerns about the efficient provision of prisoners' property. What plans does the prison have regarding developing a more efficient, consistent, and streamlined approach to handling and allocating prisoners' property, on arrival, departure and movement within the prison?

3.3.4 In the Board's opinion, showers across all wings continue to be in need of major refurbishment. What plans does the prison have regarding a resolution to this issue?

3.3.5 The Board remains concerned about the issue regarding cell clearances. What actions are being taken to carry out cell clearances promptly when a prisoner moves location within the prison, to reduce the loss of property? (See paragraph 5.1.3.)

3.4 Progress since the last report

3.4.1 Family contact has been impacted throughout the year and to maintain family links, the roll out of in-cell telephony has been introduced. In-person visits have become more frequent during this year and are preferred over social video calls.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

4.1.1 Reception is the unit for all prisoners entering or leaving HMP Risley. During the reporting year, as Covid restrictions have gradually relaxed, the number of prisoners arriving at the prison averaged 25-30 new arrivals each week, many with complex personal needs. During this reporting period, the transport arrangements were focused on the management of the risks posed by Covid-19; escort vans continued to be cleaned and sanitised.

4.1.2 Due consideration was given to the mix of the population received into the establishment, with mainstream prisoners and those convicted of sexual offences arriving on different days.

4.1.3 Prisoners were served hot food and drinks, and all new arrivals could contact family and friends. In general, prisoners were positive about their treatment there.

4.1.4 There was access to decent toilet and hygiene facilities, as well as a television in the holding room.

4.1.5 Arrival and reception procedures adequately focused on the risks posed by Covid-19, with new arrivals monitored for the virus via the reception screening processes, followed by health screenings undertaken promptly by a registered nurse. Immediate healthcare needs were identified, including mental health and substance misuse needs, as well as the completion of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents if deemed necessary. Initial cell-sharing risk assessments and individual safety reviews were also carried out prior to the newly arrived prisoners being moved into their first night accommodation as a cohort, where they remained for at least 14 days.

4.1.6 On arrival, all prisoners' immediate basic needs were catered for, including appropriate toiletries for at least the first 24 hours; clean, reasonably fitting clothing, and items suitable for ethnicities where appropriate; one-to-one interactive support, with prisoners given the opportunity to declare their immediate complex needs.

4.1.7 The X-ray body scanner was fully operational within the reception area, and it was successful in making finds when new admissions arrived, including mobile phone concealment and small ingested parcels located in the stomach.

4.1.8 While the location and retrieval of prisoner property continued to be an issue, the Board did note some improvements introduced by reception staff which ensured that all property in the property store that was designated as reasonable for prisoners to have was issued to them in a prompt and timely manner.

4.1.9 The needs of prisoners arriving, through reception to induction, were assessed in interactive peer-led induction sessions in the two specially designated areas, on a one-to-one basis, and in separate booths. The induction rooms were clean and bright, with adequate information posters clearly visible around the room. In general,

prisoners were very complimentary about the induction process and felt that the pace and delivery of the sessions enabled them to fully understand all relayed information.

4.1.10 A comprehensive induction pack is now sent to all new receptions, which may be translated into one of 11 different languages on request, and free reception letters are provided.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.2.1 The Board is pleased to report that there was a good level of support for prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm at Risley, which was well supported by the ACCT case management process.

4.2.2 During this reporting year, the total number of self-harm incidents reported was 405 compared to 386 in the previous year – an increase of just under 5%.

		2021/22	2020/21
Incidents of self-harm	Total number of incidents	405	386
	Number of individuals	133	130
	First-time harmers	30	33

4.2.3 The top three methods of self-harm used during this reporting year were ligatures, ingestion and cutting.

4.2.4 Safety champions were introduced on the wings, and they continued to help identify mental health needs more easily and more quickly.

4.2.5 The Listener scheme increased the number of Listeners on the wings, which was 27 at the start of this reporting year, to cover both the wings and receptions, promoting support as soon as prisoners arrive.

4.2.6 There were two deaths over the reporting year. One was apparently self-inflicted and the other was of a prisoner who had recently been released from custody.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 Overall, this reporting year saw a steady decline in violence when compared to the previous period. This reduction was the result of improved prison safety, as well as the effort invested in reducing trends of violence.

		2021/22	2020/21
Number of assaults	Total	164	212
	On staff	48	67
	Prisoner on prisoner	116	145
Number of disorder and damage incidents	Incidents of damage	262	307
	Incidents at height	40	42
	Barricade incidents	27	53
	Hostage	1	3
	Fires	8	10

4.3.2 The safer custody team was well integrated into the fabric of the prison, and linked robustly into other key functions, teams, and departments. Both the weekly SIM and the monthly safety custody meeting continued throughout the reporting year, focusing on managing and supporting perpetrators and victims of violence alike, with a wide range of data being regularly analysed to identify emerging trends and triggers, and to highlight any hotspots. In addition, consideration and discussions took place at

these meetings, with a view to introducing new initiatives that will contribute to and address the ongoing management of violence at the establishment, recognising that punishment alone will not reduce levels of violence. Examples have included, but are not limited to:

- upskilling and training staff on the importance of conducting thorough cell-sharing risk assessments
- the wearing of body-worn video cameras (BWVC) as a de-escalation measure and the introduction of turning these on at mealtimes, when some assaults have taken place out of the view of closed-circuit television (CCTV) (for example, behind serveries)
- targeted searching sessions by the Northwest Area Search Team, involving whole wings at a time
- safer custody champions, who actively link into challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) and attend prisoner council forums and safer custody meetings, in order to assist in establishing and highlighting any issue that might trigger violence.

4.3.3 All acts of violence and antisocial behaviour were appropriately challenged and, where necessary, the incentives scheme, CSIPs, and/or adjudication processes were employed to challenge and address this behaviour, encouraging prisoners to contribute to life at HMP Risley in a positive manner.

4.3.4 The CSIP process was used well to manage and monitor the more complex and problematic prisoners who present a disproportionately damaging effect on individuals, staff or the establishment as a whole, so that they may understand the reasons behind their violent behaviour and receive insight and guidance into managing that behaviour in a more positive way that does not include violence. These plans also work with the victim in each case, identifying what support they might need and implementing this support at the earliest opportunity.

4.3.5 Netting and grilles on both A and C wings continued to prevent the ingress of drugs into the prison, and resulted in a drop in the number of prisoners under the influence of illicit substances and, consequently, a reduction in violent incidents.

		2021/22	2020/21
Number of finds	Total number of finds	452	743
	Drugs	116	220
	Phones	90	227
	Weapons	89	94
	Alcohol	157	202

4.4 Vulnerable prisoners, safeguarding

4.4.1 Case management of vulnerable prisoners, including self-isolators, was good. The safer custody team took proactive responsibility in monitoring each case, ensuring that documents are generally completed to a good standard and evidenced the effective interactions between staff and prisoners in each case. Regular SIMs were held, in which the needs of prisoners were considered, and support measures across a range of safeguarding issues implemented.

4.4.2 The Listener scheme has continued throughout this reporting period.

4.4.3 Vulnerable prisoners continued to be managed safely on a separate residential wing, which provides a safe haven when they find living on the main wings problematic.

4.5 Use of force

4.5.1 There have been fewer use of force incidents during this reporting period compared to the previous year – 322 compared to 334, a reduction of approximately 3.5%. Of the 322 incidents this reporting year, 293 were classified as low-level interventions (91%), such as guiding holds and application of rigid bar handcuffs (RBH), one as a medium-level intervention (0.31%) and 28 as high-level interventions (8.69%). The introduction of RBH, issued to all band 3–5 officers through training, has also impacted on the level of force used, as RBH de-escalate incidents and positively impact the level of force used within these incidents. Use of RBH also speeds up gaining full control of prisoners, reducing injuries both to them and to staff.

4.5.2 The number of incidents involving the use of PAVA spray has increased, with the number of instances standing at 28 for 2021/22 compared to 10 for 2020/21.

		2021/22	2020/21
Total number of incidents involving PAVA	Total number of incidents	28	10

4.5.3 The number of incidents involving the use of batons reduced, with one instance in this reporting period.

4.5.4 There was no use of mechanical restraints (that is, body belt or metal cuffs) during this reporting period.

4.5.5 Managerial oversight of use of force is to be commended. All incidents were reviewed on a weekly basis, identifying best practice as well as issues of concern, and the monthly meeting analysed incidents in greater depth via written reports as well as BWVC and CCTV footage. These monthly meetings also scrutinised data looking for any possible trends in the use of force, and to determine that incidents were reasonable, justified, and proportionate, as well as non-discriminatory across age,

ethnicity and religion, using the meetings as a vehicle for promptly addressing any issues if and when they were identified.

4.5.6 Prisoners who displayed challenging behaviour or had physical or learning disabilities or personality disorders had care/management plans put in place, highlighting risk factors, and setting out alternative management protocols which sought to reduce the likelihood of restraint techniques becoming necessary. The care/management plans were emailed to the use of force coordinator. After attending the use of force meetings, the prisoner equality representative, as appointed wellbeing mentor, aimed to work with those prisoners identified.

4.5.7 Any documented actions arising from the monthly meetings were incorporated into the control and restraint training sessions, along with the relevant BWVC/CCTV evidence.

4.5.8 Prisoner representatives regularly conducted structured quality assurance checks on a sample of records of use of force, with anonymisation in each case. This exercise has been highly successful in building and increasing trust across the establishment.

4.6 Preventing illicit items

4.6.1 The prison reacted well to the challenge of reducing the ingress of drugs into the establishment, with electronic detection equipment being used to good effect, especially the introduction of an X-ray body scanner, which proved particularly successful in the identification, retrieval, and confiscation of illicit substances (see also paragraph 4.1.7).

4.6.2 HMP Risley continued to react well to the changes in drug supply routes, and in particular to the increase in attempts to send letters and documents impregnated with drugs into the establishment. A catalogue of official stationery from legal advisers, which had been verified with the sender, assisted in detecting bogus rule 39 (legal and confidential) mail.

4.6.3 The prison continues to work with Cheshire Police to reduce the supply of drugs into the prison by decreasing the number of drones and throwovers.

4.6.4 The year-on-year trend in the number of fermenting liquid (hooch) finds also declined. (See chart within 4.3.5).

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1 The residential areas were clean and tidy, but many of the areas are ageing; they are in need of comprehensive refurbishment to be in line with the Equality Act.

5.1.2 Shower surveys continued to be conducted by the Board during this reporting year, and the condition of the showers continued to be of concern. In the Board's opinion, showers across all wings continue to need major refurbishment, with many out of action for long periods of time, as well as peeling paint and tiling. In addition, the issue of maintaining the consistent provision of hot water for showering, as well as adequate water pressure, remains unresolved, as this is still proving problematic and requires frequent attention.

5.1.3 The Board remains concerned that cell clearances were not carried out promptly when a prisoner moved location within the prison, which can lead to loss of property.

5.1.4. Discussions continued regarding the Board's concerns over clothes and footwear not being received from stores to new arrivals. Board members are proactive in discussing this ongoing issue, with a view to resolving the matter with the management team.

5.1.5 The catering contingency plans were strong and are constantly under review. The Board is still confident that, should any unforeseen issues arise, the contingency arrangements would prove adequate to maintain a continued service.

5.2 Segregation

5.2.1 Prisoners located in the segregation unit (care and separation unit; CSU) fall into three categories: those who have committed misdemeanours, those facing threats from other prisoners and put in the CSU for their own protection, and those segregated for good order and/or discipline (GOOD) reasons.

5.2.2 The unit comprises 12 cells, including one constant observation cell, special accommodation cells, one holding cell and a meeting room used for adjudications, GOOD reviews and general meetings. There are a number of showers, toilets, a small kitchen and dedicated exercise yards.

5.2.3 All prisoners were seen by healthcare staff on arrival in the CSU, and they monitored the prisoners thereafter on a regular basis. A governor, healthcare worker and a chaplaincy member visited the CSU daily. The Board visited all prisoners weekly.

5.2.4 Under statutory regulations, the Board should be informed of any new prisoners as soon as they arrive on the unit, so that a member may visit the individual as soon as possible, to ensure that all their statutory needs are met.

5.2.5 GOOD reviews were carried out routinely as required; Board members attended. Board members followed up with a notification to the Chair via the duty governor of the outcome via secure email.

5.2.6 The Board has been able to resume monitoring adjudications.

5.2.7 The Board considers the CSU to be a well-run unit, with staff providing a high standard of care. It continues to be clean and relatively peaceful, given its purpose. At a time of extreme difficulty in relocating prisoners from the CSU to other establishments, the Board has witnessed the hard work that officers put in during the reviews, particularly to achieve relocation to other establishments, when appropriate to do so. Prisoners on the unit have informed us that they are well treated by the officers, who form a small, dedicated and appropriately trained team. However, the Board remains concerned about the vulnerable prisoners with mental health issues held in the CSU. We believe that more appropriate accommodation should be provided for these individuals.

5.2.8 Comprehensive CSU statistics were kept by the prison, and the segregation monitoring and review group met regularly to monitor trends and to address any key issues.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships, key workers

5.3.1 Prisoner information champions continued to improve overall communications.

5.3.2 Prisoner council meetings were run every month by the senior management team and provided prisoners with a useful and constructive outlet to bring their thoughts and views to the table for discussion and consideration. These were well received by the prisoners.

5.3.3 Each prisoner at HMP Risley had an identified key worker, who used their time to constructively support the prisoner through their sentence by building a working relationship, identifying concerns, and signposting the prisoner to the relevant support where applicable.

5.3.4 The allocated time for key workers was 45 minutes per week spent with each prisoner, unfortunately these sessions only took place once per month. The scheme was operating at 30% of target level required, but the prison is hoping to bring this back up to the original operating level of 90%.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 Equality and diversity continued to have a high profile and there is a clear coordinated diversity and inclusion policy, committed to 'promoting fair and equitable outcomes for all prisoners in an inclusive, supportive and tolerant environment'.

5.4.2 The initial and ongoing identification of prisoners with protected characteristics worked well and the prison had a good understanding of the make-up of its population. Equality-related data was monitored and presented for review and discussion at the regular diversity and inclusion senior management team meetings, with actions identified, agreed and monitored by the team.

5.4.3 Diversity and inclusion, including coverage of the nine protected characteristics and how to submit a discrimination incident reporting form (DIRF), if required, was comprehensively covered within the induction sessions.

5.4.4 Transgender prisoners that spoke to the Board were very happy with the care and support they received at Risley and felt that their practical needs were adequately met. In addition, they said they felt safe and did not feel compromised about being open and upfront about their gender identity.

5.4.5 All transgender prisoners at Risley were treated in line with the 2019 Framework for Operational Guidance. The Board was invited to reviews for these prisoners and attended as many as was possible.

5.4.6 Steps have been taken to improve the management of transgender prisoners' issues and the needs surrounding the provision of care – for example, ensuring that all appropriate items for transgender women were easily available to order on the canteen sheets. However, the Board would welcome appropriate toiletries and cosmetics being added to the first night induction canteen list.

5.4.7 Transgender prisoners could request clothing parcels to be sent into the prison every three months, provided that the proper application and approval process was followed.

5.4.8 Disabled prisoners were flagged up on arrival at Risley; however, the Board notes that not all areas in the prison are compliant with the Equality Act.

5.4.9 The Board recognises the good work undertaken to conduct comprehensive staff training in conjunction with the National Autistic Society to ensure that staff may more easily identify autistic prisoners, as well as helping to better address and deal with their needs.

5.4.10 Personal emergency evacuation plans and care plans have been adapted to cater for autism needs, and now all learning disability and/or mental health issues are recorded and addressed on care plans, with reasonable adjustments implemented where deemed applicable.

5.4.11 The diversity and inclusion team has worked hard with the specialist nurse practitioners in identifying those prisoners with special needs – for example autism and deafness – and addressing their individual requirements.

5.4.12 The number of foreign national prisoners has increased during this reporting year and now accounts for nearly 19% of the total population at Risley. Home Office Immigration Enforcement were housed on A wing to hold immigration surgeries which took place once a month.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 The chaplaincy team was led by a full-time Sikh chaplain, who was supported by a mix of full-time, part-time, and sessional chaplains, catering for a diverse mix of faiths, as well as celebrating the full range of multi-faith festivals throughout the year.

5.5.2 Chaplains were accessible to new receptions on the morning after their arrival.

5.5.3 Times of services were well advertised and if prisoners could not attend services for whatever reason the chaplaincy team would make every effort to visit them.

5.5.4 The chaplaincy visited segregated prisoners on a daily basis and attended GOOD reviews and ACCT sessions.

5.5.5 Chaplains gave excellent pastoral support to all prisoners, whether they followed a faith or not, and prisoners were generally very positive about the support they received from them. The chaplaincy team was well represented across the prison and attended a wide range of multi-functional meetings. They worked closely with the prisoners, providing an excellent support service on both a short- and long-term basis, as dictated by the needs of the individual prisoner.

5.5.6 The chaplains provided pastoral support for bereaved prisoners, as well as those visiting dying relatives or attending funerals. They also spoke to families, arranging compassionate visits when appropriate, as well as providing palliative religious support to both the prisoner and their family, if that is what the prisoner wanted.

5.5.7 No applications or significant issues in respect of the chaplaincy have been brought to the Board's attention during the year. Indeed, the chaplaincy has been open to the Board's enquiries about wider pastoral matters and has often assisted the Board in addressing prisoner applications in respect of personal issues.

5.6 Incentives schemes

5.6.1 Data available shows that the incentives scheme was fair and effective, and that prisoners made good progress under this scheme where it was warranted. All reviews were conducted in line with the Lammy Review recommendation 24, regarding fairness and effectiveness.

5.7 Complaints

5.7.1 A review of the prisoner complaints system was introduced in the previous reporting year and has been supported by monthly analysis of statistics to help monitor effectiveness. The senior management team has monitored these complaints at each of its meetings. Trends were identified and any emerging issues were addressed through the functional head.

5.8 Property

5.8.1 The Board recognises that there are problems with individuals' property going missing, as this remains one of the most frequent subjects of prisoner applications, many relating to transfers between prisons. We again suggest that action should be taken nationally regarding this issue.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare: general

6.1.1 Healthcare services, for both physical and mental health, are provided by Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. The service aims to provide primary and mental health services within the prison setting that are equivalent to those that would be available within a community setting.

6.1.2 The healthcare building is clean and well equipped, and regular clinics are held.

6.1.3 All ACCT reviews were attended by the mental health team representative. Following the planning and social distancing required during the Covid-19 crisis, these reviews were well attended. In this reporting year, the service provided by healthcare and mental health staff has been excellent.

6.1.4 A healthcare improvement adviser attended and offered wellbeing services both for staff and prisoners, commissioned by NHS England from Warrington Borough Council. Their role is an integral part of the prison health improvement group and ensures the implementation of the prison health improvement plan, a multidisciplinary approach to wellbeing across the whole prison.

6.1.5 Waiting room furniture is waiting to be refurbished when new materials arrive.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 C-wing was designated a health and wellbeing unit, with the north side holding prisoners who required clinical intervention, and the south side being the recovery unit. Other projects across other wings are currently in progress, including hepatitis C testing/diagnosis.

6.2.2 GP clinics take place five days a week and dental clinics four days a week, and optometry, physiotherapy and mental health appointments are also available. Waiting lists for GP, dental, optometry and other services are within national time scales; due to Covid-19, these services have been limited and there was a one to two weeks' wait to see the GP. The monthly healthcare waiting list is added to all wing notice boards.

6.2.3 Nurses attended the units to complete blood tests, ECGs and the like to try to reduce the number of prisoners having to attend the healthcare department.

6.2.4 Medication was only withdrawn for a 24-hour period when prisoners were found to be under the influence of an illicit substance, thereby ensuring that any possible medical complications were prevented.

6.2.5 There were dental sessions and optician clinics running weekly. There were many external hospital appointments every day, and access to regional inpatient beds at HMPs Preston, Liverpool and Manchester, although this process remains difficult.

6.2.6 Healthcare administered medication to those who collected medication daily, approximately 105 prisoners in the morning and 115 in the afternoon. New ID cards were issued to prisoners who collected medication daily. Medication compliance checks are completed each month.

6.3 Mental healthcare

6.3.1 All referrals were discussed at a single point of access meeting each week and either left within the mental health screening clinics, to identify each prisoner's clinical needs and allocate for the required clinical interventions, or referred to the appropriate partner agency, as required.

6.3.2 The mental healthcare unit provided secondary and primary mental health input equivalent to provision in the community, incorporating psychiatric nurses, psychological wellbeing practitioners, visiting psychiatrists and visiting advanced, nurse prescribers and counsellors.

6.4 Social care

6.4.1 Prisoners needing special aids or physical adaptations to cells or equipment generally received them in a timely manner. The Board did not have any complaints during this period from prisoners about a lack of equipment, although adequate wheelchair provision continues to be a problem.

6.4.2 It must also be noted that the Board received a lot of concerns regarding the thinness of mattresses and this is still an ongoing concern.

6.4.3 There are two social care packages available and the new provider for this is C&D Family Care Ltd.

6.5 Exercise, regime

6.5.1 All prisoners have time in the fresh air based on the Covid-19 restrictions and national directives, which meant that all prisoners were offered exercise every day.

6.5.2 Outside exercise equipment was placed on all exercise yards and this was well received.

6.5.3 It is to the credit of everyone in the prison that changes to the regime were accepted and adapted to so well. Most prisoners understood the need for restrictions in very unusual circumstances.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

6.6.1 There is a substance misuse team provided by Change Grow Live (CGL) comprising a specialist GP (substance misuse) and two nurses during the day. The CGL team continued face-to-face contact with prisoners, providing increased use of in-cell and self-help materials.

6.6.2 An incentivised substance-free living wing is being introduced at HMP Risley, and offers prisoners a safe and supportive environment in which they are able to address their substance misuse and partake in a culture of recovery.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

7.1.1 Education services are provided by Novus and library services by Livewire.

7.1.2 For most of the year library services have been curtailed. The library staff continued the delivery system which has proved very popular. The library is well-stocked and has a good selection of books, CDs, and DVDs. There has been a move to purchase books designed to encourage good mental health.

7.1.3 As lockdown conditions improved the library continued its involvement in the Shannon Trust reading scheme. Volunteer mentors were recruited and worked with prisoners who would benefit from the scheme. Throughout the year Read Ahead encouraged participants to read books of their choice.

7.1.4 Due to staff shortages for part of the year and requests from prisoners, there were fewer distraction packs provided. A new head librarian is now in post.

7.1.5 Education services had to adapt to ever-changing Covid conditions within the prison. From January 2022 face-to-face learning recommenced. A bubble system was adopted so that wings were kept separate. This meant that group sizes were small and organised on a rota basis. It was very hard to create successful groups on this basis. All education courses have been offered on a part-time basis.

7.1.6 Feedback from staff and prisoners was that a very small group size was not popular. At times prisoners may have been on their own with the tutor if other members of the group did not attend. This proved difficult for tutors and prisoners alike.

7.1.7 This year has been very atypical, and it is probably the case that education delivery has been based on a want rather than a need system. For example, someone educated to degree level accessing functional maths is not a good use of education resources but did provide the prisoner with something to do in difficult times. There should be a more appropriate matching of education and training needs as the prison moves back to normal.

7.1.8 It is pleasing to note that neurodiversity was flagged up in the education offer and that education can be adapted to different learning needs.

7.2 Vocational training, work

7.2.1 Vocational training and work opportunities were affected badly by the Covid restrictions in place throughout the year. Staff absence also hit the delivery of training courses. Work on the workshop roof overran but did not impact on delivery as much as it would have done in a normal year. Part-time work was adopted as a model for nearly everyone, with very few full-time roles continuing. This did give opportunities for purposeful activity for most prisoners.

7.2.2 The prison tried to adapt its work and training offer to the modern jobs market and demand in the local area. Construction, warehousing, and catering courses were popular, and all prisoners could take a qualification in customer service. Taking the views of prisoners into account, a business administration course is offered. The barbering course closed due to a lack of demand and the realisation it did not lead to good employment opportunities. It is hoped that this facility can be adapted to another use.

7.2.3 As with education, by necessity this year training often seems to have been offered on a want rather than need basis. A tutor in one workshop commented that they were receiving prisoners who were without the basic maths skills to access the course fully and would not be able to do the job in the real world. Moving forward there needs to be a focus on ensuring that those taking on a course have the skills to access it successfully. Tutors have tried to introduce real-world maths into lessons and there were good visual displays in workshops which demonstrated the importance of literacy and numeracy in the workplace.

7.2.4 Work within the prison was offered on a wing bubble system for most of the year. This enabled the largest number of prisoners possible to be involved in purposeful activity. Prisoners often commented on how much they enjoyed their work opportunities, especially after spending much of the previous year unable to do very much. The gardeners, wing cleaners and wing painters did an excellent job of keeping the prison looking tidy. Orderlies in areas such as reception and the chapel were extremely diligent and said they enjoyed the work.

7.2.5 One workshop was empty, and it is hoped that this could be used to further modernise the prison's work offer. Unfortunately, outside space is at a premium within the perimeter of the prison walls which does limit the possibility of providing training for jobs which have to take place outside.

7.2.6 In October the Employment Advisory Board met for the first time. This should help drive forward the changes needed to modernise the work and training offer within the prison.

7.2.7 A coding course proved popular. This would suggest that digital skills development would be worthwhile as this is now so important in the modern world. It is important to develop these skills to enable prisoners to successfully apply for work digitally, once they've left the prison system.

7.2.8 After listening to views expressed by the prison council, the learning and skills manager brokered self-employment courses via Entrepreneurs Unlocked. Many prisoners convicted of sexual offences wish to be self-employed and this helps them understand how to deal with taxes, for example, and gives 12 months' support after release. This is very worthwhile for Risley, where approximately 400 men could fall into this category.

7.3 Offender management, progression

7.3.1 For much of last year the prison had about 30-40 receptions per week. About half of them arrived without an initial offender assessment system (OASys) assessment. This is due to the bulk of them arriving from neighbouring reception prisons who are not required to do this initial work.

7.3.2. This creates a challenge for staff in the offender management unit (OMU). Their target is for all the outstanding OASys assessments to be completed within 10 weeks of arrival. This has proved to be impossible this year. In March 2022 there was a backlog of 87. Over 30 had been in the prison for longer than 10 weeks. Half of these were work in progress.

7.3.3 This reflects staff shortages within the OMU. The unit is understaffed by at least one probation officer, and another has been on long-term sick leave. An offender manager in custody (OMiC) case manager was redeployed to help with caseload in the interim until new staff arrived.

7.3.4 At the start of the Covid pandemic in March 2020 the prison undertook to increase the population of prisoners who had been convicted of sexual offences. The population almost doubled from 200 to 400. This also has had an impact on the OMU's workload due to the complexity of their cases. The OMU therefore expects the number of probation prison offender managers (POMs) to increase, and the number of prison POMs to decrease. The Board would certainly welcome an increase in staff numbers in the OMU to reflect the changing nature of the prison.

7.3.5 The prison does not offer the Horizon programme for men convicted of sexual offences. As the profile of the prison changes, it is important that this is addressed quickly. Otherwise, if it is mentioned in their sentence plan, men will have to be moved to other prisons.

7.3.6 Two prisoners contacted the Board this year about their imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentence. In each case the men had served almost double their tariff. They did not criticise the prison or the POMs working with them but felt that the system was weighted against them and that this was having an impact on their mental health.

7.3.7 The OMU was efficient and usually completed home detention curfew (HDC) assessments and re-categorisation.

7.4 Family contact

7.4.1 Family services are provided by Phoenix Futures.

7.4.2 In-cell telephony was introduced during this reporting period and resolved many of the issues that were reported in the 2020/21 annual report.

7.4.3 Family contact has been severely impacted this year as in all prisons. However, there were good processes in place to help prisoners maintain family links. For example, the roll out of in-cell telephony is now complete so prisoners can find it easier to make calls. The 'email a prisoner' scheme has also been signposted and social video calling has been in place throughout.

7.4.4 When allowed, face-to-face visits started on a two-week rotation system. For some time there was no food or drink availability and at a prison council meeting there were complaints that restrictions were more severe than at the start of the pandemic when people had not been vaccinated. One prisoner said he had stopped his visitors attending when they couldn't be offered a drink. Prisoners accepted that the prison was not making these rules and they were designed to keep people safe.

7.4.5 As Covid cases within the prison decreased the prison was able to offer table service during visits and the children's play area reopened with experienced playworkers. The visits hall is a light and airy space and there is a good visitors centre outside the prison gate.

7.4.6 Phoenix Futures were a positive force for good within the prison throughout the pandemic. They quickly adapted their role. A family support worker role was developed to help both prisoners and families who were struggling. This worker has helped prisoners and their families access other services or agencies and assisted in booking visits for older family members who have struggled to cope with modern technology. These things have helped prisoners and families cope in difficult times.

7.4.7 Family forums restarted online with quite limited attendance. However, families were overwhelmingly positive in what they had to say about the efforts the prison had taken to keep prisoners safe during the pandemic. It was interesting to hear that families felt overwhelmed by all the acronyms that are used in the criminal justice system and that they would welcome a glossary of terms.

7.4.8 There are very sound recovery plans in place. Face-to-face family forums were a priority. Family education has also been highlighted as something that needs to be developed going forward. There is also a move to work more with care leavers as they enter the system and to see what can be done for prisoners who do not have visitors. Currently the chaplaincy is co-ordinating the Prisoners' Penfriends and official Prison Visitors schemes to help this group of men. These are good steps on the road to recovery.

7.5 Resettlement planning

7.5.1 The Board feels that this has been a very positive year for the prison in this area. Risley is now an accelerator prison focusing on accommodation and employment.

7.5.2 After a period of confusion when the new contracts and ways of working came into force, the result is now more prison ownership of what it delivers and strategic leads in the areas of accommodation and employment bringing a lot of outside agencies together, driving initiatives forward and leading to better outcomes for many prisoners at the end of their sentence.

7.5.3 The accelerator employment lead is determined that prison leavers should be work-ready with the skills to succeed in the outside world. Resettlement Boards have not been able to go ahead this year, but all prisoners are discussed on a one-to-one basis with regard to employment and housing with probation and outside agencies. There is now a lot of help available to those who want it.

7.5.4 The leads in accommodation and housing worked very closely together to aim to ensure that a prison leaver has both housing and jobs in place before leaving Risley. This gives the prison leaver every chance to succeed in the future and to avoid reoffending.

7.5.5 The Board feels that this joined up approach to work and accommodation will be a successful development and is extremely positive about its impact on reducing reoffending. Post holders have made a success of their new roles in a time of great change and are making a difference.

7.5.6 The employment hub in the library is accessible to all. Here vacancies are advertised with how to apply. The information, advice and guidance (IAG) service is integral for this process to succeed and starts from the induction process. The aim is to ensure that prisoners are able to be work-ready on leaving prison with an up-to-date CV and a bank account.

7.5.7 There was recently a mini roadshow for prisoners based on employability skills, with the help of Greene King. This was a great success in reassuring prisoners that there was work available for those who want it and that there were employers willing to take on ex-prisoners. Feedback from Greene King was hugely positive. More roadshows are planned, starting with construction, and it is hoped interviews and firm job offers for those leaving prison within 12 weeks will come from this.

7.5.8 The employment lead has also worked with some highly able prisoners convicted of sexual offences who felt they had lost all employment opportunities. Helping employers understand these prisoners on a case-by-case basis led to some top employers interviewing these men. This is very positive.

7.5.9 Practical help was also offered to prisoners as they went through the gate: for example, basic mobile phones so that prisoners can access probation services; toiletries; holdalls and transport tickets. These are very simple things which might stop prisoners falling through the net when they leave prison.

7.5.10 It should be noted that employment targets for Risley can look extremely challenging. The prison has a high number of foreign nationals, older prisoners and prisoners who have been convicted of sexual offences. These groups historically have always found it hard to find employment on leaving prison. The Board feels that those prisoners who want to engage have an excellent support network within the prison. Even though the scheme is in its infancy there appears to be a noticeable improvement in the number of men leaving prison with job offers.

7.5.11 Being an accelerator prison has also benefited the accommodation system. The accommodation lead has driven through the changes and has made meetings with all stakeholders a priority. There is good local authority involvement and also third sector input. The result is a very pleasing steady improvement in the accommodation figures. Of those men discharged from the prison during the year, 975 had first night accommodation organised.

The work of the IMB

The Board's monitoring was limited due to the pandemic and the Board being below full complement. This year has seen a decrease in the number of Board members due to internal transfers, resignations and sabbaticals. This has restricted the ability of the current Board members to monitor and gather information for the period of this report. A vacancy campaign has been put in place but only one candidate was successful.

Board meetings continued to be held monthly during this reporting period.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	4
Total number of visits to the establishment	378
Total number of segregation reviews attended	17

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	1	1
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	2	1
C	Equality	5	6
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	3	10
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	5	20
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	0	0
F	Food and kitchens	3	7
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	29	32
H1	Property within this establishment	34	54
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location		
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)		
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	25	27
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	16	21
K	Transfers	4	12
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	14	29
	Total number of applications	141	220



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