



Ministry
of Justice

Damian Hinds
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP/YOI Hatfield
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MoJ ref: SUB102712

8 February 2023

Dear Chair,

**HMP/YOI HATFIELD: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 APRIL 2021 – 31 MARCH 2022**

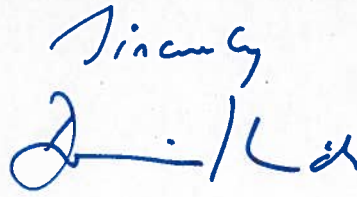
Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 March 2022. I am very much aware of the amount of effort that goes into producing annual reports and thank you for providing a comprehensive picture of HMP/YOI Hatfield over the reporting period, especially as you had several vacancies. I understand the Deputy Prime Minister met the Governor and staff when visiting HMP/YOI Hatfield on 2 February 2022 and was able to discuss some of these themes in more detail which I hope was helpful.

I was saddened to hear there was one death in custody during the reporting period and the Coroner's inquest concluded in November 2022 with the prison's family liaison officers supporting the prisoner's family throughout the inquest. As you are aware the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) carry out independent investigations into deaths in custody and I would like to assure the Board my officials take recommendations from the PPO very seriously.

I note you have not raised any issues specifically for my attention, however, the Board will be aware of the progress being made with the new accommodation to replace the demolished Unit D & E and it is pleasing that the Board welcomes these and the other new facilities being provided at HMP/YOI Hatfield. The building to house the new Virtual Learning Centre has now been refurbished, the new dental suite is under construction which is expected to be finished in March 2023 and construction on the new multifaith centre is due to begin in May 2023. In addition, a full fire safety improvement programme has been undertaken across the prison site and the improvements being made to address your report's concern to HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) about the prison ablution facilities are set in the attached annex. I hope all these projects provide reassurance that significant investment is being made in a targeted way to continue to improve the living conditions at HMP/YOI Hatfield.

Turning to some of your other positive comments, I was pleased to note that the prison provides a safe environment and there are good relationships between staff and prisoners which enables them to be proactive in addressing unfair or inhumane treatment. It was interesting to read about the good standard of education, skills and work provision as well as the increased opportunities for externally paid work and the emphasis placed on building family ties to reduce the chances of prisoners re-offending on their release. Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was reassuring to read that physical and mental healthcare is well managed with services equivalent to those in the community. I also welcome the Board's recognition of the effort and commitment of the Governor and staff during such a difficult period and I too am grateful to everyone working at the prison for your continued hard work and professionalism.

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/YOI Hatfield.



Damian Hinds
Minister for Prisons and Probation

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Facilities Refurbishment

The Ministry of Justice Property Directorate has now commissioned a design to enable the refurbishment of the shower and toilet areas. B Wing has been identified as the priority and has been included as a project in the minor capital maintenance programme for the 2022/23 financial year which is currently out to tender. Any further requests from the prison will be considered, noting that demands for maintenance across the HMPPS estate are much greater than the available funding, even with the significant increases achieved in the last two Spending Reviews. However, all project bids must be prioritised very carefully to make best use of the funding that is available, focusing on risk to life and risk to capacity, decency and sustainability. In the interim HMP/YOI Hatfield continues to do all it can to maintain standards at the prison and has directed additional resources to help in this area, it is also anticipated that the commissioned design will allow for a refurbishment programme to continue to the other wings in future financial years.

The facilities management provider now also has a dedicated general maintenance operative for the Lakes site which has improved response times. Where more specialist trades are required the work will continue to be assessed and prioritised based on the staff resources that are available. In addition, the heating in the Lakes accommodation building is no longer provided from the Central Boiler House at HMP Lindholme. In June 2021 new gas boilers were installed in the Lakes cellar plant room which now provides independent heating and hot water to the accommodation building.