



Ministry  
of Justice

**Damian Hinds**  
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board  
HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay  
Woodbridge,  
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IP12 2JW

18 May 2023

*Dear Chair,*

**HMP/YOI HOLLESLEY BAY: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1  
JANUARY 2022 – 31 DECEMBER 2022**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 December 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 Hollesley Bay over the reporting period. I am sorry to hear of the problems experienced recruiting new members and hope you are successful in recruiting a more diverse Board.

I address below the specific points you have raised for my attention:

With regard to the Board's concerns about prisoners serving indeterminate sentences of imprisonment for public protection (IPP), although the IPP sentence was abolished in 2012, it is the Government's long-held view that retrospectively changing the sentence which was lawfully passed would give rise to an unacceptable risk to public protection. As such, the Government rejected the Justice Select Committee (JSC) main recommendation and has no current plans to conduct a resentencing exercise. The Government published formal response to the Committee's report can be accessed here <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/1509/imprisonment-for-public-protection-ipp-sentences/publications>.

I would like to reassure you that the Government accepted the Committee's recommendation to review the IPP Action Plan and shared the outcome of the review with the JSC on 26 April 2023. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is doing all they can to support progression and has already begun work on the Action Plan, specifically focusing on improved, clear work streams, with deadlines, and a robust overarching governance structure. I have no doubt that the refreshed Action Plan, when finalised, will be a strong driver to build on past achievements and continue to provide the best possible opportunities for those serving an IPP sentence to progress towards a safe and sustainable release. The latest national published figures at the end of March 2023 show the unreleased IPP population standing at 1,355 This is a reduction from 1,554 at the end of March 2022.

Locally at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay, the Governor has seen a steep decline in the number of IPP prisoners, most notably in the last twelve months. The welcomed IPP forum and local psychology and probation staffing support ensures these individuals are adequately supported towards their resettlement plans, whilst benefiting from increased personal autonomy and reintegration back into the community within the

open estate.

I note the Board's concerns about crowded conditions within prisons. HMPPS will be delivering 20,000 additional, modern prison places, the largest prison build programme in a century, ensuring the right conditions are in place to rehabilitate prisoners. There will always be a need for some prisoners to share cells designed for multiple occupancy; we found that some prisoners prefer this and, in some cases, sharing a cell can help mental health and wellbeing. It is recognised that accommodating two prisoners in a cell designed for one is never desirable, but this continues to be necessary across the prison estate to accommodate all those committed to custody by the courts.

HMPPS published a revised Framework in April 2022, Certified Prisoner Accommodation, from which the useable operational capacity of the prison estate is determined. While most single cells could physically hold two people, the maximum crowded capacity of a prison is a matter of operational judgement, considering risks to safety and stability. In times of severe population pressure (as in the current climate), prisons will be expected to hold as many prisoners as they can safely accommodate. There may be options in the future to further reduce crowding levels, for example, if population growth is slower than projected and there is sufficient headroom in the estate, it will enable targeted reductions of the least suitable prison places (including crowded places). The new 240 single occupancy accommodation scheduled to go online in June 2023, demonstrates the Governor's commitment to reduce the proportion of shared accommodation (making the overall prison capacity 655 from 415).

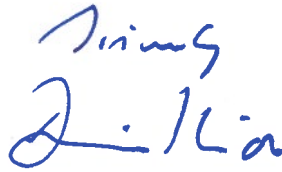
Regarding national recruitment, between the end of October 2016 and the end of December 2022, the number of full-time equivalent prison officers has increased by 3,677 (from 17,955 to 21,632). The recruitment of trainee probation officers has been accelerated to increase staffing levels with targets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 exceeded, recruiting 1007 and 1518 Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) trainees respectively, as well as recruiting a further 1514 trainees during 2022/23. In order to review and address strategic resourcing and operational workforce planning issues in the probation service, a National Operational Stability Panel has been established, chaired by the Chief Probation Officer and the Senior Responsible Officer for the Probation Workforce Programme. Also, a unified model of operational resourcing to achieve consistency in delivery, increase applications and reduce time to hire has been trialled in six priority regions, which included the East of England.

Recruitment activity is ongoing for all prison sites with a current or future recruitment need, particularly in areas with significant local employment market challenges. Since March 2022, the prison recruitment process has been streamlined and we are starting to see average time to hiring and training fall month on month. My officials are regularly reviewing the resource demands of the expanded prison estate on workforce and exploring all viable means to ensure staffing requirements are factored into workforce planning up to 18 months in advance of the new prison places opening. Further details about other recruitment activity is outlined in the attached annex.

It was encouraging to note the abscond reduction strategy has been effective in mitigating risks and release on temporary licence has reconnected families. I was pleased to hear about the new initiatives implemented such as the mental health first aid awareness, new courses, purchasing of outdoor gym equipment and the further development of the forklift driving course and clothing recycling business.

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/YOI Hollesley Bay.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Damian Hinds'.

**Damian Hinds**  
**Minister for Prisons and Probation**

## HMP/YOI HOLLESLEY BAY: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JANUARY 2022 – 31 DECEMBER 2022

### HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

#### **Facilities Management / Maintenance**

As referenced by the IMB, there has been and continues to be a great deal of work to update and maintain (with the help of the prisoner working party to ensure the prison is the best it can be). The investment in the new gym flooring, outdoor gym equipment, 240 new single occupancy rooms, refurbishment of visits and the addition of an outdoor visits area is a demonstration of the improvement of prison facilities during 2022.

As the Board is aware, Government Facilities Services Ltd are the incumbent supplier of the facilities management provision at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay and have provided a good, reliable service for the period 2022/23. In the region of £171,000 has been spent on day-to-day repairs and maintenance.

HMPPS has invested £225 million into the improvement of the prison estate in the last financial year and continues to invest within the allocated budget. All requests from establishments are considered, noting that demands for maintenance are much greater than the available funding. Therefore, once a bid for a project is received, work requests have to be prioritised very carefully to make best use of that funding, focusing on risk to life and risk to capacity, decency and sustainability. The Governor will keep you informed of any updates to capital investment.

#### **Recruitment Activity**

##### *Probation*

An updated Recruitment and Retention Strategy for the Probation Service will be published to staff at the end of May 2023. The strategy will champion recruitment and retention equally and profile initiatives delivered within the Probation Workforce Programme, as well as more widely across HMPPS and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in support of improving retention and increasing recruitment.

##### *Prison*

The MoJ have supported recruitment promotion efforts through targeted media publications, employment events and building strong ties with local job centres in Woodbridge and Ipswich. The National Marketing and Communications team visited both HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay and the neighbouring HMP Warren Hill in February 2023, to capture video footage and photographs to be included in the national prisoner officer recruitment website, which is due to go live shortly (this is in response to new officers not being fully informed of the ways of working in an open prison). Hertfordshire, Essex and Suffolk Prison Group is currently undertaking a recruitment pilot, which HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay is participating in. This pilot provides a candidate focused recruitment approach between application and first day of employment.

The Recruitment Hub is providing a tailored and professional approach to candidates. Regular 'Keep Warm' events provide an opportunity for prison officer and Operational Support Grade (OSG) candidates to have the queries answered in a timely manner, alongside an offer of a familiarisation visit.

HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay promoted their recruitment open day with a leaflet drop within the surrounding towns and villages. Additional recruitment activity has been undertaken. This has included a level transfer campaign enabling three experienced prison officers to transfer; secured seven starters through the

National First Deployment Scheme; supported OSGs wishing to progress careers; and have three successful candidates on the latest OSG to prison officer Fast Track Scheme campaign. The MoJ Learning and Development team has been able to support two localised prison officer training courses in March and May 2023. These two courses, specifically for HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay and HMP Warren Hill candidates, will aid retention. The local Apprenticeship Coach and New Colleague Mentor provide on-site additional support in the early stages of a prison officer's career.

Senior Leaders at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay are committed to improving retention. Forums are held regularly to allow a comfortable space for staff to have their voice heard, share their thoughts and suggestions. The feedback provided by the employee cohort feeds into HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay's retention activity. This has formed an improved recognition approach, championing of health and wellbeing events and publication of career opportunities.

In the later part of 2022, the Governor recruited an increased number of non-operational prison offender managers who could not be redeployed elsewhere. This has improved staffing levels within the offender management unit. The prison is now better resourced.