



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Full Sutton
Full Sutton
York
YO41 1PS

27 June 2023

HMP FULL SUTTON: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JANUARY – 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 Full Sutton over the reporting period, especially as you had several vacancies. I met the Governor and staff when I visited HMP Full Sutton on 3 November 2022, and I was pleased to discuss some of these themes in more detail with them.

I was saddened to hear there was a death in custody during the reporting year due to natural causes. 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.

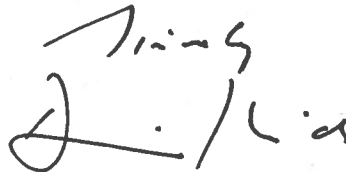
I note that you have not raised any specific points for my attention, but I recognise the Board's concerns about the shortage of prison officers and the lack of experience. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has been recruiting for prison officers at a high level for the past two years which has led to prisons having to support a larger group of new prison officers and staff with less experience than previously has been the case. A lower level of retention among these new staff, which is common in many organisations, has also been a factor which has been experienced for many years. A number of initiatives are in place to address this and to support retention efforts among new staff, including most recently investing in New Colleague Mentors who are experienced staff within each prison to provide support and assistance to new prison officers. An Alumni scheme has also been introduced which encourages former prison officers to return to HMPPS and the implementation of last year's Prison Service Pay Review Body recommendations are showing signs of improving both retention and recruitment efforts.

Locally, HMP Full Sutton has also been working to address staff attrition rates which has provided a more stable staffing position and there has been a successful drive to address the backlog of staff training. However, the need to achieve increased staffing levels is acknowledged, particularly in light of the opening of HMP Millsike in 2025 which will be next door to HMP Full Sutton. To retain staff, the prison will continue to invest in its workforce through engagement and wellbeing activities, as well as ensuring that their working conditions and the facilities available are optimised. As it is recognised recruitment in the area local to HMP Full Sutton has been challenging for some time, it is now planned that prison officers will be recruited from other parts of the country using the First Deployment Scheme to increase staff numbers. As part of the scheme prison officers will move to HMP Full Sutton initially for a period of two years at the outset of their employment with accommodation assistance provided.

Turning to some of the positives within your report, it was reassuring to receive your comments that safety and security have been maintained providing a calm environment within a good standard of accommodation. I was pleased to note that prisoners were treated fairly and humanely with staff having good interactions with those prisoners who have complex needs. I was also encouraged to read about the improvements made to education, as well as the increased employment opportunities with the introduction of a Wood Mill and LED Lighting Assembly workshops and a Recycling Centre.

I note you have raised three local issues of concern in your report which the Governor will continue to keep you aware of as work continues.

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 Full Sutton.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian Hinds', written over a faint, larger signature.

Damian Hinds
Minister for Prisons and Probation