



Ministry
of Justice

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Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP North Sea Camp
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9 October 2023

De - Chair,

HMP NORTH SEA CAMP: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 MARCH 2022 to 28 FEBRUARY 2023

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 28 February 2023. Thank you for providing a comprehensive picture of HMP North Sea Camp over the reporting period, especially as you continued to operate with several vacancies.

I note the Board's continued concerns about the completion of Offender Assessment System (OASys) risk assessment papers and its subsequent effects on Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) boards. I would like to assure the Board that there are internal prison escalation processes in place to follow. The first step is with the Community Offender Manager starting at four weeks prior to the deadline. If this is not returned, it is escalated to the Offender Management Unit (OMU) Hub Managers, and if no response is received, it is then escalated to the Heads of Offender Management. If the escalation process fails, the case is then escalated to the East Midlands Prisons Lead or Head of Public Protection at HM Prison Service (HMPPS) headquarters.

Prisoners' progression for ROTL is monitored by a local tracking system which is reviewed once a week by OMU managers and feedback is provided to the Governor on a weekly basis. ROTL delays continue to be a priority for the OMU at HMP North Sea Camp, however, there is no data that evidences ROTL delays are the reasons for parole adjournments or deferrals. HMPPS is nevertheless in the process of updating the local Indeterminate Sentenced Prisoner (ISP) policy and will be introducing the monitoring of reasons for parole adjournments and deferrals to understand if further action is required and ensure these prisoners are supported for their specific risks and needs.

The Justice Select Committee (JSC) published their report into the Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence on 28 September 2022 following a year-long inquiry. The Government has now issued a formal response to the Committee's report which can be found online.

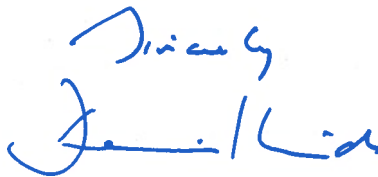
The Government accepted the Committee's recommendation to review the Action Plan and shared the outcome of the review with the JSC on 26 April 2023 which can be accessed on the parliament.uk website. HMPPS' review of the Action Plan specifically focused on improved, clear work streams, with deadlines, and a robust overarching governance structure. The refreshed Action Plan 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 Government is, as a matter of priority, reviewing the Department's work to date to help more IPP prisoners progress towards release and will be considering thoroughly if there are further steps we need to take. The Secretary of

State for Justice does not want to prejudge his conclusions, but please be assured that he will be giving the matter his close personal attention.

It was encouraging to receive your comments that HMP North Sea Camp treats prisoners humanely, fairly and with respect. I was impressed to note the work of the initiative-taking safer community team consisting of both staff and prisoners that regularly stages events to enhance prisoner and staff safety and promotes the wellbeing of prisoners.

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 North Sea Camp.



Damian Hinds
Minister for Prisons and Probation

HMP NORTH SEA CAMP: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 MARCH 2022 to 28 FEBRUARY 2023

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Prisoner Accommodation

HMPPS recognises that the rooms are not large enough for two tables. However, prisoners are not constrained to their rooms and the regime is structured so that comparatively little time is spent there. Occupancy rates at HMP North Sea Camp have increased significantly since March 2023, but the prison's capacity remains equal to the Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) level originally certified by the Prison Group Director (PGD). CNA, or uncrowded capacity, is HMPPS' own measure of accommodation. It represents the good, decent standard of accommodation that HMPPS aspires to provide all prisoners. Cells are only shared where a PGD has assessed them to be decent and of an adequate size and condition.

In open prisons, there is a clear expectation that prisoners will spend significant amounts of time unlocked from their cell, either occupying communal areas or working outside of the prison. This should further mitigate any issues concerning decency that are linked to cell size specifically. At HMP North Sea Camp, prisoners are only expected to be in their rooms between 11pm and 5am which allows minimal time in their rooms. A significant number of prisoners at the prison (86%) are in full time employment, that is normal prison work and shift work in the community. Of the remaining 14%, 4% are new receptions being engaged in the induction process and 10% are retired, who are encouraged to participate in numerous purposeful activities throughout the day to keep them occupied and out of the rooms. Work activities encourage people to make the most of the three-hundred acres of this resettlement establishment.

Accommodation Investment

At this time there is no budget allocated to converting the dormitories to smaller rooms. A Small-Scale Investments team is commissioning a feasibility study on the options available to refurbish various buildings. This includes erecting partition walls in three dormitory rooms located in South Units 1 and 2 to create seven double-occupancy rooms.

Maintenance Contract Management

HMPPS acknowledges that the performance of facilities management (FM) has sometimes fallen below expectations. Performance is measured through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), tracking results periodically and applying financial penalties where necessary. The Ministry of Justice Property Directorate will continue to work with the FM provider to improve reactive maintenance.

Currently KPIs are being met in terms of routine maintenance, but we acknowledge that some of the more complex work can take longer to complete. This is often down to logistics rather than the desire to complete the work. The Area Property Operations Manager (APOM) has met with the IMB chair to discuss some of the more complex detail around FM delivery. The APOM is available to discuss any further issues with the IMB should they arise.

Prisoners' Property

HMPPS notes the Board's concerns about the transfer of prisoners' property despite implementation of the new Prisoners' Property Policy Framework on 5 September 2022. The Framework introduced a new requirement that prisons must transfer excess property within four weeks unless there are exceptional circumstances which make this impossible. To avoid the problem of delays altogether, the Framework places an emphasis on ensuring compliance with volumetric control limits, since anything within these

limits will be transferred with the prisoner. HMPPS will monitor the impact of the Framework going forward and will continue to look at what further improvements can be made.

The introduction of the digitally recorded Prisoner Escort Records (dPER) by Prison Escorting and Custody Services (PECS) includes a property section that accurately records the number and type of sealed property 'owned' by and transferred with the prisoner and an accurate record of property handover between different stakeholders. This is now embedded as business as usual. The digital process has assisted with investigations for property that is lost in transit with PECS suppliers. PECS also applies commercial levers to hold the supplier to account when it is contractually required in line with the contract.