



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP/YOI Lincoln
Greetwell Road
Lincoln
LN2 4BD

9 November 2023

Dear Chair,

HMP/YOI LINCOLN: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 FEBRUARY 2022 - 31 JANUARY 2023

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 January 2023. Thank you for providing a comprehensive picture of HMP/YOI Lincoln over the reporting period, especially as you had many vacancies.

I was saddened to hear two prisoners died in custody during the reporting year. I would like to assure the Board my officials and I take recommendations from the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman very seriously.

I note the Board has commented again this year about improving access to specialist mental health facilities, care and treatment. Since your report, the Mental Health team at HMP/YOI Lincoln has grown in confidence and in experience, and the Governor reports that the mental health service at HMP/YOI Lincoln is to a good standard, as evidenced by an impressive number of hospital referrals and transfers achieved. As outlined in last year's response to the Board, the NHS England Mental Health Service specification for custodial services does not restrict access to those with a personality disorder and prisoners will be able to access the service for support and low intensity interventions such as psychoeducation around diagnosis and coping strategies. The national service offer in place for prisoners screened into the Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) pathway identifies, supports and promotes therapeutic interventions and psychologically informed approaches. These services are jointly delivered with the health sector and include approaches working with trauma and psychological and emotional disturbance. Access to OPD services is co-ordinated by an individual's offender manager, and not by NHS England or the healthcare provider.

Nationally, there continues to be a high demand for secure beds and healthcare providers are being supported by Commissioning Teams to help progress patients through the pathway(s). The Draft Mental Health Bill published in June 2022, sets out vital reforms to better support people with severe mental illness in the criminal justice system. These reforms, together with operational improvements, will ensure that people with severe mental health needs are able to access appropriate and timely support in the most appropriate setting. This includes swifter access to specialist inpatient care and treatment by introducing a new statutory time limit of 28 days for the transfer of patients from prison and other places of detention to hospital. The Draft Mental Health Bill has recently been subject to pre-legislative scrutiny. The Joint Committee on the Draft Mental Health Bill published its report on 19 January 2023. I hope to reassure the Board that my officials are working with the Department of Health and Social Care to

consider the Committee's recommendations and the Government will be publishing its response in due course.

Turning to your other comments helpfully captured in your report, it was encouraging to read that overall prisoners at HMP/YOI Lincoln are treated fairly and with respect and I was pleased to note your positive feedback on the reception and induction processes. It is also pleasing to hear that the Body Scanner has prevented unauthorised items coming into the prison and the opening of a Bistro in the Visits Hall will create job prospects on release through the qualification(s) achieved.

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. HM Prison and Probation Service (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 Lincoln.

Yours sincerely,



Damian Hinds
Minister for Prisons and Probation

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Operational Capacity Levels

Under HMPPS policy the total number of prisoners that an establishment can hold is set by the Prison Group Director (PGD). In making this assessment, the PGD is required to consider control, security and the operation of the planned regime using their operational judgement and experience. Currently, there are no plans to increase the operational capacity at HMP/YOI Lincoln.

Training Opportunities

All prisons undertake a needs analysis annually before commissioning the training provision. This is to ensure appropriate courses are commissioned that meet the needs of the population. The provider is incentivised through contract levers to ensure prisoners who are allocated to an education programme go on to achieve. Education achievement is shared on Virtual Campus and providers can discuss continuation of studies on transfer with the learner.

There is no doubt that the rise in prisoner churn caused by national population pressures has had a negative impact at HMP/YOI Lincoln; the resettlement cohort has all but disappeared and the remand population has nearly doubled. As recognised by the Board, this does present challenges running a meaningful and purposeful regime. We remain optimistic that when the population pressures begin to subside, we will reduce the remand population, increase the resettlement cohort and return to achieving a more purposeful and meaningful regime.

Prisoners' Property

HMPPS notes the Board's concerns about the transfer of prisoners' property, despite implementation of the new *Prisoners' Property* Policy Framework, which came into effect on 5 September 2022. The Framework places an emphasis on ensuring compliance with volumetric control limits, since anything within these limits will be transferred with the prisoner. Volumetric control limits apply to all prisons and the Framework contains a leaflet to explain these limits to prisoners. The Framework introduced a new requirement that prisons must transfer excess property within four weeks unless there are exceptional circumstances which make this impossible. The Framework is clear that Governors should ensure management checks are undertaken to have confidence that prisoners' property is being handled correctly and with care. HMPPS will monitor the impact of the new Framework going forward and will continue to look at what further improvements can be made.

Prisoner Escort Custody Services (PECS) provide transportation for prisoners and their property. As part of the planning for the current PECS contract, which commenced in August 2020, PECS engaged with Ministry of Justice Policy to review property limits on transportation, and it was agreed that the new vehicle fleet would have increased capacity to facilitate an additional half bag of property for consumables

to the limit of 7.5 kg. The vehicle fleet is designed to transfer the number of prisoners intended, together with their property in line with the volumetric limit. In addition, the PECS supplier shall transfer a reasonable volume of legal documentation.

The introduction of the digitally recorded Person Escort Record including 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, is now embedded as business as usual. The digital process has already assisted with investigations for property that is lost in transit with the PECS supplier, however, PECS receive few complaints for lost property overall and often the issue is not attributed to the PECS supplier.

PECS review complaints during monthly formal meetings with the PECS supplier. During the last 12 months there has been no complaints received from HMP/YOI Lincoln in relation to the loss of property attributed to PECS. For property delay, in-line with the HMPPS Prisoner Property Framework if the limit of items allowed in possession has been reached, and if there is no space on the escort vehicle to transport items safely and securely, then responsibility for transfer of any remaining items remains with the sending prison.

Remand Prisoners

Regional Probation Directors (RPDs) are responsible for the delivery of resettlement services with key interventions delivered by Commissioned Rehabilitative Service (CRS) providers (commissioned by RPDs).

As the Board is aware, CRS services were initially only available to sentenced people in prison. We are currently working on extending the contracts for accommodation to unconvicted and unsentenced people in prison. In the absence of a CRS contract servicing unconvicted prisoners, the Pre-Release Team at HMP/YOI Lincoln is committed to the following:

- Identifying immediate resettlement needs through the Basic Custody Screening Tool (BCST) 2 and providing pre-release support.
- Duty to Refer referrals to Local Authorities (who might be homeless or at risk of homelessness), although many will not act until there is confirmation of a release date. This provision will be further developed once the prison Strategic Housing Specialist is in post.
- Support with financial matters such as Court fines.
- Provide a basic tenancy support service. This provision will be developed further with more detailed advice and signposting.
- Safeguarding issues identified are discussed with the Community Probation Practitioner (if applicable) and or Duty Probation Offender Manager. Matters can also be discussed through line management chain.

Currently more than 90% of prisoners have a BCST2 completed within the required timescale. The Offender Management Unit (OMU) is not resourced to undertake work with unconvicted prisoners under the Offender Management in Custody model. The OMU team recognises there is a need for this and makes every effort to address concerns or provide support on a case-by-case basis. The Governor and staff also work closely with Probation, Lincolnshire Action Trust and other partners to release remand prisoners as productively as possible into the community.

Social Care Provision

Victorian infrastructure prisons like HMP/YOI Lincoln and many of those built in the 1960s and 1970s were not initially designed with disability access and some alterations have been made to accommodate people with accessibility needs. The aims and intentions of the New Prison Capacity Team are to build a

modern, efficient prison estate that is safe and productive to live and work in. This involves improving the physical design and structures of the sites to encompass the safety of all individuals. In the new prisons i.e. HMPs Five Wells, Fosse Way and Millsike and in the expansion projects that use the new houseblock design, we have catered for a growing number of elderly and disabled prisoners by providing the following:

- A larger number of accessible cells including low mobility cells, wheelchair accessible cells, and medical cells that cater for a range of accessibility needs associated with older prisoners. Amenities have been designed to ensure that there is equality of access for all prisoners through their locations on ground floor levels, ensuring lifts are available and by building technology infrastructures that enable the use of hearing loops and other technology that can support access and care for elderly prisoners.
- Specific activity spaces that enable older prisoners to engage in age-appropriate activities. Décor is used to follow known principles designed to aid a person's wayfinding and accounts for needs around dementia and other cognitive impairments prevalent with older prisoners.

HMP/YOI Lincoln has worked productively with health and social care partners to introduce reasonable adjustments for prisoners. It is hoped that the prison's close proximity to HMPs Five Wells and Fosse way may provide more access to disability compliant accommodation.

Food Budget

The daily food allowance is set locally by the Governor. The funding provided has been increased making the daily food allowance at HMP/YOI Lincoln £2.70. This is considered to be a decent increase despite the high inflationary pressures on food items. HMP/YOI Lincoln has a very capable and experienced catering team and there are few complaints received about the quality /quantity of the food provided.

To support prisons to address the rising cost of food, HMPPS is working closely with catering managers to understand the issues experienced and share good practice ideas. HMPPS is also working with the Department of Health and Social Care, Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, following government guidelines, to provide enhanced advice to prisoners on eating healthy meals. The Board can be assured that Prison Rules require prisoners to be provided with three meals a day that are varied and nutritious and that meet the religious, cultural and medical needs of all.

Facilities Management

Performance

The performance of the contractor has improved markedly over the past two years. In 2021 there were seven complaints around performance. In 2022 there was one and in 2023 to date no complaints have been received. Key Performance Indicator 5 (reactive repairs) consistently reaches the 90% threshold. It has been acknowledged some projects mentioned below have been too slow and have not been delivered as effectively as required. This is now being rectified and we are content that the new project manager and team will deliver what is required.

Repairs to the Care and Separation Unit (CSU)

The CSU is undergoing a programme of cell strengthening; this major capital project coupled with the enhanced water hygiene management (legionella rectification works). Due to the complexity of this work, it requires some cells to be out of use for a prolonged period. However, a maximum cell reduction number has been agreed and is currently in place.

Heating and Hot Water

The issues around heating and hot water will remain until the major capital project to replace the infrastructure is completed. At the time of IMB's report the project was experiencing delays in delivery which has extended the completion date until at least mid-2024. As mentioned above, some cells will be out of use for extended periods, and this will continue until such projects are complete. Other cells are routinely brought back online promptly and within the contractual timescale.

Temporary Boilers

The temporary boilers were in place due to the major capital project which includes the upgrade of the main boiler house and replacement plant rooms across the site. These were installed at the start of the project but became unreliable and needed replacing. The temporary boilers have now been replaced and the reliability of them working has improved.

Shower Water Supply

The Building Management System (BMS) which controls the heating temperatures will be partially replaced under the major capital project. Currently the BMS controls are limited, however, since replacing the temporary boilers this has increased reliability and reduced breakdowns markedly. Water temperatures are within an acceptable water hygiene range.

Pipework

A bid for a project to replace the secondary pipework sitewide has been submitted and will be duly considered, noting that demands for maintenance are much greater than the available funding. Therefore, once a bid for a project is received, HMPPS must prioritise works very carefully to make best use of that funding, focusing on risk to life and risk to capacity and decency.