

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Wayland
Griston
Thetford
IP25 6RL

21st January 2024



**HMP WAYLAND: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2022 – 31 MAY 2023**

Thank you for providing your annual report on HMP Wayland. I commend the Board for carrying out its statutory role effectively, particularly as you operated with several vacancies. I am deeply saddened to hear that one prisoner died during the reporting year and I would like to reassure the Board that recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman are taken very seriously.

I have read your report with care. I am sorry to hear of the problems experienced recruiting new members and acknowledge your request for a funded advertisement campaign to improve the recruitment for Board members nationally. The recruitment efforts made by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) over the last year have included paid advertising campaigns run by professional advertising agencies which have included regional radio advertisement, targeted social media advertising, regional online advertorials, targeted advertising via Job Boards and targeted advertising through google search. Increased funding for the 2024/25 financial year is also being sought to continue to attempt to address recruitment issues.

I understand the Board's concerns about recruitment, retention and the quality of the training that operational staff receive. Recruitment of both Prison Officers and Operational Support Grades is undertaken to meet predicted vacancies over the succeeding six to nine months using information about turnover and other requirements that the prison has such as new accommodation. It is recognised that recruitment in the locality of HMP Wayland is challenging, however, during 2023 staff numbers, particularly Prison Officers numbers, improved and continued to after the Board's reporting period. Retention of new Prison Officers has also improved, partly through two first deployment schemes that provide support for new Prison Officers to move to HMP Wayland for the first two years of their employment and then either permanently relocate at the end of the period or return to their home area. Initiatives have been put into place to support retention efforts among new staff with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) most recently investing in New Colleague Mentors who are experienced staff within each prison to provide support and assistance to new colleagues. Locally HMP Wayland uses feedback from new staff to implement improved measures to support staff and refine local training. The prison proposes developing a comprehensive Workforce Development plan which will set out the importance of effective training and outline strategies to instil pride in the role and foster a commitment to continuous improvement among Prison Officers to support retention.

In addition, to manage the volume of new Prison Officers and provide flexibility, their foundation training has recently undergone a transformation with multiple training routes now available including the Custody and Detention Apprenticeship, Direct Prison Officer (non-apprenticeship option), Women's Estate Specific

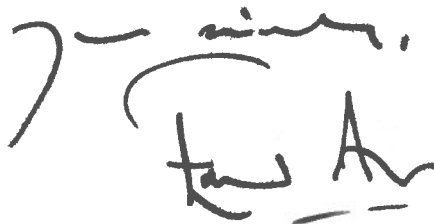
Training, Youth Custody Estate Training and Alumni for those with previous Prison Officer experience. HMPPS also has a clear commitment in its business strategy via the Enable programme to transform the capability and support offered to prison staff, including reviewing Prison Officer training by June 2024. This will help staff to better motivate, support, and challenge people in prison and the work focusses on an approach which uses a type of Psychologically Informed Practice that has been successful in other sectors that work with individuals with complex behaviours as evidence suggests that it could have transformational impact if applied to the justice system.

Turning to the Board's concerns about refurbishments and new accommodation, key initiatives to enhance the facilities at HMP Wayland are progressing with the construction of the Rapid Deployment Cell Programme and a new House Block, both of which are designed to improve the prisons living environments to modern standards. To support these facilities a project is in development to replace both kitchens with one new modern kitchen facility with the capacity to serve the whole prison. This new facility will be delivered together with the accommodation expansion, alongside a larger reception and a new multi-faith centre. In the interim, the Board will be aware that both existing kitchens were completely re-fitted and the flooring was replaced in early 2023. It is recognised there are some ongoing issues with the catering equipment which will continue to be addressed as required. In addition, refurbishment programmes are underway providing essential roof repairs to the gym and these have already been completed in Healthcare. A survey of the heating system in the newest accommodation has also been instructed and temporary heating units will continue to be funded by MoJ Property Services to ensure the temperature throughout the colder months is at an acceptable level. Where further improvements are needed across the prison these will be considered, however, it should be noted that demands for maintenance are much greater than the available funding. Therefore, HMPPS continues to prioritise works carefully to make best use of the funding, focusing on risk to life and risk to capacity and decency.

Despite your concerns, it was encouraging to note that the Board was able to report improvements were made to address concerns in your previous report and I welcome the recognition of the efforts the Governor and staff are making to continue the prisons positive progress to provide a safe and rehabilitative environment. It was reassuring to receive your comments that there has been a reduction in incidents of violence, self-harm and prisoners self-isolating. I was pleased to read about the improvements in the relationships between prisoners and staff and the positive impact the increased time that prisoners receive out of cell has had on the atmosphere around the prison.

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 the other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

I appreciate the valuable contribution from members of Independent Monitoring Boards and am grateful for your work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Argar', with a stylized flourish underneath.

RT HON EDWARD ARGAR MP

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Workforce Planning

The Board's concerns about the number of staff needed as new accommodation opens is recognised. Further to last year's response about the progress of the workforce delivery project which is reviewing the staffing model for all prison types, where operational capacity is increasing, including via the introduction of new houseblocks, staffing is being uplifted. This will ensure that all areas of the prison can operate as intended. The Workforce Delivery Project have reviewed and refined the staffing model at HMP Wayland and the approach ensures that the prisons staffing strategy aligns with the specific needs of a training prison, particularly in preparation for the new accommodation units.

Accommodation

Further to the new accommodation and support buildings referred to in the above letter, the facilities management provider is contracted to maintain all accommodation within HMP Wayland. When faults are reported they liaise with the MoJ Area Property Operations Manager to ensure the accommodation is returned to the required standard as quickly as possible. Prisoner work parties are working alongside the collaborative efforts of the Clean, Rehabilitative Enabling and Decent team which have provided consistent support to the regular maintenance service. In addition, an Asset Condition Survey took place between January-March 2023 to accurately capture the risk of building and infrastructure failure and its impact on prison capacity which included cellular accommodation. The survey determined cellular accommodation and sanitary facilities were in a fair condition, however it recommended that "the condition of the finishes within the cells should be monitored with repairs and re-decoration carried out as necessary. A rolling programme for replacement of all floor coverings within cells should be implemented and regular maintenance undertaken to ensure a watertight covering is maintained. Ventilation rates should be improved where in cell shower facilities are present to prevent damp and mould growth". To begin to address these concerns, there is a shower replacement programme in place which is being completed with funding from the MoJ Minor Capital Team.

Food Budget

Whilst food budgets are determined locally by the Governor in Public Sector Prisons (or the Director in privately managed prisons), the Board can be assured that prisoners are provided with three meals a day that are varied, nutritious and meet the religious, cultural and medical needs of all as this is a requirement of Prison Rules. The HMPPS national Catering Team continues to provide support to all prisons to help address the rising cost of food and the Board will be aware that the food budget at HMP Wayland was previously increased. The local catering team at HMP Wayland ensures varied, nutritious, and sufficient food is offered to meet the diverse dietary needs, by regularly consulting with prisoners, having a proactive approach to quality assurance through regular assessments, as well as prisoner taste tests and implementing best practice. Where successful strategies are identified these are shared regionally and nationally.

Prisoner Pay

It is recognised that inflationary pressures also affect prisoners and these are kept under constant review and are being managed across several areas. HMPPS have set out some changes to address the issue

of increasing prices of canteen items and the impact on prisoners. In September 2022, a national approach to the rising cost of living was agreed and a 10% uplift in private cash allowances, money that can be sent in by family and friends of prisoners, was introduced to help mitigate against price increases. Several new value brand product lines were made available through the Prison Retail service in November 2022, which give prisoners the choice to purchase less expensive, non-premium branded items just as people in the community are doing. Whilst still in early stages, purchases of the value brands are becoming increasingly popular.

In addition, Prison Service Order 4460 Prisoners' Pay policy sets out the national minimum rate of pay for employed activity for prisoners. Governors in public sector prisons and Directors in privately managed prisons have the necessary freedoms to set local pay rates that reflect their prisoner population needs, the type of prison and regime in operation, as well as the jobs, educational and vocational training that are available. Locally HMP Wayland regularly reviews prisoner wages, with assessments made against its established comparator group and remains an agenda item at the monthly finance meeting.

Prisoners' Property

The *Prisoners' Property* Policy 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 be assured that prisoners' property is being handled correctly and with care. Local efforts at HMP Wayland have substantially reduced complaints related to missing property and enhanced practices have been implemented to address concerns. The importance of continued vigilance is acknowledged and the prison will be working collaboratively with staff and management across prisons to manage and resolve any issues effectively. HMPPS will also monitor the impact of the new Framework going forward and will continue to look at what further improvements can be made.

Prisoner Healthcare

The Board's recognition of the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Care of Prisoner Policy to improve their prisoner healthcare management is welcome. The Board can be assured that there is a close working partnership between the healthcare team at HMP Wayland and the local NHS hospital, as well as similar arrangements in place with many other prisons and hospitals which NHS England continues to encourage and support.

Healthcare Contract

NHS England has a programme of activities in place to plan for the expansion of different prisons over the next five years, which facilitates the commissioning of additional healthcare capacity to ensure increased prisoner population needs are met.

Rehabilitation

It is acknowledged that improvements need to be made and HMPPS is focused on embedding and improving the performance of its resettlement approach across the prison estate, since its launch alongside the unified Probation Service in July 2021. Additional funding has been provided to enable the recruitment of a record number of trainee Probation Officers in recent years. In addition, during the spending review period 2022/23 – 2024/25 a landmark investment is being made to reduce reoffending through a range of initiatives to support prison leavers into employment, stable accommodation and drug treatment. The creation of HMPPS Area Executive Director roles in October 2023 will also enable increased collaboration between prisons and probation to maximise this investment and drive continuous improvement to support prison leavers to resettlement into communities post release.

Employment after Release

As recommended by the National Audit Office in their May 2023 report into improving resettlement services, the MoJ is working with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to ensure that overlaps and gaps are addressed in the respective services provided to give effective joint support to prisoners to prepare them for employment on release. Nationally, the proportion of prison leavers in employment six months after their release has more than doubled in two years to March 2023 to over 30%. The proportion who were in employment six weeks after their release during the same period, increased from 9.8% to 19.4%. Whilst there is further to go and efforts continue to look for opportunities to deliver effective rehabilitation support to reduce reoffending, as the Board recognises, this is a complex cohort and significant progress has been made so far.

Within prisons Employment Hubs and Prison Employment Leads have been implemented to work alongside DWP Prison Work Coaches to provide a joined-up approach to assist prisoners to prepare for employment. This includes support with job matching, job applications, CV preparation and prisoners can meet with a DWP Prison Work Coach 12 weeks prior to their release to receive advice on benefits and employment. Prison leavers are also eligible for early access to the Work and Health Programme to receive employment support at the earliest opportunity. Within the community, the MoJ and DWP are working together to ensure services provided are complementary and give the right support to the prison leaver to become employment ready, with the DWP Jobcentre work coaches providing specific support to the needs of the individual. In addition, the HMPPS New Futures Network and DWP National Employer and Partnership Team are brokering relationships with employers and helping them to understand the advantages to their business of employing prisoners after their release.