



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Humber
4 Sands Lane
Everthorpe
Brough
HU15 2JZ

MoJ Ref: SUB118646

31 October 2024

Dear Chair,

**HMP HUMBER: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JANUARY 2023 – 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Thank you for submitting your Board's annual report on HMP Humber. Having read the report, I would like to thank you and your colleagues for the considerable amount of work you have undertaken to capture the current state of the prison. I appreciate that this would have taken particular effort given that you continued to operate with several vacancies, and I am very grateful to you and your members for this.

I was deeply saddened to read that two prisoners died during the reporting year. Any death in our prisons is a tragedy and I extend my heartfelt condolences to their friends and family. All deaths in custody are treated extremely seriously and this is something that I discuss with Governors whenever I have the opportunity to visit prisons. I would like to reassure the Board that in such circumstances I recognise the importance of acting on the recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman.

I understand the Board's concerns about HMP Humber's transition to a resettlement prison. HMP Humber is a category C prison holding a resettlement and training cohort in line with the national offender flows model. The prison is modelled to hold a resettlement cohort of approximately 85% and such prisoners can be received at HMP Humber from 29 days up to 16 months' time left to serve. The remand population continues to grow to unprecedented levels for numerous reasons, including a backlog in the courts together with previous industrial action taken by the Criminal Bar Association. I recognise that the impact of this is being felt acutely in the training estate.

Due to the unrelenting overall pressure on the prison population, training prisons are continuing to hold certain cohorts of men so that spaces in the resettlement estate can be prioritised for use by reception prisons. Our priority is to maximise capacity in reception prisons to serve the courts, to encourage prisons to support offender flows, and to ensure as much as possible that the rehabilitation needs of each prisoner is met and protected. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) continues to do its very best to maintain offender flows in the face of ongoing population pressures across the entire adult male prison estate.

Over the next twelve months, HMPPS will review whether HMP Humber's population is appropriate and whether the resources available are sufficient to deliver the outcomes needed. The Ready for Release Wing is scheduled to be open and operational later this autumn. This wing will work with a cohort of prisoners in the last twelve weeks of their sentence and will be provided with an increase in staff resourcing to deliver resettlement services.

I was very encouraged to receive your comments that HMP Humber continues to be a safe prison and that staff and prisoner relationships continue to be constructive and positive. Reducing and eliminating the ingress of illicit items is vital to ensuring safety and rehabilitation in our prisons and I was therefore pleased to note the body scanner in reception continues to be invaluable and was further aided by good intelligence. I am grateful that the Board concurs with HM Inspectorate of Prison's assessment that outcomes for prisoners in the healthy prisons test were reasonably good and noted the Board's view that this is an area of strength within the prison.

Local issues of concern raised in your report will be addressed by the Governor who will continue to keep you aware of progress as work continues. HMPPS comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

The Secretary of State and I hugely appreciate the invaluable role of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are very grateful to you and your team for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP Humber.



Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Prisons, Probation, and Reducing Reoffending

HMP HUMBER: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JANUARY 2023 – 31 DECEMBER 2023

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Prison Capacity

HMPPS appreciates the Board's ongoing concerns around cell sharing. HMPPS' cell certification framework requires that cells are only shared where a Prison Group Director has assessed them to be of adequate size and condition. There are other standards set out in the framework, including adequate lighting, heating, ventilation, fittings, and access to water and sanitation. These standards ensure that prisoners are accommodated safely even when held in crowded conditions.

The Board will be aware from last year's response that HMPPS is delivering 20,000 additional modern uncrowded prison places, the largest prison build programme since the Victorian era. We have already delivered 6,000 places including through our two new 1,700-place prisons, HMP Five Wells and HMP Fosse Way. We are also investing in our prisons to make them safer for both prisoners and staff by taking a preventative approach to safety, making key changes to the physical environment and testing new technology. We will continue to invest in critical prison maintenance and renewal to ensure that we keep as much capacity as possible in use and fit for purpose. These measures will have a positive impact on lowering the proportion of crowding within the prison estate by providing accommodation that is safe, decent and uncrowded. The extent to which the proportion of prisoners held in crowded accommodation can be reduced will always be dependent on levels of demand in the system. Our number one priority is protecting the public and cutting crime by taking dangerous criminals off the streets. We can only do this by always ensuring we have sufficient prison places to serve the courts.

Prisoners' Property

HMPPS recognises the Board's continued concerns about prisoners' property following a transfer between establishments. The emphasis must remain on prisoners complying with volumetric control limits, since any property within these limits will be transferred with them. This includes items which are exempt from volumetric control, such as legal papers. It is not possible to transfer all excess property with a prisoner which they might have accrued above these limits. There has been a requirement since the introduction of the Prisoners' Property Policy Framework for prisons to transfer any excess items within four weeks. Previously, there was no time limit in place. HMPPS is aware of the problems around property and continues to look at what further can be done.

Mental Health Transfers

NHS England is responsible for mental health transfers and does not consider prisons as a designated place of safety. Whenever an individual who requires transfer to a secure mental health bed is identified, NHS England and their providers work proactively with the prison governor to expedite a transfer to a more appropriate hospital location as quickly as possible. There is a facility within HMP Hull, the Wellbeing Unit, where prisoners who may require more therapeutic support whilst awaiting a secure inpatient bed can be temporarily transferred to if considered appropriate and this facility has been a positive intervention for prisoners from HMP Humber. NHS England performance metrics indicate that HMP Humber has not experienced delays in transfer in the last five months. Training is available for staff and if a care management plan is required, this would be facilitated pending transfer to a secure unit.