



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP/YOI Parc
Heol Hopcyn John
Bridgend
CF35 6AP

MoJ Ref: 120339

3 January 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP/YOI PARC: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 APRIL 2022 – 31 MARCH 2023**

Thank you for submitting your Board's annual report on HMP/YOI Parc. Having read your report with care I am truly grateful for the huge amount of work put in to producing this report and capturing the key issues. This is particularly impressive given the Board's membership has been running at less than a third of its complement. I also had the opportunity to visit the prison earlier this month to speak with the Prison Director, staff and Board members which provided invaluable experience of the work the prison is taking forward.

I was really saddened to read that eleven prisoners died during the reporting year and I offer my deepest condolences to their friends and family. It is important in these tragic circumstances that we act on recommendations made by the PPO and I would like to reassure the loved ones of those who have passed away that deaths in custody are taken extremely seriously. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) have provided support to the prison in understanding why the cluster of deaths may have occurred and, where appropriate, to implement changes with the intention of preventing further deaths and issued the prison with an improvement notice in March 2024. The prison has since developed a plan designed to drive rapid action around six key factors (staff, safety, security, drugs, regime, and respect) which it has been implementing since June 2024.

I fully understand the Board's concerns about prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP). I hope that the Board is now aware that the IPP sentence was reformed by the Victims and Prisoners Act which gained Royal Assent on 24 May 2024. On 5 September 2024 the Secretary of State announced the timings for these changes through a phased approach. This commenced on 1 November, with 1,742 people who were released on an IPP licence for the first time at least five years ago or four years for those convicted when they were under 18 and has spent the last two on licence without recall to custody, having their licence automatically terminated. As part of the next phase on 1 February 2025, the qualifying period for when the Secretary of State must refer an IPP licence to the Parole Board for consideration of licence termination will reduce from ten years to three years, or two for those convicted when under 18. This means that around 600 people will be referred to the Parole Board to consider licence termination.

I agree that not knowing when they will be released can be a cause of anxiety impacting on the mental health of IPP prisoners; The Government is determined to support the rehabilitation of IPP offenders through a newly refreshed Action Plan, which we published on 15 November 2024. The refreshed Plan puts an important emphasis on effective frontline delivery in our prisons and the Probation Service, to

ensure that those serving IPP sentences have robust and effective sentence plans, which they are actively engaging with, and that they are in the correct prison to access the right interventions and rehabilitative services. This is the most effective way to help them to reduce their risk so that they can progress towards safe release from custody. The refreshed Action Plan was published in our IPP Annual Report and can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hmpps-annual-report-on-the-ipp-sentence-2023-to-24>. However, it is important to note that a resentencing exercise would likely result in most of those still serving an IPP sentence in custody being released without any licence supervision, despite the Parole Board having previously considered that these individuals should remain in custody for the protection of the public. HMPPS will continue to monitor the progress of the IPP Action Plan and consult expert organisations and campaign groups to ensure all options are carefully considered of what further work we can do but I do hope you can understand that the Government's priority remains the protection of the public and we cannot take any steps that would put them at risk.

Despite the period of change at the prison I hugely appreciate the efforts of all involved in the transition to new contractual arrangements to keep the services running for the prisoners at HMP/YOI Parc. This is all the more welcome given the significant reduction in incidents of violence and self-harm in the reporting period, which is really encouraging. I was pleased to note that every prisoner received at least one key worker session every month with many receiving more as this is an important support mechanism for prisoners during their time in custody. It was also reassuring to read about the work of the families services staff and volunteers of Invisible Walls, whose commitment has been remarkable for the past 15 years.

I note you have raised some local issues of concern in your report which the Director 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 Secretary of State and I hugely appreciate the valuable role played by members 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/YOI Parc.



Lord Timpson
Minister for Prisons, Probation, and Reducing Reoffending

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Prisoners' Property

As the Board recognises, the emphasis must remain on prisoners complying with volumetric control limits, since any property within these limits will be transferred with them along with items which are exempt from volumetric control, such as legal papers. The Prisoners' Property Policy Framework is also clear that Governors and Directors should ensure that management checks are undertaken to have confidence that prisoners' property is being handled correctly and with care, including compliance with volumetric control limits. Responsibility for transferring any remaining items remains with the sending prison. Previously there was no time limit in place to ensure items were forwarded on, but there has been a requirement since the introduction of the Prisoners' Property Policy Framework for prisons to transfer any excess items within four weeks.

Locally, it is acknowledged that the physical size of the Property Stores at HMP/YOI Parc and the increased population over a number of years has made the storage of property challenging. Security Managers have made better use of the guidance within the Policy Framework, increasing the use of the HMPPS central property storage facility at Branston and the prison's Local Security Strategy and Searching Policy contains guidance in the application and levels of volumetric control to be applied. The onsite HMPPS Controller team have also undertaken several assurance visits on property and are now seeing improvements.

HMPPS does note the Board's concerns about property, but it is simply not possible to transfer with a prisoner all their excess property which they might have accrued above these volumetric limits. HMPPS is aware of the problems around property and continues to look at what further can be done.

Food Budget

The Board can be assured that both public sector and private prisons follow guidelines regarding food and nutritional needs in line with Prison Service Instruction 44/2010 Catering - Meals for Prisoners. Meals and menus at HMP/YOI Parc are prepared in accordance with the PSI and the prison operates with a daily catering budget per prisoner that is in line with HMPPS national prison catering budgets. The local prisoner council has provided helpful feedback regarding menus, quality and portion sizes and the Prison Director has been working with senior managers and the catering provider to review the meals. It is recognised that some issues were because of equipment deficits or defects in the kitchen, and these have largely been addressed. The catering provider has subsequently made improvements to the quality of meals and the methods in which it is delivered to the servery areas. Varied international theme meal nights have also been introduced, celebrating food from different cultures which has been well received and freezers have been installed to servery areas to support the serving of chilled desserts. The prison is also continuing to review food waste so that the savings can be reinvested into the menu that is offered.