



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Bure
Jaguar Drive
Badersfield
Norwich
NR10 5GB

MoJ ref: SUB121695

20 February 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP BURE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 AUGUST 2023 – 31 JULY 2024**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP Bure. I have read your report carefully and offer my thanks to you and your colleagues for your continued dedication and the hard work that has been put into providing your helpful observations. This is particularly appreciated given you have been operating with fewer board members than your recommended complement.

I was saddened to read of the deaths of two prisoners during the reporting year. Such events are tragic, and I offer my condolences to their friends and family. I note that in both cases the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman made no recommendations.

I recognise the concerns you have raised regarding the sentencing position of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) prisoners. I want to be clear that public protection will always be our top priority and as such we cannot commit to a full or partial resentencing exercise. It would pose an unacceptable level of risk to members of the public and in particular to victims.

That being said, the Government remains determined to support the rehabilitation of IPP offenders through a refreshed action plan, which was published in November 2024 in our IPP Annual Report. 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. I can assure you the Government is committed to working with organisations and campaign groups to ensure the appropriate course of action is taken to support those still serving IPP sentences.

I also appreciate the issues you raise regarding the varying rates of pay for prisoners and note your request that a national minimum wage be considered. Governors do have the discretion to pay above the nationally set minimum rates of pay and are required to review their local pay policy annually. Within HMP Bure, prisoners are consulted on local pay rates via the Prisoner council. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) reviews policies regularly and will explore whether any further changes need to be made to national prisoner pay policy.

It was encouraging to receive your recognition of the prioritisation of rehabilitation, delivery of accredited Offending Behaviour Programmes and in particular the establishment's focus on reading, a key life skill, for which there is a specific strategy in place. I was delighted to read that this is supported by the provision of an excellent library which your report notes has been identified as an example of best practice.

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 Lord Chancellor and I appreciated 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 Bure.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'James', written in dark ink.

Lord Timpson
Minister for Prisons, Probation, and Reducing Reoffending

HMP BURE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 AUGUST 2023 – 31 JULY 2024

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Capacity and Regime

In all prisons the education offer is reviewed on a regular basis with an annual needs analysis taking place which informs the education offer commissioned by the Governor. HMPPS continues to seek opportunities to improve both the quantity and quality of our Education, Skills and Work offer. At HMP Bure the Waste Management area has been relocated, enabling a plan to increase workplaces through a partnership with a community recycling company to be progressed. There has also been an increase in the number of workplaces on the prisoner maintenance team by relocating that service. All residential areas now have a range of activity groups running, which prisoners can access when they are not at work, this has been a particular focus along with ensuring the needs of the older and younger population are reflected in this provision. Six of the seven wings now have additional garden spaces adjacent to the building which prisoners can use when not at work, increasing time in the open air and providing additional space on wings that have very limited communal space for the number of prisoners that live on them.

Resettlement Funding

The funding available to enable dedicated employment initiatives and resourcing covered 93 prisons, including all resettlement prisons at the time. Prisons that did not receive the funding for initiatives can set these up voluntarily, to meet the needs of their cohort. At HMP Bure the Governor has funded a Prison Employment Lead to add to the other locally resourced Resettlement services, to ensure that prisoners being released are appropriately supported. A new operational Policy Framework on employment was published in April. This provides guidance on best practice regarding how to resource and operate employment initiatives, to support prisoners on this part of their resettlement journey.

Safety

In relation to the lack of CCTV at HMP Bure, the Area Property Operations Manager will be discussing this matter with the prison with a view to submitting a business case for funding for this project. All requests from the establishment will be 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.

Digital Adjudications

Following the conclusion of an evidence-based whole system review of adjudications in May 2023, legislative and non-legislative work was conducted to make improvements to the adjudications system, including clarifying the existing policy and new charges and rehabilitative options. HMPPS are building on the recommendations given in the whole system review to improve the processes used in the behaviour management of prisoners across the estate. This will include looking at tech options, as suggested by the board, along with other possible solutions.