



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Warren Hill
Rectory Road
Hollesley
Woodbridge
IP12 3JW

MoJ ref: SUB130989

19 January 2026

Dear Chair,

**HMP WARREN HILL: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2024 – 31 MAY 2025**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP Warren Hill and I very much appreciate you and your colleagues hard work in capturing these helpful observations. Whilst you have remained short of members, I'm pleased you have been able to significantly increase your visits to the prison and that your membership has increased to provide stability to continue your monitoring in the forthcoming year.

I was saddened to hear three prisoners died in custody during the reporting year, two of which were due to natural causes, and I offer my condolences to all their friends and family. I'm reassured though that any recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman will be taken very seriously with the implementation arrangements the prison has in place with the regional safety team.

I am very much aware of your continued concerns about access to Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) at HMP Warren Hill, following the previous Government's decision to suspend the pilot. You will know from my reply to you last year that the current ROTL Policy Framework requires Indeterminate Sentence Prisoners (ISP), including those serving Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences, to be tested in open conditions before accessing ROTL to ensure suitability and public protection. However, it is recognised that for prisoners released directly from HMP Warren Hill, the gap between custody and release can be significant without the benefits of ROTL. Therefore, options are being considered to address this as part of the IPP Action Plan which was published in the annual report on the IPP sentence 2024 to 2025 on 17 July 2025. Target 5 of the refreshed action plan sets out a commitment to extend ROTL access to all four progression regime prisons by July 2026 which includes HMP Warren Hill. It will build on previous experience and the Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) are exploring how this can be delivered safely and effectively. The prison locally has also setup up its own ROTL working group to enable local policies and procedures to be put in place.

Despite this ongoing concern it was reassuring to read your many positive comments, particularly that the prison continues to operate as a well-run, safe, clean and decent environment, with positive and respectful relationships between staff and prisoners. The continued commitment to the Enabling Environment to ensure prisoners and staff are contributing to the place in which they live and work is encouraging. I was interested to read about the introduction of the Willow Unit, as well as new partnerships with local employers which will help prepare prisoners for life after custody. It was also pleasing to note that a purposeful regime is provided with prisoners spending most of the day out of their

cell, with a high level of employment. I also welcome the governance review across HMPs Warren Hill and Hollesley Bay to improve effectiveness and efficiency, which I hope will build on the existing good practice, as well as the many positive aspects HM Inspectorate of Prisons found when they visited HMP Warren Hill in February 2025.

I note you have raised four local issues of concern on which the Governor will continue to keep you updated. HMPPS comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

The Deputy Prime Minister and I really value the role which members of the Independent Monitoring Boards provide throughout the estate, and we are very grateful for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP Warren Hill.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James', written in a cursive style.

Lord Timpson
Minister for Prisons, Probation, and Reducing Reoffending

HMP WARREN HILL: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JUNE 2024 – 31 MAY 2025

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Expansion Programme

The Board can be assured that the planned expansion at HMP Warren Hill to deliver the rapid deployment cells (RDCs) will also provide a proportionate ancillary provision to maintain operational effectiveness and staff welfare. This will include additional storage, laundry areas, staff rooms, office space, serveries, self-cook areas, prisoner activity places and other enhancements to allow the prison to operate efficiently following the expansion.

Kitchen Facilities

The new kitchen which is planned as part of the expansion programme is intended solely for HMP Warren Hill to cater for the prison's population. Further details will be able to be shared with the Board once the project design is finalised.

Education

There have been no cuts to the national prison education budget in the current financial year, it has in fact been increased. However, it is recognised that this budget has not been able to keep pace with the significant rise in the cost of delivering high-quality education in recent years. This has resulted in some reduction in the volume of Core Education being delivered from October 2025 onwards, but does not affect other education services such as libraries, careers advice, distance learning or vocational training delivered through industries and workshops. Investment will continue in digital infrastructure, new assessment tools, and specialist staff to ensure the budget delivers the greatest possible impact for learners. Governors also retain access to the Prison Education Dynamic Purchasing System to commission provision tailored to the local prisoner population needs. Locally at HMP Warren Hill, have worked closely with the education provider to ensure that the education provision meets the need of the population and over 10% of the population are involved in higher education. The prison will also continue to work with the Employment Advisory Board to improve outcomes for the prisoner population through employment and vocational opportunities

Building Works

It is recognised that there have been delays in the expansion programme due to a change in contractor. HMPPS is working closely with partners to progress the project design and remain committed to ensure the prison, the national catering team, and wider stakeholders are informed throughout the process. Regular partnering calls with the prison will continue to take place to update on progress and a comprehensive implementation plan will be shared once finalised.

Older Prisoners

It is recognised that there has been an increase in the number of older prisoners in custody in recent years. This has created some challenges for prisons due to the complex health and social care needs and the physical design of the prison estate. However, the new prison places across the estate are accessible by design to accommodate mobility needs and will significantly increase the number of cells adapted to the needs of those with mobility issues and physical disabilities. A strategy for older prisoners was recommended by the recent Independent Sentencing Review, and as part of this strategy, how best to use the estate to support older prisoners across all prisons is being considered. Locally, HMP Warren Hill is monitoring the age of its population and exploring ways to make its facilities and purposeful activity

age-friendly to maintain engagement and improve wellbeing. As NHS England commission the healthcare services within prisons and Local Authorities commission social care packages, the prison continues to work with the commissioners and the providers to ensure that the health and social care provision meets the need of the prison population as it changes.