

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMPYOI Hollesley Bay
Rectory Road
Woodbridge
IP12 3JW

MoJ ref: SUB137752

7 September 2026

Dear Chair,

**HMP/YOI HOLLESLEY BAY INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2025**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP YOI Hollesley Bay. I want to express my sincere appreciation for the work undertaken by you and your colleagues in producing such valuable insights, despite still having vacancies. I'm also sorry to hear that your membership reduced further during the reporting period and I hope this improves in the coming year.

I understand the concerns about funding for prison education but can provide assurance that the national funding provided for prison education has not reduced, reflecting our commitment to support rehabilitation through high-quality education, skills and work activities. However, many prisons have seen changes in the volume of provision that is being delivered through the Core Education contract since the new Prisoner Education Service started in October 2025. This is mainly due to funding not being able to keep up with inflation costs of delivering education, as well as the funding formula for prison education being refreshed to provide a fairer allocation that reflects a prison's population, function and regional cost differences. The extent to which prisons are affected under the previous and current contracts, are set out in [published](#) transparency data which shows HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay has seen a reduction of 34%. Core Education delivery does represent only one element of the wider education, skills and work offer that prisoners are able to access and governors have retained the flexibility to commission provision through the Dynamic Purchasing System to meet the needs of their prison population. There is also a focus on obtaining the maximum value for money and quality outcomes from the education provision through effective allocation and increased attendance. In addition, a full evaluation of the new Prisoner Education Service is underway to assess the impact of the education provision on prisoner progress and rehabilitation outcomes to inform future policy and commissioning decisions.

Regarding the challenges with Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) assessments, while we are committed to improving timeliness, public protection will always remain a priority. Releasing someone temporarily depends on a thorough assessment of the individual's risk, which can take time to draw on information from relevant agencies where required. It is recognised that there are pressures within the Probation Service and these are being addressed through significant investment of up to £700 million by 2028/29 which will deliver significant reforms based on the recommendations of the Independent Sentencing Review. As a result of this review, the Sentencing Act, which received Royal Assent on 22 January 2026, will provide the Courts with options to end the cycle of less serious offenders going in and out of prison. This will also help HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) to inform the future

requirements for the prison estate to keep protecting the public and supporting resettlement opportunities. Furthermore, probation recruitment remains a priority and during 2025/26 HMPPS exceeded its Trainee Probation Officers target and has committed to bringing in at least another 1,300 new trainee Probation Officers by March 2027. Our Future Probation Service Programme will also help to rebalance the workload demand and capacity through the introduction of digital tools, policy measures and process improvements. These measures will help support the completion of ROTL assessments and enable probation practitioners to focus on helping people to turn their lives around.

I can sympathise with your concerns that prisoners are transferring with only a short time left to serve. Allocation within the estate is designed to ensure prisoners are held in the right prison at the right point in their sentence. However, in times of population pressure, it is imperative that prisons can safely receive new arrivals from court. In these cases, the Board can be assured that the prison and partners will prioritise assessments and interventions as quickly as possible to assist with the individual's housing, job skills, and money management needs. Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) are also currently being re-procured to introduce an enhanced community support service for men from Summer 2027 to better support resettlement and reintegration into the community. Improvements include the delivery provider being co-located within the prison to enable improved pre-release and resettlement activity, a meet at the gate service for the most vulnerable, and the introduction of a community links role which will provide enhanced resettlement transition. In addition, HMPPS continues to strengthen offender flows to support earlier movement wherever possible and an estate configuration is ongoing to better reflect the changing cohort mix of prisoners.

I also welcome your further enquiries around prisoners having the opportunity to work on the project to build Sizewell C nuclear power station. Engagement between the prison, the local Employment Advisory Board and Sizewell C has continued since my predecessor last wrote to you, and Lord Timpson had discussions with the Chief Executive Officer of Sizewell C this year on the matter. I am sure you can appreciate that security and vetting requirements for prisoners to access a nuclear site remains a challenge to this venture. Discussions will continue to explore whether there is a solution to these barriers, but HMPPS will remain focused on creating ROTL opportunities.

Whilst recognising these concerns, it was encouraging to read that stability was maintained, enabling the prison to provide a safe, decent and purposeful environment despite the high population churn. I was pleased to note that staff treat prisoners fairly and that health and wellbeing needs are being met. I welcome the continued emphasis on employability through the mock interview initiative and efforts to provide purposeful activity that develop vocational skills such as the textiles and forklift opportunities. I am also aware that the Board's support to the prison in its successful transition to a single governance model with HMP Warren Hill has been appreciated by staff locally to improve efficiency, consistency, and continuity of care.

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 really value the contribution of Independent Monitoring Board members in improving our prisons and we extend our thanks for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay.



Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister for Prisons, Probation and Reducing Reoffending

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Prisoners' Property

The importance of prisoners' property is recognised and HMPPS is committed to ensuring it is managed with care and respect. A further update to the Prisoners' Property Framework was introduced during your reporting period on 17 November 2025 to implement the work that took place to carefully consider the IMB national thematic report on the impact of property loss, alongside the thematic review by Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations. This work included consultation with prison staff and has strengthened the Framework in areas commonly identified as challenging, including the sending of excess property, the management of prisoners' laundry, and the accurate completion of cell clearance certificates.

The HMPPS Prison Performance Committee has previously discussed central oversight and assurance of prisoner property. The Committee agreed that assurance and compliance with the Policy Framework would have the greatest impact through management and oversight within the operational reporting line of Prison Group Directors and Area Executive Directors. In addition, it remains the case that complying with volumetric control is important, since the property within those limits will be moved with the prisoner when they are transferred by the Prisoner Escort and Custody Service (PECS) supplier. It is worth noting that PECS receive few concerns about lost property overall, as property is accurately recorded on the digital Person Escort Record, which assist with any investigation should property be lost in transit with the PECS supplier. For example, in the past 12 months there have been no complaints received from HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay relating to property losses by PECS.

Infrastructure Modernisation

Whilst investment in the infrastructure of our prisons remains important, HMPPS must carefully prioritise the available funding to ensure the best use of these resources, focusing on risk to life, capacity and decency as demand for maintenance across the estate exceeds the available funding. Requests that are made by a prison will be considered but there are currently no bids or projects relating to the chaplaincy offices, the chapel or the world faith centre at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay.

IMB Data Access

When the IMB Secretariat were made aware of the issue around SharePoint, discussions took place with the relevant team in the Ministry of Justice to set out the unique position and needs of IMB members as well as the need to access information. To address this a dedicated IMB area on a prison's SharePoint site has been created, where the local Board can access the relevant files that would previously have been available via a local prison drive. However, HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay has not yet migrated as part of the Prison Data Migration project but is being considered for the next tranche of prison migrations in due course. It is recognised that Boards will not yet be able to access the SharePoint site outside of the prison without MoJ Official technology and further consideration will need to be given to this to determinate the options available.