

Chair
Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Humber
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MoJ ref: SUB138170

18 September 2026

Dear Chair,

**HMP HUMBER: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
1 JANUARY 2025 – 31 DECEMBER 2025**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP Humber. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you and your colleagues for your continued dedication and commitment in capturing your invaluable observations, particularly in light of your ongoing membership challenges. I sincerely hope the position improves during the current reporting period.

I was saddened to learn that four prisoners died during the reporting year, three of whom I understand were after release and the fourth being tragically self-inflicted. I offer my condolences to all their friends and family and would like to reassure the Board that recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman are taken very seriously.

The Government and I are acutely aware of the critical role that education plays in providing purposeful activity and reducing reoffending. That is why we continue to focus on how we can drive the maximum value for money and quality outcomes from the available provision including ensuring that allocations and attendance remain a priority locally and nationally.

Whilst the national budget for prison education has not been reduced, many prisons have seen changes in the volume of provision that can be delivered through the Core Education contract from October 2025. This is driven primarily by inflationary pressures across all education services, which impacts the proportion of the budget that can be spent through the Core Education contract. The extent to which prisons are affected varies because the funding formula for prison education was refreshed to ensure that allocations are a fair reflection of prison population, function, and regional cost differences (many of which have changed since the funding formula was last set in 2019) and also due to local commissioning decisions as some types of delivery are more expensive than others.

This delivery reduction applies only to Core Education contracts and does not affect other education services such as libraries, careers advice and guidance, distance learning or vocational training delivered through industries and workshops. We are also investing in digital infrastructure, new assessment tools, and specialist staff to ensure that every pound spent delivers the greatest possible impact for learners. HM Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS) is monitoring delivery and outcomes through contract support and management, and are conducting a full evaluation of the new Prisoner Education Service to inform future provision.

I appreciate the Board's continued concerns around prisoner recalls together with the interest in greater use of non-custodial sentences. Recall is a critical public protection tool where the offender has breached licence conditions in such a way as to indicate increased risk or where there is other evidence that the offender's risk has increased (for example being out of touch), and the Probation Practitioner judges that, even with the imposition of additional licence conditions/alternative enforcement action the offender can no longer be safely managed in the community. As such, probation practitioners may rightly recall offenders for reasons other than further offending where the recall threshold has been met, which is based on the Probation Practitioner's professional judgement regarding the risk the offender poses.

Regarding the use of community alternatives to recall, we recognise the impact recall populations can have on churn and prison stability. I would like to assure you that this issue is being actively considered through wider sentencing and recall reform. Probation practitioners already must demonstrate that they have considered alternative enforcement action to manage the individual's risk in the community, where safe and appropriate, when submitting a recall request. Where recall is required, our recent reforms under the Sentencing Act have sought to improve outcomes following re-release. The new 56-day fixed-term recall model provides more time than previous short-term recalls to address recalled prisoners' risks and resettlement needs, helping to ensure safe re-release and public protection.

The Ministry of Justice are also considering the most appropriate response to the Independent Sentencing Review's second recommendation on recall to tighten the recall threshold, which the Government accepted in principle. Any changes to the application of recall will need to be evidence-led and balanced against the need to maintain public protection. We will continue to monitor the application of recall and consider whether further changes are needed as evidence emerges. Alongside this, HMPPS are evaluating the impacts of the pre-release delivery model being implemented at HMP Humber. Operational insight and pilot activity undertaken at HMP Humber will be used to understand what is effective and deliverable to inform future policy and guidance. The aim is to ensure the additional time in custody is used effectively to support rehabilitation, improve transition back into the community, and reduce reoffending.

Although there has been a high churn of prisoners, it was reassuring to note your comments about the good reception process that is also supportive and respectful. I was further reassured by the excellent work of the chaplaincy team and that the prison remains a safe place. It was also very encouraging to note the successes of the Hope Unit and the opening of the textile and waste recycling workshops and I wish both initiatives continued success.

Local issues of concern 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 Lord Chancellor and I appreciate the important 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 Humber.



Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister for Prisons, Probation and Reducing Reoffending

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Technology and Digitalisation

HMPPS understands the Board's concerns regarding the pace of digital transformation within prisons and there is no doubt about the significant benefits that secure digital services can deliver for both prisoners and staff, including reducing the administrative burden and improving efficiency. Digital investment is focused on moving away from fragmented legacy systems and paper-based processes towards a modern, integrated digital ecosystem that gives staff the right information at the right time to support safe and effective decision-making. At the core of this transformation is Digital Prison Services (DPS), which is becoming the single platform for prisoner management. DPS hosts a suite of new modern digital services to create a unified system through which staff can manage core operational activity. There are 45 DPS services live or in development, providing a single access point for information and tools covering areas such as sentence management, case notes, movements, and release planning. DPS is bringing all information onto one platform, ensuring data is captured once at the right point, and creating a system that is increasingly intelligent in how it supports staff workflows. This investment is helping to establish the foundations for a more connected and efficient prison environment.

HMPPS is currently working through future plans and priorities for the continued development and rollout of digital capabilities across prisons, including prisoner-facing digital services. Whilst HMPPS remains committed to expanding secure digital services, the pace and scope of future deployment will be subject to business planning processes and future funding decisions. In the meantime, HMPPS will continue to evaluate opportunities to improve existing services, learn from implementation across the estate, and ensure that future digital investments deliver value for money while supporting the effective operation of prisons.

Prisoners' Property

HMPPS fully recognises the importance of prisoners' property and are committed to ensuring it is managed with care and respect. Further to last year's response, HMPPS has considered carefully the IMB national thematic report on the impact of property loss on prisoners, and the thematic review by Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations of the property complaints they have received over the last five years. In considering the reports, consultation with prison staff took place on the issues raised. A revised version of the Prisoners' Property Policy Framework was published on 17 November 2025 and includes additional guidance on the sending on of excess property, the handling of prisoners' laundry and on the correct completion of the cell clearance certificate, as these have been identified as common areas of difficulty.

Resolution of complaints within a reasonable time is important to prisoners and to the integrity of the complaints system as a whole. Under the Prisoner Complaints Policy Framework establishments should agree which prison is responsible for providing the substantive response to a complaint and, where appropriate, for any compensation. Where agreement cannot be reached, the matter must be escalated promptly to the relevant Prison Group Director or the Director's line manager. HMPPS remains committed to improving the management of prisoners' property and considers possible areas for improvement on an ongoing basis.