

Independent Monitoring Report 2014/15

ISSUES FOR THE MINISTER

- **Once again we urge the Minister to continue to promote the need for greater understanding of the importance of dealing with mental illness in prison.**

It should be accepted that a standard prison is not the correct place for a prisoner who has severe mental illness. It is not beneficial for the individual, other prisoners, prison staff, and the Island community in general.

Policy should reflect the need for specialist accommodation on the Island and/or using the facilities available in the United Kingdom.

Accepted. Colleagues at Department of Health and Social Care are building a bespoke facility which will improve secure provision for those with acute mental health needs.

- **Encourage the Department of Health & Social Care to provide more staff and facilities to work with prisoners who have drug addiction problems.**

We note your response from last year; however, we evidence little improvement in spite of some input from Motiv8.

Accepted. Too many leaving prison are still prescription dependent.

One of the prison's strategic priorities is 'Harm Reduction'. The Drug & Alcohol Strategy has been revised as part of this.

There is increased focus and more support from Motiv8 and the Drug Action Team.

A full strategic needs assessment is to be conducted through the Public Health directorate into drugs and alcohol - this will include prison issues. The purpose of the assessment is to obtain facts as to where the drugs and alcohol problems are in the Island and utilise resources to target these. The Prison will be given the opportunity to feed into this process and has representation on the projects stakeholder group.

- **To press forward with all haste with the Custody (Amendment) Bill 2015 and so remove the role of the Board in relation to adjudications.**

To inform other members of Tynwald and to support the change through the legislation process.

Subject to Council of Minister's approval the Custody (Amendment) Bill will be printed and its first reading will take place on the 26th January 2016. The important matter of removing adjudications from the IMB will be delivered via this Bill. I accept that this has been a long journey, but the end is now in sight. I would like to thank the IMB for their forbearance and assistance in this matter.

- **The furniture in the Advocate's Room and Secondary Office in the Custody Suite at the Isle of Man Courts of Justice gives rise for concern as they are not secure.**

This matter has been raised with you at our meetings over a period of time and the issue has not been addressed.

The furniture has now been secured to the floor.

- **The Department of Infrastructure incorrectly stated that CCTV was fitted in the Custody Suite at the Isle of Man Courts of Justice (outside Court 3 and in the Van Dock area) after the build and so is not their responsibility.**

The Department of Home Affairs should resolve this situation in all haste before an incident occurs as there will be no recorded evidence to support staff or victims.

Following a meeting between prison senior management, 'Resource', and the Department of Infrastructure (DOI) the following has been completed:

- *Two faulty cameras have been replaced.*
- *The camera in the vehicle dock has been re-positioned to improve observation and safety.*

The Department of Infrastructure accept that they have ongoing responsibility for the maintenance. I am grateful to Mr Coleman for seeing this matter through.

- **The Department of Health & Social Care (Contracts & Business) has yet to put the long awaited policy in place for the handling of juveniles.**

A part of the policy would include whether handcuffs should or should not be used.

The Prison Governor has visited HMYOI Wetherby and obtained Sentence Planning documentation.

In addition, he has met with 'Resource' and the Department of Health & Social Care to implement a specification for court escorts including handcuffing.

Contact has also been made with the Young People's Estate (National Offender Management System) and a new custody specification from the Youth Justice Board has been received. This will form a Service Level Agreement regarding the management of Young People.

- **Progress on the Criminal Justice Strategy including publishing annual reviews of targets is welcomed. However, the Board would further welcome a toughening on the reduction of the number of prisoners leaving prison without a firm plan for further education, employment or training.**

The Department needs to support a 'through the gate' resettlement service in order to give most prisoners continuity. Prisoners need to be prepared for release.

The Prison Governor met with an Education Manager from HMP Humber to discuss a portfolio approach to capturing progress. The prison will adopt a 'passport' approach as part of the aim for seamless progression and 'through the gate' approach.

The prison is looking to strengthen their relationships with other agencies to improve discharge plans.

Treasury has been very helpful and extended its National Insurance Holiday Scheme to former inmates in order to make them more attractive in the workplace.

- **Concerns regarding limited accommodation options on release for young female and vulnerable prisoners remain. The Board looks forward to an update on firm plans for a replacement hostel facility.**

The planning permission has been granted, a Project Team has been established working to a Project Plan.

Following numerous site visits, architects have drawn up detailed plans and the specification for re-tendering of the contract is being prepared.

The project is now part of the wider Government's Agenda for Change Programme with a target date of April 2016 for the Probation Team to relocate with the hostel facility re-locating when the procurement exercise is complete.

Tromode House will provide better facilities for the management and support of young female and vulnerable prisoners on discharge.

- **Prisoners remain mostly appreciative of their treatment throughout the probation, resettlement and work process, although strain upon all these areas from loss of key staff and weak Succession Planning has impacted upon the quality and quantity of interactions with prisoners.**

Succession Planning is the top priority in the Strategic Plan established this year.

The potential retirement dates of key staff together with an assessment of their skills and knowledge has been compiled. The development needs of key staff have been identified using a nine box talent matrix and a 'talent pool' has been established.

I am confident that the Prison Governor and his team are addressing this important issue.

- **As a comparatively new build, the prison tries to deliver lower running costs through the efforts of the 'Greening Committee'. However, many of the systems and equipment are beginning to feel their age and fail leading to high maintenance/replacement costs. This needs to be an important consideration when the Department is considering future budget plans.**

I will ensure that an Asset Replacement Programme will form part of the Department's financial plans.

- **One of the Board's major concerns is regarding the prisoner's use of New Psychoactive Substances (legal highs) e.g. 'Spice' or 'Black Mamba' with potentially serious physical and mental health consequences. These substances are readily available in the community.**

They are not only extremely difficult to detect but they evade current drug testing capabilities and so cause difficulties for staff in managing and treating the side effects which, on occasions, necessitate hospital treatment.

As a matter of urgency the Board would urge the Minister to take forward the appropriate legislation in order to deal with this developing problem.

It was recently agreed at the Drugs and Alcohol Strategic Group that the Public Health Directorate would come forward with drafting instructions for inclusion in the National Health and Social Care Bill 2015 to ban Psychoactive Substances in the Isle of Man. The form of this legislation is not yet formulated but there will be an opportunity to provide comment as the legislation progresses in relation to whether what is being proposed will be sufficient for prison purposes.