

Isle of Man Prison & Probation Service – Response to IMB Recommendations 2021/22

SECTION 5: ISSUES FOR THE GOVERNOR

- The Board hopes that the role of the Custody Support Officers will be further developed with particular emphasis on increasing interaction with detainees held in the CSU. The Board would still like to see consideration being given to a protected time slot for Officers to achieve this.

Response:

A new policy that has been written and ready to be ratified will re-vamp the existing scheme and will dovetail into new routines once the profiling has been agreed and implemented. This will allocate time for custody support work along with intervention work.

- The Board would continue to urge the Governor to encourage the attendance of a Community Probation Officer at the monthly Safer Custody Meeting to assist with continuity for detainees following their release.

Response:

We are confident now there is attendance by Probation which will feedback to the Community Probation Officers that may be allocated any pending release.

It is the plan for the Prison Probation Officer to make contact with the Community Probation Officer at least three months prior to the detainee's release.

- As mentioned in previous Annual Reports, the Library is not being fully utilised and is closed for most of the week. If the Library could be developed as a research and study facility, this would be particularly useful to detainees undertaking Distance Learning Courses.

Response:

It is part of the induction interview process when it is explained how to access Distance Learning and utilising the Library to help with studies. A Distance Learning student is currently using the Library and individuals do ask for books via the Library.

We are looking to explore using the Library as a classroom to give students the opportunity to utilise the facility and also considering introducing Community Group Talks within the Library setting.

The Library Orderly is in attendance daily from 9am – 4pm.

- As ever, the Board remains of the opinion that the introduction of Voluntary Drug Testing would be beneficial.

Response:

This is included in our KPIs.

Recently, a further number of Officers have been trained and we are currently looking to have more trained before rolling out the new programme which will incorporate Voluntary Drug Testing and Mandatory Drug Testing.

We will concentrate on core groups i.e. Resettlement Day Releases, Hostel, Kitchen Workers, Work Party, and Orderlies.

- Whilst understanding that the demands of the Pandemic have restricted opportunities to offer agreed Resettlement functions, the need for maintaining realistic KPIs to assess progress on long-term goals is essential.

Response:

Since the Pandemic we have invested heavily in resettlement both financially and time.

We have trained a large number of Officers and qualified them in various skills to deliver ongoing Resettlement Programmes/Interventions.

The Resettlement/Interventions Team has also been increased by a Senior Officer and a Forensic Psychologist Team.

KPIs are captured from this area amongst other numerous areas of the prison and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis.

Approximately ten members of staff are training on 'Life Minus Violence' allowing us to do work on a 1:1 basis or group work to address violent behaviour and domestic violence behaviour. It will be quality assurance and fully accredited.

We are being trained by Professor Jane Ireland who is one of the most accredited Forensic Psychologists in the UK.

- The Board would continue to encourage the Governor to ensure Interventions Officers are given protected times so they can achieve both timely and high-quality interventions with detainees. The return of Resettlement personnel to their ring-fenced roles is imperative to ensure the safe release into the community of detainees who have completed the required number of interventions and where necessary, promptly completed modules to support their parole applications.

Response:

I would contest this. We have hard evidence that since July 2021, Resettlement /Interventions were removed from residential duties and only utilised at minimal times as a last resort. Their time is dedicated to Resettlement and Interventions.

We have invested in training and will continue to do so.

The evidence is in the recent lifer reports completed by the Forensic Psychologists Team. Also, there are two lifers out in the community as the result of the dedication and hard work of these teams and the time allocated to them.

- With the upheaval within the management of Probation and associated consequences, it remains a concern that some detainees are being released without sufficient interventions to lower their risk of re-offending. Lack of timely interventions to support complex cases and parole applications remains an issue, although recent part-time appointments have started to mitigate this longstanding issue. Increased engagement between Probation and the Judiciary is required to promote mutual understanding.

Response:

We have gone down to the foundations of Resettlement and Intervention work in regard to detainees being released and as already mentioned in previous points we have invested heavily in time and funding to ensure a better outcome to detainees on their release.

Unfortunately, we inherited some poor practices previously and have since taken a root and branch approach. This was mentioned at a previous meeting by the Head of Community & Rehabilitation as to what our chosen direction of travel would be and the work being carried out in terms of training across all sectors, also with the introduction of the Forensic Psychologists when it was also emphasised that this would take time and that we are still on a journey.

This is not the stock exchange where there are instant results. Our re-offending rates for the reporting year would challenge this action point.

- The Board thanks the Prison Governor and his staff for their support and hard work to bring about a change in the conditions in the Court Custody Suite.

Response:

There are quarterly meetings with "Noonan's". Also, there are clear open lines of communication in between these meetings.