



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Haverigg
North Lane
Millom
LA18 4NA

MoJ ref: SUB125640

10 July 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP HAVERIGG: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 DECEMBER 2023 to 30 NOVEMBER 2024**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP Haverigg. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your dedication and hard work in capturing your helpful observations, particularly as you operated with just four members for the entire reporting period. I hope this situation improves during the course of the current reporting year.

I was very saddened to hear there were two deaths during the reporting year. Every death in our care is a tragedy and I offer my heartfelt condolences to the friends and family of both of the deceased and would like to reassure the Board that any recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman are taken very seriously.

I fully understand the Board's concerns of how difficult it can be for Persons Convicted of a Sexual Offence (PCoSO) to gain employment whilst in the open estate or following release. A report by the Prison Reform Trust and charity Unlock titled 'Thinking Differently' noted that "*despite their low re-offending rates, it is widely believed that people with sexual convictions are inherently dangerous and incapable of change*". This viewpoint can result in prospective employers being more resistant to employing people convicted of sexual offences. In response to this, HM Prisons and Probation Service's (HMPPS) New Futures Network devised a proposed strategy for improving the employability of PCOSOs. Subsequently, high-level meetings have taken place, involving the National Employment Advisory Board (EAB) chair Rosie Brown and Interim Permanent Secretary Amy Rees, to determine the best direction to support PCOSOs into suitable and sustainable employment. The initial action agreed was to appoint a specific EAB chair to concentrate on this cohort who is working alongside other employers.

Locally, the Governor continues to make a concerted effort to help the PCOSO cohort. A Business and Community Engagement Manager is now in post to work with local business to create paid work placements during Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). I would also like to recognise the impressive work of the Employment Advisory Board at HMP Haverigg and its Chair, Dave, in helping to secure ROTL work and paid work after prisoners' release. Whilst employment opportunities remain a challenge, there is engagement with around five employers, two of which have since offered work to prison leavers. As opportunities are limited, the prison is also focusing on learning and skills provision to ensure prisoners are ready for employment with multiple skills on release.

Effective resettlement of prison leavers is a core part of our efforts to reduce reoffending. In January, we introduced regional Employment Councils, which bring together business leaders, prisons, probation and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to support offenders in the community. HMP Haverigg is represented on both the North West and Cumbria and Lancashire Employment Councils. To support individuals leaving prison in accessing suitable temporary housing, HMPPS operates a three-tier Community Accommodation Service (CAS) which is vital in reducing reoffending and protecting the public. The CAS Tier 2 service provides short-term housing for individuals on bail or Home Detention Curfew, including new properties in Carlisle and Workington - Cumbria's first. CAS Tier 3 offers up to 12 weeks of accommodation for those at risk of homelessness upon release and under probation supervision. There are also 50 prison-based Strategic Housing Specialists (SHS), including one at HMP Haverigg, working with local stakeholders to address housing difficulties. Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) are currently undertaking a review to ensure that they more effectively deliver services to people leaving custody and align with wider provision to best meet people's resettlement and rehabilitative needs. HMPPS is also collaborating with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and other government departments to develop a new cross-government strategy aimed at helping to end homelessness.

The number of older prisoners has risen significantly over the past 20 years, and I recognise the challenges this increase can bring to prisons. HMPPS is currently considering how best to ensure the needs of older prisoners are reflected in wider strategic work. In the interim, there is a range of work ongoing to improve support for older prisoners focusing on working with partners to improve health and care support; considering how the estate can best meet their needs, and sharing best practice on purposeful activity. Separately, the Early Release on Compassionate Grounds policy framework allows offenders with serious mental or physical health conditions to apply for early release if their medical condition makes imprisonment difficult to navigate and causes excessive suffering. This can apply to individuals who are severely incapacitated or paralysed, have had major strokes, suffer from serious respiratory or heart diseases, and/or those living with various forms of mental health issues such as dementia.

I was encouraged to read that there has been some progress on the concerns you raised last year, most notably a 50% reduction in IMB applications around the loss of property. I was concerned though that some issues around prisoner and staff relationships remain with a number of prisoners being apparently unwilling or reticent to raise legitimate concerns. I hope that this can be rectified locally, and I appreciate the work that the Board has done to reassure prisoners around this.

Despite the challenges of the prison's remote location, I was pleased to note the prison's efforts to maintain family ties including the publishing of a Family and Significant Others Strategy to support offenders' mental health and wellbeing.

HMPPS comments in response to your concerns around infrastructure investment are set out in the attached annex. The Lord Chancellor and sincerely I appreciate the invaluable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are extremely grateful for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP Haverigg.

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

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Prison Infrastructure and Investment

HMPPS is considering the development of the site through the addition of new accommodation units, with the aim of increasing overall capacity. A feasibility study to assess this potential expansion is being conducted by the Ministry of Justice. A new Offender Management Unit (OMU) building has been discussed but this is pending financial approval before any further progress. A local prisoner maintenance team is in place that works to maintain and improve living conditions, utilising any available funds to ensure accommodation standards remain decent and appropriate.