



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Full Sutton
Full Sutton
York
YO411PS

August 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP FULL SUTTON: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JANUARY 2024 – 31 DECEMBER 2024**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP Full Sutton. I visited the prison on 18 December 2024 where I was able to discuss some of the themes in more detail and I hope you found this visit useful. I am extremely grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing your helpful observations despite continuing to operate with a severely depleted complement of members.

I was very saddened to hear seven prisoners died during the reporting year. Whilst these deaths may have been due to natural causes, it was still very upsetting, and I offer my heartfelt condolences to the friends and family of all the deceased. I can assure the Board that recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman are always taken very seriously.

I appreciate the Board's concerns around sentence progression and treatment programmes. The Building Choices suite was accredited in November 2024 and roll out to relevant sites is planned between July to October 2025. The process of rolling down existing legacy programmes is underway, and sites are preparing with implementation planning. Due to good preparation for training, I am pleased to advise the number of staff successfully meeting 'ready to deliver' criteria nationally are very high.

HMP Full Sutton is due to deliver its first Building Choices group at the end of August. A new Head of Psychology and Interventions joined the prison in July and will lead the delivery on this, and currently there are no delays expected for implementation. An ongoing vacancy for Programmes Manager remains despite recent internal and external campaigns which I hope will be resolved soon. The prison expects the suite of programmes to be rolled out more fully later this year.

Communicating effectively and confidently with prisoners is a key part of jailcraft and that is why prison officer foundation training includes verbal communication and interpersonal skills. The National Officer Training Programme underscores the importance of building professional relationships with those in their care, and also focuses on identifying individuals who may be vulnerable in custody and where and how to signpost to the relevant support. New prison officers learn how to utilise incident management techniques and skills emphasising the steps they can use to defuse potential conflict situations in accordance with approved protocols. This includes utilising de-escalation techniques when dealing with inappropriate behaviours of individuals. Whilst there are no bespoke training packages specifically for the Long Term and High Security Prisons Group or HMP Full Sutton, the training programmes allows for set weeks for officers in training to apply the training they have received at their assigned establishment.

I note you have raised some local issues of concern in your report which the Governor will continue to keep you aware of progress as work continues. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

Whilst there has been some progress on the issues raised from the last report and other challenges remain, I was encouraged to receive your comments that generally the prison continued to remain calm for most of the year along with the good work of the Complex Needs/Safety Intervention Meetings that includes proactively identifying potentially challenging prisoners transferring into HMP Full Sutton or recently transferred in. I was also impressed to learn about the horticulture teams' activities despite the limitations, and of the efforts to attract new workshop activity together with the reduction in the unemployment level. It was very heartening to learn that over £1500 was raised for charity/motor neurone disease following a fundraising event and would like to commend the college mentors who organised the event and all who participated.

The Lord Chancellor and I continue to appreciate the valuable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are sincerely grateful for your ongoing commitment and service on behalf of HMP Full Sutton.

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

Healthcare Contracts

The commissioning of healthcare contracts and reviewing the quality or performance of provision lies with NHS England. A separate contract for mental health provision at HMP Full Sutton commenced on 1 June 2024. The transition from a single-provider model to separate contracts for primary care and mental health provision prompted a review of joint working arrangements between the providers of these two services to ensure prisoners in the segregation unit continued to receive assessments and support from the most appropriate healthcare professionals. HMP Full Sutton continues to be a pilot site for the implementation of the HMPPS/NHS England joint care and separation standards framework. NHS England, HMPPS, the healthcare providers, and regional NHS commissioners continue to work together to implement the framework.

Prisoner Spends Accounts

Private cash rates were uplifted by 10% in April 2025 in response to increases in the price of canteen items. There was a previous uplift of 10% to private cash rates in September 2022. HMPPS recognises the effects of inflationary pressures on prisoners and consequently this is kept under constant review and is managed across different areas.

The selling price of canteen products is governed by retail pricing policy and is set as no more than the recommended retail price. This is benchmarked in line with local convenience stores on a quarterly basis and allows for consistency of pricing with the wider community. The national product list includes a number of cheaper value product lines, the same as what would be found in supermarkets, that prisons can include on their local product lists.

STEP Unit

The Supporting Transition and Enabling Progression (STEP) Unit is resourced with an additional twelve Band 3 Officers added to the local Annex G staffing levels of HMP Full Sutton. Whilst the unit should have its own Supervising Officer, this role is often cross deployed as part of ongoing staffing issues at HMP Full Sutton. The original staffing profile of the unit did not include the addition of Band 4 or Band 5 (supervisor grade) staffing. As the unit is a landing on B wing, currently the Custodial Manager of B wing provides managerial oversight.

HMPPS can confirm there are no plans to remove the additional staff provided for the unit and this is now factored into the prison's staffing group. The requirement for additional manager/supervisor will be considered by the Pathways to Progression team alongside HMP Full Sutton and the suitability of bids assessed. The Governor also intends to further review the Annex G staffing model and to explore a reprofiling exercise in line with a full review of local resources.