



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP/YOI Winchester
Romsey Road
Winchester
SO22 5DF

MoJ ref: SUB129224

20 November 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP/YOI WINCHESTER: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2024 – 31 MAY 2025**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP/YOI Winchester. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your considerable efforts in capturing your helpful observations. Whilst it has been a turbulent year for the Board, it was reassuring to note the overall complement appears to be stable. Further to my visit on 4 December 2024, I trust my 6-month update letter at the end of July proved useful.

I was saddened to hear five prisoners died during the reporting year, two of which I understand occurred within 14 days after release. I offer my sincere 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.

Following the invocation of an Urgent Notification (UN) by HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) on 24 October 2024, a comprehensive action plan was developed which included clear timeframes for all remedial works. We acknowledge, and the Board will be aware, that key estates projects haven't progressed as quickly as we would have liked. Several roof repairs on the education and reception wings are still awaiting to be progressed. Westhill window refurbishment is awaiting Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Estates approval, while shower works also await quotes to begin tendering. Chapel improvements are on hold pending a feasibility study, with interim options being explored. The permanent Control Room completion is projected for August 2027. In the meantime, the Emergency Control Room is due to be completed in December. Unfortunately, there has been a slight delay to this due to issues identified and needing a revised programme of works but work is now progressing well.

As per my 6-month update letter, the Care and Separation Unit (CSU) project has been remobilised and anticipated completion remains at February 2027. Five unused rooms have been identified as additional prisoner accommodation and conversion into single-occupancy cells with commissioning expected this autumn. Whilst temporary grills have been installed on B wing to address immediate security concerns, manufacture of a new window design is progressing and installation expected by the end of the 2028 financial year. Separately, the feasibility of demolition and replacement of existing Industrial Cleaning and Wood Workshop facilities is being considered together with a new Video Conferencing Centre facility. I sympathise with the Board's concerns about the timeliness of delivery but I would like to reassure you that HM Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS) is committed to delivering all identified works as soon as possible. Additional information about the Control Room and CSU is contained in the attached annex.

In terms of monitoring contractor or supplier performance and delivery, across the prisons estate Regional Property Operations Manager (RPOM) and Area Property Operations Manager (APOM) review performance data which includes analysis of Key Performance Indicators on a monthly basis. A monthly tri-partite is held between the service provider, establishment and APOM to discuss regular business and any concerns with delivery. These meetings are minuted so progress can be monitored and performance driven. Any failures on the part of the service provider are officially recorded with an Early Warning Notice (EWN) via our commercial department issued to the service provider. Any continuation of failure can be escalated to a risk reduction meeting and if no progress is made, then a contract defect notice can be issued. At HMP/YOI Winchester, there are weekly Maintenance Update meetings through which suppliers are closely monitored and an avenue to be held to account on agreed time, cost, and quality.

Looking to the future, and introduction of new contracts through the Property Transformation Programme (PTP), the new contracts will introduce measures aimed at streamlining processes and enhancing service delivery. A particular emphasis will be placed on achieving first-time fixes to improve efficiency and outcomes. A new Contract Management team will be introduced by PTP that will provide dedicated support to the MoJ Property Directorate, ensuring full oversight of the new facilities management contracts to deliver improved service. Each facilities management contract will have a designated Senior Contract Manager that will provide Contract Oversight and include Performance Management. Through the delivery of a standardised approach with consistent management processes across all new contracts, improvements will be seen in assigning clear ownership of tasks, consistent governance, collaboration and proactive management. By identifying trends early, the team will shift focus from reactive issue resolution to strategic oversight.

Notwithstanding the invocation of the Urgent Notification, there are issues to be addressed at the prison and that is why I was encouraged to receive your comments about the reduction in the number of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) cases together with the opening of the specialist neurodiverse landing on C wing. A testament to it's success is the number of referrals received from other establishments. The kitchens ought to be commended too for the sheer volume of meals provided each day despite the challenges with prisoner workers.

Local issues of concern raised in your report 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 Deputy Prime Minister and I appreciate the valuable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are very grateful for your continued commitment and hard work on behalf of HMP/YOI Winchester.

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

Constant/Bed Watches

Providing staff for bed watches and constant supervision continues to be a significant challenge for the prison service. Whilst establishments aim to plan cover in advance, there is a frequent requirement to respond at short notice due to illness, accidents, or incidents of self-harm. Additionally, often many prisoners have neglected their healthcare needs prior to arrival and consequently there is an increased demand for external hospital escorts in a local prison setting. This work is unprofiled at HMP/YOI Winchester, and although overtime is available, local prisons tend to be reliant on staff volunteering for additional hours to provide cover.

Bedwatches (hospital admissions) and some instances of constant supervision are commissioned by NHS England and undertaken by HMPPS staff. Some of the cost of undertaking bedwatch activity is cross-charged to NHS England and the funds that are recovered can be used to support the prison regime. Instances of constant supervision and bedwatch are unpredictable, meaning it wouldn't be efficient to fund either of them permanently at a local level. A joint HMPPS/NHSE national review of Escorts, Bedwatches and Constant Supervision is underway, and it is hoped this will lead to improvements in this area of prison delivery.

Capital Investment

Care and Separation Unit (CSU)

The contract has been re-tendered and awarded to a new contractor. The work is due to start in November 2025. MoJ Property Directorate have been working with the constructor to support and share information in advance to expedite validation and commencement of works, with the new CSU now projected for completion by February 2027.

Control Room

This work has been awarded to the contractor that is delivering the CSU. The work is due to start in November 2025. Work on the temporary Emergency Control Room has started and MoJ property services have surveyed the existing CCTV provision and have replaced the faulty cameras. There continues to be a robust local contingency plan in place in the event of any loss of service. The project to permanently replace the existing control room and upgrade the CCTV system is expected to conclude by August 2027.

Illicit Items

Prisons have a range of physical security countermeasures to reduce the ingress and conveyance of illicit items, including X-ray body scanners, airport-style Enhanced Gate Security (EGS), X-ray baggage scanners, detection dogs, and drug trace detection equipment. As of March 2024, over 53,000 positive indications had been recorded by our X-ray body scanners. This year, HMPPS has invested over £40 million in physical security across 34 prisons, which includes anti-drone measures such as window replacements, external window grilles, and netting across 15 priority prisons.