



Ministry
of Justice

Baroness Hamwee
Chair of the Justice and Home Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

The Right Honourable
Alex Chalk KC MP
Lord Chancellor & Secretary
of State for Justice

30 November 2023

Dear Baroness Hamwee,

LORD CHANCELLOR JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE EVIDENCE SESSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide evidence to the Committee on Wednesday 25 October and your follow up letter providing additional detail regarding Hendon Probation Office. Please find additional information that I agreed to provide during the session.

Move to Open Conditions (Quarter 3)

On 17 July 2023, I adjusted the policy criteria for accepting recommendations by the Parole Board to move indeterminate sentence prisoners to open conditions. The adjusted policy has been applied to all outstanding Parole Board recommendations at 17 July, and all recommendations received after that date. Under the terms of the Policy, the Secretary of State (or an official with delegated responsibility) will accept a recommendation from the Parole Board (approve an ISP for open conditions) only where:

- the prisoner has made sufficient progress during the sentence in addressing and reducing risk to a level consistent with protecting the public from harm (in circumstances where the prisoner in open conditions may be in the community, unsupervised under licensed temporary release); and
- the prisoner is assessed as low risk of abscond; and
- there is a wholly persuasive case for transferring the ISP to open conditions.

For the quarter 3 period in 2023, I have accepted 104 and rejected 65 Parole Board recommendations for an indeterminate sentence offender to move to open conditions.

Update on whether new processes have been put into place following German Extradition case

I have expressed that it is crucial that those who commit offences in the UK must serve justice in the UK.

Requests for assurances are initially received by the CPS whose usual point of contact within government on extradition is the Home Office. Given the recent requests on prison conditions we have strengthened direct liaison between CPS and MoJ/HMPPS. We do not anticipate any issues resulting from lack of communication.

Hendon Probation Office

You asked me to follow up with you about the position of Probation in Hendon and concerns that services were being delivered from a Travelodge. London Probation have had an office at Denmark House in Hendon since 2008. In 2017, the Travelodge was developed around this building, occupying upper floors to the area that probation is in. There are, however, no shared spaces, the entrances are entirely separate and located on different streets and there is no access between the two premises. The service does not occupy any rooms within the hotel and I am pleased to say that there have been no problems arising since the hotel started operating in 2017. On rare occasions, people can arrive at probation looking for the hotel but they have been easily redirected. There have been no incidents of concern from guests at the hotel.

I would also like to reassure you that there is no need to apologise, I was very grateful for your magnanimity in allowing me to leave a few minutes early to attend PMQs.

Yours sincerely,

RT HON ALEX CHALK KC MP

LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE