



Welsh Affairs Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA Tel: 020 7219 1424

Email: welshcom@parliament.uk Website: www.parliament.uk

From the Chair

20 March 2024

Heather Whitehead
Director, HMP Parc

Thank you for appearing before the Welsh Affairs Committee on Wednesday 21 February as part of our inquiry into prisons in Wales.

Unfortunately, we were not able to cover all of the intended areas of questioning during the session. As such, I would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions:

1. The Committee has heard of the important role staff-prisoner relationships play in running an effective regime, with multiple witnesses saying that quality relationships can help reduce instances of violence and self-harm. How does your prison go about forging such relationships, and how can this approach be embedded into prison officer training?
2. The Committee has been told that the needs of the prison population are growing more urgent and more complex. To what extent is supply meeting the demand for mental health and substance misuse treatment at your prison, and how does this compare with prisons in England?
3. The Committee has heard that prison transfers can disrupt a prisoner's rehabilitation, as they may not be able to complete education courses or employment workshops at the establishment they are moved to. What measures do you have in place to ensure that transfers do not disrupt a prisoner's rehabilitative journey?
4. You told the Committee that there was better provision in England for men with personality disorders, noting that the lack of adequate provision in Wales "significantly impacts levels of self-harm at Parc". How exactly does this provision vary, and what can be done to ensure there is parity in this area?
5. The Committee has heard of the practical issues that arise from the "jagged edge" of devolution, in which the UK and Welsh Governments are responsible for several intersecting issues relevant to the criminal justice system. What is the most pressing issue you encounter as a result of this "jagged edge", and is there anything that either the Welsh or UK Government could do to mitigate this issue?

Yours sincerely,

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Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP



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Amanda Corrigan
Governor, HMP Cardiff

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4. How might detached duty be delivered differently so as to reduce its impact on the prison that the officers are being transferred from?
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Rob Denman
Governor, HMP Usk & Prescoed

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Rebecca Hayward
Governor, HMP Berwyn

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Chris Simpson
Governor, HMP Swansea

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Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP



Gwasanaeth Charchardai
a Phrawf EM yng Nghymru

HM Prison & Probation
Service in Wales

Giles Mason
Prison Group Director
Public Sector Prisons in Wales

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP
Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

18 April 2024

Dear Stephen

WELSH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR PRISON GOVERNORS IN WALES

Thank you for your letter of 20 March 2024, to the five prison governors in Wales, with further questions to the evidence they provided to the Welsh Affairs Committee in February.

All of the prison governors have considered the committee's further questions with care, and I am responding as the Prison Group Director for Public Sector Prisons in Wales to provide their collated response.

The committee's questions and the governors' joint responses are presented in turn.

1. The Committee has heard of the important role staff-prisoner relationships play in running an effective regime, with multiple witnesses saying that quality relationships can help reduce instances of violence and self-harm. How do such relationships get forged, and how can this approach be embedded into prison officer training?

Informal staff-prisoner relationships are vital to making the living and working conditions in our prisons safe for all. Our prison officers develop and maintain these by using their authority in a procedurally just way, being both respectful to prisoners and encouraging hope for the future.

Successful staff-prisoner relationships combine prison officers' individual skills with learning from their prison officer training on Procedural Justice, the Five-Minute Intervention, and Rehabilitative Culture.

There are also formal structures in place to support the forging of staff-prisoner relationships through the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model. Key Workers support the delivery of the sentence plan, through formal contact sessions with our prisoners.

Key Workers develop constructive, motivational relationships, support the making of appropriate choices, and give hope and responsibility for development through one-to-one sessions. This provides an individual with whom prisoners can establish a relationship, build trust and receive encouragement.

Band 3 Prison Officers are trained to coach and support our prisoners through their custodial sentence, with Key Work as part of their prison officer training.

A future programme that the Prison Service is currently developing is the Enable Programme. At the heart of the Enable Programme is the transformation of our capability and support offer to prison colleagues that will in turn enable them to build constructive relationships with prisoners. These improved relationships will help engage prisoners and motivate them to make the most of opportunities in prison for positive change and ultimately will help contribute to a reduction in reoffending, and improvements to prison safety.

2. The Committee has been told that the needs of the prison population are growing more urgent and more complex. To what extent is supply meeting the demand for mental health and substance misuse treatment at your prison, and how does this compare with prisons in England?

As health is devolved to the Welsh Government, responsibility for mental health and substance misuse treatment falls with the Local Health Boards in Wales.

HM Prison and Probation Service in Wales, Welsh Government, and Public Health Wales co-signed a Partnership Agreement for Offender Health and Social Care in 2019. This established the Oversight Group for Offender Health, providing an escalation point and all-Wales platform.

Prison governors co-chair a Prison Health Partnership Board with the Local Health Boards, which provides strategic oversight to healthcare in our prisons. At an operational level, prisons in Wales have a Healthcare Operational Group to resolve day-to-day issues.

Local health teams provide mental health treatment and interventions in prisons in Wales. However, for more complex mental health cases, officials in HMPPS in Wales and the Welsh Government work directly with health partners to provide for specific needs. This is not a formal structure but can be implemented after escalation from either a prison or the health team.

HMPPS in Wales provide an abstinence-based programme for substance misuse to offenders in prison, commissioned from the Forward Trust. This programme provides additional 'through the gate' support for service users in the community. Our prisons also offer a range of psychosocial support services for substance misuse through either their Local Health Boards or commissioned services, including via Dyfodol and Kaleidoscope.

We began introducing Buvidal to the prisons in Wales from 2020, with the funding being renewed annually by Welsh Government. Buvidal is a long-acting drug, which enables patients with substance misuse challenges to stabilise and focus on recovery.

Challenges in these areas in prisons in England and Wales will be dependent on the offender cohort at the particular prison. HMPPS works to ensure that the correct health services and interventions are supplied to offenders across the entire prison estate, and this should not be impacted by geographical location.

3. The Committee has heard that prison transfers can disrupt a prisoner's rehabilitation, as they may not be able to complete education courses or employment workshops at the establishment they are moved to. What measures do you have in place to ensure that transfers do not disrupt a prisoner's rehabilitative journey?

Prison staff may need to move prisoners for a variety of reasons, including a change in the security categorisation of a prisoner, sentence planning requiring a prisoner to complete a course that is unavailable at the holding prison, to match prison places with prison population needs, or to ensure the safety and wellbeing of a prisoner. This makes sure that prisoners are in the right prison to get the help that they need at the right stage of their sentence.

As the prison estate operates on an England and Wales basis, prisoners may be transferred across sites as necessary. However, during a prisoner's resettlement phase, every effort is made to ensure male prisoners from Wales are released from prisons in Wales.

When planning prisoner transfers, the individual needs of the prisoner are taken into account and prisons have an ability to place transfer holds on specific individuals to prevent disruption to their rehabilitative journey. This can be used to allow a prisoner to complete an upcoming course certification without disruption.

4. How might detached duty be delivered differently so as to reduce its impact on the prison that the officers are being transferred from?

Detached duty is one of the sensible and proportionate measures taken to cover resourcing pressures and ensure we run safe and decent regimes in prisons, as well as being able to respond appropriately to any operational issues that arise.

The maximum number of staff that a site can supply on detached duty is centrally managed to minimise impact on local delivery and sites who release their prison officers may provide local overtime to backfill those released.

Detached duty has been a net benefit to prisons in Wales by providing experienced prison staff in periods of pressure. However, the demand for detached duty has now fallen significantly across England and Wales due to the national increase in Band 3 Prison Officers.

5. The Committee has heard of the practical issues that arise from the "jagged edge" of devolution, in which the UK and Welsh Governments are responsible for several intersecting issues relevant to the criminal justice system. What is the most pressing issue you encounter as a result of this "jagged edge", and is there anything that either the Welsh or UK Government could do to mitigate this issue?

There are three main areas that sit at the interface of the reserved prison service and matters devolved to the Welsh Government that are of particular relevance to the management of offenders: health, education and housing.

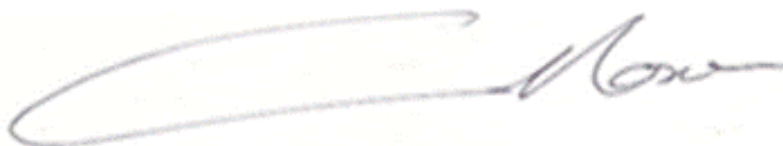
Although there are challenges encountered across these three areas, this is not unique to prisons in Wales as they are based on the wider community in which a prison operates. HMPPS works across the prison estate to mitigate such challenges so that the services required by offenders in a prison's cohort may be provided.

In order to ensure that we take a joined-up approach between HMPPS in Wales and Welsh Government, there are a number of formal structures in place. These include the Justice in Wales Strategy Group, the Criminal Justice Board for Wales, the Prison Health and Social Care Oversight Group, and the Accommodation and Offender Health Board. The structures enable close working between justice partners and facilitate the smooth running of the criminal justice system in Wales.

The establishment in 2014 of the HM Prison and Probation Service in Wales Directorate, with responsibility for both the prison and probation services, has enabled an operational interface with Welsh Government to support effective delivery of services, taking account of the devolved landscape.

Thank you once again for your correspondence with our five governors and I hope that their answers provide the additional evidence that you require.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Giles Mason', is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark or background.

GILES MASON
PRISON GROUP DIRECTOR FOR WALES