



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Official

Andy Slaughter
Chair of the Justice Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

MoJ ref: SUB117971

10 October 2024

Dear Andy,

URGENT NOTIFICATION – HMP MANCHESTER

I trust this message finds you well. I am writing to inform you that Charlie Taylor, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, has invoked an Urgent Notification at HMP Manchester. I have enclosed a copy of Charlie's letter informing the Secretary of State of his decision which sets out his concerns. Kindly note that this letter is embargoed until the Urgent Notification is published by HMIP on 10 October, and I respectfully request that it is not shared until that time.

The Urgent Notification process enables the Chief Inspector to publicly inform the Secretary of State when his team finds urgent and significant concerns regarding the performance of a prison or young offenders institution. The decision to invoke an Urgent Notification rests solely with the Chief Inspector.

The Chief Inspector has identified a number of serious issues at HMP Manchester, particularly regarding illicit items, physical security, safety, culture, living conditions and purposeful activity. HMP Manchester has the highest rate of drone incursions nationally, which has increased the accessibility of drugs and other illicit items in the prison. Work is underway, by the Governor, to strengthen security and I am confident that this will create a safer environment for both prisoners and staff.

The Secretary of State will respond to the Chief Inspector within 28 days, detailing the immediate actions to be implemented at HMP Manchester. The Inspectorate will publish their full inspection report within three months, in accordance with standard practice. We will also develop a comprehensive action plan to address all concerns made in the full inspection report.

It is troubling to receive a second urgent notification so soon after receiving one at HMP Rochester on 30 August. These Urgent Notifications are an indication of the state of crisis that the system finds itself in. Like the Chief Inspector, the senior leaders of HM Prison & Probation Service have confidence in the Governor and his ability to turn the prison around and I want to assure you that the Secretary of State and I are determined to take all necessary measures to support the Governor to improve the situation at HMP Manchester and indeed across the wider estate.

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My Private Secretary will be in touch to arrange a call to discuss the Urgent Notification and any concerns you may have, but in the interim, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at ps.JamesTimpson@justice.gov.uk.



Lord Timpson
Minister for Prisons, Probation and Reducing Reoffending

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