



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Official

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

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22 September 2025

Dear Andy,

**UPDATE ON THE PRISON, PROBATION, YOUTH JUSTICE AND COURT CUSTODY
SCRUTINY BODIES LANDSCAPE**

I am writing to update you on the prison, probation, youth justice and court custody scrutiny bodies. These include HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation, the Independent Monitoring Boards, the Lay Observers and the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman.

As you are maybe aware, a recent Cabinet Office (CO) Arm's Length Body (ALB) Review has focused on public bodies that are administratively classified as ALBs, either as Executive Agencies or Non-Departmental Public Bodies.

While the above scrutiny bodies do not fall within the formal scope of the CO ALB Review, we are taking the opportunity to look more broadly across the department's public body landscape and as such have decided to consider options to streamline the scrutiny landscape. This is in line with the Government's wider objectives to create a more productive and agile state, reduce duplication and drive efficiency.

The Department has therefore started an internal review of the aforementioned scrutiny bodies and we will ensure that you are updated as this progresses.

You will also note that we have outlined our intention to conduct this review in our response to the Justice and Home Affairs Committee (JHAC), inquiry on Prison culture: governance, leadership and staffing. We have submitted our response to the inquiry and the JHAC have published this today.

Yours sincerely,

Lord Timpson
Minister for Prisons, Probation and Reducing Reoffending