

CONFIDENTIAL

ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD
AT
BULLINGDON COMMUNITY PRISON

1 AUGUST 2007 TO 31 JULY 2008

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IMB STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

In all its activities the Board will uphold the principles of fairness and humanity in the treatment of prisoners while giving full weight to the maintenance of discipline and the interests and concerns of staff.

Bullington Community Prison

1. Bullington Community Prison is a Category C prison, (with a Category B commitment) and opened in 1992 as a local, training and remand adult male establishment. With a CNA of 763, the prison has an Operational Capacity of 963, and for much of the year was almost 99% full.

A new houseblock taking the total to six has been completed during the current reporting period. This will increase the CNA to 879 and the Operational Capacity to 1114.

The prison serves Oxford and Reading Crown Courts and the Magistrates Courts in Oxfordshire and Berkshire. However, due to overcrowding intakes, Bullington holds prisoners from many parts of England and Wales. !!

2. Executive Summary

- The medical and administrative staff in the Health Care Centre transferred to the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust on 1 August. p7¶1
- There were 126 life sentence prisoners in the prison at the end of July which represents 12% of the population. This is an increase of 72 compared with last year. p8¶5
- The number of applications from prisoner to the Board decreased by 26 to 775 property and healthcare issues were the main reasons for prisoners asking to see the Board. p10¶8
- The number of adjudications increased from 1249 to 1302 compared with 2006-07 The number of cases proven was 939 (881 in the previous year). p8¶7
- There was one death in custody during the reporting year which was a self harm incident in March. p6¶
- There were 187 Foreign National prisoners in the establishment at the end of July including 12 Immigration hold prisoners. p8¶4

3. Conclusion

The Board recognises that despite the pressures caused by the high population in the prison the positive improvements to the treatment of prisoners and to the regime continue to be implemented.

The Board also notes that the large numbers of prisoners held in the establishment means that there is insufficient work or education for all.

The staff are dedicated and are working hard to ensure decent treatment for prisoners particularly in reception and late arrival times.

Issues for the Secretary of State

- 1 To increase resources to provide education and work for all prisoners
- 2 Approach the Department of Health for an increase the number of bed spaces for severely mentally ill prisoners
- 3 Ensure that the Department of Health gives directions the PCT informing Healthcare staff must perform in line with PSO1700 and attend Segregation Review Boards

Issues for the Prison Service

- 1 To ensure that prisoner transferred from other establishments for the Sex Offenders Treatment Programme are suitable to enable maximum use of the programmes available
- 2 To ensure that further efficiency savings do not impact on resettlement and rehabilitation work
- 3 To provide a library suitable for the size of Bullingdon

4. Changes since the last report

New Houseblock

- 1 A new houseblock (Finmere Unit) was completed by the end of July. The two new spurs are built to hold 120 prisoners in single cells. Each spur has a cell for the disabled. All cells are safer cells with new style windows. These have mesh covered ventilation ports which mean that prisoners cannot physically contact each other or throw out rubbish.

5. Treatment of Prisoners

Reception

- 2 HMP Bullingdon is full to capacity most evenings. Reception staff often work long evenings when prisoners arrive late from court up to 10.00 pm.
- 3 Many times these prisoners have been brought long distances due to lack of space in nearer prisons, or the other prisons have 'locked out'. We are pleased to note however late it is the prisoners are treated with care and consideration, assessed by healthcare and given a hot meal.
- 4 Movement in and out of Bullingdon continues to accelerate as the overcrowding across the prison service continues. The Board is aware that the prison senior managers are very concerned at this situation.
- 5 Property issues are still one of the largest for the IMB. With the increase of movement between prisons there are more chances for property to be lost or left behind.
- 6 For the latter part of 2007 and first half of 2008 reception had large building expansion work in progress. This involved much noise and dust but reception staff have continued to be the professional face of Bullingdon.

First Night Centre

- 7 The First Night Centre has continued to be located on Blackthorn Unit, awaiting the opening of the new Finmere Unit. Staff and prisoners have worked hard to provide support to newly arrived prisoners during the year. During the year, the facilities for newly arrived sex offender prisoners on Edgcott Unit have been extended to four cells.

Prisoner Support Unit

1 Despite frequent staff changes on the unit great deal of good is being achieved. The men on the unit are becoming more confident with themselves and this in turn leads to greater participation in the overall facilities such as education which are available.

Inductions

2 Inductions continue to be held every week and usually a Board member attends to talk to the group of prisoners. There are separate inductions sessions for convicted and remand prisoners and the Board is pleased to see that inductions are now being held regularly for sex offender prisoners.

Library

3 The library has experienced short periods without prisoner helpers but say that the problem is now resolved. The Board has noted the comment by OFSTED inspectors that the available space is not big enough for a prison the size of Bullingdon.

Gymnasium

4 Demand for the 'open' session in the fitness room each day is high. Under the new profile, the gym operates a first come first served system in the fitness room (no booking) which means that, in theory, it is possible to play truant from education and go to the gym instead. Staff in Education confirm that this does sometimes happen, though they can stop prisoners' pay if necessary and do so when they discover that someone has signed up but failed to attend.

Canteen

5 Very few complaints were submitted to the Board. After the date of our reporting year there has been a national review of Canteen services which has resulted in a new provider and a national pricing policy.

Education

6 The Board considers that this service is running well and is offering a good service to prisoners.

Workshops and Training

7 The Board is pleased to note that all targets are being met in this department. All contracts are being completed and these facilities continue to provide important opportunities for prisoners.

Land Bases Activities

8 The Board has noted how well the Land Based Activities have coped with the disturbance caused by the new build.

Kitchens and food

1 The kitchen was moved into temporary premises in February 2008 for the existing kitchen to be rebuilt and modernised. There were initial teething problems. The building had had poor ventilation, was initially very cold and portable heaters were installed. It was also too hot in the summer months. However, staff continue to be well motivated in delivering an efficient service whilst producing over 14,000 meals a week. At the end of July 2008 the new kitchen was not open.

2 Some complaints have been received from prisoners and staff regarding the quantity and quality of the food provided. The IMB notes that guidance has been produced on portion control to ensure that food does not run out. Complaints that insufficient portions were sometimes provided by the kitchen staff have now been rectified.

Safer Prisons

Suicide Prevention

3 The Suicide prevention team meet monthly and a member of the Board attends as an observer. There is a sound Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) in place though it is noted that the ACCT coordinator is quite stretched at times. Listeners are well supported by the Samaritans and the Chaplaincy department continues to provide counselling. Both of these areas feel that they appreciated by the prisoners. There was one death in custody in March.

Anti Bullying

4 There is a strong anti bullying policy in place with anti bullying prisoner representatives on each wing. All incidents reported are logged and investigated.

Drug Strategy

5 The IMB notes that the prison provides treatment programmes in line with national guidelines. The new short duration programme is considered to be an example of best practice. The treatment programme has been provided by RAPt but has struggled to meet its targets. The prison's target for MDT of under 10% each month was only met in 5 months out of 12. The Board has concerns that harm prevention after release, rather than treatment has become the new strategy, since drug addiction has always been seen as a major contributor to crime.

Public Protection

6 Staff changes during the year have created problems with prioritising the heavy work load. However the situation has improved during the summer. The Board is pleased to see that the monthly meetings held with other departments in the prison and with local police to share information are mainly well attended.

Offending Behaviour Programme : Sex Offender Treatment Programme

7 The target for completions of the Sex Offender Treatment Programme was 68 and there were 85 in total, an improvement of 29%. However, this is a small number

considering the number of sex offender prisoners held in the establishment. At the end of July the IMB noted that nearly 47% of men on the Sex Offenders Unit were unsuitable for Core, Rolling or Booster courses, had already completed a programme or were unsuitable in other ways.

Healthcare

- 1 The transfer of nursing and administrative staff in the HCC to the Oxfordshire PCT took place on August 1st 2008 and that of the pharmacy to OBMH on the same day (this is a day after our reporting period).
- 2 HMP Bullingdon is the only adult establishment within this PCT area and we understand that there are plans to introduce more health education and preventative medicine to the prison. The Board hopes there will be more action to find medium secure beds for those with severe mental illness.
- 3 The PCT is responsible for the costs of bed watches and journey to and from hospital.
- 4 The Board has noted that there is significant unease among HCC staff, both uniformed and nursing, who feel insecure about their futures. Only nursing staff have been offered NHS contracts. After August recruitment and retention of nursing staff has been poor. The IMB is concerned that still more nurses will be needed with the commissioning of the new houseblock and its new wing based treatment room.
- 5 The Board has been very concerned that a significant number of Segregation Review Boards have been held with no healthcare present, despite the best efforts of prison staff.

Race Equality

- 6 The Race Equality Meeting continues to be held quarterly and now includes statistics on Foreign National prisoners held in Bullingdon.
- 7 Bullingdon received a *Well Controlled* on the Race Equality Action Plan, from the Standards Audit Unit.

The Race Equality Officer has introduced a monthly Cultural Awareness Programme and also special food nights; the most recent of these have been a curry night and an African/Caribbean food night.
- 8 The Black Self Development Programme was very successful with 15 out of the original 18 applicants completing the course. Those taking part felt it had been very helpful. Funds are now being sought to run a further course and it is also hoped to identify suitable BME staff for training to deliver the programme.
- 9 Prisoners of some 54 nationalities are currently held at Bullingdon. The nationalities with the largest number of prisoner groups are Poland, Albania, Jamaica, Vietnam and India. The black and ethnic minority (BME) prison population was reported at 36% in July.

Foreign Nationals

- 1 A Foreign Nationals Policy document has been written and this has now been accepted as policy for the prison. The document establishes a co-ordinating team under a Governor. The team meets quarterly and reports statistics to the Race Relations Meeting.
- 2 A bi-monthly Newsletter for Foreign Nationals has been produced. The first two issues appeared in May and July and covered such subjects as the Early Removals Scheme and Discharge Grants for Detainees.
- 3 Four Facilitated Removal Surgeries and two Immigration Surgeries have been held so far this year, with a further Immigration Surgery taking place in August. Three *Question and Answer* sessions for Foreign National prisoners have been held so far this year with a further session planned for September.
- 4 In July 2008 there were 187 Foreign National Prisoners with 12 Immigration Holds compared to July 2007 compared with 162 last year with Immigration holds number remaining the same.
- 5 Translations have been an issue, with prisoners volunteering to act as translators for other prisoners. A laptop with specialised translation software has been purchased and is now in use. The Prisoners Handbook has been translated into 7 other languages: Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Polish, Punjabi, Russian and Vietnamese. Notices to Prisoners, details of IEP scheme and the Foreign National Newsletter will be translated initially. The Library will be the central point for translated documents. A register of translated documents will also be created.
- 6 The Foreign Nationals and Race Relations Orderlies now attend inductions, and aim to speak to all new prisoners each week. Their work had been praised by both prisoners and staff, since they are able to deal with a number of issues as they arise. The Orderlies also aim to identify those willing to act as translators at these meetings.

Adjudications

- 7 The External Adjudicator commented that the system of allocating adjudications internally/externally was working well. The Board continued to monitor adjudications on a regular basis throughout the year. There were 1302 adjudications in 2007-08 with 939 cases proven.

Removal from Association

- 8 Board policy is to attend all post 72 hour and 7/14 day reviews held under PSO 1700. The IMB has, on many occasions, noted the excellent work undertaken by staff in the SSCU (Segregation Unit) to ensure prisoners were removed from association for the minimum length of time, and often for no more than a few days. The Board has also noted and made comments elsewhere in this report about ongoing healthcare attendance issues.

6. ***Resettlement Activities***

1 There are few opportunities at Bullingdon for accredited vocational training with a view to employment on release. However, St Giles Trust which as well providing accommodation for prisoners on release also provides good accredited training for its staff.

Estates Management, Energy and Sustainable Development

2 The Estates section continued throughout the year to complete 100% of all the jobs allocated to the workforce in spite of the need for maintenance staff to work in the new unit from May until about August 2008.

There are continuing problems with hot water supply due to greater number of prisoners than the boilers were designed for.

3 Energy management initiatives during the year included instant hot water supplies in the new unit and new type showers being installed in existing units that are self cleaning and more economical with water. raise money for charities. The prison won Butler Trust award for Greening of the prison estate.

7. ***The General Regime***

Performance Recognition

4 HMP Bullingdon is to be commended for winning the Elton Trophy for the work in the Laundry which includes contracts for several prison including - Woodhill, Onley and Wayland, Campsfield House. There was also a Commendation for the Industrial Cleaners.

Lifer Sentence Prisoners

5 The number of life sentence prisoners at the end of July was 126 (12% of the prison's total population). In two years, the lifer population has more than trebled. The number of Indeterminate Sentence Public Protection (ISPP) prisoners (81) has been the major reason for this increase, but the number of mandatory lifers has also nearly doubled (45 in July) The process of incorporating ISPPs into OASys began in January with the objective of completing the process by November 2008. The demands on the staff team are considerable, but the team is very professional, thereby ensuring the tight timetables are met, particularly for ISPPs.

Older Prisoners

6 The number of prisoners over 65 was 11 at the end of July, (21 in 2007). Most of these were sex offenders located on Edgcott Unit. The number of prisoners aged between 55 and 64 was 44. The monthly meeting for disabled and older prisoners continues to be an effective forum for discussion between prisoners and staff. Two carers and a prisoners' representative continue to aid the process of communication.

Visits

7 There is renewed vigour in the provision of facilities for visitors. A new fully staffed play area for children in the visits hall as well as food and beverages and in the visits

centre more provision is being made through play areas, greater variety of food and a TV system for children's DVD. 28,580 adults and 7193 children visited the prison during the year.

Security

- 1 Attention continued to be focussed on drugs, mobile phones and prisoner security, against a difficult background caused by the extensive building work within the prison. There has been an increased level of finds. The use of enhanced searching equipment for mobile phones has also helped. A full staff meeting in April detailed concerns about extremist cell in UK prisons. The Police have encouraged the use of SIRs for the reporting of any unusual activity.

Chaplaincy

- 2 The Chaplaincy Team has two full time members supported by ten sessional members who cover all faiths.

Health and Safety

- 3 In July 2008 there were 31 disabled prisoners and the Board is pleased that the opening of the new unit will help accommodate them better through a second lift in the prison installed on the new link walkway. There are also two cells specially designed for disabled prisoners and a disabled toilet on ground floor of the unit.

8. *The Work of the Board*

- 4 The Board is up to strength with further appointments to be confirmed after the reporting date.

- 5 Training continues throughout the year with members and staff giving presentations before the Board meetings.

- 6 Members continued to receive applications from prisoners and fulfilled all other rota and statutory duties. These included attending Segregation Review Boards and attending as observers, meetings reflecting their areas of interest.

- 7 The Board wishes to acknowledge the hard and dedicated work undertaken by the Governors and their staff in caring for the prisoners in Bullingdon during the reporting year. The members of the Board would also like to show their appreciation for the good working relationship that it has with the Governing Governor and his staff

Appendices

Applications

- 8 Prisoners made 775 applications to see Board members, (an average of 65 per month), down 26 compared with the previous year. The main reasons for prisoner applications were as follows:

	2007		2008		
	%		%		
1.	Confidential	22	1.	Property	21
2.	Property	15	2.	Medical/Dental	11
3.	Medical/Dental	6	3.	Confidential	7

4.	Categorisation	5	4.	Transfer requests	4
5.	Transfer Requests	5	5.	Monies	4

9

Confidential access complaints to the Board from prisoners, reduced very significantly to 53 in 2008 (2007 – 179). All of these complaints were read; however, in almost all of the cases, the confidential access process was incorrectly used by prisoners as the concerns expressed were not confidential. As can be seen and in common with recent years, various questions relating to property were, by far, the most significant reason why prisoners asked to see the Board.