



Tim Flesher
Chair, Prison Service Pay Review Body
Level 3
Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

16 November 2022

Dear Tim,

THE PRISON SERVICE PAY REVIEW BODY (PSPRB) REMIT 2023/24

I would like to thank the Prison Service Pay Review Body (PSPRB) for their continued hard work and dedication to Prison Service pay, and I look forward to working with you. I am now writing formally to commence the 2023/24 pay round and set out how the Government intends to work with the PSPRB throughout this year.

While we will adopt a usual pay round for 2023/24, the next pay award must strike a careful balance – recognising the vital importance of public sector workers, whilst delivering value for the taxpayer, considering private sector pay levels, not increasing the country's debt further, and being careful not to drive prices even higher in the future.

I am pleased that the Government was able to accept recommendations from the PSPRB for the 2022/23 pay round which delivered substantial increases to front line prison staff, and an important reset of the prison service pay structure.

In this context – and similarly noting the wider economic context – affordability must be absolutely central when forming this year's recommendations for prison pay, particularly given the substantial increases made in 22/23 which went significantly beyond the budgeted funding for proposals we had put forward to you. Pay is one mechanism among many to support our front-line workforce, increase recruitment and retention, and facilitate improving performance within the prison system – and it is important that MoJ and the PSPRB consider pay within a broader approach to modernising and reforming our offer to our staff. I would want to indicate that should affordability pressures arise, I would need to consider recommendations made by the PSPRB closely against our prisons workforce policy priorities and against the distinct needs of groups of staff within the Prison Service. This will be vital to ensure the necessity of each recommendation and that it offers value for money for the taxpayer. I also strongly urge you to pay due regard to the Government's inflation target – as per parts 5 and 6 of the PSPRB's terms of reference.

In implementing the 2022/23 recommendations, the use of market supplements in prisons has been significantly cut, from 35 prisons to now only 18. We will provide more detail on our proposed approach to use of market supplements in our evidence; however, I would like to take this opportunity to remind the

review body of the terms of reference and responsibility to take into account regional and local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff.

In response to your ask in the 2022/23 PSPRB report, we intend to condense the annual process to bring the pay award in line with the pay year over the course of the coming years. In accordance with a condensed timetable, I ask that the PSPRB submit their report earlier, by the end of April 2023, subject to further discussion with the secretariat in the Office for Manpower Economics (OME) on the detail of the timetable and my department being able to submit written evidence on behalf of Government by the end of the year. As usual, we welcome the opportunity to discuss our proposals and evidence at an oral evidence session.

Thank you again for the PSPRB's valuable contribution and commitment to prison service pay. I look forward to receiving your recommendations in the pay round ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Damian Hinds".

Damian Hinds
Minister for Prisons and Probation