

the
**Parole
Board**

working with others
to protect the public

**Strategy 2020 to 2022
and
12 Month Business Plan
April 2021 – March 2022**

The Parole Board is an independent organisation that uses evidence to decide whether people can be safely released from prison and managed in the community.

The Parole Board makes these difficult decisions in a fair and balanced way to keep the public safe.

Our top priority is to **keep the public safe** by only releasing someone when it is safe to do so and where we are satisfied that effective arrangements are in place to manage their risk.

We have 3 strategic aims that help us to achieve this:

1. We make independent, impartial and **quality** decisions
2. We work **efficiently and effectively** and provide value for money
3. We seek to be as **open and transparent** as possible

We Value ...

- **Fairness**
- **Independence**
- **Transparency**

We are ...

- **Confident**
- **Collaborative**
- **Reflective**
- **Respectful**

What we have to deliver and what work we plan to complete

	19/20 (actuals based on ARA)	20/21 (in year forecast)	21/22 (Allocation)
R-del Budget	18.506	20.86m (actual 20.187)	23.47m
Secretariat staff headcount	Non-agency: 126 Agency: 2	Non-agency: 172 Agency: 9	Non-agency: Approx. 189 (based on 10%) Agency: Approx. 10
Accredited Panel Chairs	90	89 (+ 40 in training)	152
Members	269 members	332 members	340 members
Oral hearings conducted total	8,264 cases	9,202 cases	10,300 cases
Paper hearings conducted total	21,063 cases	23453 cases	24,800 cases
Active case load the end of the financial year	9,059	8,856	9,200

Key Priorities for 2021-2022

Key Priorities	Strategic Aim	Key tasks by March 2022
Recover from COVID and retain a more flexible operating model, including a greater proportion of oral hearings continuing to be done remotely and more staff continuing to work from remote locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We work efficiently and effectively and provide value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out new laptops to the membership to support VMR with wi fi access in prison for all chairs Transformation Continue to deliver a wellbeing programme for staff and members People New guidance for members on when to use remote Policy/Transformation More flexible offer for staff People/Governance Series learning for specialists, chairs and independents People Performance management training for managers People Support staff and members to come together in person once safe to do so People Hearing support team transitioned to BAU Ops Review paused policies including lifers on the papers and young adults Policy
Increased transparency and better public education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We seek to be as open and transparent as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with MoJ to change the rules to introduce a new rule for public hearings Ops/Policy/Legal Pilot public hearings when rules are changed Ops/Policy/Legal/Governance Support victims to observe a hearing where they want to Ops/Policy/Governance Implement the new decision template and pilot naming of members on it Transformation/Policy Deliver the media strategy using member spokespersons Governance Review committee to consider publishing summaries of cases referred to it Special Projects
Use the Root and Branch Review to resolve the question of the Board's constitution and make changes to the powers of the Parole Board to enhance our court like status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We make independent, impartial and quality decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take forward changes to the Parole Board rules with MoJ including rule 17 and rule 21 changes Legal Make recommendations for a standalone court or enhanced ALB status as part of the root and branch review Legal Work with MoJ to set up an inspectorate function for the parole system Governance
Reduce delays in progressing cases and more efficient processing of recall cases across the parole system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We work efficiently and effectively and provide value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform Root and Branch review CEO/COO/Legal Get the best out of the Parole Oversight Board once set up CEO Joint working with HMPPS psychology Policy Restructure the MCA team to ensure balanced workloads, manage the MCA extra process and bring in changes to MCA admin resulting from the new fees structure Ops Balanced work portfolios for members and enough trained chairs to meet demand People Quality assurance review completed, and changes made to MCA QA processes Governance Changes to member fee structure implemented Transformation/Governance/Ops Design and test a replacement to PPUD starting with recall cases Transformation
A diverse and inclusive parole board that represents the community it serves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We make independent, impartial and quality decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing programme that provides opportunities for members and staff to come together and promotes diversity and inclusion People Research into outcomes by BAME - Policy Consider our policy for all protected characteristics, focusing this year on women, older offenders, traveller communities Policy Ensure our listing policy for hearings promote diverse panels where possible Ops/Policy Learning pathways for members People

1. We make independent, impartial and **quality** decisions

We do this by:

- Making fair decisions, **respecting the rights of the prisoner** but always **putting public safety first**.
- Operating like a court by **making difficult, impartial** decisions by considering evidence **without fear or favour**.
- Selecting our members through a **rigorous recruitment process** - members are **independent public appointees** who come from a variety of backgrounds and represent the community they serve.
- Operating a **reconsideration mechanism** that allows us to look again at the most serious cases when it is appropriate for us to do so.
- Providing our members with the **appropriate training and tools** to be able to carry out their role effectively.
- Working with others to **safeguard our independence**.

The KPI we will measure our success against is:

- 95% of cases heard by the review committee are found to be justified by the Review Committee (to be replaced with QAF measures)

Success Measures we will monitor are:

- More than 14% of Parole Board members are from a BAME background
- Staff from BAME backgrounds are progressing their careers within the organisation and wider civil service
- 95% of reconsideration applications have a decision made within 21 days of the reconsideration application being sent to the reconsideration assessment panel
- Staff engagement scores increase by 2% annually from a baseline of 56% in 2018
- 50% more chairs by April 2022

Risks that need to be managed and key controls:

Diversity - *a lack of diversity of either staff or members give the perception that the Parole Board do not fully represent the community*

- Retain and develop BAME members and staff to play an active part in the organisation
- Mandatory E and D training for all members and staff

Quality Assurance - *quality assurances do not work effectively*

- Develop and implement a quality assurance framework that is proportionate and brings operational and member quality assessment into a single framework

Legal Challenge to the Boards Independence - *there is a fundamental challenge about the Boards status and powers*

- Engaging with the Root and Branch review of the Parole System
- Up to date policy and guidance
- Influence the PB Rules Committee once in place

2. We work **efficiently and effectively** and provide value for money

We do this by:

- Ensuring that all c26,000 cases heard per year are **processed in a timely manner**.
- Working in an **inquisitorial way**, directing further information when necessary to ensure we make a fully informed decision based on all evidence available
- Trial and implement new processes to **improve our processes** and performance
- Regular **monitoring and improving of our performance** and outcomes through Key Performance Indicators.

The KPI we will measure our success against is:

- Over 90% of decisions are issued within 14 days of the oral hearing with adjournment notices issued in all other cases.

Success measures we will monitor are:

- Maintain GPP cases outstanding at less than 20% of active caseload.
- 95% of cases have a hearing date within 3 months of being made ready to list
- New measure to be developed on technology to support remote hearings
- Less than 6% of oral hearings are deferred on the day.
- 70% of cases conclude on the day.
- In year budget variance is under 1%, with no overall overspend
- New measure to be developed on unit cost and value for money

Risks that need to be managed and key controls in place:

Budget - we are unable to deliver our strategic objectives due to insufficient budget/funds

- Continue monthly reviews with finance business partner and involve finance business partners in key projects
- Ongoing engagement with analysts and policy officials in MoJ to understand impact of changes in the prison population or legislation on our work

Digitalisation resilience – *unable to run our digital systems to the quality required*

- Replace PPUD with a modern cloud-based system
- laptop and wi-fi roll out for all members that supports remote hearings continuing as BAU

Operational case management – *we do not manage our caseload in the most efficient way possible*

- Enhanced TACT case management

3. We seek to be as **open and transparent** as possible

We do this by:

- Providing around **100 summaries per month** to explain our decisions to the public and victims.
- Publishing our **annual report each year so that we are accountable for our decisions** and open about our performance. We also offer a **full listing of our members**.
- Committing to improve **the public's understanding and awareness of our work**, so that all those affected by our decisions understand how we make them.

The KPI we will measure our success against is:

- 95% of summaries are produced within 14 days of being actionable

Success measures we monitor are:

- New for 21/22 - The portrayal of the Parole Board in media coverage remains at a consistent Positive vs Negative proportion.

Risks that need to be managed and key controls in place:

Reputation - *something happens which adversely affects the Parole Board's reputation or undermines the public's confidence in the parole system*

Controls in place

- CEO engagement as needed with MP's or victims as needed in high profile cases
- Proactive media about the work of the Board using spokespeople.
- Proactive media engagement strategy focused on TACT, victims, sentencing,
- Review committee for serious further offences