



## HM Prison & Probation Service

Charlie Taylor,  
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons  
3rd floor, 10 South Colonnade  
Canary Wharf  
London  
E14 4PU

Richard Vince  
Executive Director  
Director of Security  
HM Prison and Probation Service  
8th Floor  
102 Petty France  
London SW1H 9AJ

30 September 2022

Dear Charlie,

### **HMIP report on an independent review of progress at HMP Swaleside - 18-20 July 2022**

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress report at HMP Swaleside, whereby you followed up thirteen key recommendations and four Ofsted themes from your most recent inspection in October 2021.

I am encouraged to note that you have seen good and reasonable progress being made across six of the recommendations and Ofsted themes, and note the following;

- The recognition of the good progress made in the oversight and consistency of the professional judgement of risk factors for re-categorisation reviews, combined with the increased level of prisoner contributions resulting in an increased level of offender manager recommendations being upheld.
- The recognition of the good progress made to the induction environment and programme, including an improved prisoner journey and private areas for the needs assessment interviews.
- The recognition of the reasonable progress made to almost halve the levels of self-harm since the full inspection in October 2021, including the improvements made to the analysis of data to identify and respond to triggers.
- The recognition of the reasonable progress made by Oxleas in the three month period that they had been the healthcare service provider, including improvements to the staffing position, governance and medication management.

In respect of the eleven key areas and Ofsted themes where you found insufficient or no meaningful progress, I can confirm that all the IRP findings have been carefully considered and steps will be taken to address them as appropriate. This will include the following;

- Recruitment campaigns remain ongoing for both prison officers and OSGs, including an enhanced level of marketing activity for HMP Swaleside. The 2022/23 pay award has delivered an increase in base pay of at least 4% for all staff between bands 2 to 11, alongside further targeted pay rises for the lowest paid staff of up to £3,000. To support the immediate progress of the regime, HMP Swaleside is included in the national relocation campaign which allows HMPPS to allocate prison officers to establishments with the most acute recruitment challenges. The following initiatives have been introduced to better invest and support new colleagues; Apprenticeship Coaches, a new Mentoring scheme, and a peer-to-peer buddy scheme.
- The strategic planning and governance of Equalities will be improved, including a new template for the strategy to ensure that it provides clear aims and milestones for delivery and the action plan will be monitored to ensure progress is tracked and improvements implemented.
- Whilst it was recognised that senior level governance arrangements are now more data led, further work will be completed in collaboration with the Effective Practice Service Improvement Group (EPSIG) to improve the scope and effectiveness of the strategic documents such as functional strategies and action plans.
- The site will progress the programmes and interventions delivery and outcomes for prisoners. The delivery of one-to-one sessions by POM's will be increased and analysis of prisoner's needs will be developed using the BRIAN database, to ensure that future delivery is providing a sufficient volume and range of interventions.
- The site will ensure that prisoners can make informed choices about their education, skills and work. The Information And Guidance (IAG) mentors will all receive training to improve the support being offered and the timeliness of assessments. There are plans in place to increase the level and equitable access to work, accredited courses and structured on wing activities, with allocation including consideration of prisoner's long-term goals.

The Governor with the support of the Prison Group Director will continue to progress the full Action Plan covering all the original recommendations.

I remain committed to ensuring continued progress against HMP Swaleside agreed Action Plan and I can assure you that through my operational assurance functions and the support of OSAG we continue to closely monitor progress.

Whilst I acknowledge that there is still much work to be carried out at the prison, I am encouraged that progress is being made and that our monitoring of the prison is in line with your findings.

**Richard Vince**

Executive Director – Long Term & High Security Estate

CC: Private Office

Phil Copple, Director General of Operations