



To: Ed Cornmell, Senior Responsible Owner for the Youth Justice Reform Programme

From: Dr Jo Farrar, Second Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice; and
Nick Smallwood, Chief Executive Officer of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority

June 2023

Dear Ed Cornmell,

APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER FOR THE YOUTH JUSTICE REFORM PROGRAMME

We are writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project) with effect from 5 December 2022. This letter sets out your responsibilities and the support you can expect from the Ministry of Justice and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

As SRO, you are directly accountable to the Chief Executive Officer of His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), under the oversight of the Permanent Secretary as Principal Accounting Officer for the Ministry of Justice, and the Minister for Prisons, Probation and Youth Justice.

The Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project) forms part of the Ministry of Justice's Portfolio, under the oversight of the Chair of the Portfolio Committee within the tolerances set by the Investment Committee at each approvals point. The Programme is included in the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP).

You have personal responsibility for delivering Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project) and will be held accountable for the delivery of its objectives, with policy intent and outcomes expected. This encompasses securing and protecting its vision, ensuring that it is governed responsibly, reported on honestly, escalated appropriately and for influencing the context, culture, and operating environment of the Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project). You are also responsible for ensuring the ongoing viability of the Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project) and recommending its pause or termination if appropriate. Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these to the Ministry of Justice's Investment Committee.

You remain accountable to Ministers, as set out in the Civil Service Code, and should deliver the programme in accordance with the objectives and policy intent as set by Ministers.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, SROs for GMPP projects and programmes are personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. This means that, from the date of this letter, you will be held personally accountable to and could be called by Select Committees to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the programme.

It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation, within the agreed terms in this letter; it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

More information on this is set out in [Giving Evidence to Select Committees - Guidance for Civil Servants](#), sometimes known as the Osmotherly Rules. Information on the roles and responsibilities of the SRO are detailed in the Infrastructure and Project Authority's guidance on [the role of the senior responsible owner](#). You should also make yourself familiar with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework, and the guidance and requirements for project delivery as set by the Ministry of Justice's Portfolio Management Office.

Time commitment and tenure

This role will require 50% of your time to enable effective delivery of the role and execute your responsibilities in full.

You are required to undertake this role until achievement of business-as-usual handover and programme closure planned for August 2024. Progress towards this will be reflected in your personal objectives. Any changes to the agreed time commitment or tenure of the role, as set out above, will require both departmental and Infrastructure and Projects Authority consent.

Objectives and performance criteria

The policy intent supported by this programme is a Government manifesto commitment to trial secure schools with the aim of improving the safety and life chances of children in custody and reduce levels of reoffending. This programme is a major step in establishing innovative high-quality provision for children, through development of smaller, homely units underpinned by a culture that can credibly drive the long-term system of reform whilst we continue to invest in the existing youth estate to improve facilities and practice.

The vision of the Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project) is to be a "school with security" rather than "prison with education" and its objectives are to:

- Provide forty-nine places for boys and girls aged 12-17 sentenced to custody or on remand;
- Create a therapeutic environment in a smaller secure setting. This includes renovating the former Secure Training Centre (STC) site at Medway to create a homely environment that meets children's home standards;
- Be run by visionary, child-focused not-for-profit providers;
- Have integrated education, health, wellbeing and care at the heart. This includes giving Oasis Restore Trust – namely their integrated, multi-disciplinary Oasis Restore senior leadership team – autonomy to develop a bespoke operating model, which will be quality assured by experts appointed by the Youth Custody Service;
- Have high levels of autonomy accompanied by high levels of accountability;

- Be secure 16 to 19 academies and children's homes and operate in accordance with the legal frameworks relevant to each of these provisions; and
- Be needs-led and focused on addressing the underlying causes of behaviour.

Any proposed changes to scope which impacts on this intent or the realisation of benefits must be authorised by the Ministry of Justice's Investment Committee and may be subject to further levels of approval. Your personal objectives and performance criteria which relate to the Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project) are:

- Champion and communicate the Secure School Project's vision and aims;
- Ensure cultural change and the strategic fit with this change across the youth secure estate;
- Provide the team with leadership, decision making, and direction;
- Assure ongoing project viability; and
- Engage key stakeholders and drive leadership accountability.

You are expected to run your programme in accordance with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the other [Functional Standards](#) as applicable to this programme and the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework, ensuring that the programme follows best project delivery practices and effective risk management processes.

Extent and limit of accountability

Finance and Controls

HM Treasury spending controls will apply on the basis set out within the department's delegated authority letter. Where the programme exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury, the Treasury Approval Point process will apply, and the details of each approval process must be agreed with your HM Treasury spending team. You should consult departmental finance colleagues on how to go about this.

You should note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive, or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HM Treasury approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HM Treasury spending team.

The overall estimated budget, resourcing requirements and tolerances for your programme will be agreed as part of the approval process. It is expected that you deliver within the agreed cost and deliverability tolerances and to report quarterly on these as part of GMPP reporting.

You should operate at all times within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). In addition, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific HM Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet Office controls relevant to the programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#).

Delegated authority

The whole life cost of the recommended option as presented in the Full Business Case (FBC) was £635m over a 30-year period. This has been updated at Investment Committee in December 2022 to increase this to £746m over a 30-year period. As part of the departmental annual allocations process, you will be authorised to approve a set level of expenditure each financial year. This will be set out in your annual financial delegation letter from the Chief Executive Officer of HMPPS.

You are also authorised to:

- agree programme rescheduling up to April 2024, but rescheduling beyond that must be agreed with the Ministry of Justice Investment Committee; and
- recommend to the Chief Executive Officer of HMPPS and the Ministry of Justice's Investment Committee the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary and in a timely manner.

These authority limits are subject to change and other conditions or tolerances may be set as part of the business case approval and ongoing monitoring processes within which you should then operate.

Where issues arise, which take you outside of these authority limits and which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to the Chief Executive Officer of HMPPS and the Ministry of Justice's Investment Committee.

Appointments

You should appoint a full-time programme director to support you in the management of this programme and make other appointments as required for the control and delivery of your programme within your delegated authority.

Governance and assurance

You should pay attention to ensuring effective governance for your programme, including the establishment of a programme board with appropriate membership and clear terms of reference.

You should also ensure that the programme remains aligned to the strategic outcomes, costs, timescales, and benefits in line with the approved business case as well as monitoring the context within which the programme is being delivered to ensure it remains valid.

Where a change impacts the scope, costs, benefits, or planned delivery milestones agreed as part of an agreed business case, you are responsible for following the agreed change request approval process and setting a new, approved business case baseline.

You are responsible for bringing to the attention of the accounting officer any material changes in the programme which could require a new accounting officer assessment to be completed and published. [Guidance on completing accounting officer assessments](#) for major projects is available from HM Treasury.

Although you are directly accountable for this programme, you are also expected to support delivery of the department's overall strategic objectives. This means that you are expected to work collaboratively with other SROs and project directors in adjacent projects and programmes and with the Ministry of Justice's Portfolio Management Office and Head of Portfolio to manage dependencies, resources, schedules, and funding to support delivery of the overall change the department needs to achieve its strategic objectives.

You should ensure that appropriate and proportionate assurance is in place and agree on the level and frequency of assurance reviews through the maintenance of an integrated assurance and approvals plan. You should develop this plan and its maintenance in collaboration with the Departmental Assurance Coordinator and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

Programme status, reporting and transparency requirements

The programme status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority and is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

You are responsible for ensuring the honest and timely reporting on the position of the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority while it remains on the GMPP and for providing reports and information to the Ministry of Justice Portfolio Management Office as required and for submitting business cases and reports to the keyholder process and relevant boards. Where appropriate, governance will include reference to the Ministry of Justice's Investment Committee and Executive Committee. Information on the programme will be published annually by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

You should monitor and report on status, forecast timescales, costs and benefits, key risks established using the GMPP RAG rating (if appropriate) and dependencies, and ensure that any issues (including any likelihood of exceeding approved tolerances) are reported openly and transparently both within the Ministry of Justice and to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

You are responsible for publishing on GOV.UK a summary of the accounting office assessment completed in line with the approval of the Business Case and summaries of any subsequent assessments should they be required.

Development and support

As SRO of a GMPP project, you are required to complete the Major Projects Leadership Academy, and you have agreed to enrol on a cohort in the near future. The Head of Profession for Project Delivery in the Ministry of Justice can provide further information on the application process.

To widen experience and understanding of the role, SROs are also expected to become accredited assurance reviewers and to lead or participate in such reviews for other government departments, the wider public sector, and other areas of the Ministry of Justice as appropriate. Becoming an assurance reviewer and completing a review will form part of your time at the Major Projects Leadership Academy. To maintain your accreditation, you will be required to participate in a review at least once every 12 months.

The department will assist you in securing the necessary resources to support the programme and will set clear guidance, requirements and standards, which align to the [Government Functional Standard on Project Delivery](#), to enable good governance and effective delivery. You will be part of the department's cohort of major project leaders who will be expected to support each other, share good practice and lessons learned and to collectively develop solutions. You should liaise with the Ministry of Justice's Head of Profession for Project Delivery to discuss the maintenance and development of your delivery and leadership skills.

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority will be available to you for support, advice and assurance throughout the project's time on the GMPP.

The Ministry of Justice's Portfolio Committee will provide ongoing oversight and support and will take steps to help resolve and escalate risks, issues or constraints that are acting as a blocker to successful delivery.

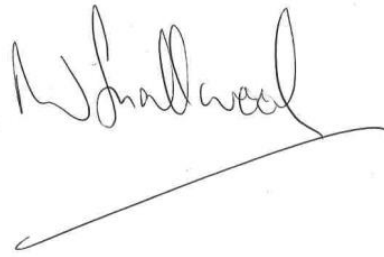
We would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,



Dr JO FARRAR

Second Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice with lead responsibility for project delivery



NICK SMALLWOOD

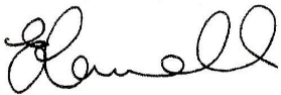
Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure and Projects Authority

Appointment endorsed by:

Antonia Romeo, Principal Accounting Officer of Ministry of Justice: [DATE]

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT

I confirm that I accept the appointment of Senior Responsible Owner for the Youth Justice Reform Programme (Secure School Project), including my personal accountability for implementation, as set out in the letter above.



Ed Cornmell

30 May 2023