



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

20 December 2023

Dear Mr Flesher,

### **THE PRISON SERVICE PAY REVIEW BODY (PSPRB) REMIT 2024/25**

I would like to thank the Prison Service Pay Review Body (PSPRB) for their continued hard work and dedication to Prison Service pay for our hardworking staff.

I am writing to formally commence the 2024/25 pay round and set out how the Government intends to work with the PSPRB over the coming year.

The Government must once again focus on striking a careful balance of ensuring fair pay for public sector workers, including recognising cost-of-living pressures, whilst ultimately ensuring affordability, value for the taxpayer, and not driving inflation higher.

I am pleased that the Government was able to accept all recommendations from the PSPRB for the 2023/24 pay round. This delivered another set of substantial pay increases to prison staff, in recognition of their dedication to rehabilitating prisoners and keeping the public safe, and builds on the even more significant investment into pay in 2022/23.

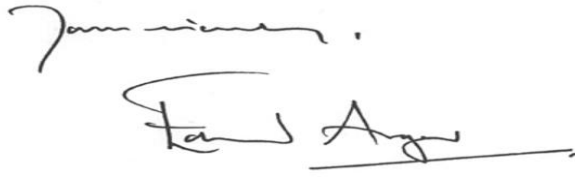
In 2022/23 and 2023/24, the PRBs recommended historically high pay awards for their respective workforces in light of the extraordinary macroeconomic context. Accepting these recommendations, whilst not increasing borrowing, required tough decisions. It is vital that the PRBs consider the historic nature of the 2022/23 and 2023/24 awards and the Government's affordability position that will be set out further in written evidence.

As you are aware, the Department takes a holistic view to supporting Prison Service staff, and pay is just one element of improving working conditions. Investment in a range of other initiatives to support recruitment and retention and improve safety and security across the estate is crucial. It is therefore important that both the Department and the PSPRB consider the impact of trade-offs that will need to be made if recommendations exceed our affordability.

I appreciate that we were unable to achieve our aim of condensing the pay round timetable last year. Nonetheless, the Government is committed to improving the timeliness of pay rounds and bringing the pay award back in line with the pay year over the course of the coming years. I therefore ask that the PSPRB submit their report in May 2024, 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 HM Government by February 2024. As usual, we welcome the opportunity

to discuss our proposals and evidence at an oral evidence session.

Thank you again for your valuable contribution and commitment to prison service pay. I look forward to working with you over the pay round ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Argar', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**RT HON EDWARD ARGAR MP**