



HM Prison & Probation Service

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

Chris Jennings
Executive Director
HMPPS South West, South
Central and Public Protection

20/12/2023

Dear Charlie,

HMIP report on an Independent Review of Progress at HMP Exeter between 13–15 November 2023

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress (IRP) report at HMP Exeter, whereby you followed up on seven concerns and three Ofsted themes from your most recent inspection in November 2022.

I am encouraged to note that you have seen reasonable progress being made across three concerns, and note the following:

- The prison was safer, particularly for new arrivals, and support for those on Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) had improved due to our ACCT floorwalkers' positive impact in driving up standards and the multidisciplinary approach to supporting complex prisoners. Engagement with prisoners, staff and families as part of our safety summit has informed our safety strategy and action plan.
- Improvements in leadership and management in healthcare have led to a better quality of service, and the establishment of a long-term conditions clinic.
- Staff were visible on the wings, and interactions between our staff and prisoners were positive. Recorded keyword sessions were of good quality and there was a sense that prisoners were provided resolutions to legitimate requests.

In respect of the four concerns and three Ofsted themes where you found insufficient progress, I can confirm that all the IRP findings have been carefully considered and steps will be taken to address them as appropriate. This includes the following:

- Maintaining leadership stability at a senior level and developing and upskilling all leaders to further develop confidence and competence to deliver the prison vision and priorities.
- Improving the standard of our living accommodation, partnering with Government Facilities Services Limited colleagues and prisoners to drive up standards, and keep cells clean, graffiti free and well equipped.
- Building on our work to understand violent incidents, utilising Challenge, Support, and Intervention Plan management and consistent keyword delivery to drive down prisoner on prisoner violence.

- Further improving attendance at education, skills and work, broadening the curriculum to meet the needs of prisoners, and developing health and wellbeing initiatives such as the Physical Education department wellbeing centre.
- We have reviewed our induction process to ensure prisoners get what they need and move through it in a timely manner, and a Quality Assurance process is in place. This includes allocation to work based on identified pathway need. We accept this is work in progress and will continue to drive it forward to yield better outcomes for our prisoners.
- A new core day was implemented in July 2023 to provide a consistent regime to all prisoners and maximise use of purposeful activity. Additional regime provision has been sought through the dynamic procurement system including the Construction Skills Certification Scheme, art, barbering, construction theory and drama. Vacancies and difficulty in recruiting Tutors and Instructional Officers has impacted on the availability of purposeful activity.
- The Quality and Improvement Group (QIG) has seen a revised Terms of Reference, updated membership and strong leadership to reflect the importance of this forum. The use of data at this meeting to understand where there are shortfalls in delivery has translated into improved governance and management grip. The focus of the QIG to deliver high quality purposeful activity remains a high priority.

The Governor with the support of myself and 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 Exeter's agreed Action Plan and I can assure you that through my operational assurance functions and the support of Operational and System Assurance Group 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.

Yours sincerely

Chris Jennings

Executive Director, HMPPS South West, South Central and Public Protection

CC:

Amy Rees, HMPPS - Director General Chief Executive Officer

Phil Copple, HMPPS - Director General of Operations