



Accounting Officer Memorandum

HMP Dartmoor Refurbishment – Outline Business Case (OBC)

It is normal practice for accounting officers to scrutinise significant policy proposals or plans to start or vary major projects, and then assess whether they measure up to the standards set out in Managing Public Money. From April 2017, the government has committed to provide a summary of the key points from these assessments, making them available to Parliament when an accounting officer has agreed an assessment of projects within the Government's Major Projects Portfolio.

Background and context

The department is delivering 20,000 additional prison places. A refurbishment at HMP Dartmoor could deliver 104 places. This OBC is seeking approval to progress the project to FBC stage when a final investment decision will be taken. This OBC is seeking approval to:

- Deliver 104 additional Category C prison places at HMP Dartmoor.

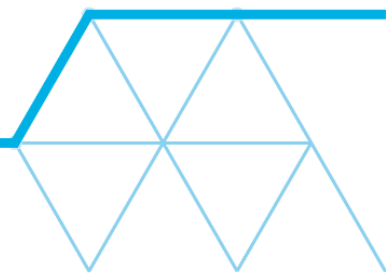
Assessment against the accounting officer standards

Regularity

The HMP Dartmoor Refurbishment OBC is assessed as regular. The Prison Act 1952 includes that the Secretary of State may, with the approval of the Treasury alter, enlarge, or rebuild any prison and build new prisons. I therefore consider that the department has the required spending powers to progress the project to its next decision point at Full Business Case (FBC) stage. The OBC is fully compliant with other relevant legislation and the project has obtained legal input throughout its development.

Propriety

The HMP Dartmoor Refurbishment OBC is assessed as proper. The OBC has passed our internal project and departmental governance. I am satisfied that all relevant governance and assurance procedures have been completed ahead of submission to HM Treasury and Cabinet Office for final assent. The OBC is fully compliant with the relevant legislation. The project is affordable within SR21 budgets, and has been selected based on its cost, feasibility, strategic fit and overall value for money.



Value for Money

The HMP Dartmoor Refurbishment OBC is assessed as value for money. There is national and regional demand for the places proposed under this project. Progressing this refurbishment will provide capacity for Category C places. This will support the department in upholding the sentences of courts and the law across England and Wales. This project is therefore of significant value in terms of helping to address the need to increase capacity within the prison estate.

Feasibility

The HMP Dartmoor Refurbishment OBC is assessed as feasible. The project management arrangements, internal governance and assurance processes are already in place and embedded to control, oversee and manage the HMP Dartmoor build.

Conclusion

I have considered this assessment of the HMP Dartmoor Refurbishment OBC against the four accounting officer standards of regularity, propriety, value for money, and feasibility. I am satisfied that these responsibilities are met.

As the accounting officer for His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service I considered this assessment of HMP Dartmoor Refurbishment Project and approved it on 26 July 2023.

I have prepared this summary to set out the key points which informed my decision. If any of these factors change materially during the lifetime of this project, I undertake to prepare a revised summary, setting out my assessment of them.

This summary will be published on the government's website (GOV.UK). Copies will be deposited in the Library of the House of Commons, and sent to the Comptroller and Auditor General and Treasury Officer of Accounts.

A copy has also been provided to the principal accounting officer for the Ministry of Justice, who has seen my assessment and endorsed my decision on the basis of my assurance that my accounting officer responsibilities are met.



Amy Rees

HMPPS Chief Executive and Accounting Officer