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Dear Beverley,

NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON SERVICE 2024-25 PAY ROUND

Thank you for your letter of 20 May 2024, giving an update on the 2024 pay round.

I hope that your meetings with the POA(NI) and PGA(NI) were constructive and we look forward to receiving written evidence from all parties in late August. We plan to hold oral evidence in late September or early October with yourself and the Minister. The secretariat will be in touch with your officials shortly with exact dates. That should allow us to deliver a report around mid-December. We hope that will allow you to pay staff slightly earlier than last year, albeit still quite a bit later than the 1 April 2024 pay effective date.

We have started the round by undertaking our visits to HMP Maghaberry, PECCS and Hydebank Wood College and Women's Prison. The staff we spoke with were generally in favour of the move to one prison officer grade but noted that caution would be needed on how this was implemented. Both equalising pay scale maxima and an enhanced overtime rate are also important to staff. As you know, the Review Body is supportive of the pay strategy that you outlined in oral evidence last year and would welcome an update on progress and discussions had as part of your evidence.

The secretariat has arranged for our annual pre-round meetings with all the parties to be held on 9 July, and I look forward to seeing you then.

Yours sincerely

Tim Flesher

Chair, Prison Service Pay Review Body