



Accounting Officer Memorandum

HMP Millsike Operator Competition

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 make 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

HMPPS is delivering 20k additional prison places. The Four New Prisons Programme was initiated by HMPPS to provide 6,366 prison places. HMP Millsike will deliver 1,468 of these places and will be a Category C resettlement prison. This establishment will be privately run, the contractual period is 10-years from the first prisoner date and is expected to start receiving prisoners in 2025.

This memo provides an update in relation to the FBC for the Operator Competition for HMP Millsike.

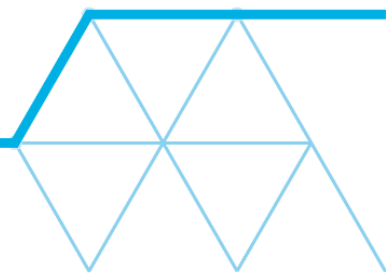
Assessment against the accounting officer standards

Regularity

The HMP Millsike Operator Competition FBC is assessed as regular. The Criminal Justice Act 1991 includes that the Secretary of State may contract out the operation of prisons under section 84. It is therefore considered that the department has the required spending powers to award the operation of this new prison to a private provider. The approach to select an operator set out in the FBC is fully compliant with public procurement regulations and the project has obtained legal and commercial input throughout its development.

Propriety

The HMP Millsike Operator Competition FBC is assessed as proper. The FBC has passed 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 FBC is fully compliant with the relevant legislation.



Value for Money

The HMP Millsike Operator Competition FBC is assessed as Value for Money. The places are more efficient to operate than the average male Category C Resettlement place, primarily due to the new prison design. The winning bid compared favourably to internal benchmarks on cost and committed to a service offering above the minimum requirement. This includes commitments assessed as adding significant value to delivering a 21st century custodial service that is safe, decent, secure and rehabilitation.

Feasibility

The HMP Millsike Operator Competition FBC is assessed as feasible. The prison build is on track to deliver with enough time for the operator to mobilise so that HMP Millsike can start to accept prisoners in 2025. The project management arrangements, internal governance and assurance processes are already in place to manage the dependencies between the prison build project and the operator, building on learning from HMP Five Wells and HMP Fosse Way.

Conclusion

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

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.

As the accounting officer for His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service I approved this memorandum on 6th March 2024.

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