



# HM Prison & Probation Service

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## Alan Scott CBE

Area Executive Director, North West & Women's Group

28<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Dear Charlie

### **HMIP report on an Independent Review of Progress at HMP Kirkham - 28th to 30th July 2025**

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress report at HMP Kirkham, whereby you followed up eight key concerns and one Ofsted theme from your most recent inspection in September 2024.

I am encouraged to note that you have seen good and reasonable progress being made across five of the nine concerns and Ofsted theme and note the following:

- Leaders had taken the concerns about the negative culture seriously. Staff Prisoner Relationships have been developed over the last 6 months, and it was reassuring that the inspectorate recognised the number of initiatives and consultation that have taken place.
- Leaders and managers formed a working group to improve the enrichment activities available to prisoners. Since the inspection, leaders have appointed an enthusiastic and effective Physical Education (PE) manager, who has introduced an extensive programme of activities and increased prisoner participation. We acknowledge the inspectorate's comments around weekend activities, and this will now be reviewed with a view to expand the offer.
- Leaders had restructured the employment hub and had brought Custody to Work (C2W) and careers support for prisoners into this department. Managers had established effective collaboration with the Offender Management Unit (OMU), which had enabled prisoners to get into outworking more quickly than was previously the case. Prisoners said that they received helpful support from employment hub staff to find employment. Arrangements for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) had

improved, there was a reduction in bureaucracy which had improved timeliness, Leaders regularly scrutinised the data on ROTL performance to identify areas for improvement. ROTL clinics were returning to their intended purpose and the recently introduced monthly OMU managers forum, gave prisoners a further opportunity to discuss the ROTL process. The number of complaints about ROTL had reduced although frustrations remained around perceived delays and so we will continue this progress to ensure we maximise ROTL opportunities prior to release.

- Since the inspection two new senior probation officers (SPOs) have been appointed and had introduced several changes to improve the management of public protection risks. They were keen to ensure continuous improvement and have introduced two prison offender managers (POM's) as Public Protection single point of contacts (SPOCs) to improve the consistency and quality of assessments and decision-making.

In respect of the four key areas where you found insufficient or no meaningful progress, I can confirm that all the IRP findings have been carefully considered, and steps will be taken to address them as appropriate. This will include the following:

- Living conditions was assessed as having made insufficient progress. Local work will continue to take place utilising prisoner working parties to refurbish billets across the site and funding has been secured to make improvements to showers. Bids will continue to be submitted for additional funding to make further improvements. Newly appointed residential supervising officers will continue to drive up standards in hygiene and cleanliness.
- We acknowledge illicit drugs are too freely available at HMP Kirkham. Action has already been taken locally, and we will continue to progress this work through embedding the revised comprehensive Drug Strategy and the new Tripartite Meetings. We will also use the North-West Area and National Dedicated Search Teams to disrupt supply and continue to work with our substance misuse service (SMS) providers to enhance the support on offer to prisoners with substance issues. A Custodial Manager has recently been appointed to oversee this work, and we will strive to obtain the funding to implement a dedicated Drug strategy lead.
- Despite the mitigating action taking place locally around increasing privacy of telephones, we acknowledge the concerns raised by inspectors. In room telephones are not available and there are no plans in place nationally to address this concern. However, we will continue to raise this concern on a national level, engaging with colleagues to encourage tangible improvements.
- Leaders at HMP Kirkham will continue to be responsive to the needs of the prisoner population given the recent changes to the prisoner demographic as a direct consequence of wider estate capacity challenges. Work has already commenced to support prisoners with less time left to serve at the point of arrival with changes to the

curriculum. Work has commenced with employers able to support this group of prisoners and ROTL processes to improve outcomes and risk management on release.

The Governor with the support of 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 Kirkham's agreed Action Plan and I can assure you that through my operational assurance functions and the support of Performance, Assurance and Risk Group (PAR) 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 and that our monitoring of the prison is in line with your findings.

Alan Scott CBE  
Area Executive Director  
North West and Women's Group

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