

Imprisonment for Public Protection Member Guidance

August 2026 (v2.0)

Document History

Document version	Date of Issue	Revision description
1.0	11/10/2024	Interim Guidance
1.1	31/01/2025	IPP licence termination guidance now incorporated into this guidance. Revised to take account of the: • Parole Board (Amendment) Rules 2024. • Victims and Prisoners Act 2024. • Refreshed HMPPS IPP Action Plan
1.2	19/02/2025	Amended to include the need for panels to explicitly reference/address the presumption of termination in IPP Licence Termination decisions.
2.0	04/08/2026	Revised to take account of the: • Parole Board (Amendment) Rules 2025 • The Sentencing Act 2026 • Judgment in the case of <i>R (Hanson) v Parole Board for England and Wales [2026] EWHC 1723 (Admin)</i>. • Other policy and practice changes • Published HMPPS IPP Annual report 2025/26 and Action Plan • The key revisions are set out here in the Table of Changes

Contents

CHAPTER ONE – GENERAL INFORMATION	4
1 Introduction	4
2 Background	5
3 Parole Board Policies	6
4 Key Concerns	7
<i>Injustice of the sentence</i>	7
<i>Hopelessness and uncertainty</i>	7
<i>Self-harm and suicide</i>	8
<i>System capacity</i>	9
CHAPTER TWO – GPP REVIEWS	11
5 Advice for Panels	11
<i>Case Management Conferences</i>	11
<i>Pre-tariff reviews</i>	12
<i>On/post tariff reviews</i>	13
<i>Open conditions</i>	15
<i>Pre-release considerations</i>	16
<i>IPP Progression Panels</i>	17
<i>Contingency Planning</i>	20
<i>Complex and "Stuck Cases"</i>	20
<i>Progression Regimes</i>	22
<i>The Phoenix Unit</i>	22
<i>Approved Premises</i>	23
<i>Psychology Services in the community</i>	24
CHAPTER THREE – ON LICENCE AND RECALLS	26
6 Supervision on Licence	26
7 Suspension of Supervision	26
8 Re-imposition of Supervision	28
9 Licence Variations	29
10 Recalls	29
11 Release following Risk Assessed Recall Review (RARR)	31
CHAPTER FOUR – LICENCE TERMINATION AND UNCONDITIONAL RE-RELEASE	32
12 Licence Termination	32

<i>Legislation</i>	32
<i>Parole Board Rule 31</i>	33
<i>The Referral and Powers of the Board</i>	34
<i>The IPP Licence Termination Dossier</i>	35
<i>Considering the Referral</i>	37
<i>Taking account of the OBR principles when the individual is on licence</i>	40
<i>Writing the decision</i>	42
<i>Offender Initiated Termination Review</i>	44
13 Unconditional Re-Release	45
<i>Legislation</i>	45
<i>Parole Board Rules</i>	46
<i>The Referral and Powers of the Board</i>	46
<i>Re-release directed</i>	46
<i>No release directed</i>	47
14 Automatic Licence Termination	48
CHAPTER FIVE - ROUTES OF CHALLENGE	50
15 Reconsideration	50
16 Set Aside	50
CHAPTER SIX – HMPPS ACTIVITIES	52
17 HMPPS IPP Annual Report and Action Plan	52
<i>HMPPS IPP Annual Report</i>	52
<i>HMPPS IPP Action Plan</i>	54
CHAPTER SEVEN – OTHER KEY CONSIDERATIONS	57
18 Victims	57
19 Detention for Public Protection (DPP)	57
20 Women Serving an IPP Sentence	59
21 Mental Health	61
<i>IPP-sentenced prisoners and mental wellbeing</i>	61
<i>IPP-sentenced prisoners in secure hospitals or remitted to prison</i>	64
<i>MHA Section 117 aftercare</i>	64
22 Neurodivergent Individuals	66
23 Support and Campaign Groups	66
<i>Family</i>	66
<i>HMPPS Initiatives</i>	68
24 Further Reading	68

CHAPTER ONE – GENERAL INFORMATION

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this guidance is to provide panels with points to consider when undertaking parole reviews for individuals sentenced to an Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) or Detention for Public Protection (DPP) sentence. For the purposes of this guidance, reference to the IPP sentence and licence will also include the DPP sentence and licence, except where different criteria are specifically applied. DPP sentences were given to individuals who were under 18 at the time they were convicted of the offence committed.
- 1.2 The guidance has been updated to take account of the amendments to the Parole Board Rules 2019 (as amended) ("the Rules"),¹ relevant provisions in the Sentencing Act 2026² and other policy changes.
- 1.3 Text in **bold** is used throughout the guidance to highlight key principles or matters requiring emphasis following themes identified through practice queries.
- 1.4 This guidance will support panels in identifying ways of working to effectively assess these cases fairly and justly, whilst maintaining a focus on risk and the tests to be applied, as required. Public protection is the overriding priority. **It is universally accepted that a bespoke focus is required when reviewing IPP-sentenced individuals.**
- 1.5 It provides information to panels when considering referrals to terminate an IPP licence.
- 1.6 This guidance additionally sets out information about initiatives and approaches taken by HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) colleagues for progressing IPP sentenced prisoners and how these might be taken into account by the panel when considering the Codified Public Protection Test (CPPT),³ a move to open conditions or the termination of the licence.
- 1.7 Panels should bear in mind the following when reading this guidance:
 - The focus must be on the relevant tests to be applied
 - Be mindful of the key concerns set out in section four and any link these might have to the assessment of risk and decision-making
 - Note information about HMPPS duties or initiatives which aim to assist panels to:
 - Understand the wider HMPPS aims related to progressing IPP sentenced prisoners

¹ Please note the Parole Board Rules have been amended several times, most recently in 2026. References to the Rules in this guidance take account of this. Thereafter, references throughout the rest of the guidance will be to 'the Rules'.

² [The Sentencing Act 2026](#).

³ Introduced by the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 (VAPA 2024) and explained in the Types of Cases Guidance.

- Be aware of what work may be taking place with the individual within HMPPS
- Ask questions of witnesses and/or seek out relevant information about progress and
- Take note of key messages which have been written in **bold**.

2 **Background**

- 2.1 IPP sentences were available for courts to impose from 2005 to 2012. They were designed to detain individuals in prison who posed a significant risk of causing serious harm to the public through Serious Further Offences (SFOs)⁴ until they no longer posed such a risk and could be safely released on licence.
- 2.2 The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO)⁵ abolished IPP sentences. However, this did not apply retrospectively and therefore those who had already been sentenced to an IPP continue to serve their sentence unless they reach a point where their licence is terminated.
- 2.3 IPP sentences operate in the same way as life sentences in that there is no guarantee that the individual will ever be released. The release of an individual sentenced to an IPP remains a decision for the Board to make and is binding on the Secretary of State (subject to official routes of challenge).
- 2.4 It is worth noting that those IPP-sentenced individuals still in custody include those:
 - Who were given short minimum terms, and who are now well beyond their tariff (some in excess of ten years)
 - Who have served for longer post-tariff than the original minimum term
 - Who were sentenced as children to DPPs who have spent all or most of their whole adult life in prison
 - Who were sentenced for offences which would not, prior to 2005, have received an indeterminate sentence
 - Who were sentenced prior to 2008 but would not have met the revised “*seriousness threshold*” following the change brought in by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008⁶ and would have instead been given a determinate sentence, and
 - Who committed offences that were so serious that they could have received a discretionary life sentence after the IPP sentence was abolished
- 2.5 For sentencing statistics, background, and history of the IPP sentence, please go to the following SharePoint page: *IPP Background and History*.

⁴ SFOs are qualifying violent or sexual offences listed in Schedule 15a to the Criminal Justice Act 2003, committed by individuals who are the subject of probation supervision. [SFO qualifying list](#).

⁵ [Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(LASPO\)](#).

⁶ [The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008](#).

3 **Parole Board Policies**

- 3.1 The Codified Public Protection Test (CPPT) applies to IPP cases, as it does for all other cases.

The core test is that release or re-release can only be directed if a panel is satisfied that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public that the prisoner be confined [in prison]. A direction for release must not be made, unless the panel considers that there is no more than a minimal risk of the prisoner committing a further offence which would cause serious harm, should they be released. The CPPT also sets out some of the factors that must be considered when making this decision. Panels should not be influenced or persuaded to step outside of this core principle when making independent decisions.

- 3.2 An IPP Taskforce was established in November 2024 to pilot a specialist operating model designed to address long-standing systemic delays affecting the most complex IPP cases. Initiatives include the adoption of End-to-End case management (E2E), a cohort of members developing expertise with these cases, and designated case manager support to Taskforce members.
- 3.3 Member Case Assessment (MCA) panels can conclude any IPP case on the papers where there is sufficient information to make a decision and fairness does not require an oral hearing.⁷ An oral hearing is not required unless the circumstances merit exploring oral evidence from witnesses or meet other criteria as set out in the Supreme Court's judgment in the case of *Osborn - v- Parole Board [2013] UKSC 61 (OBR)*.⁸
- 3.4 When listing IPP cases for both MCA and oral hearing, they are prioritised in the same way as other indeterminate sentences (but see paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 on DPP cases). Ordinarily, they are given first priority based on their review type, once exceptional or top priority cases have been listed.
- 3.5 It should be noted that both the Prioritisation Framework for Paper Reviews under the MCA process⁹ and Listing Prioritisation Framework for Oral Hearings¹⁰ require that individuals convicted when under 18 years of age will be automatically prioritised. This is irrespective of whether they are Generic Parole Process (GPP) reviews or recall reviews.
- 3.6 This prioritisation includes DPP cases and will also apply to any individual who should have been given a DPP rather than an IPP by virtue of the fact they were convicted when they were under 18 years of age.

⁷ Subject to some exceptions which require an oral hearing if release on the papers cannot be directed (see The MCA guidance for more information).

⁸ *Osborn -v- Parole Board [2013] UKSC 61*. See section six of the MCA Guidance for more information about the *Osborn* criteria.

⁹ [Prioritisation Framework for MCA Paper Reviews \(June 2023 v1.0\)](#).

¹⁰ [Listing Prioritisation Framework for Oral Hearing \(May 2023 v4.0\)](#).

4 **Key Concerns**

- 4.1 The Ministry of Justice and the wider Criminal Justice System has recognised the concerns raised since the introduction of IPP sentences and subsequent abolition. These concerns are significant and some of the main points are set out below.

Injustice of the sentence

- 4.2 There are numerous studies and reports articulating what many feel is the injustice of the sentence, with the following being of particular note.

- 4.3 In 2020, the Prison Reform Trust (PRT) undertook a study into individuals recalled to prison whilst serving an IPP sentence.¹¹ The researchers stated that:

"The IPP sentence provokes strong emotions in both people who are subject to its strictures and the criminal justice practitioners involved in the administration or implementation of its requirements. The fact that the government acknowledged that the legislation was unfair when repealing it has left almost all the people still serving IPP sentences with a strong sense of injustice. The majority of criminal justice professionals we interviewed felt the same way, whilst still being bound by their duty to fulfil their legal responsibilities to the best of their ability".

- 4.4 In 2022, the final report from the Independent Commission into the experience of victims and long-term prisoners¹² was published. It was informed by the results of a survey of the family members of individuals serving IPP sentences and included a recommendation to end the injustice they faced.
- 4.5 In 2023 the United Nations (UN)¹³ urged the Government to step up efforts to tackle the inequality of access to rehabilitation opportunities for IPP-sentenced individuals and highlighted the significant psychological harm they were suffering as a result of this sentence type.
- 4.6 In July 2026, UN experts renewed calls for the UK to undertake an urgent review and re-sentencing exercise for individuals still subject to the IPP sentence, warning that continued inaction is perpetuating serious human rights violations.¹⁴

Hopelessness and uncertainty

- 4.7 The lengthy periods of imprisonment and uncertainty over release has led to significant concerns for IPP-sentenced individuals, particularly in relation

¹¹ Prison Reform Trust: ["No life, no future, no freedom" \(2020\)](#).

¹² ICEVLP: [Making sense of sentencing: doing justice to both victims and prisoners \(2022\)](#).

¹³ [UK: UN torture expert calls for urgent review of over 2,000 prison tariffs under discredited IPP sentencing scheme, OHCHR \(August 2023\)](#).

¹⁴ [UK must end IPP sentences as psychological harm continues: UN experts July 2026](#).

to their mental health. The term most frequently used to describe how IPP-sentenced individuals feel about their sentence is "*hopelessness*".

4.8 Various publications exploring the issues with the IPP sentence highlight the feelings of individuals serving them:

- Many feel like they are without a path to get out and have no chance of being released. Some have stopped engaging in their parole hearings as they feel there is no point. Individuals reported being in "*limbo on this sentence*" and having a sense of being completely trapped in the system. Recall of individuals serving IPP sentences not only leaves them feeling hopeless but also leaves their families with a sense of hopelessness.¹⁵
- Individuals are unable to accept their indefinite future detention and restriction whilst serving alongside others whose continued imprisonment appears to be justified by considerations of more serious actions in the past.¹⁶
- The halfway point of a sentence has been identified as significant for coping with long sentences. Indeterminacy removes these significant psychological markers: there is no "*home stretch*".¹⁷
- Within custody, research has found that in some cases IPP-sentenced individuals felt that their sentence plan demanded too little of them, and they faced substantial periods of purposeless "*nothing time*".¹⁸

4.9 The IMB briefing noted that across 24 prisons in England and Wales it was found that:

- Many IPP-sentenced individuals were questioning whether they would ever be released and were fearful that they would die in prison
- Progression pathways were poor and unclear, with many being unable to access the courses they needed for parole and release
- There was inadequate preparation for release, which could lead to recall to prison; e.g. because of issues arising from the loss of accommodation

Self-harm and suicide

4.10 In its 2022 report¹⁹ the JSC acknowledged the profound levels of psychological harm caused by IPP sentences, citing the evidence of high levels of self-harm and suicide rates amongst IPP-sentenced individuals.

4.11 In evidence given to the JSC²⁰ in 2022, the following points were of note:

- The clinical presentation of IPP-sentenced individuals is increasingly akin to those who have been wrongfully convicted and the circumstances

¹⁵ User Voice: [the voice of people on IPP \(2024\)](#).

¹⁶ Dr Roger Grimshaw Centre for Crime and Justice Studies: [How to resolve the IPP problem for good \(February 2024\)](#).

¹⁷ Crewe B., et al., "Swimming with the Tide": Adapting to Long-Term Imprisonment Justice Quarterly Vol. 34, No. 3 pp. 517-541 (June 2016).

¹⁸ Prison Reform Trust 'Making Progress? What progression means for people serving the longest sentences' (2022).

¹⁹ JSC IPP sentences: Third Report of Session 2022-23 (September 2022).

²⁰ Evidence given by Dr Dinesh Maganty, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist to the Justice Select Committee IPP Sentences: Third Report of Session 2022-2023 (September 2022).

surrounding the sentence has led to a sense of helplessness. Many have become institutionalised.

- From its inception, both sentenced individuals and professionals did not know what the sentence was and what the implications were for such a sentence. With time, and a better understanding of the implications of the sentence, there was a deterioration in the presentation and mental health of individuals serving IPP sentences.
- Given the psychological harm that has ensued as a result of the sentence and conditions attached to it, many have argued that assessing risk is more complicated for IPP-sentenced individuals than is the case for other prisoners. The sentence, with its mental health impact, has been described as a “vicious cycle”, because mental health issues can sometimes be related to behaviours which might be indicative of risk escalation. Therefore, when preparing reports for, or giving evidence to Parole Board panels, it must be considered.

4.12 In 2023, the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) went as far as stating that an IPP sentence should be considered as a potential risk factor for suicide and self-harm due to the anxiety and hopelessness it can cause. The PPO published a Learning Lessons Bulletin²¹ on the self-inflicted deaths of IPP prisoners which identified that the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process should consider the IPP sentence as a potential risk factor to suicide and self-harm.

4.13 HMPPS has produced a range of information and advice for prisons which can be found on SharePoint: External IPP published research, reports and articles.

System capacity

4.14 Under the IPP sentence, release is based on successful rehabilitation and the individual no longer being deemed a risk to the public. However, the JSC found that inadequate provision of support services inside prison and in the community on the outside led to a “recall merry-go-round” with almost half of IPP-sentenced individuals in custody having been released previously.

4.15 The JSC, as well as IPP campaign organisations, have emphasised the prison-based barriers to IPP sentence progression, with a lack of capacity to deliver the identified interventions to demonstrate sentence progression and reduced risk and therefore the potential for release.²²

4.16 Whilst directly addressing the above issues is outside of the Board’s remit, panels may wish to consider that each individual coming before them may have experienced or be suffering from any or all of the above to some degree. **This inevitably will have had an impact on behaviour for many of them in both the custodial setting and whilst in the**

²¹ [PPO ‘Learning Lessons bulletin: Fatal Incident Investigations – Self-inflicted deaths of IPP prisoners’ \(2023\).](#)

²² *It should be noted that HMPPS take a different view and in more recent times the challenge has not been a lack of capacity, rather the individual’s needs are complex and require additional or alternative interventions to those more generally available.*

community on licence. Panels will need to bear this in mind when they carry out their assessment of risk.

- 4.17 Additionally, panels should be mindful that custodial behaviour might on occasion only reflect the custodial experience, including the individual's level of coping skills and interaction or engagement with others, which may not provide a clear indication of likely behaviour in a community environment. Again, panels will need to bear this in mind when they carry out their assessment of risk.**
- 4.18 More information on reports and government responses on IPP sentences is available on the SharePoint page: Justice Select Committee Reports and Government Responses.

CHAPTER TWO – GPP REVIEWS

5 Advice for Panels

- 5.1 Individuals serving an IPP sentence who are in custody and have never been released are likely to have amassed a complex range of needs during their time in the custodial setting which might make their progression challenging.
- 5.2 Agencies should provide comprehensive evidence which focuses on risk and be fully prepared for questioning at oral hearings to ensure the IPP-sentenced individual has the best chance of progression. Progressing onto licence in the community initiates the individual's journey towards eventual termination of the licence and the end of the sentence.

Case Management Conferences

- 5.3 Case Management Conferences (CMC) can often be a key intervention for managing complex reviews, particularly where conventional case progression has failed or where multiple agencies need to coordinate action.
- 5.4 They can be helpful in **unblocking complex, stalled or poorly evidenced cases by bringing key stakeholders together to identify barriers, clarify responsibilities, and agree next steps.**
- 5.5 Throughout the guidance there are suggestions where a CMC may be useful and a summary is set out below.
- 5.6 A CMC can be convened at the **MCA stage**, before deciding whether a case can be concluded on the papers or requires an oral hearing.
- 5.7 A CMC can help understand:
- What progression work has already been undertaken
 - Why progress is not being made
 - What further work is required
- 5.8 They will be particularly helpful for "stuck" cases where:
- Multiple parole reviews have produced little or no progression
 - The same risk-management gaps repeatedly appear
 - Barriers to retaining or applying learning have not been fully explored
 - Broader unmet needs affecting risk have not been understood
- 5.9 In some particularly difficult cases, a **staged approach** may be required, involving **more than one CMC**
- 5.10 They may be beneficial where panels are considering inviting the Secretary of State to provide a view on a complex case.

5.11 CMCs can be part of proactive oral hearing preparation and may help avoid adjournments and delays.

5.12 A further use of CMCs is when dealing with mental health, hospital remittals, and section 117 aftercare. Planning can become stalled where:

- Mental health providers disagree about responsibilities
- Agencies dispute funding arrangements
- Community services are not clearly identified
- MAPPA and healthcare arrangements are unclear

In such circumstances:

1. Panels may seek information from the attendees about current arrangements
2. The aim is to establish **clear expectations and timeframes** and resolve inter-agency issues affecting progression and release planning

Pre-tariff reviews

5.13 There were only three pre-tariff IPP cases (all male) remaining in the system as of 31 March 2026²³ and so these will now be very rare.

5.14 It is for the Secretary of State to determine whether to seek advice from the Board about the suitability of a pre-tariff IPP-sentenced prisoner to move to open conditions. There is no requirement for the Secretary of State to seek advice or involve the Board in their decision.

5.15 Whilst sentence planning is not part of a panel's function, the Supreme Court's judgment in *OBR* stated that:

"The Board's decision, for the purposes of this guidance, is not confined to its determination of whether or not to recommend the prisoner's release or transfer to open conditions but includes any other aspects of its decision (such as comments or advice in relation to the prisoner's treatment needs or the offending behaviour work which is required) which will in practice have a significant impact on his management in prison or on future reviews."

5.16 This confirms the important role of the Board, including at pre-tariff stage where progression to open conditions or remaining in closed conditions are the only options.

5.17 Panels are uniquely placed in these circumstances to review a pre-tariff prisoner's progress in addressing their risk of causing serious harm to the public. **Whilst panels should not comment on specific sentence planning, they will be able to identify outstanding risk factors that need to be addressed to prepare a prisoner for potential release at tariff expiry.** The panels review could uncover options or types of work

²³ MoJ Offender Management statistics quarterly Prison Population: [October to December 2025](#) (as of 31 December 2025).

that may be beneficial, although it will be for HMPPS to determine exactly how to address areas of risk.

- 5.18 This not only ensures fairness to the prisoner but also adds value to the process as it focuses those responsible for sentence planning on key risk issues and helps to ensure that prison resources are appropriately targeted.
- 5.19 **Panels will need to follow the terms of the referral and consider whether each of the criteria are met, as set out in the Secretary of State's Directions to the Parole Board on 1 August 2023 (Transfer of indeterminate sentence prisoners (ISPs) to open conditions).**²⁴

On/post tariff reviews

- 5.20 Almost all IPP cases are now post-tariff and so will have had at least one previous parole review. Panels will need to consider the current review on its own merits. However, it will be helpful to review the previous decision/s to see what was identified as requiring further work and whether that work has been completed. **These should already be in the dossier but the Board's case manager should be directed to provide the previous parole decisions if they are missing.**
- 5.21 Many of the prisoners serving an IPP sentence are now significantly over-tariff and have never been released. It will be important for panels to reflect on how this affects their consideration of applying the CPPT.
- 5.22 It is worth remembering that in the case of *Osborn*, the Supreme Court gave guidance as to how the Board should take into account that a prisoner serving an indeterminate sentence was over tariff. At para 2(6) in a summary of its findings the Court said:
- "When dealing with cases concerning post-tariff indeterminate sentence prisoners, it should **scrutinise ever more anxiously** whether the level of risk is unacceptable, the longer the time the prisoner has spent in prison following the expiry of his tariff."*
- 5.23 At paragraph 83 of the judgment the Court said that this was not new guidance and had been said more than once. The Supreme Court relied on two decisions of the Court of Appeal as having said the same thing.
- 5.24 Simler J re-affirmed this as the correct position in her judgment in *Hall -v- Parole Board [2015] EWHC 252(Admin)*.²⁵

*"The requirement of **ever more anxious scrutiny** as time goes on, is a requirement to look more carefully and more closely at the level of risk posed by the prisoner, the longer the detention lasts, and does not involve any lowering of the threshold for release the longer the detention lasts."*

²⁴ *SharePoint: Open Conditions and Release on Temporary Licence.*

²⁵ [Hall -v- Parole Board \[2015\] EWHC 252\(Admin\)](#).

- 5.25 The purpose of sentencing includes deterrence and rehabilitation, and the longer a prisoner serves in prison the more likely it is that those aims have been achieved. While some academics might doubt the effectiveness of deterrence in sentencing, it is recognised by Parliament as a purpose of imprisonment. Furthermore, it is the experience of the criminal justice system that one of the principal drivers of rehabilitation is age. Many prisoners do stop committing offences through the process of maturation.
- 5.26 While the statements of the Supreme Court were made in relation to prisoners serving sentences of life imprisonment, similar considerations apply to prisoners serving IPP sentences as is made clear by the case of *Hall*. It is arguable that they apply to an even greater degree for IPP-sentenced prisoners. HMPPS has implemented a bespoke IPP Action Plan that is reviewed on an annual basis (see section 21 for more information).
- 5.27 Panels should consider how they have applied the Supreme Court guidance in making their decision. It may be clear from the decision that they have taken into consideration the fact that the prisoner is over tariff at the time of the hearing, even if it is not specifically referred to. Equally, it may be apparent from the decision that there was no way in which the fact of post-tariff detention could make any difference to the decision. Being as clear as possible in the written decision may assist future panels, particularly in the event of reconsideration or judicial review.
- 5.28 Panels are reminded that the identified risks may be addressed in a variety of ways including regimes, education, therapy, one-to-one work and accredited and non-accredited programmes.²⁶ **Evidence from all relevant work and interventions should be directed by panels to inform their risk assessment. Panels should not focus solely on accredited offending behaviour programmes to provide evidence of risk reduction.**²⁷
- 5.29 Panels could seek confirmation as to whether the IPP-sentenced prisoner is suitable for a particular programme by directing a Programme Suitability Summary (PSS). It may be that accredited programmes are not the best, or only, way forward. This information could alternatively be provided in the Community Offender Manager (COM) or Prison Offender Manager (POM) reports.
- 5.30 In cases where the challenges of establishing what has been undertaken and how the individual can progress are proving difficult to unpick, panels may wish to consider directing a Case Management Conference (CMC) with key attendees. This may be helpful to identify activity already undertaken and if/why progress is not being made.
- 5.31 On rare occasions, a panel may wish to invite the Secretary of State to provide a view or send a representative to the oral hearing to explain what

²⁶ More information can be found in the Interventions Guidance.

²⁷ Mr Justice Cranston in *Gill vs SSJ [2010] EWHC 364 (Admin)* made clear at paragraph 80. "Offending behaviour programmes are neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for release from prison. There are other recognised pathways to reduce re-offending and to achieve release".

officials have undertaken and achieved. **The Secretary of State cannot be directed to provide a view or send a representative and so this should not be relied on as a standalone solution to any gaps in evidence or understanding of the complexities of a case.** As mentioned in paragraph 5.3 above a CMC is likely to be more appropriate.

Open conditions

5.32 The panel can recommend that an IPP-sentenced prisoner is transferred to open conditions only if it is part of the Secretary of State's referral.²⁸

5.33 A period of time in open conditions can be an important part of the rehabilitative process for many prisoners. In the case of high-risk prisoners such as those serving an IPP sentence, this can be an important opportunity to test:

- The impact of the offending behaviour work, including regimes, education, therapy, one-to-one work, accredited and non-accredited programmes, that have been completed during their sentence; and
- Whether their risk can be safely managed in conditions of lower security and for limited controlled periods in the community.

5.34 Operational and resource pressures within HMPPS can and do influence progression towards release. It is not unusual for a panel to be faced with a situation where professionals are recommending a transfer to open conditions when a prisoner has completed their sentence planning targets, only to find following careful scrutiny of the evidence that specific risk factors have not been addressed, through no fault of the prisoner.

5.35 Conversely, there are cases where progression is not recommended because of a prisoner's behaviour in custody, which the panel ultimately finds is not relevant to their risk of serious harm or suitability for open conditions. There are also cases where it becomes apparent that offence-focused work has been proposed which is irrelevant to risk. This might be where a prisoner committed a sexual offence as a young person and has no other history of sexual offending but is recommended to undertake sex offender treatment work. This may delay progression and divert scarce resources from those who need them most.

5.36 Panels may have cases where the IPP-sentenced prisoner was in open conditions but has been returned to closed conditions following an adverse development or a security issue. A prisoner being unable to sustain good behaviour in open conditions, depending on the circumstances, may not be an indication of a failure in the progression process but rather part of the practicing and testing opportunity that open conditions are designed for.

5.37 The transfer of a prisoner to open conditions, maybe multiple times, always needs the same thorough and independent scrutiny as a decision about release, because open conditions provides increased access to the public,

²⁸ The criteria can be found on SharePoint: *Open Conditions and Release on Temporary Licence*.

eventually unsupervised, and is likely to inform future decisions about release.

5.38 Panels may also need to reflect on previous recommendations about suitability for a move to open conditions, particularly where the Secretary of State has chosen not to follow a recommendation and the rationale for that decision.

5.39 On 8 January 2026, the Secretary of State made a policy change and no longer seeks the Board's advice in relation to the suitability of Category A or Restricted Status Indeterminate Sentence Prisoners (ISPs) for open conditions.²⁹

5.40 **Panels will need to follow the terms of the referral and consider whether each of the criteria are met, as set out in the Secretary of State's Directions to the Parole Board on 1 August 2023 (Transfer of indeterminate sentence prisoners (ISPs) to open conditions).**³⁰

5.41 More information about considering open conditions can be found in the Types of Cases Guidance.

Pre-release considerations

5.42 For those still in custody and working towards a first release, the HMPPS IPP Annual report 2025 to 2026³¹ contains a number of commitments aimed at improving progression, preparation for parole, and safe release.

5.43 The main commitments for pre-release IPP sentenced prisoners are to provide more intensive case management (progression panels, a new IPP advocate role and additional psychology support), improve parole readiness, expand opportunities such as Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL), place prisoners in establishments that meet their needs, and give particular attention to the most complex and long-term never-released cases.

5.44 A deep-dive into never-released IPP sentenced prisoners identified key priorities which have been incorporated into the HMPPS IPP Action Plan:

- Timely access to appropriate psychological and health services
- Using professional judgement and formulations alongside structured risk tools
- Understanding behaviour in its custodial and psychological context and with regards to the impact of the sentence
- Staff support and training to develop skills to encourage hope and engagement
- Clear, realistic, individualised and transparent sentence planning

²⁹ More detail is provided on this in PBM 001-2026.

³⁰ SharePoint: Open Conditions and Release on Temporary Licence.

³¹ [HMPPS annual report on the IPP sentence 2025 to 26.](#)

5.45 More detailed information about the key commitments can be found in Chapter Six.

5.46 **Panels should consider whether there is evidence that the above commitments have been delivered on the case before them (where relevant). Release plans should evidence good resettlement practice including:**

- Early planning for release
- Co-producing plans that are not just focused on risk
- Consistent, personalised supervision
- Developing social capital – resources in the community that will address needs and build on strengths
- Being responsive to diversity and the needs of different groups
- Using a strengths-based approach – treating the person as an individual with talents and abilities who can make a positive contribution to society

5.47 For many prisoners serving the IPP sentence, particularly those convicted of serious sexual or violent offences, MAPPA arrangements are a significant component of release planning. It is likely that the following information will be provided:

- How MAPPA planning supports release
- Whether MAPPA meetings are taking place in advance of parole hearings
- Whether delays in MAPPA planning contribute to progression barriers
- Outcomes from MAPPA-managed releases

5.48 **Whilst panels should not direct about specific sentence planning, they will have explored extensive evidence and will be able to identify outstanding risk factors that need to be addressed and can highlight these in directions where the review is ongoing, and set out areas of risk to be addressed in decisions for future panels where release is not directed.**

IPP Progression Panels

5.49 Progression panels are multi-disciplinary meetings which ensure that those serving an IPP sentence are on the appropriate progression pathway with access to appropriate interventions. Progression panels will ensure that any emerging or current issues are identified, managed and, where possible, overcome appropriately. The progression panel must consider the following:

- a) Is there an appropriate progression pathway identified?
- b) Is the offender able to access the required interventions or services?
- c) Are all reasonable steps to mitigate any barriers to progression being pursued?
- d) Are they suitable, where eligible, for Parole Board consideration for suspension of supervision, or licence termination (in IPP cases only)?
- e) Does the offender have any protective factors in the community and what are they (accommodation, family, job, etc)?

- 5.50 The objectives of progression panels are set out in Annex A of the HMPPS Progression Panels for Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework.³²
- 5.51 The responsible practitioner should be proactive in requesting a progression panel where one is required as set out in the Policy Framework or if the case is lacking movement and requiring multidisciplinary discussion. The COM will be responsible for most cases approaching referral to the Board in line with the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model.
- 5.52 As part of the preparation for a progression panel the COM (in some cases it will be the POM) must complete the *Progression Panel Report*. This will contain all relevant information to inform the discussion and decision making.
- 5.53 In most cases, attendees at a progression panel will include the Head of Offender Management Delivery (HOMD) or Nominated Lead Senior Probation Officer (SPO), the COM and POM, and Psychology Services Representative (or WEPS representative for relevant women's cases). There may be additional attendees as needed, for example healthcare, chaplaincy etc. More information about attendees at Progression Panels can be found in Annex B of the HMPPS Progression Panels for Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework.
- 5.54 The individual serving the IPP sentence must be provided with an agenda for the meeting, containing key discussion areas, at least one week ahead of the meeting. They can receive a copy of the *Progression Panel Report* if they choose. Their views about their progression must be actively sought following sufficient preparation time and fed into the meeting where they are unable to attend.
- 5.55 For those in custody, a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating is used to ensure that resources are focused on the most complex and challenging cases. Prisons must use the RAG rating to convene panels as follows:
- Red – an annual panel
 - Amber – a panel every 18 months
 - Green – a panel only following a negative parole outcome (i.e. no release). In these cases, their progression can be managed via sentence planning meetings unless the prison or probation feel that a panel is necessary
- 5.56 For more detail and an explanation about the RAG rating allocations please see Annex C of the HMPPS Progression Panels for Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework.
- 5.57 In addition to the above requirements at paragraph 5.55, progression panels in prisons must also be convened for all those serving an IPP sentence in the following circumstances:
- Within six weeks of a no release parole outcome

³² [HMPPS Progression Panels for Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework](#).

- Within 28 days of returning to custody, following recall
- Where there has been an adverse development in open or a re-categorisation to a higher security category
- When the prisoner is remitted back from secure hospital to prison

5.58 A progression panel for the purposes outlined above should only be held where deemed necessary and where no other appropriate forum to discuss the case is taking place.

5.59 The RAG rating is reviewed regularly and can change based on any new circumstances, information or incidents, which will affect the required frequency for progression panels. **Panels may wish to ask the COM about when the last review took place and explain the current RAG rating.**

5.60 For those in the community, the first progression panel must be convened within three months of release. The progression panel must include consideration of required move-on accommodation from Approved Premises where relevant.

5.61 Thereafter, progression panel frequency will depend on the RAG rating as follows:

- Amber – an annual panel or at the key stages outlined below
- Green – a panel at the key stages where there is a significant event or change in behaviour, as follows:
 - A deterioration of behaviour/compliance or an escalation of risk which does not meet the threshold for recall (i.e. moves from Green to Amber RAG rating)
 - Where appropriate, when recall is being considered
 - Ahead of reduction of frequency of supervision, consideration for suspension of supervision, reimposition of supervision and referral for IPP licence termination

5.62 **When progression panels are considering the processes managed by the Parole Board, the COM must advise the progression panel to review the relevant reports written for the Parole Board.**

5.63 Progression panels for women should consult with relevant professionals in the cases of women on the Women's Estate Case Advice and Support Panel (WECASP). The WECASP provides some of the same functions as progression panels, with a focus on supporting progression through stabilising behaviour and improving wellbeing and, as such, it can provide important information for panels on a woman's progress.

5.64 Under section six of the *IPP Licence Termination Report* template "risk management details" the COM should include a summary of the views from the most recent progression panel, and the view on suitability for licence termination (where relevant), suspension of supervision or variation of licence. These panels provide an opportunity for key staff who are closely involved in the case to share their views, offering important insights into

the individual's engagement with their progression and ensuring that the termination report is as fully formed as possible. **As the main points from the progression panel should be included in the COM's report there should not be a need to direct the progression panel report be disclosed.**

Contingency Planning

5.65 As part of the considerations, panels will want to know whether contingency planning has been factored into proposals. It is vital to mitigate against plans unravelling and the profound psychological harm, institutionalisation, and extreme difficulty of progression this may bring. Having a contingency supports a clear safety net and proactive risk management for individuals navigating prolonged custody or complex post-release licence arrangements. The importance of this planning spans both custodial and community phases.

5.66 In Custody:

- **Progression Barriers:** With systemic delays in access to offending behaviour courses, contingency plans identify interim goals so prisoners do not stall or lose hope.
- **Self-Harm and Crisis Management:** IPP prisoners face disproportionately high risks of self-harm. Plans like ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) provide immediate action protocols for those in distress.
- **Sentence Plan B:** If a primary goal (such as securing a spot on a specialised intervention) falls through, the contingency plan outlines alternative pathways to demonstrate to the Parole Board that the individual may be ready for progression.

5.67 In the Community:

- **High Recall Rates:** Over half of IPP sentenced prisoners recalled to custody are returned for non-compliance with licence conditions, rather than new crimes. Contingency planning establishes clear safety nets and "protective factors" to prevent these minor breaches.
- **Pre-emptive Recall Prevention:** It maps out exactly who to contact (e.g., family, support workers, probation) and what steps to take if the individual's mental health or personal circumstances begin to deteriorate, preventing unnecessary returns to prison.
- **Stable Resettlement:** The transition to the community is high stakes. Contingency measures ensure that housing, employment, and financial support are secured as alternatives to Approved Premises if needed.

Complex and "Stuck Cases"

5.68 In cases where there have been multiple parole reviews with little or no progression, it could be that the same gap in risk management appears each time, barriers to retention and/or application of learning have not been fully explored and understood or that other identified needs have not been considered and formulated in relation to their impact upon risk. Some

of these cases will most likely be identified as an "Aged Case" and there should already be some monitoring and oversight from the Secretariat.

5.69 Panels can address lack of progress in directions, if the same gap or need appears in several previous parole decisions with no change, and it may be something that needs to be explored at a CMC.³³

Convening a CMC may assist panels to establish a more comprehensive understanding of the circumstances by bringing key individuals together. This can be undertaken at the MCA stage before determining if the case can be concluded on the papers or requires an oral hearing.

5.70 More targeted directions could be set following the CMC to follow up on actions which are agreed or thought to be necessary, or to provide explanations for inaction. Whilst panels have no responsibility for sentence planning, it is possible to explore and suggest how progression in these cases might happen without being prescriptive. It will be for other professionals to determine the precise nature of the work or intervention needed. In some situations, a staged approach to problem solving may be needed, involving more than one CMC.

5.71 Adjournments should generally be avoided as they can sometimes cause unnecessary delays, however, panels may wish to consider whether one is appropriate if there are outstanding work or unaddressed complexities. If any outstanding work and follow-up reports cannot be completed within four months, an adjournment would not normally be appropriate because of the requirement for a speedy review.

5.72 Panels are reminded that the JSC report (as mentioned in paragraph 4.10) highlighted the serious detrimental impact delays in listing hearings, frequent deferrals, and concluding cases has on those serving an IPP sentence. Prompt consideration, swift listing, together with comprehensive planning and consultation between panel members, can help avoid unnecessary deferrals.

5.73 Please see guidance on Adjournments and Deferrals for further information.

5.74 In some cases, Delegated Authority may be used to review progress with the compliance of directions. The case manager will work with the HMPPS Public Protection Casework Section (PPCS) to deliver to deadlines ahead of a panel chair being appointed.³⁴ This may support the preparation of the case for when the panel chair comes to review if it is oral hearing ready.

5.75 Where the case is directed to an oral hearing and a panel chair has been appointed, Panel Chair Directions (PCDs) should be issued within 14 days, once any update reports have been received. Issuing early PCDs provides more time ahead of the oral hearing allowing for progress to be made, including convening CMCs and compliance with directions. Where the case

³³ More information on CMCs can be found in the Oral Hearing Guidance.

³⁴ Delegated authority is used to assist in the progression of reviews, for example by directing information and completing oral hearing readiness checks.

is not considered ready and needs to be adjourned, there may be time to list another case in its place.

Progression Regimes

5.76 HMPPS operate four Progression Regimes in closed, adult male category C prisons which provide opportunities for indeterminate sentenced prisoners (including IPPs) to gain a fuller understanding of their risks and problematic behaviours, and support to address them. Progression Regimes aim to re-introduce the responsibilities, tasks and routines associated with daily life in the community, to test prisoners' readiness to respond appropriately to the trust placed in them, and to actively pursue activities and relationships which support rehabilitation.

5.77 The four Progression Regimes prioritise prisoners serving an IPP sentence for places and provide an approximate total of 390 beds. The Progression Regime is not a treatment pathway, accredited programme or intervention which may have a defined end point. The length of time a prisoner resides at a Progression Regime site is determined by staff at the respective prison (unless the Parole Board directs release, or the Secretary of State accepts a recommendation for a move to open conditions). Prisoners may reside at a Progression Regime site for varying periods depending on their needs, engagement and required next steps.

The Phoenix Unit

5.78 The Phoenix Unit is a new specialist residential unit at HMP Aylesbury designed specifically to support IPP sentenced prisoners who are furthest from release and have become disengaged from progression and are facing significant barriers to release. It can house up to 49 men, including approximately 15 IPP sentenced individuals and is scheduled to open in summer 2026. The unit's primary aim is to:

- Re-engage prisoners who have become "stuck" in the system.
- Rebuild motivation and hope.
- Support progression towards release.
- Address wellbeing and behavioural barriers that may be preventing parole progression.

It is aimed particularly at:

- Prisoners given a red RAG rating (those assessed as having significant barriers to progression).
- Individuals who have become disengaged from sentence planning or rehabilitation activity.
- Prisoners with complex needs who require more intensive, personalised support.

The unit will use:

- Personalised management plans.
- Strong emphasis on wellbeing.

- Relationship-based support.
- Life-skills development.
- Rehabilitation-focused activities.

5.79 The screening and selection process for the unit relies on a structured assessment of risk, engagement, and rehabilitative need.

Approved Premises

5.80 Approved Premises (APs) can be a helpful route to assist reintegration into the community for an individual serving an IPP sentence. They are particularly beneficial if they:

- Have been in the custodial setting for a significant period of time
- Have not spent time in open conditions or undertaken Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL), or
- Have a number of licence conditions to manage complex risks and assist with an initial period of stability

5.81 Not all cases will need an AP, and proposals about suitable accommodation should be weighed up against all factors, including other options such as support networks, geographical location, etc.

5.82 HMPPS undertook an IPP AP Pathway pilot in four APs in the North-West and, following positive evaluation results, has now rolled this out to additional sites across England and Wales. This does not replace the service offered by PIPE units and prisoners serving an IPP sentence can still be referred to those.

5.83 The IPP Pathway aims to develop an approach for individuals serving an IPP sentence which places a greater emphasis on their specific needs in relation to their sentence. This allows for a whole person approach to the person's stay and ongoing management to improve outcomes for those who attend an AP. These APs offer a tailored approach working closely with custodial establishments, Probation Delivery Units (PDUs), HMPPS Psychology Services and external agencies to prepare the individual for the change prior to their release.

5.84 The IPP AP Pathway Offers:

- Minimum 12-week (up to 16 week) placement
- In reach contact from Probation Service Officer (PSO) in APs – Pre-release visit (in person where possible), structured piece of work with the COM and support through parole process
- Liaison with the COM
- Extra training for staff around IPP sentence and impact
- Extra structured session for the first 4 weeks of the placement with reflective space
- Semi structured groupwork programme for IPP residents
- Outreach – Resident able to return for extra support when required
- Peer support mentors
- Alternative to recall placements

- 5.85 The COM can make an IPP referral to the pathway and indicate their preference. The AP manager will then assess and provide a response regarding suitability.
- 5.86 Some APs provide Psychologically Informed Planned Environments (PIPEs) which are *“specifically designed contained environments where staff have additional training to develop an increased psychological understanding of their work”*.
- 5.87 To be eligible for a PIPE, the individual must meet the threshold for complexity, need and risk. Further information can be found in this video PIPE - Parole Board Presentation.
- 5.88 Recovery Focused Approved Premises (RFAP) may also be an option. They provide concentrated support for individuals on licence using a trauma-informed approach, with the aim of breaking the cycle of a prisoner committing a drug-related offence and relapsing upon release.
- 5.89 There are currently nine APs for women, which may require them to move far away from their family. It should be kept in mind that moving women serving an IPP sentence away from their family or children to attend an AP or PIPE can be disruptive and have an adverse effect on their mental health and hinder progress towards a reduction in risk.
- 5.90 It will be important that the COM has fully explored the option of release to an AP ahead of the MCA assessment or in time for the oral hearing. Referrals to the HMPPS central digital service need to be made in good time so that the apply and assess stages are completed. A match will be made once a direction for release is issued.
- 5.91 More detailed information on APs, including the list of the 16 IPP AP Pathway pilot sites, is available on the Approved Premises SharePoint page.

Psychology Services in the community

- 5.92 A high proportion of IPP-sentenced individuals reintegrating into the community will have had HMPPS Psychology Services Group (PSG) contact in custody, and it would be beneficial to promote continuity of support once in the community. The *HMPPS IPP Action Plan* highlights the need for community-based psychological support for IPPs and funding has been provided for HMPPS Psychology Service to deliver a small service in the community setting.
- 5.93 A small community pathway has been established with a limited amount of funding to primarily support staff working with IPPs in the community, particularly where there has been recent contact with Psychology Services in custody. Services delivered directly to the IPP-sentenced individual in the community are considered “exceptional” given the resources required to deliver such work (e.g. assessments, interventions).
- 5.94 The Women’s Estate Psychology Service (WEPS) within PSG are working with regions to ensure WEPS psychologists can deliver services into all

probation regions where women sentenced to an IPP are released, promote continuity in professional relationships, and make best use of women-centred expertise and services.

CHAPTER THREE – ON LICENCE AND RECALLS

6 Supervision on Licence

- 6.1 Supervision on licence is a matter for HMPPS. The COM must determine the frequency of supervision on a case-by-case basis, using their professional judgment, in accordance with Risk of Serious Harm (RoSH) levels, agreed Sentence Plans, and Risk Management Plans (RMP) in line with the requirements set out in HMPPS guidance.
- 6.2 **It is not for panels to determine the frequency of supervision.** However, any proposed supervision should be detailed in the COM report. The frequency of supervision should have been discussed at an IPP progression panel prior to release.
- 6.3 On initial release, weekly contact is likely to be required which will then move to a minimum of monthly reporting for the remaining duration of the first two continuous years in the community. If the individual is recalled, the two-year period restarts upon re-release by the Board or the Secretary of State (under RARR) unless the recall is disapplied.³⁵
- 6.4 After two years in the community, the COM can consider reducing the frequency of supervision further where appropriate. This must be approved by the IPP progression panel and/or the Head of Service/PDU Head. Supervision approved by the Head of Service/PDU Head may not be reduced to fewer than once every two months.
- 6.5 In exceptional circumstances, the COM may seek approval from the Head of Service/PDU Head (as appropriate) prior to two years in the community to reduce the reporting frequency.
- 6.6 **Panels should bear in mind that RMPs will be subject to variation and adaptation. Panels need to be confident that dynamic risk will be professionally managed once in the community.**
- 6.7 Guidance³⁶ on the frequency of supervision has been provided to COMs which sits alongside the HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework.³⁷

7 Suspension of Supervision

- 7.1 The Sentencing Act 2026 introduced the expectation that COMs will assess suitability for suspension of supervision following a period of two years of continuous trouble-free resettlement and good behaviour in the community. This will ordinarily form part of the referral for licence termination at the qualifying point.

³⁵ Under VAPA 2024, the Secretary of State can "disapply" the impact of an IPP recall on the two-year automatic licence termination period.

³⁶ HMPPS Guidance: Supervision of People Subject to Sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP).

³⁷ [HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework](#).

- 7.2 An assessment of suitability will be required for either:
- The Parole Board review two years after first release
 - *Any Offender-initiated Termination Request* made one year after the end of the qualifying period (where they are still on licence)
- 7.3 These qualifying timeframes mean that the Board should not receive any requests to suspend supervision until the individual is also eligible to have consideration for their licence to be terminated (unless there are exceptional circumstances).
- 7.4 In order to recommend suspending supervision the following should be evidenced by the individual on licence:
- Achieving sufficient stability to live offence-free, is able to settle proactively into the community, demonstrates appropriate problem-solving skills, and maintains an open relationship with the supervising officer
 - There has been a gradual reduction in the level of required contact with the Probation Service
 - Managed any crises appropriately, seeking and engaging with the supervising officer as necessary
 - Likely to seek support from the Probation Service on a voluntary basis when required and demonstrates understanding of their own risks and their RMP
- 7.5 If the COM intends to request suspension of supervision, they will inform the Senior Probation Officer and complete a *Suspension of Supervision* report for the IPP progression panel to consider.
- 7.6 The COM must discuss the suspension request with the individual on licence and disclose a copy of the report. The individual must have the opportunity to make representations and can do so, either by adding their own to the space provided on the representations form or by indicating that their representative will do so on their behalf (legal aid may be available for this work where the individual meets the criteria).
- 7.7 If supervision is not suspended by the Board at the end of the two-year qualifying period, the COM may make a further application **one year after the qualifying period** in cases where the individual is still on licence and has not made an *Offender Initiated Termination Request*.
- 7.8 Where there is Victim Contact Scheme (VCS) involvement, the COM must contact the Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) to ascertain the views of the victim.
- 7.9 PPCS is responsible for compiling and formally referring the dossier to the Board.
- 7.10 **When considering these requests, the panel will need to take the same approach as if considering terminating the licence. That is, make a determination about whether there will be an impact on the protection of the public by removing supervision from the licence. If**

the impact on public protection is more than minimal then it may not be appropriate to agree to the request.

7.11 Only the Board has the power to suspend supervision of an IPP licence and will make the final decision on whether supervision should be suspended.

7.12 Guidance³⁸ on the suspension of supervision has been provided to COMs which sits alongside the HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework.³⁹

8 Re-imposition of Supervision

8.1 Where supervision has been suspended on an IPP licence that remains in place and it is considered that an individual's risk can no longer be safely managed in the community without supervision, the COM can request via PPCS that the supervisory element is re-imposed on to the licence. This may be considered in cases where recall is not necessary for public protection, but one or more of the following is relevant:

- Behaviour has given cause for concern
- There has been a conviction for a further offence
- The individual's domestic circumstances have changed
- Mental health has deteriorated to a point where there is no alternative but to reimpose active supervision

8.2 Where it is deemed appropriate to reimpose active supervision, an IPP Progression Panel will be convened by HMPPS to consider the evidence and make a recommendation to the responsible Regional Head of Service/PDU or equivalent. Information about this should be set out in the dossier.

8.3 In exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible to convene an IPP Progression Panel in sufficient time, the responsible Head of Service/PDU or equivalent must endorse the application for re-imposition of supervision for submission to PPCS, prior to their submission to the Board.

8.4 Panels are not bound by the HMPPS policy and can suspend or re-impose supervision at any point as part of their assessment of risk. Panels should address the request within the terms of the referral but could consider other changes to the licence where there are compelling reasons to take a different view.

8.5 More information about considering suspension/re-imposition of supervision can be found in the Duty Member Activities Guidance.

³⁸ HMPPS Guidance: Supervision of People Subject to Sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP).

³⁹ [HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework](#).

- 8.6 Guidance⁴⁰ on the re-imposition of supervision has been provided to COMs which sits alongside the HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework.⁴¹

9 **Licence Variations**

- 9.1 Information about adding, varying or removing other licence conditions can be found in section 5.14 of the Duty Member Guidance.

10 **Recalls**

- 10.1 Following recall, most of those serving IPP sentences are directed to an oral hearing to consider re-release. Due to the time required to reach an oral hearing, most spend several months in prison waiting for the hearing. Around 75% of IPP-sentenced individuals are re-released by the Board following an oral hearing.⁴²
- 10.2 Many in the IPP cohort have complex needs, are considerably over-tariff, and are disengaged with their sentence plans. **Progression panels are key** to ensuring that these recalled individuals have and maintain a clear and appropriate pathway for their progression towards a prospective safe re-release. As part of the discussions, the possibility of unconditional re-release should be addressed **for eligible cases** (see section 13 below).
- 10.3 **Progression panels are an HMPPS requirement and should take place in custody for individuals serving an IPP sentence who have been recalled to prison.** This should happen within 28 days of being returned to custody ahead of the submission of the Part B report.⁴³ If it is unclear whether an IPP progression panel has taken place, the panel may wish to issue a direction to seek clarification and request details.
- 10.4 However, if the COM report has been written without the benefit of an IPP progression panel but is of sufficient quality and contains enough information to make a decision on the papers (or at oral hearing), the panel can avoid an adjournment and proceed to conclude the review. The IPP progression panel discussion is a requirement on HMPPS, not the panel. It is not necessary for a panel to wait for this if they can make a decision on the evidence they already have.
- 10.5 **The COM is required to meet with the recalled individual prior to completing their report.**

⁴⁰ HMPPS Guidance: Supervision of People Subject to Sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP).

⁴¹ [HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework](#).

⁴² [HMIP thematic inspection of IPP recall decision \(2023\)](#).

⁴³ From November 2025 PPCS commenced a trial for recalled IPP sentence prisoners who are returned to custody within three trial regions which have an extended 49-day timeframe for completion of the Part B report and referral to the Board (rather than the usual 28-day timeframe for referral). A key aim of the trial is to produce a more comprehensive set of reports ahead of the referral, with the intention of reducing the need for panels to direct more information in relation to the recall. The trial is ongoing.

- 10.6 Panels will need to consider the current risk, which may be an escalation of or variation in the risks associated with the index offence. They will need to consider whether a new risk has emerged, or whether the circumstances of the recall have made no material impact on the level of risk.
- 10.7 **Panels are required to assess the totality of risk, not simply whether risk has changed since the last release.**
- 10.8 **Where the panel is undertaking a first review following recall, they will first need to determine whether the recall was appropriate (as required by Calder)⁴⁴ and then consider whether re-release can be directed.**
- 10.9 Applying *Calder* is not required for subsequent reviews of the same recall as these reviews should be approached in the same way as a periodic GPP review. Care should be taken when selecting options in the decision template to ensure the recall information is properly recorded.
- 10.10 **MCA panels may wish to consider adjourning and directing more information to consider whether a decision for re-release on the papers can be made.** The MCA panel may benefit from consulting or seeking advice from another member or duty member before making a decision. Alternatively, requesting a second member to make up a multi-member MCA panel may be helpful in concluding the review and avoid directing an oral hearing and the additional delay that brings.
- 10.11 It may be helpful to ascertain why the Secretary of State did not make an executive release under Risk Assessed Recall Review (RARR) powers as this may identify outstanding areas of risk that could be further explored on the papers.
- 10.12 Panels will need to check the relevant timeframes to ascertain if the recalled individual is also eligible to be considered for unconditional re-release (i.e. it has been two years since their initial release). Where the case is eligible, panels will need to:
- Consider whether the CPPT is met
 - Consider whether, if the CPPT is met, re-release should be unconditional or on licence⁴⁵
 - Reflect that, if re-released on licence, the individual will commence their journey towards automatic termination of the licence after two years; they therefore may have greater incentive or focus to comply and complete a successful release
 - Reflect that, if re-released on licence, the individual will be able to make an *Offender Initiated Termination Request* one year following re-release
 - Check if any previous recall has been disapplied (see paragraph 6.3 for information about this)

⁴⁴More information about applying *Calder* can be found in section four of the *Types of Cases Guidance*.

⁴⁵ *The Sentencing Act 2026* expanded the power for the Secretary of State to direct the Parole Board to refer the prisoner's case to the High Court following a Parole Board release decision to include decisions to re-release an IPP prisoner unconditionally.

10.13 Please see section 13 below for more information about unconditional re-release.

11 Release following Risk Assessed Recall Review (RARR)

11.1 PPCS, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has the power to re-release following a Risk Assessed Recall Review (RARR), IPP-sentenced individuals into the community subject to licensed supervision at any time during the recall period. RARR for IPP-sentenced individuals was introduced through the VAPA 2024.

11.2 Since the introduction of RARR for IPP cases in November 2024, PPCS has assessed all IPP recalls for suitability for RARR, irrespective of whether the COM supported re-release in their Part B Post-Recall Report. Statistics published in response to a Parliamentary Question show that 50 recalled prisoners serving an IPP were released by the Secretary of State through RARR between 1 November 2024 and 30 September 2025.⁴⁶

11.3 If an IPP-sentenced individual is re-released under RARR, the Secretary of State will set the licence at the point of re-release but any future licence variations that may be required must be considered by the Board.

11.4 In cases where the recalled IPP-sentenced individual is also eligible for consideration of licence termination (had they been in the community at that point in time), where PPCS decide to release via RARR, they would do so on licence (an unconditional re-release cannot be made). A separate licence termination referral would be made to the Board for consideration once the re-release has taken place.

11.5 Where the individual is also serving a life sentence, RARR cannot be used.

⁴⁶ Lord Timpson letter to Justice Committee, May 2026.

CHAPTER FOUR – LICENCE TERMINATION AND UNCONDITIONAL RE-RELEASE

12 Licence Termination

Legislation

12.1 An individual serving an IPP sentence has the right, under section 31A of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997, as amended by both the VAPA 2024 and the Sentencing Act 2026, for consideration to be given to terminating their IPP licence once they reach the qualifying period.

12.2 The qualifying period for the first review of a licence termination for an individual serving an IPP sentence was amended by the Sentencing Act 2026 and is now two-years from their initial release. This is a reduction of one year for IPP cases to bring it in line with the qualifying period for DPP cases which remains two-years from their initial release.⁴⁷

12.3 Where the Board does not terminate the licence at the qualifying point, there is now an entitlement for the individual to apply for an additional referral to the Board one year after the end of the qualifying period. This is known as an *Offender Initiated Termination Request*.

12.4 These changes mean that following an initial release on licence, an individual may ordinarily remain on licence from between two and four years. The points at which a licence may be terminated are as follows:

- Licence termination must be considered once they reach the qualifying point, which is two years following initial release
- If the licence is not terminated at the qualifying point, the individual can apply for an *Offender Initiated Termination Request* one year on from the qualifying point (taking it to three years since initial release)
- If the licence is not terminated at the three-year point, a further year will be on licence until it is automatically terminated once the four-year point is reached

12.5 Some individuals may spend more than four years on licence where they are recalled, as the two-year period until automatic termination ordinarily resets following each re-release. However, PPCS on behalf of the Secretary of State may give consideration to using the power to disapply the effect of the recall. Where the power is used, the licence will be treated as having remained in force during the period that the individual spent in custody on recall, rather than being reset on re-release.

12.6 **The VAPA 2024 requires that the starting point for panels is a presumption of termination.** This does not impact on applying the CPPT as risk to the public is still the primary concern.

⁴⁷ Until 31 January 2025 the qualifying period was 10 years for IPP and DPP cases; it was reduced under the VAPA 2024 to three years for IPP cases and two years for DPP cases between 1 February 2025 to 31 May 2026.

- 12.7 Panels must demonstrate in the written decision that the presumption has been applied and, where applicable, should indicate why, despite the presumption, the application to direct termination has been declined on public protection grounds. Failure to demonstrate the application of the presumption in the written decision could lead to a successful challenge.**
- 12.8 Any individual also serving a life sentence is not eligible to have their IPP licence terminated at any point.
- 12.9 Where an individual is subject to a separate determinate sentence and the IPP licence is terminated, they will only be subject to the active determinate sentence, and a new determinate licence must be issued by HMPPS.
- 12.10 Where an IPP-sentenced individual is released and then detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 and not recalled, they will remain eligible to be referred to the Board for consideration of termination of licence when they reach the qualifying point. If they are recalled to prison and then transferred to hospital for treatment there will be no separate consideration of licence termination if they reach the qualifying point whilst in hospital. Instead, the matter of their licence will be considered as part of the referral for the recall once it is received.
- 12.11 An IPP-sentenced individual who has been directed for release by the Board may subsequently be deported from the UK, extradited, or permanently resettled in another country. In such cases, the individual remains eligible for referral to the Board for consideration of licence termination at the qualifying point. A dossier, including a report from the last responsible COM must be provided with the referral and the panel will need to consider whether the licence can be terminated. In doing so, the panel will need to refer to the guidance on Foreign National Prisoners bearing in mind there is unlikely to be any reciprocal arrangement for supervision or enforcement of licence conditions. If the individual returns to the UK before their licence is terminated, the licence remains in force.
- 12.12 An IPP-sentenced individual who has not been directed for release by the Board but has been removed from the UK via the Tariff Expiry Removal Scheme (TERS) is not eligible for referral for consideration of licence termination at the qualifying point. Their IPP sentence is suspended from the date of removal and will remain suspended unless or until they return to the UK.
- 12.13 An individual recalled to prison is no longer eligible for a review of their licence as the licence has been revoked. There is no licence to terminate.

Parole Board Rule 31

- 12.14 Only the Parole Board can terminate an IPP licence (except where it meets the automatic termination eligibility). Rule 31 of the Rules deals explicitly with termination of these licences. The full wording of rule 31 can be found in the Parole Board Rules.

12.15 The panel should note the following points:

- Rule 31(6), in respect of IPP sentenced individuals who are in the community, enables a panel to direct termination if it is satisfied that the licence is no longer necessary to protect the public from risk
- Rule 31(7A) provides that all decisions about licence termination are provisional and eligible for reconsideration⁴⁸

The Referral and Powers of the Board

12.16 The Secretary of State is required by law to make the referral to the Board once the individual becomes eligible and they are on licence in the community.

12.17 The referral will set out the following:

*This case is hereby referred to the Parole Board by the Secretary of State under **section 31A** of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to terminate the licence.*

Should the Board not agree to termination of the licence then they are also asked under sections 31 and 32 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to suspend the supervisory elements of the licence or add/amend/vary any additional conditions contained within the licence.

12.18 In coming to a decision, the test that the panel must apply for termination of an IPP licence is:

The Parole Board will direct the termination of a licence if it is satisfied that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public that the licence should remain in force.

12.19 As set out in paragraph 12.6, the starting point is a **presumption** of termination.

12.20 The panel has the following options, as set out in rule 31(5):

- a) Make a decision on the papers
- b) Direct that it should be decided by a panel at a hearing. Further guidance on directing an oral hearing is set out at paragraphs 12.53 to 12.63.

12.21 The panel can also adjourn for additional information, or defer, if required:

- The decision maker under rule 31 is a panel appointed under rule 5(5)
- Such a panel acts as a chair under rule 5(6)
- A panel chair can use the power in rule 6 to adjourn, defer or make any other direction considered necessary

⁴⁸ All decisions were brought into scope under the VAPA 2024.

12.22 The panel can, under rule 31(6):

- a) Terminate the individual's licence
- b) Dismiss the reference but amend the individual's licence in accordance with section 31(3) of the 1997 Act
- c) Dismiss the reference (the licence is neither terminated nor varied)

12.23 All decisions made by the Board about terminating the licence are eligible for reconsideration.

12.24 All decisions made by the Board about terminating the licence **are not** eligible for set aside.

The IPP Licence Termination Dossier

12.25 PPCS is responsible for commissioning and compiling reports from the Probation Service and formally referring an IPP licence termination dossier to the Board to consider. PPCS will notify the COM three months prior to the individual becoming eligible for consideration of termination of their licence.

12.26 **It is an HMPPS policy requirement that an IPP progression panel is held to discuss the individual's suitability for licence termination prior to the report being completed by the COM. The IPP progression panel should also explore eligibility for suspension of supervision (even where they are supporting termination) and recommendations should be set out in the COM report.⁴⁹**

12.27 The COM must contact the IPP-sentenced individual to discuss the termination referral and ascertain their views. They must then complete a *Consideration for Termination of IPP Licence* report and disclose it to the individual who must be given seven calendar days to submit representations. The individual can write their own representations or seek legal advice and assistance with writing their representations and appoint a lawyer or other person to represent them (legal aid may be available for this work where the individual meets the criteria).

12.28 If victims are signed up to the VCS, they have a right to be notified of the referral and are entitled to submit a Victim Personal Statement (VPS). The report from the COM should include information on whether there is current VCS involvement, whether the victim has views about terminating the licence, and whether they wish to submit a VPS.⁵⁰ The VPS should confine itself to the impact that termination of the licence may have on the victim. If the victim chooses to make a VPS, it will be added to the dossier where disclosable. If the victim does not wish for it to be disclosed PPCS will follow the non-disclosure process.

⁴⁹ HMPPS [Progression Panels for Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework](#) sets out the process that HMPPS practitioners should follow.

⁵⁰ Some of this information may be subject to non-disclosure.

12.29 The COM will provide a recommendation about the termination of an IPP licence and suspension of supervision within their report,⁵¹ rather than a professional opinion. The report must contain a lay out of all the evidence and be clear about:

- Analysis of the key issues
- How the individual has progressed during this period in the community
- The views from the most recent IPP progression panel
- Recommendation on whether the licence should be terminated and a clear rationale for that decision giving thorough consideration also to any concerns raised by the victims and/or VLO
- Recommendation on whether supervision should be suspended or if any changes are needed to licence conditions to manage the risk presented by the individual should the licence remain in place

12.30 The report should be approved by the Region's IPP progression panel or, where this has not been possible, directly by the Regional Head of Service.

12.31 Where the COM is not recommending terminating the licence they must include information about suspending supervision and any other changes to the licence that are considered necessary and proportionate. If the COM report does not address these points, the panel may wish to direct an update to address the gap in evidence.

12.32 The COM report, together with any representations from the individual or their representative must be submitted to PPCS. **PPCS will compile the dossier and refer it to the Board and a copy will be given to the individual and/or their representative, if they have one.**

12.33 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, PPCS must not submit the dossier to the Board until the individual's representations have been received, or, if none have been received, until the seven-calendar day deadline for representations has expired. PPCS will submit to the Board any individual's representations received late unless a decision has already been made by the Board.

12.34 The IPP licence termination dossier should include the following:

- Dossier cover sheet with key information including index offence and date of sentence with tariff, initial release and any recall dates
- Terms of the Referral
- The *Consideration for Termination of IPP Licence* report (the COM report)⁵²
- Release licence
- All previous release/re-release decisions
- Any post-release licence variation requests and outcomes.

⁵¹ The Rules do not preclude COMs from providing a recommendation about terminating a licence in the same way that they must only give a professional opinion about release or a move to open conditions.

⁵² The IPP licence termination report template has been updated to take account of the changes.

12.35 It can be helpful to have sight of the Judge's Sentencing Remarks (JSR) and these can be directed. However, the previous panel will have taken these into account when directing release and so the JSRs may be covered within a previous decision.

12.36 Guidance⁵³ on terminating IPP licences has been provided to COMs which sits alongside the HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework.⁵⁴

Considering the Referral

12.37 **A standalone referral will only be made where the individual is in the community on licence.**

12.38 Once the referral has been made, the Secretariat will check that the dossier contains all the required information and submit it to a panel for consideration (either a Duty Member or a member from the IPP Taskforce).

12.39 The panel should check whether the individual meets the qualifying period for an initial review as set out in paragraph 12.2.

12.40 Points to consider:

The Past

- The scale of progress across the two-year period since initial release, including work that has been carried out in the community to address the individual's risk factors and to meet sentence planning objectives
- The COM report should summarise the key events during the licence period since initial release, highlighting any areas of concern or progress
- Content of previous progress reports submitted to PPCS
- How the individual has engaged with their sentence plan: have they completed all their objectives
- Whether they have been recalled at any time over the two-year period and if so, details of any recall(s) are provided
- Were any previous recalls considered to be appropriate under *Calder*
- If previously recalled, was the individual re-released under RARR
- If previously recalled and re-released was the recall disapplied by the Secretary of State in terms of its effect on the two-year qualifying period of automatic licence termination i.e. the two-year period was not interrupted by the recall (see paragraph 6.3 for information about this).

The Present

- The individual's current circumstances including stability of lifestyle, current accommodation and history, current employment and history, and current relationships and history

⁵³ HMPPS Good Practice Guidance for IPP/DPP licence terminations.

⁵⁴ [HMPPS Supervision of Indeterminate Sentences Policy Framework](#).

- Whether applications to vary the licence conditions have been made at any point since release, and if so, the conditions under which any such variations were requested and granted (or refused)
- What is or has been the frequency and nature of contact with the COM, and how this has changed over the licence period
- How well the individual has engaged with supervision
- Evidence that checks with other relevant agencies listed in the COM report have been carried out. If the individual has come to the attention of one or more of these agencies, the referral must still be made to the Board, but full details must be provided
- The current or last known risk of serious harm category. All four categories of risk of serious harm (public, children, known adult, staff) should be considered and noted on the application if there is more than one category relevant to the individual's risk
- The current or last known MAPPA level⁵⁵
- Any additional or bespoke licence conditions still in place

The Future

- What agencies and support networks will the individual have in the community and what, if any, can continue post licence
- How the individual has engaged with external agencies
- The view from the IPP Progression Panel
- The recommendation of the COM and whether there is sufficient information to support their view
- Any continued risk to the victim and any representations or concerns submitted by the victim, including where there is a VPS
- If the COM is not recommending terminating the licence what necessary and proportionate licence conditions are needed to manage risk including whether suspension of supervision is being recommended

12.41 Panels are reminded that the starting point is a **presumption of termination**, whilst acknowledging that licence conditions will have been considered necessary and proportionate at the point of release to manage risk and protect the public.

12.42 The panel may wish to adjourn for more information. Directions should be issued on a Duty Member Form. Only short adjournments should be considered for these cases.

12.43 It is important the panel consider the *OBR* principles when deciding if an oral hearing is required. More detail about directing an oral hearing is at paragraphs 12.53 to 12.63.

12.44 Where the panel is minded to conclude the matter on the papers, the Management Committee has agreed that in fairness to the prisoner, the steps set out below should be followed as policy.

First step: Consideration is given as to whether a case might be able to be concluded on the papers.

⁵⁵ *Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements.*

Second step: The panel will need to notify the parties where it is considering concluding the case on the papers, and its reasons for doing so, as soon as practicable. The parties should be given 14 days to make representations about:

- a) The reasons provided by the panel for the proposed direction
- b) The contents of any further evidence
- c) Whether they agree to the case being decided by a panel on the papers

The panel will need to set an adjournment for 14 days to allow for representations, or further representations to be made.

Third step: The panel makes the decision about whether the case can be concluded on the papers (in which case the panel will write the decision), or whether the case must proceed to oral hearing (in which case it will be directed to oral hearing).

12.45 The panel should aim to make its decision as soon as possible once representations have been received and considered.

12.46 If there is sufficient information to make a decision on the papers, the panel can, under rule 31(6):

- a) Terminate the individual's licence
- b) Dismiss the reference but amend the individual's licence in accordance with section 31(3) of the 1997 Act
- c) Dismiss the reference (the licence is neither terminated nor varied)

The panel is therefore required to consider:

- a) Whether the licence is to be terminated and, if not,
- b) Consider if the licence should be varied

12.47 The panel will need to consider the matter of the licence termination first before going on to consider suspension of supervision. It is only where the panel decide not to terminate the licence that consideration should move onto whether the licence should be varied, including any matter relating to the suspension of supervision. Suspension of supervision is different to a variation of licence, as it effectively cancels active supervision.⁵⁶

12.48 The referral may set out other conditions to amend, remove or add. The panel can, of its own volition, consider whether the conditions on the existing licence are still necessary and proportionate to manage risk. A panel can vary a licence as needed i.e., remove, amend, or add conditions even where the referral does not make any such request. These can be undertaken under powers to make licence variations.

⁵⁶ *Suspension of supervision should not be confused with the frequency of supervision. **The Board should not receive requests relating to frequency of supervision.***

12.49 The key consideration is whether changes are necessary and proportionate to protect the public. It must be clear within the body of the panel's decision the reasons for amending the licence.

12.50 This can be a good opportunity to remove expired conditions, where relevant information is provided. For example:

- Time limited electronic monitoring or polygraph examination condition
- Accommodation conditions where the individual has moved onto different accommodation and the original condition is no longer valid (e.g. Approved Premises requirements or curfews)
- There may be exclusion zones that are no longer needed where the victim has moved (but the COM must confirm that the VLO has made contact with the victim about this)

12.51 The panel should be clear on any recommendation from the COM. There are instances where terminology has been confused. To clarify:

- The supervision element of a licence can be **suspended** but not terminated
- The licence in its entirety can be **terminated** but not suspended

12.52 The referral should be dealt with as swiftly as possible, providing all required information is submitted within the dossier. The Board will aim to consider referrals on the papers within 14 days of receipt of the referral.

Taking account of the OBR principles when the individual is on licence

12.53 **Rule 31(5) permits a panel to direct an oral hearing (where one is required) to determine the application to terminate an IPP licence.**

12.54 Following the judgment handed down in the case of *R (Hanson) v Parole Board for England and Wales* [2026] EWHC 1723 (Admin)⁵⁷ on 9 July 2026, it has been established that **reviews for licence terminations fall within scope of the broader principles about procedural fairness, as set out in the Osborn, Booth and Reilly judgment.**⁵⁸ The court determined that:

"Osborn contains general principles that are applicable to all public law decision makers when considering questions of procedural fairness, including members of the Parole Board when considering whether to terminate an IPP licence. Accordingly, the principles of procedural fairness discussed in Osborn are relevant to decisions concerning whether an oral hearing should be directed in IPP licence termination cases."

12.55 In order to comply with common law standards of procedural fairness, the panel must take account of the *OBR principles*. The key question is whether fairness to the prisoner requires oral evidence to be heard, bearing in mind (a) the facts of the case and (b) the importance of the issue at stake.

⁵⁷ *R (Hanson) v Parole Board for England and Wales* [2026] EWHC 1723 (Admin).

⁵⁸ *Osborn & others v Parole Board* [2013] UKSC 61.

- 12.56 The Court in the case of *Hanson* helpfully identified the following four overarching factors to be important when deciding how to proceed.

What is at stake for the individual? licence conditions may be highly restrictive and termination decisions can be of major significance to the individual concerned. The panel should therefore consider what the practical impact on the individual would be if the licence continues.

Would hearing from the individual assist? Fairness may require participation. The panel should therefore consider whether hearing directly from the individual would materially assist the assessment.

Is there an important factual dispute? Disputed facts may require oral evidence. The panel should consider whether there are disputed factual matters that cannot fairly be resolved on paper.

Is there a disagreement between professional assessments and the panel's provisional view? The panel should expressly consider whether an oral hearing is required before rejecting professional evidence that favours termination.

- 12.57 Where it is not possible to make a decision about terminating the licence based on the papers alone, the panel will need to carefully consider whether an oral hearing could more readily assist with the application of the presumption requirement.

- 12.58 Circumstances that may indicate an oral hearing is required include, but are not limited to:

- critical disputes of fact
- significant factual disagreements between professional assessments
- vulnerabilities affecting effective participation
- mental health issues relevant to risk assessment
- cognitive difficulties affecting engagement with the process
- cases where the panel considers it would be materially assisted by hearing directly from the individual or other witnesses

- 12.59 **Fairness will not require an oral hearing in every case. It may be possible to fairly determine the review on the papers without an oral hearing taking place.** The Court in the *OBR* case said that it would be impossible to define exhaustively the circumstances in which an oral hearing will be necessary.

- 12.60 When considering the question of fairness, panels should follow the more detailed advice on *OBR* set out in the *Member Case Assessment Guidance*.

- 12.61 If an oral hearing is considered necessary to properly consider the matter, then directions will need to be issued on an MCA Directions Form. Directions for an oral hearing should be set (any additional documents, witnesses etc) and the Secretary of State should be directed to secure a suitable location for the oral hearing to take place.

12.62 Logistics should be considered in terms of panel composition and tier.

12.63 Victim involvement should also be taken into consideration as with any other oral hearing.

Writing the decision

12.64 A consistent approach to IPP licence termination decisions that reflects the Decision-Making Framework (DMF) is required. Bespoke templates have been produced to either:

- Decide the case on the papers, use: IPP Licence Decision – Paper Review template
- Decide the case at oral hearing, use: IPP Licence Decision – Oral Hearing Review template

12.65 The front sheet of the templates is very similar in functionality to other decision templates. The key differences are:

Decision – There are three decision options for this type of referral:

- 1) Licence terminated
- 2) Licence not terminated
- 3) Licence not terminated but varied⁵⁹

12.66 The panel is required to make the assessment in line with the DMF, providing an analysis of the individual's past, present and future. The rationale for the decision must be clearly explained in writing to enable others to understand all the key elements that influenced the decision.

Panels are reminded that the starting point must be a presumption of termination.

12.67 **Panels must demonstrate in the decision that the presumption has been applied and, where applicable, should indicate why, despite the presumption, the application to direct termination has been declined.**

12.68 If concluding the case on the papers, it is strongly recommended that the standard form of words is used to refer to *OBR* in each case. This is because the text is comprehensive and based on legal advice. It is easy to insert this prepared standard wording in the paper decision template, saving the panel time and avoiding paraphrasing.

*"The panel has considered the principles set out in the case of Osborn, Booth and Reilly (2013) UKSC 61 concerning oral hearings. It has not found that there are any reasons to hold an oral hearing. **[but note any representations submitted]**. Therefore, this case is not being directed to an oral hearing."*

⁵⁹ This option should be used where a licence condition is being varied, added or removed including the suspension or re-imposition of supervision.

- 12.69 The panel must then insert their detailed reasons below the standard paragraph. Those reasons should deal with the particular circumstances of the case, addressing any representations, and stating why an oral hearing is not required.
- 12.70 The decision must focus on the identification and assessment of risk and the weight given to relevant evidence.
- 12.71 Where the panel takes a different view from the assessments given in key reports or by witnesses the decision should clearly explain why the panel has come to a different conclusion.
- 12.72 The decision is eligible for reconsideration. It should therefore provide enough information for any reconsideration panel to have a clear understanding of how the decision was reached.
- 12.73 The panel should take a pragmatic approach to writing the decision with the focus being on the current circumstances and risk to the public, supported by a sufficient explanation as to why the decision has been reached. The following points may assist in drafting the decision:
- There is no need to go into any great detail about the index offence⁶⁰
 - There is no need to go into any great detail about time in custody, unless there have been periods back in custody following recall
- 12.74 The following may assist when drafting each section of the decision:

Front Page – complete as fully as possible in the usual way.

Past – Include very brief details about the circumstances of the index offence, the victim and the terms of the referral. A statement confirming previous recalls, if any, and current position will be helpful here. The individual's full history and custodial behaviour prior to the decision for initial release (or following any recall) is only needed if it is relevant to the current analysis and assessment of risk.

Present – the focus of this section should be on the time on licence; any issues that have been raised; continuing areas of risk (if any); any positive factors and progress of note; Probation's overall view of progress in the community; set out the recommendations from the IPP Progression Panel and Probation; any relevant points from representations and the victim's VPS.

Future – this section should set out what is in place in the future to manage risk, including support and other monitoring that would be in place if the licence is terminated; and the panel's evaluation of risk and the decision. The panel should set out reasons about terminating the licence first. Where the licence is not terminated, the panel should go on to consider whether the licence should be varied in any way, including

⁶⁰ This will have already been carefully and fully analysed in the previous decision to release or re-release.

considering suspension of supervision. This may also include tidying up the licence by removing expired conditions or those no longer considered necessary and proportionate to manage risk.

- 12.75 The decision should be succinct but clearly articulate that the starting point was of a presumption of termination and whether the codified public protection test is met and why.
- 12.76 A victim can request a summary of the Board's decision about the termination of an IPP licence. Requests are made in the same way as for a summary of a full parole decision.

Offender Initiated Termination Review

- 12.77 Where the Board does not terminate the licence at the qualifying point, the individual may apply for an additional referral to the Board one year after the end of the qualifying period. This is known as an *Offender Initiated Termination Request*.
- 12.78 The one year commences from the date the individual reached the legislative qualifying point and **not** the date the Board made its decision. Some applications may therefore be received in less than 12 months from the previous decision.
- 12.79 Individuals can only apply if they are in the community and have not been recalled back to prison during the 12-month period since they reached the qualifying period.
- 12.80 This is an optional referral, meaning the individual does not have to apply if they do not want to. If they do wish to apply, they must complete an application form which is available on GOV.UK: *Request for further consideration of IPP/DPP licence*.⁶¹ An information sheet has been produced: *Information sheet for offenders on IPP/DPP licence*.
- 12.81 Where an application is made, it must be sent directly to PPCS who will request a report from the COM to be provided within four weeks.
- 12.82 The COM report will need to include all the information as for an initial report but include an additional section summarising progress since the previous consideration of termination. If supervision is still in place there may be a recommendation to suspend it. If supervision was suspended at the previous review, details of any voluntary contact with the Probation Service and any concerns should be included; if there has been an escalation of risk, there may be a recommendation to re-impose supervision.
- 12.83 An IPP progression panel for further consideration of termination is not mandated but COMs will consider whether convening one would be beneficial, particularly if there have been new and significant changes.

⁶¹ [Request a further Parole Board consideration of IPP licence termination.](#)

12.84 The individual will have time to submit further representations where they can respond to points raised by the COM before the referral is made to the Board.

12.85 The PPCS will submit the *Offender Initiated Termination Request* referral. There is no sifting of applications, and all applications will be referred, irrespective of their likelihood of success.

12.86 The referral will set out the following:

*This case is hereby referred to the Parole Board by the Secretary of State under **section 31A** of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to terminate the licence.*

Should the Board not agree to termination of the licence then they are also asked under sections 31 and 32 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to suspend the supervisory elements of the licence or add/amend/vary any additional conditions contained within the licence.

12.87 HMPPS has produced a *Good practice guidance – further consideration for termination of IPP/DPP licence reports*.

12.88 A new template has been produced for these applications: *Further consideration for termination of IPP/DPP licence report* template.

12.89 HMPPS has produced an information sheet for staff about *Offender Initiated Termination Requests*.

12.90 These reviews should be approached in exactly the same way as standalone referrals made at the qualifying point and so the information in the above sections apply. However, the panel should bear in mind the following will need to be considered:

- Why the licence was not terminated at the qualifying point
- What has happened since the last review
- The position regarding supervision
- Where the licence is not terminated, there will be one further year on licence until it is automatically terminated (subject to any recall)

13 Unconditional Re-Release

Legislation

13.1 Anyone serving an IPP sentence who is recalled to prison is no longer eligible for a consideration to terminate their licence, where they have met the qualifying period. **This is because the licence has been revoked and no longer exists.** The matter of their licence will be considered by the Board as part of the review of recall.

13.2 The VAPA 2024 introduced legislation specifically addressing the matter of unconditional re-release which has been incorporated into the Rules.

- 13.3 **The VAPA 2024 requires that that the starting point is a presumption of unconditional re-release. This does not override the requirement for the CPPT to be met. As such:**
- 13.4 There may be cases where an individual on an IPP licence has been convicted of a further offence and is now serving another sentence in prison but was not recalled on the IPP licence. Whilst very rare, this can happen. In such circumstances, the individual is still eligible for an IPP licence termination review, and a referral will be made. It should be treated as a "standalone" referral as the panel is only considering the termination of the IPP licence.

Parole Board Rules

- 13.5 Rule 19(1A) requires the MCA panel to consider unconditional re-release where the prisoner has reached the qualifying point:

In relation to a prisoner to whom paragraph (1)(a) and section 31A(4E) of the 1997 Act applies, the panel must also consider whether they must direct the Secretary of State to release the prisoner unconditionally in accordance with section 31A(4F) of that Act.

- 13.6 Rule 21(7A) requires the same if re-releasing on the papers following a direction for an oral hearing:

In relation to a prisoner to whom paragraph (7)(a) and section 31A(4E) of the 1997 Act applies, the panel must also consider whether they must direct the Secretary of State to release the prisoner unconditionally in accordance with section 31A(4F) of that Act.

- 13.7 Rule 25(1A) requires the same if re-releasing following an oral hearing:

In relation to a prisoner to whom paragraph (1)(a) and section 31A(4E) of the 1997 Act applies, the panel must also consider whether they must direct the Secretary of State to release the prisoner unconditionally in accordance with section 31A(4F) of that Act

- 13.8 Rule 31(6A) requires the Board to determine if the individual can be released unconditionally if currently back in custody, that is to say they can be released without an IPP licence in place.

Where the reference has been made for an offender who is in prison having been recalled under section 32 of the 1997 Act, the panel must consider the reference in accordance with section 31A(4F) of that Act.

The Referral and Powers of the Board

Re-release directed

- 13.9 If the panel decides that the recalled individual is to be re-released (i.e. that the CPPT is met), they will need to go on to determine whether this

should be unconditional or on a licence. The panel will need to make one of the following decisions:

- a) Re-release unconditionally – this means the individual will be re-released without a licence and the sentence will end once the decision becomes final. There will be no licence conditions (including any in place to protect the victim) and the individual cannot be recalled on the IPP sentence.
- b) Re-release on licence – this means the individual will be re-released on a **completely new licence** which may, or may not, include supervisory elements and with a set of conditions; they may be recalled on the IPP sentence if any of these conditions are breached.

13.10 Panels need to reflect that the starting point is a presumption of unconditional re-release. This does not override the requirement for the CPPT to be met.

13.11 The critical point for the panel is to be satisfied that there are no residual concerns about public safety that would require licence conditions relevant to the IPP sentence to be in place to manage risk upon release, before directing that the prisoner is suitable for unconditional re-release.

13.12 When considering re-release from prison, panels will need to be clear that unconditional release has been considered, and there will need to be a full justification on public protection grounds where they decide to re-release on licence.

13.13 Where the panel decides to re-release on licence rather than unconditionally, the individual will progress to automatic termination. Automatic termination will ordinarily be two years from the point of re-release unless PPCS on behalf of the Secretary of State decide to disapply the recall, or if a further recall takes place.

No release directed

13.14 If the panel decides that the recalled individual is not to be re-released into the community, there is no requirement to go on to determine the matter of the licence (which no longer exists), although proposed licence conditions will have been considered by the panel when applying the CPPT. Once the decision becomes final, the individual will have a further review at a time set by the Secretary of State where unconditional re-release will again be considered.⁶²

13.15 The above applies equally if the panel is recommending that the individual is suitable for a transfer to open conditions, as there is still no licence to be considered (which no longer exists).

⁶² There are no longer referrals for annual review of IPP licence termination when an individual is back in prison.

Writing the decision

- 13.16 Where the individual is back in custody, the decision should be made using either the Paper Decision template or Oral Hearing Decision template. The IPP Licence Decision templates **should not** be used. This is because the panel will also be considering the review of recall and will need the functionality of the main templates.
- 13.17 The panel should select “**IPP recall (plus s31A)**” from the Type of Case field on the decision template and follow the guidance as set out in the Decision Writing Guidance.
- 13.18 It will also be helpful to include in the “Any other information” section of the decision a statement along the following lines:

The terms of the referral required the panel to determine re-release as required under section 32(4) of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 and consideration under section 31A of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 as to, whether or not, it would be appropriate to re-release the prisoner unconditionally.

Then either:

In directing the re-release of [insert name of prisoner] the panel considered whether re-release should be unconditional or on licence as required by section 31A of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997. The panel decided that [insert name of prisoner] should/should not be re-released unconditionally...

OR

The panel has not directed the release of [insert name of prisoner] and therefore consideration for unconditional release under section 31A of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 did not take place. This will be considered again when the Parole Board undertakes the next review.

- 13.19 Panels should be careful to note that further reviews of recall cases are processed by PPCS as GPP reviews. The statement in any other information should align with that of the referral:

The terms of the referral required the panel to determine release as required under section 28(6)(a) of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 and consideration under section 31A of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 as to, whether or not, it would be appropriate to release the prisoner unconditionally.

And then add the appropriate statement as set out in paragraph 13.18 above.

14 Automatic Licence Termination

- 14.1 The Board is not involved in automatic licence terminations.

14.2 This section applies to all IPP sentenced individuals who have met the qualifying period for licence termination consideration but have remained on licence because it was not terminated by the Board.

14.3 It also applies to any IPP sentenced individual who made an *Offender Initiated Termination Review* request and the Board declined to terminate the licence.

14.4 All IPP sentenced individuals will have their licence automatically terminated without further reference to the Board where:

- A period of two years has elapsed since their initial release on licence (i.e. they have met the qualifying period)

AND

- They have spent a further two continuous years in the community without being recalled to prison

14.5 Where an individual has been recalled at any time during the final two-year continuous period, the clock resets. They will still need to complete two full years in the community from the point of re-release for the licence to end automatically.

14.6 However, PPCS on behalf of the Secretary of State does have the power to disapply the effect a recall has on an individual's progress towards automatic termination of the licence (where it is in the interests of justice). Where the power is used, the licence will be treated as having remained in force for the period of the recall, and the two-year period for automatic termination will not be interrupted by the recall. The individual will still be on track for automatic licence termination at the end of the original two-year period.

14.7 It should be noted that automatic termination of licence is not eligible under the reconsideration or set aside provisions.

CHAPTER FIVE - ROUTES OF CHALLENGE

15 Reconsideration

15.1 Decisions about release and the termination of the licence for IPP-sentenced individuals are both eligible for reconsideration under Rule 28.

15.1 Decisions about IPP cases feature significantly in reconsideration applications. IPP-sentenced individuals may be motivated to identify any part of the decision that may lead to a successful reconsideration application providing a further opportunity to have their case looked at again.

15.2 In a study⁶³ reviewing decisions made by reconsideration panels, IPPs featured prominently: 46.7% (313/670) were IPPs and more than half of these (182/313: 58.1%) had previously been released but then recalled.

15.3 The high uptake of the reconsideration scheme from IPPs was felt to reflect the strong sense of injustice that many of these individuals feel regarding their sentences.

15.4 Analysis of published reconsideration applications submitted between 2019 and 2022 identified that 52 prisoner applications and two brought by the Secretary of State were granted. Of the 52 applications from IPP prisoners which were granted:

- 32 (62%) of the decisions were based on “procedural unfairness”
- 15 (29%) on “irrationality”
- 5 (9%) on both “procedural unfairness” and “irrationality”

15.5 Of the two Secretary of State applications, one was granted on the basis of “procedural unfairness” and the other on the basis of “irrationality”.

15.6 **When writing decisions,⁶⁴ panels should note that almost half of the successful reconsideration applications fall into one of the following categories:**

- Procedural issues around oral hearings and adjournments
- Issues with allegations⁶⁵
- Panels not properly explaining in their decisions where they take a different view to the professional opinions of witnesses

16 Set Aside

16.1 Final decisions directing release are eligible for Set Aside under Rule 28A of the Rules. However, decisions about the termination of licences are not eligible to be set aside.

⁶³ Professor Stephen Shute: *Challenging Parole Decisions in England and Wales: Reconsideration and Set Aside*.

⁶⁴ Panels should refer to the *Reconsideration Guidance and Irrationality Checklist*.

⁶⁵ Panels should refer to the *Member Guidance on Allegations*.

- 16.2 Since the introduction of set aside, as of 31 May 2026 there have been 30 applications which involved IPP prisoners.
- 16.3 For 19 of these 30, the application for set aside was initiated either by the Secretary of State (17 cases) or by the Board's Chair (2 cases). Of the determined cases, 16 of the applications were granted and 2 applications were refused. Only 2 of the 19 involved a recalled IPP-sentenced individual.
- 16.4 The remaining 11 applications were made by the prisoner, 4 of the 11 were recalled IPPs. Two of the 11 had also previously brought reconsideration applications, one of which was granted and one of which was refused.
- 16.5 All set aside applications made by prisoners have, to date, been refused. Following the amendment to the Rules in 2025, only decisions to release are eligible for set aside. It is therefore expected that applications from prisoners will rarely, if ever, be received.
- 16.6 Please see the Set Aside Guidance and Reconsideration Guidance for more information.

CHAPTER SIX – HMPPS ACTIVITIES

17 **HMPPS IPP Annual Report and Action Plan**

17.1 This section provides information about the work HMPPS is undertaking to support IPP-sentenced individuals.

HMPPS IPP Annual Report

17.2 HMPPS has committed to publishing an IPP Annual Report setting out progress against its published Action Plan, alongside the areas where further work is required. The third Annual Report and Action Plan was published on 9 July 2026.⁶⁶

17.3 The Annual Report is built around five overarching messages; key aspects are set out below:

1. Supporting progression towards release remains the overriding priority.

The report emphasises that the primary purpose of the work is to help IPP prisoners progress towards **safe and sustainable release**. Much of the activity described is aimed at identifying and removing barriers to progression through:

- Progression Panels
- Improved sentence planning
- RAG (red/amber/green) ratings
- Specialist psychological support
- Better prison placement decisions
- Greater access to ROTL and progression opportunities

The report acknowledges that many remaining IPP prisoners are the most complex cases, often with significant psychological, behavioural or risk-management needs.

2. Parole readiness and evidence of reduced risk need to improve.

A major theme is improving prisoners' ability to demonstrate reduced risk before the Parole Board. Examples include:

- Improved timeliness of parole reports
- Greater involvement of the Parole Board in local governance
- Mock parole hearings in some prisons
- Specialist assessments for difficult cases
- ROTL opportunities in progression regimes
- Efforts to ensure progression panels occur closer to parole reviews

The report suggests that progression is increasingly being aligned with forthcoming parole reviews rather than operating as a separate process.

⁶⁶ [Annual report on the IPP sentence for 2025 to 2026.](#)

3. *The remaining IPP population requires increasingly individualised support.*

The report recognises that a significant proportion of those still serving IPP sentences face entrenched barriers such as:

- Mental health difficulties
- Personality-related needs
- Neurodiversity
- Long periods beyond tariff
- History of self-harm
- Disengagement from services

Several initiatives are aimed specifically at these groups, including:

- Red-rated prisoner progression panels
- Additional psychology funding
- The new Phoenix Unit
- The proposed IPP Advocate role
- Deep-dive reviews of never-released prisoners

The underlying message is that a "one-size-fits-all" approach is insufficient for the current IPP population.

4. *Successful resettlement, reduced recall and licence termination are now viewed as equally important outcomes alongside release itself.*

The report highlights efforts to:

- Improve recall decision-making
- Reduce unnecessary recalls
- Maximise use of Risk Assessed Recall Review (RARR)
- Shorten time spent back in custody after recall

There is particular emphasis on ensuring recalled prisoners are reviewed promptly and that decision-making is proportionate and evidence-based. The reduction in recalls during the year is noted as a positive development.

Another major theme is supporting people after release. The report highlights:

- Expanded approved premises provision
- Psychology-led community pathways
- Safer transitions from custody
- Support following licence termination
- Implementation of new licence termination reforms

The report frames progression as extending beyond release itself, with the ultimate goal being successful community resettlement and eventual termination of the IPP sentence.

The elevated risks faced by IPP prisoners are a recurring theme. The report repeatedly references:

- Self-harm
- Suicide risk
- Emotional distress
- Loss of hope
- The psychological impact of indeterminate detention

Safety measures include:

- The IPP Safety Toolkit
- Staff training
- Improved information-sharing
- Analysis of self-harm and deaths
- Trauma-informed approaches in both custody and community settings

The report acknowledges the vulnerability of the cohort and links wellbeing directly to progression outcomes.

A significant new theme is the growing role of people with lived experience. Feedback from prisoners highlighted concerns about:

- "Shifting goalposts"
- Lack of clarity in sentence planning
- Poor communication
- Limited understanding of progression processes
- Feeling excluded from decisions affecting them

In response, HMPPS has committed to creating a formal **IPP Lived Experience Panel** to influence future policy and communications.

5. Greater accountability, targets and transparency are being introduced.

The report reviews progress against six targets, including:

- Suitable prison location
- Parole report timeliness
- Licence termination referrals
- DPP reviews
- ROTL implementation
- RARR use

It is recognised that more progress is needed.

HMPPS IPP Action Plan

17.4 An updated IPP Action Plan has been published at Annex A of the IPP Annual Report. Below is a summary of the **parole-relevant elements of the IPP Action Plan**, focusing on actions that may affect progression to

release, parole reviews, parole decision-making, and preparation for release. The Action Plan's parole strategy is centred on:

- Better identification of progression barriers
- More robust and timely parole reporting
- Greater use of progression panels
- Enhanced psychological support and assessments
- Stronger engagement with the Parole Board
- Increased opportunities to evidence reduced risk (including ROTL)
- Improved preparation for release and post-release support

The following section sets out a bit more detail.

Improving progression towards parole release

Progression Panels

- HMPPS will continue to embed progression panels as a key mechanism for identifying barriers to release and agreeing progression plans.
- A new target requires 100% of red-rated IPP prisoners to receive a progression panel between 1 April 2026 and 31 March 2027.
- HMPPS will review the frequency, attendance, recording and quality assurance of progression panels and revise guidance where necessary.
- Progression panel reports will be redesigned to give prisoners clearer and more personalised next steps.

IPP Advocate Pilot

- A new IPP advocate role will be trialled to provide additional support to individuals who are struggling to progress toward release.
- The pilot will be evaluated after nine months.

Specialist Assessments

- New funding will be used to commission specialist psychological assessments for prisoners who are having difficulty progressing.
- The intention is to ensure assessment gaps do not become barriers to parole progression.

Working with the Parole Board

Joint Working

- HMPPS will continue close collaboration with the Parole Board IPP Taskforce to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the parole process.
- All regions are expected to invite Parole Board representatives to regional governance meetings.

Timeliness of Parole Reports

- 90% of PAROM1 parole reports to be submitted to PPCS on time.
- Timeliness will be monitored through monthly reporting.

Understanding Progression Blockers

- HMPPS will:
 - Explore why some prisoners remain red-rated despite multiple progression panels.
 - Review a sample of cases rejected for open conditions to better understand barriers to progression and share learning with the Parole Board and practitioners.

Improving parole readiness

ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence)

- HMPPS will continue monitoring and evaluating the use of ROTL in progression regimes.
- Case studies will be used to assess whether ROTL helps prisoners demonstrate reduced risk and progress towards release.

Chaplaincy Support

- Increased collaboration between IPP leads and chaplaincy services.
- Explicit consideration of how chaplaincy can support prisoners at key stages, including preparation for parole reviews.

Section 117 Aftercare

- HMPPS will improve identification of prisoners entitled to Section 117 aftercare before parole review.
- Section 117 considerations will be reflected in PAROM reports to reduce delays caused by unresolved aftercare arrangements.

Key performance targets most relevant to parole

The Action Plan's principal parole-related targets are:

1. 95% of IPP prisoners housed in prisons appropriate to their progression needs (supports access to interventions and parole preparation).
2. 90% of PAROM1 reports submitted on time.
3. 100% of eligible cases referred for licence termination when eligible.
4. 100% of red-rated prisoners to receive a progression panel during 2026–27.

The report also sets out specific measures for those serving a DPP sentence and women serving IPP sentences. Information from the report is covered in sections 19 and 20 respectively.

CHAPTER SEVEN – OTHER KEY CONSIDERATIONS

18 Victims

- 18.1 As with all other cases it is vital that the victim is taken into account in the appropriate way when reviewing an IPP-sentenced individual.
- 18.2 Many victims still find the IPP sentence confusing and are unclear on how the individual serves the sentence. This is despite the best attempts of the VLO to explain the sentence to victims, which has been made harder by some of the recent changes to licence periods. As such, panels will wish to seek reassurances that victims have been afforded all their entitlements, as set out in the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.⁶⁷ It is the responsibility of the VLO and COM to work together to ensure the victim is aware of the opportunity to engage as set out in the Code.
- 18.3 Victims of individuals serving an IPP sentence may have experienced numerous parole reviews (some going back as far as 2008) and the repetition of release and recall. There may be previous VPSs in existence and panels will need to check with the VLO/COM whether the victim intends to submit a new one or rely on an existing version.
- 18.4 With the public focus on IPPs, victims may have feelings of being forgotten or that the harm done has been overshadowed by the impact of the sentence on the individual prisoner.
- 18.5 **Being mindful of the dignity of the victim is important when reading the VPS and considering requested licence conditions.** Summary decisions will need to sensitively articulate how the decision was made and finely balance the impact on both the victim and IPP-sentenced individual.
- 18.6 Victims may be confused about the legislation in relation to the termination of the IPP licence and the views of the victim must be carefully considered before directing that the licence is terminated or that unconditional re-release is directed. The COM should take account of the victim's wishes in their reports to the Board. This is required by the Code, and panels should only apply the test after taking into account the views of the victim, where they are provided.
- 18.7 More information about victims can be found in the Guidance on Victims.

19 Detention for Public Protection (DPP)

- 19.1 There should be a particular focus on those sentenced to a DPP (under the age of 18 when convicted).⁶⁸ This cohort will be in their late twenties and thirties now, over tariff, and likely to have had no, or little adult life experience outside of the custodial environment.

⁶⁷ [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime \(2020\)](#).

⁶⁸ Some IPP sentences were also handed down to under 18s.

19.2 Whilst individuals serving a DPP will no longer be children at the point at which they are referred to the Board, panels should bear in mind the offending was carried out as a child and they were taken into custody as a child. The period of maturation up to the age of 25 is likely to have taken place wholly in the custodial setting. **Child offending may be important for panels to reflect on in terms of considering maturation and custodial behaviour** (which most likely will be all they have known) and support arrangements in the community for an effective and successful release. The critical issue is to disentangle maturation issues from enduring unmanageable risk and ensure the risk assessment factors in the capacity to change quicker than older adults.

19.3 **Panels may wish to seek advice from specialist members⁶⁹ about whether there are points to consider where professionals are using risk assessment tools that have only been validated on adults when an individual has caused harm as a child.** There is also helpful information in the Guidance on Children.

19.4 The most recent HMPPS IPP Annual Report published in July 2026 highlights that DPP prisoners receive a **more intensive and structured level of oversight**, centred on quarterly psychology-led reviews, annual Parole Board review expectations, enhanced sentence planning, and targeted operational management. The focus is on identifying and addressing barriers to progression for a group that has often spent most of its adult life in custody. In particular:

Enhanced oversight and psychology support

- HMPPS continues to treat DPP prisoners as a priority cohort and provides **quarterly case reviews by HMPPS Psychology Services**. This target was achieved at **100% compliance** during 2025–26.
- The quarterly reviews are designed to:
 - Support timely and evidence-based sentence planning
 - Identify barriers to progression
 - Ensure accurate risk assessments and RAG ratings
 - Confirm prisoners are located in the most appropriate establishment⁷⁰

More frequent Parole Board reviews

- HMPPS introduced a policy presuming a maximum interval of **12 months between Parole Board reviews for DPP prisoners**, compared with 18 months for adult IPP prisoners. This is intended to support quicker progression where appropriate.

⁶⁹ A list of specialist members who can be consulted can be found here under the Operations page on member SharePoint.

⁷⁰ HMPPS is developing a definition about what this means (as of July 2026)

Greater understanding of barriers to progression

- Additional actions have been included in the latest Action Plan to ensure that learning from psychology reviews is systematically used to help progression.
- HMPPS is also carrying out work to improve identification and understanding of the DPP population so that support can be better tailored to their specific needs.

Dedicated operational focus

- Area Executive Directors continue to use local IPP/DPP operational delivery plans to improve support for DPP prisoners both in custody and in the community.
- The findings from psychology reviews are intended to feed into progression panels and other services to provide a more coordinated, wraparound approach to support.

19.5 It is worth noting that the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) is re-examining historic applications to review DPPs or IPPs imposed on children and young adults. The CCRC has already referred cases to the Court of Appeal and some have either had their sentence quashed, reduced or substituted. The Court of Appeal found that sentencing judges had failed to attach the necessary weight to the age and maturity of the individuals before imposing the indeterminate sentence. Many more cases are currently being investigated.⁷¹

19.6 As set out in Section three of this guidance, all DPP cases are prioritised for listing at both the MCA and oral hearing stages.

20 Women Serving an IPP Sentence

20.1 There were 249 IPP sentences handed down to women which represented 2.9% of the total number of IPP sentences issued. There still are women in custody serving an IPP sentence, some of which have never been released.

20.2 Research has found that women's experience of trauma and adversity contributes to both their risk and their failure to progress in prison.⁷²

20.3 It has been identified that the absence of a fixed release date for an IPP sentenced individual results in the lack of urgency or time pressure to arrange a resettlement plan. This can lead to a significant period in custody for women, even where community referrals have been made.

20.4 Another research study⁷³ undertaken by the Griffin Society that interviewed a small cohort of women serving an IPP sentence in one women's prison. The research identified that:

⁷¹ [Criminal Cases Review Commission](#).

⁷² [Justice Select Committee 'IPP Sentences: Third Report of Session 2022-2023' \(2022\)](#).

⁷³ [Griffins Society: Too Many Bends in the Tunnel \(2019\)](#).

- All of the women spoken to talked about the lack of information on IPP sentences at the time of sentencing and their continued struggle to understand the sentence;
- All of the women distinguished their tariff lengths (which they all judged as fair) from the length of time actually spent in custody. The indeterminate element was what caused most frustration and affected their ability to progress;
- There were widespread feelings of anger that the sentence had been abolished, but they were still in custody. This led to lack of confidence in the system and affected willingness to engage;
- The women all experienced significant losses during their sentence, with five of the nine losing children into local authority care;
- All of the women spoke about the adverse effect of the sentence on their mental health, which affected their ability to engage in regime and risk reduction work – it is only by being assessed as engaging fully in this work that they are likely to be recommended for release;
- Six of the nine women had tried to commit suicide multiple times;
- Accessing interventions was problematic at the specific prison where the research was undertaken, due to poor availability of appropriate courses, and past trauma and anxiety making it difficult to engage;
- Parole Board hearings were immensely stressful for the women and three had mostly paper hearings, despite being entitled to apply for oral hearings. The approach of individual boards had an impact on the women and their perception of due process;
- All the women said that simply 'having a date' would make the most difference.

20.5 Distance from home makes it difficult to maintain contact with children, which was one of the most distressing elements of long-term imprisonment for women. The pains of being separated from family and children are exacerbated by the indefinite length of time they will be held in prison, with no set date when they will be able to return home.

20.6 It is likely that these women present as having a particularly complex range of needs and there will be involvement from the Women's Estate Case Advice and Support Panel (WECASP). The criteria for referral to WECASP is set out in the HMPPS Women's Estate Case Advice and Support Panel (WECASP) Policy Framework.⁷⁴

20.7 **Panels may wish to ascertain if there is WECASP involvement as there may be information relevant to complex risk management arrangements. Such information should be covered within COM and POM reports but being aware that WECASP is involved may be helpful.**

20.8 The most recent HMPPS IPP Annual Report published in July 2026 demonstrates that support for women is increasingly focused on **trauma-informed, gender-responsive psychological support**, strong coordination between custody and community services, and personalised case management aimed at helping women progress safely towards

⁷⁴ [HMPPS Women's Estate Case Advice and Support Panel \(WECASP\) Policy Framework](#).

release, avoid recall and achieve licence termination. It recognises that women often face different needs and barriers to progression than men. The following are the key points:

- There is a bespoke **Women's Group IPP Delivery Plan**. This covers women both in custody and in the community and is designed to provide a **gender-specific, personalised and relational approach** to support, management and progression. Progress is monitored and regularly reviewed.
- All women serving IPP sentences in custody are currently held in **establishments appropriate to their needs**. HMPPS has shifted its focus towards ensuring effective coordination between prisons, probation services and stakeholders to support smooth transitions into the community.
- The **Women's Estate Psychology Service (WEPS)** has expanded its community-focused support. Dedicated local points of contact have been established to improve oversight of women serving IPP sentences and strengthen links between prison and community services.
- WEPS provides:
 - Proactive case consultancy for all women moving into the community
 - Support for women transitioning between secure hospitals and custody
 - Close work with probation staff to ensure information about risk, support needs and rehabilitation progress is effectively transferred from custody to community supervision

20.9 The refreshed IPP Action Plan includes additional measures specifically for women:

- Learning events for Community Offender Managers to improve support for women serving IPP sentences.
- Referral of all women to the **WEPS community pathway** to strengthen resettlement and reduce the risk of recall.
- Greater involvement of **women's probation leads and women's specialists** in oversight and decision-making.
- Delivery of **gender-specific, trauma-informed and relational support**, with improved communication between prison offender managers, community offender managers and psychological services.
- An offer of **psychologically informed case support** from WEPS to all probation practitioners supervising women on IPP licences.

21 Mental Health

IPP-sentenced prisoners and mental wellbeing

21.1 As set out previously, individuals serving an IPP sentence are likely to experience frustration, anxiety, and loss of hope. This can lead to increased incidence of psychological harm.

- 21.2 There is general concern about how the mental health and wellbeing of individuals serving an IPP sentence is being managed including considerable interest from Parliament.⁷⁵
- 21.3 The Howard League for Penal Reform 2013 research briefing⁷⁶ highlighted that the nature of the IPP sentence frequently had a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of those serving the sentence. Impacts include:
- High levels of anxiety and depression
 - Increased risk of self-harm and suicide (or attempted)
 - Widespread feelings of anger that the sentence had been abolished, but they were still in custody
 - Lack of confidence in the system negatively affecting engagement
- 21.4 Poor mental health is particularly the case for those IPP-sentenced individuals who were sentenced pre-2008 with short tariffs who would not have been eligible for the sentence following the changes made in the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008.⁷⁷ The Act introduced a new 'seriousness threshold' and decreased the number of 'specified offences' for IPP sentences. It was emphasised that this cohort of individuals had particular difficulties with anxiety as they saw other individuals who had been convicted of similar crimes after 2008 enter and leave prison, whilst they were detained substantially beyond their tariff date.
- 21.5 Respondents noted that IPP sentences were particularly difficult for individuals who had pre-existing mental health or neurodevelopmental conditions, or personality disorder. Such individuals faced additional obstacles in accessing rehabilitative courses, where it was noted that interventions teams were unable to provide the level of support required, resulting in disproportionately longer periods in custody.
- 21.6 As recently as July 2026,⁷⁸ the UN renewed calls for action and set out that a range of example cases illustrated wider systemic failings that have left many individuals trapped in a cycle of excessive punishment, repeated recall, deteriorating mental health, and diminishing hope. Concern was also expressed that the IPP regime lacks an effective review mechanism or referrals to mental health support outside of prison. The UNs raised particular concern regarding prisoners with disabilities, neurodivergence, acquired brain injuries, severe mental health conditions and histories of childhood trauma.
- 21.7 The refreshed IPP Action Plan 2026-27⁷⁹ places a strong emphasis on improving the mental health and wellbeing of IPP sentenced prisoners,

⁷⁵ *At the time of writing a private members bill – "Mental Health Support (Sentence of Detention and Imprisonment for Public Protection) Bill" was introduced in the House of Lords on 15 June 2026. The aim of this Bill is to ensure that all prisoners serving IPP sentences who are currently in prison and may require mental health support are given the opportunity to be assessed by a doctor approved under s12 of the Mental Health Act 1983.*

⁷⁶ [Howard League for Penal Reform: The never-ending story \(2013\).](#)

⁷⁷ [The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008.](#)

⁷⁸ [UK must end IPP sentences as psychological harm continues: UN experts July 2026](#)

⁷⁹ See paragraph 17.4 for more information about the HMPPS IPP Action Plan.

recognising the elevated risks of self-harm, suicide, trauma and psychological distress within the cohort. Key actions include continued promotion of the IPP Safety Toolkit, staff training to improve awareness of IPP-specific risks, ongoing monitoring of self-harm and self-inflicted deaths, and the sharing of learning from deaths in custody and the community.

- 21.8 HMPPS is also committed to strengthening trauma-informed practice, improving information sharing about vulnerability, and ensuring appropriate access to psychological, personality disorder and mental health services.
- 21.9 The Action Plan also seeks to address barriers to progression linked to mental health through increased psychology provision, specialist psychological assessments for those struggling to progress, enhanced support for prisoners with complex needs, and the development of the Phoenix Unit⁸⁰ for highly disengaged IPP prisoners.
- 21.10 Learning from a psychological “deep dive” of never-released IPP prisoners is being used to promote timely access to mental health services, more individualised sentence planning, greater staff capability to support hope and engagement, and a better understanding of how trauma, neurodiversity and psychological difficulties affect progression and risk management.
- 21.11 In the Board’s submission to the Government consultation on reforming the Mental Health Act in 2021⁸¹ it was pointed out that these individuals may have been assessed and found in need of a transfer to hospital but are not considered a priority for a bed by the relevant mental health provider because they are in prison, and it is considered that this protects the public and ensures the individual’s own safety. In such circumstances, the prison is effectively being used as a place of safety while a bed is awaited. If this is the case, it must be recognised that the level of care in prisons falls short of what would be available in the inpatient setting that an individual has been assessed as requiring. Whilst it is appreciated there are limited resources, these individuals tend to be very vulnerable and need to be transferred to the hospital setting promptly.
- 21.12 Panels may be concerned for individuals who may not be ready for release but do need specialist mental health care. There are currently delays for individuals who need to be transferred from a prison establishment to hospital. Transferring them as swiftly as possible to receive the treatment they need is critical. Transferring them to hospital can be a complicated process, and assessments and threshold criteria will vary between prisons.
- 21.13 **Panels should be mindful that the Board has no remit to provide a view on whether the individual should be transferred to hospital and should avoid making any such statements.** However, panels can direct a psychiatric assessment, where it is felt necessary, as part of a parole review and may wish to comment on concerns about an individual’s mental health raised by report writers or witnesses. This might include

⁸⁰ See paragraph 5.78 for more information about the Phoenix Unit.

⁸¹ Parole Board response to Mental Health Reform Act consultation (2021).

supporting a recommendation made by another professional that the individual should be assessed for a transfer to a hospital setting.

21.14 It will be for other professionals to commission the necessary medical assessments, either during a parole review or, ideally, ahead of any review commencing, in order for a transfer under the Mental Health Act to be considered (and where appropriate, effected).

21.15 More information about transfers to hospital under the MHA can be found in the Restricted Patient and Mental Health Act Guidance.

IPP-sentenced prisoners in secure hospitals or remitted to prison

21.16 The following cases are dealt with by the Mental Health (MH) Cohort of members:

- Prisoners who are due or overdue a parole review who are detained in a secure hospital setting as a restricted patient
- Prisoners who have been returned to prison following a period in a secure hospital setting and it is their first parole review since their return to prison

21.17 **Any panel receiving a mental health case at either MCA or oral hearing who is not within the MH Cohort should check with the Secretariat before proceeding. It is likely that it has been allocated in error.**

21.18 However, where an individual is having a subsequent review following a period of time in a secure hospital setting, they will be treated in the same way as any other IPP-sentenced individual.

MHA Section 117 aftercare

21.19 Prisoners are entitled to section 117 (s117) aftercare if they have been in hospital under sections 3, 37, 45A, 47, or 48 of the Mental Health Act 1983. **There is no time limit on this duty unless the s117 duties have been discharged.**

21.20 **Reinforcing the right to s117 aftercare continuing once back in prison is important. Panels may wish to reiterate in directions or decisions that HMPPS has a continuing responsibility to involve the local health authority and their delegated agents with the care of the individual whilst in prison. This should be dealt with at the MCA stage to avoid delays further along the process which may derail an oral hearing.**

21.21 Panels may come across a range of challenges when reviewing release arrangements where mental health wraparound services are key to both the individual's progression and the protection of the public. For example:

- Undertaking considerable work to engage mental health trusts and providers to work together to develop care and support packages for prisoners with specific needs.
- **In some cases, the starting point is establishing who is responsible for the assessments, locating services and funding.**
- Sometimes, due to exclusion zones, the catchment area mental health team cannot practically monitor the individual in the community where they will be placed due to geographical distance. There can then be subsequent funding and clinical disagreements about responsibility with the local community mental health services where the individual is placed. This can delay release.
- Panels have experienced serious problems with community mental health teams only accepting responsibility for community management and supervision post-release, once release has been directed by the Board.
- This is an issue as mental health may be an active risk management factor in the community and the panel may be unable to direct release until community mental health support is confirmed.

21.22 Better communications and clearer pathways and setting out scope and responsibilities of relevant agencies will go some way to mitigate against delays to parole reviews if these issues arise.

21.23 **It can often be helpful to seek information from the COM on the current position and how issues or challenges are being addressed by MAPPA.**

21.24 **Directions may then need to be issued to bring the key agencies together at a CMC to establish clear expectations and timeframes. An Executive Summary of MAPPA meeting minutes can be helpful for a panel to understand the community agencies' views on risk and involvement in risk management.**

21.25 **It can be helpful to direct information on whether a Care Assessment has been carried out, whether funding arrangements with the relevant local authority have been secured, and the minutes of any Care Plan Approach/s117 meeting which would ordinarily be held in the run up to a parole oral hearing.**

21.26 It is worth noting that behaviours potentially resulting from poor mental health are not always readily visible to clinical staff in prison in the way they would be in a hospital setting. Staff working on a prison wing may not identify mental health related behaviours and could instead treat individuals with disciplinary measures (or it may result in a prison transfer).

21.27 The Public Protection Group (PPG) has produced a bulletin for HMPPS staff about remitted prisoners, and a Hospital Remission Strategy⁸² was published in November 2021. Alongside the strategy, the NHS has published good practice guidance. These documents, together with more information about remitted prisoners and s117 aftercare can be found on SharePoint here: Restricted Patients Remitted to Prison.

⁸² [LTHSE Hospital Remission Strategy \(2021\)](#).

22 **Neurodivergent Individuals**

- 22.1 Many individuals serving an IPP sentence have issues related to high levels of psychological challenge, including neurodivergence and complex childhood trauma that can present a barrier to engagement and learning in a group context.⁸³
- 22.2 Neurodivergence and complex trauma can make course learning very difficult. The HMPPS IPP Action Plan recommends a more concentrated focus on individual rather than group work, which may benefit neurodivergent individuals.
- 22.3 It is possible that a case may be “stuck” as the individual’s neurodiversity was not understood properly. An assessment and diagnosis may identify certain needs, such as customised accommodation or adapted learning plans, which could contribute to the development of a robust release management plan and support release.
- 22.4 Panels are reminded that diagnostic assessments are not always required where it is clear how someone presents and how this may manifest in risk management terms.
- 22.5 More information about the specific needs of neurodivergent individuals can be found in the Neurodiversity Guidance.

23 **Support and Campaign Groups**

Family

- 23.1 It is recognised that the impact on the families of individuals serving IPPs can be significant. Panels may find that there is very good support from family members, and these may feature as Protective Factors. **Where appropriate, panels may consider directing family members as witnesses.**⁸⁴ Some family members may be able to provide valuable insight that could assist with release plans. It could be helpful to discuss this option with the individual’s representative, if there is one.
- 23.2 However, a request for the attendance of family members should be carefully considered as this may inhibit the frankness of evidence or change adversely the dynamics of the hearing. For example, the panel may need to probe without unnecessary restraint convictions or allegations about, for example, domestic abuse or sexual behaviour, in order to conduct a thorough risk assessment. Whilst it is the responsibility of the prisoner and their requested observer to understand the implications of attending the hearing, the panel chair will wish to consider the effectiveness of the hearing in such circumstances. Panel chairs may also wish to highlight these sensitivities in their response to the application.

⁸³ [Justice Select Committee 'IPP Sentences: Third Report of Session 2022-2023' \(2022\).](#)

⁸⁴ *More information can be found in the MCA Guidance.*

23.3 Panels may need to carefully determine whether a particular family member is also a victim or potential victim as it is **not recommended that victims be called as witnesses**.

23.4 There may be more frequent requests for family members to observe oral hearings and these should be approached positively if the family is considered as supportive or protective, particularly where there may be mental health concerns or other vulnerabilities about the individual. A family member observing should always be with the consent of the individual.

23.5 The Farmer Report (2017)⁸⁵ stated that familial and other supportive relationships are a “*golden thread that should run through efforts by the penal system to support prisoners*” and families should be “*seen as a vital resource and [...] treated as valued allies in the rehabilitation cause*”. It further stipulated that criminal justice agencies needed to make greater effort in working with the families of individuals to enhance resettlement outcomes.

23.6 The research report *A Helping Hand: Supporting families in the resettlement of people serving IPPs*⁸⁶ sets out the following:

- They often expressed feelings of having been forgotten, with a lack of official acknowledgement of the harms caused by the IPP sentence. It is a situation that, for many, lacks legitimacy;
- Most IPP-sentenced individuals and families struggle to plan ahead and work towards realistic goals, as the path towards release is far more uncertain;
- Some families of individuals sentenced to IPP want to play an active role in supporting their relative; they want their ‘expertise by experience’ to be recognised and utilised as part of the solution. Panels might wish to reflect on the reasons for non-involvement by some families: some families reported ‘falling away’, with the pain becoming too acute to bear;
- Families often feel immense frustration and distress when parole hearings are adjourned or rescheduled for a future date.

23.7 As part of this research, a short information awareness note about families of prisoners serving an IPP sentence was produced for parole panels. Whilst the focus is on the impact on families of IPP sentenced individuals, the information may be useful when understanding the role, if any, of family and friends. The information awareness note is Annex C of the Observer Guidance and can be found on SharePoint: Information Awareness Note on IPP Families.

⁸⁵ [*Farmer Report: The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners’ Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime \(2017\)*](#).

⁸⁶ [*Annisson and Straub University of Southampton and Prison Reform Trust. A Helping Hand: Supporting families in the resettlement of people serving IPPs \(2019\)*](#).

23.8 HMPPS published a guide⁸⁷ in 2021 for families and significant others of those serving indeterminate sentences which built on the above *Helping Hand* report by the Prison Reform Trust.

HMPPS Initiatives

23.9 Family and significant relationships are considered as a key means by which HMPPS can prevent reoffending and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational crime. HMPPS sets out in its practitioner guidance⁸⁸ that there is a moral and ethical responsibility to assist any meaningful and constructive relationship in preparation for their release.

23.10 Each prison must have a *Family and Significant Other Strategy* and development plan that is available to prisoners, staff and all visitors. The strategy should be outward facing, published and freely available to families, prisoners and staff. The Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties Policy Framework⁸⁹ sets out the requirements in more detail.

23.11 HMPPS continues its Listener Scheme⁹⁰ in partnership with the Samaritans, who train prisoners as 'Listeners' to provide emotional support to prisoners in emotional distress.

23.12 There is more detail on HMPPS initiatives in section 17.

24 Further Reading

24.1 There are many documents that provide additional information and further reading, including Justice Select Committee reports and Government responses, research papers, and publications by other organisations and support groups. These documents can be found on the main IPP landing SharePoint Page: Imprisonment and Detention for Public Protection (IPP/DPP) Sentences.

⁸⁷ [HMPPS Guide for the families and significant others of those serving indeterminate sentences.](#)

⁸⁸ [HMPPS Delivering Effective Family Practice.](#)

⁸⁹ [HMPPS Strengthening Prisoners Family Ties Policy Framework.](#)

⁹⁰ [Samaritans Listener Scheme.](#)