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Foreword by the Chairman, Phil Hughes MBE.

At the time of writing this report we are still unsure of what the future holds for prison visiting committees, however having now received copies of various reports and in particular Professor Coyle's report the future is beginning to look a little brighter.

Sadly we have yet another change in the prison management, the governor Martyn Bettel OBE has taken retirement and the deputy Governor Ken McCaskil has transferred to Barlinnie prison.

Both have brought about some excellent improvements for Dumfries prison will be sorely missed by both the committee and the staff.

We do however wish a warm welcome to the new governor Rhona Hotchkiss and the new deputy Andrew Huntstone. Elizabeth and I met with them both and we were very impressed with the plans that Rhona intends to introduce, in particular the use of the playing fields by inmates. This is something that the committee have wanted to see for a long time.

Phil Hughes MBE
DPVC Chairman

Dumfries Prison History

1473 First records
1881 Current land purchased
1883 Prison opened
1951 Converted to a borstal
1964 New hall built
1965 Young offender institute
1967 Another new hall built
1989 New gate and admin complex
2002 Changed to local adult prison
2004 Changed to current category

Dumfries and Galloway has been served by a number of prisons since 1473 and on a number of different sites within the boundaries of Dumfries.

In 1881 land was purchased for the sum of £1376 from a local farmer. As was the custom in those days farmers often named their fields after their daughters and in this case the land was called Jessiefield.

As a result the Prison was referred to by locals as Jessiefield Prison. Even today one often hears it referred to by that name.

Role of Visiting Committees

1. General Duties of Visiting Committees and Members (The Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (Scotland) Rules 2006

- 158 (1) A Visiting Committee shall co-operate with Scottish Ministers and the Governor in promoting the efficiency of the Prison and shall inquire into and report to the Scottish Ministers upon any matter into which they may ask it to inquire.
- (2) The Visiting Committee shall:-
- (a) Immediately bring to the notice of the Governor and circumstances relating to the administration of the prison or the condition of any prisoner which appear to it to be expedient to report for the Governor's consideration; and
- (b) Bring such circumstances to the notice of Scottish Ministers if it appears to the Committee that the Governor has not remedied any matter which the Committee has notified to the Governor in terms of sub paragraph (a) within such period as appears to the Committee to be reasonable
- (3) The Visiting Committee shall from time to time inquire into the state of the prison premises and shall-
- (a) Inspect, in particular, the food and drink provided to prisoners; and
- (b) in relation to any such inquiry:-
- (i) record particulars of every visit made together with any deficiencies found during such visits, in the committee's minute book; and
- (ii) promptly send a copy of such particulars to the Scottish Ministers and to the Governor
- (4) The Visiting Committee shall also discharge such other duties as the Scottish Ministers may from time to time assign to it.
- 159 (1) The Visiting Committee and any Member shall hear and investigate any complaint which a prisoner makes to the Committee and the Member.
- 160 Not fewer than two Members of a Visiting Committee shall visit the prison at least fortnightly and for this purpose the Committee shall arrange a rota of attendance at the prison.
- 161 The Visiting Committee or any member of the Committee may inspect prison records other than:
- Personnel Records
 - Prisoner's records
 - Security Manuals or other papers which have implications for security
- 162 The Visiting Committee shall make an Annual Report for the period of 12 months ending on 31st March each year to the Scottish Ministers concerning the state of the prison and its administration and may include in it any advice and suggestions it considers appropriate.

Dumfries Prison Visiting Committee

Committee Membership as at end March 2013

Phil Hughes MBE (Chairman)
Elizabeth Clarke (Deputy Chairman)
Jane Ingall
Frank Gourlay
Dianne Stewart
Stuart Clement
Peter Patrick
Ian Hamilton
Donald Gibson
Karen Carruthers*
Colin Wyper*

* Member of Dumfries and Galloway Council

The Member attendance from 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013 is detailed below:

Name	Statutory/Other Visits	Committee/other meetings	Training
Phil Hughes MBE	10	6	4
Elizabeth Clark	11	5	4
Jane Ingall	5	4	4
Frank Gourlay	9	4	4
Stuart Clement	0	0	0
Dianne Stewart	0	0	0
Karen Carruthers	3	3	4
Peter Patrick	3	3	4
Ian Hamilton	2	1	2
Donald Gibson	5	4	4
Colin Wyper	2	2	3

Note

Stuart Clement and Dianne Stuart have not attended the prison in over twelve months and it is hoped that this situation will be resolved soon.

Karen, Peter, Ian and Colin were only appointed part way through the year

We have maintained our full Quota of visits and for that I offer a huge thanks to the committee for their dedication and commitment.

Local Training topics for VC members

- Complaints procedure
- Psychological Manipulation
- Changeover to NHS
- ICM and MAPA
- Training visit to Barlinnie Prison

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

In compiling this year's annual report I have once again used extracts from reports submitted by members of the committee about various parts of the prison and for which I am very grateful.

Dumfries currently has a mixture of short term local prisoners and long term sex offenders with a small number of life sentence prisoners. The prison continues to meet the aims of the Scottish Prison Service in that there have been no escapes or incidents of mass disobedience during the reporting period and all prisoners are treated with respect and humanity.

Breakdown of prison role when the numbers were high varying between 196 and 205 (contract figure 195)

Whilst Dumfries may be a small prison in terms of numbers the breakdown of types of offenders and layout of the prison brings with it its own problems. That said, the staff cope exceptionally well and should be commended

Suicide Prevention

The prison continue to have excellent suicide prevention measures in operation and whilst there has been a small number of prisoners self harming themselves there has not been any suicides. I am also pleased to report that the Samaritans are once again playing an active part and a number of prisoners have been trained as listeners.

Prisoner complaints/requests to the Visiting Committee

Once again these have been small in number with a total of only 29 during the whole reporting period, 18 of those were proved to be unfounded following a thorough investigation by the prison.

This of course does not include the number of times that advice is given to inmates while VC members tour the prison. I should also point out the current complaints procedure gives every prisoner the opportunity of having their concerns/complaints fully investigated and the first job of VC members is to ensure that they are aware of and have followed this procedure.

Breakdown of Prisoner Requests to VC 2012/13

Nature of request	Number
Transfer	2
Complaint against staff	2
Property	1
Medication	18
Activities	1
Multitude of frivolous requests	1
Closed visits	2
Move of location	1
Withdrawn at time of interview	1

These were the complaints that instigated an investigation and were all found to false

The reader will note that there were no complaints about food throughout the year, in fact we have received numerous comments of praise in relation to the food and for this the catering manager and his staff are to be commended. Discounting the false complaints about medical treatment there was only a total of 11 applications throughout the year, obviously on many occasions advice to inmates was given during members' visits but this gives a clear indication that the prison is running well

The two complaints against staff were fully investigated by the establishment

Assaults inmate on Inmate

These are on average are still running at about 5 per month which is about the same as last year which is not excessive considering the mix of prisoners within the establishment. Although the number of these assaults by prisoner on prisoner is relatively small, and under the corporate target, I am aware that the Governor is continually looking at ways of improving the establishment's anti bullying strategy

Use of restraints

This figure is an average of four per month and none of which have resulted in a complaint, a clear indication that all have been justified and strictly controlled

Visits Complex

The complex is a very bright and cheerful area information notices for visitors are plentiful and well displayed and an adequate play area for children is situated within the visiting room. The waiting room has recently been refurbished which has resulted in a separate area for legal visitors, a more secure area and a much more pleasant area in which to wait. Most prisoners actually receive much more than their minimum legal entitlement with remands getting 1 hour visits instead of 30 minutes and the short term prisoners receiving 3 visits per month.

Numbers fluctuate a lot with fewer visitors often at the beginning of the week. The visits themselves are relaxed, and there are no closed visits at the moment and have not been for some time past. The Hope Team usually visit LTPs who do not get many visits, on Friday afternoons. These voluntary visitors are doing a very good job. The Visitors Survey is still being done so results not yet known.

There is a Family Help Hub run by Lynne Johnstone, the Dad's Course/Parenting Skills group and the Cooking for Dads course to follow on shortly if funding comes through. There was a Children's and Families Party in December and there is now a full time FCO. Dumfries Prison is very much leading initiatives in this area and the good practice should be copied by other Prisons. The two members of staff particularly involved are Mary Rzepecki and Fiona Burnett.

There are posters in all the Halls advertising the opportunities for Dads but Mary Rzepecki actively goes round the cells to ask if Prisoners have children of 4yrs and under encouraging them to participate in the Parent Awareness on offer and she has liaison with the inside and the outside Social Workers. The maximum in a group at any one time is 6 STPs and they can keep in touch with Lynne Johnstone when released who also has a group in DG1 for fathers and families and children. The inside and outside links are very good and only one prisoner has come back in.

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At the moment there is also a LTP Dad and Child Bonding scheme which involves the Mother or Carer and Child coming for an hour on their own 12.15 to 1.15 pm with Lynne Johnstone, then the usual visit time from 1.30-2.30 when the LTP has to remain seated and a final session with Lynne Johnstone back when the Dad can move about freely. Being a session of over 3 hours, plus travelling time, this is a large commitment for the family but one Mum comes once a month all the way from Glasgow with the child, which shows how much this can mean.

A full time FCO is vital in this work and it is hoped this best practice will spread to other prisons.

Dumfries Prison is to be congratulated on this pioneering initiative.

Visits Summary

The Visits regime in Dumfries Prison is excellent. The Visit Room is spacious, cheerful and in no way intimidating. The Staff are sensitive whilst being vigilant. The two most impressive initiatives are the work done with Dads on the Parenting Course for STPs with good links with Social Services both inside and outside the Prison and for the LTPs the Child Bonding scheme. This is a supervised visiting session in three parts that takes over 3 hours plus travelling time which is a large commitment for the family but one Mum comes once a month all the way from Glasgow with the child which shows how much this can mean. The enthusiasm and dedication of the Prison Staff involved in these schemes is impressive. A full time FCO is vital in this work and it is hoped this best practice will spread to other prisons. Dumfries Prison is to be congratulated on these pioneering initiatives.

Reception

Since Group 4 have taken over the contract for escorts things appear to be running much more smoothly and there has not been any concerns raised with the committee either in writing or during conversations with the reception staff

Induction Programme

The great strides that were introduced last year in the induction programme have been maintained with all prisoners partaking in the following modules

1. Addictions
2. Act (suicide Risk assessment)
3. Core screening (individual/personal needs)
4. Visits
5. General prison routine
6. Service providers (service available and access arrangements)
7. Listeners (mentor system using reliable fellow prisoners)
8. Anti bullying
9. Race relations
10. Complaints procedures
11. Orderly room practice
12. Religious needs
13. Personal hygiene and infection control
14. Visiting committee-role and access
15. Family contact and development officers
16. Health Care.

Within each Module there are on average eight components. The complete programme is not always taught in continuous sessions as this is dependent on the availability of prison officers to take the classes or groups. However as a prisoner completes a module this is recorded and he attends until all modules are completed. For this induction programme prisoners are divided into two groups:

1. Local short term and remand prisoners
2. Long term prisoners

Obviously not all module content will apply to short term and remand prisoners. It is recognised that the above is a very comprehensive programme which is vital for the maintenance of good prison discipline and a human quality of life for prisoners and the prison staff are to be commended. It is also apparent that this is a dynamic programme which is being reviewed and altered due to a continuously evolving climate of legislation and expanding knowledge of prisoners needs.

Long term prisoners

I am again pleased to report that the majority of these prisoners are now settled down well into the regime at Dumfries and whilst most of them come here because they were unwilling to partake in offender programmes a large percentage are now fully participating in what is on offer. This has been brought about by the hard work of the officers delivering the programmes and the encouragement by the personal officers.

All long and short term prisoners are subject to integrated case management (Multi-disciplined approach to managing sentencing with community partners) which are reviewed annually. It is to the credit of the prison that after much reluctance all but 10 from a total of 123 long term prisoners now fully participate in this programme.

Education Provision

The learning centre is functioning well in meeting the needs of the prisoners within the prison. Literacy and Numeracy deficits are addressed and celebration events are staged periodically to reward and recognise prisoner's achievements. An upward trend in local prisoner attendance has been recognised and it is hoped to build on this in future months.

All prisoners are assessed on entry using Big Plus Assessment which gauges the level of literacy. Those who require learning support in literacy and numeracy are offered one to one programmes. This is in conjunction with Dumfries College Learning Support department.

The Core Skills courses provided are:-

- Communications;
- Numeracy;
- Maths
- ICT
- Art

These are modular certificated up to Higher standard SQA with a take up rate of 40%.

There are also links with Open University.

Although all prisoners receive assessment on entry, it is not possible to give an accurate number who have literacy problems.

The prison are about to begin a process of review of the curriculum with the introduction of the new activity day, with STPs having access in the afternoons and LTPs in the mornings. Timetabling will shortly be introduced to maximise access to ensure that support is given to those most in need in terms of literacy and numeracy.

Purposeful Activity

A new initiative was introduced last year, a Life skills workshop. This will enable STPs to prepare for release in gaining valuable skills and gaining qualifications in manual handling, first aid and basic food handling/hygiene. This initiative is being further developed in partnership with partner agencies engaged in the Employability Protocol being developed for Dumfries and Galloway.

Industries

It must be noted that the industrial cleaners continues to be an area of excellence, with all inmates who complete the training gaining certification.

I would suggest that the joiners shop could now be regarded as an area of best practice, the prisoners build a single story wooden building and then make doors and window frames to fit the building, which is a great challenge to their acquired skills and leads to certification.

Estates Management

Work on Satellite Surgery is now complete and all indications are that it is working well, it is certainly a big advantage to the older and infirm inmates.

Concern over the lack of sufficient parking, particularly at shift change times, prompted the prison to enlarge the car park and while that contractor was here the opportunity was taken to resurface and white lines on the visitors car park and create a pedestrian walk way away from the access road. To try to improve the exterior appearance of the prison they have now covered the grass areas outside the front of the establishment with bark chippings as this will require much less maintenance. In order to make it more attractive they have also placed several large planters, made by VT Joiners, on the bark and our gardens officer has planted a number of low maintenance plants and shrubs.

Health Centre

Transfer of the health care has now been completed and an excellent presentation was given to the committee by the health care manger Mr Lenny Allen

The Link Centre

The Centre continues to grow from strength to strength with number of call ups now averaging about 600 per month. Two additional interview booths have now opened in the centre and this gives a much needed increase in accommodation for interviews

The structures and processes being developed are providing an holistic approach to the management of all the offender groups at HMP Dumfries and ensuring that a balance is struck between supporting prisoners in addressing their lifestyle needs: challenging prisoners regarding their offending behaviour and protecting the public. It become apparent from discussion with the staff within the centre that they are all extremely well motivated and take a pride in what they are doing. The one concern previously raised by the staff is that of the detailing of escorts for prisoners, quite a lot of time was lost between the opening of the centre and the delivery of prisoners quite often causing interviews to be delayed. I have been informed however that this has now been resolved. Representatives from several faiths make

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appointments to see prisoners on request including those from the Muslim, Jehovah Witness, Buddhist and mainstream Christian faiths.

An excellent presentation was given to the committee on the workings of the link centre by a member of the link centre staff

Awards Achieved by prisoners

A total of 348 awards were achieved by prisoners throughout the year, this is way above the KPI and something for the establishment to be proud of. A breakdown of these awards is shown in the appendix.

Best practice

One area that stands out once again is the practice of using the mobile cleaning party, all of the prisoners are trained to a very high standard in industrial cleaning, a qualification recognised in outside industry, and subsequently employed, unsupervised, throughout the prison. This practice coupled with the cleaning schedules displayed in all areas results in a very high standard of cleanliness throughout the establishment. This was highlighted when Dumfries Prison won the British Institute of cleaning Science's Albert Grant Award for the cleanliness of the prison.

Conclusion

The committee are satisfied that the prison staff provides a high standard of service to Dumfries prison, and commend the management on the many changes made over the past year. All the staff in Dumfries Prison are extremely dedicated, and as a result relationships between staff and prisoners are very good, resulting in Dumfries offering safe conditions of custody. Discussion with staff clearly indicates a much improved relationship between them and management.

The committee were also very pleased to learn of the award to the prison of the Mental Health Commendation to add to their Bronze, Silver and Gold healthy Working Lives awards. HM prison Dumfries is the first prison in Scotland to achieve this award and the first organisation in Dumfries and Galloway to do so.

Objectives for 2013/14

Obviously we are still unsure of the future of Prison Visiting Committees but in the meantime it is important that we continue with the high standards currently experienced, therefore the objectives for 2013/14 are as follows:

Objectives
Ensure all new DPVC members continue to receive induction training and are mentored on their initial visits.
Arrange on going hostage brief training for all DPVC members
Ensure a minimum of four VC meetings per year
Arrange a minimum of four training sessions a year to be delivered locally by the prison staff
Maintain a system whereby DPVC members can meet informally to discuss any issues or concerns they may have normally prior to quarterly meetings
Arrange for the committee to have at least one training visit to another establishment.

I would like to say a huge thanks to the committee members for their support and dedication throughout the year especially ensuring that we still covered our full quota of visits throughout the year despite the shortfall of members.

Phil Hughes MBE

DPVC Chairman

31/03/2013