



Independent Monitoring Board
Annual Report 2011-12
HMP MAGILLIGAN

Mission Statement

To enhance the quality of prison life, by working to ensure fairness and accountability in prison

Statement of Purpose

Members of the Independent Monitoring Board for Magilligan Prison are appointed by the Justice Minister under Section 3 of the Treatment of Offenders Act (NI) 1968 and under the Prison Act (NI) 1953.

The Board is required to:

- visit Magilligan Prison regularly and report to the Justice Minister on the conditions of imprisonment and the treatment of offenders;
- consider requests and complaints made by prisoners to the Board;
- report matters of concern to the Governor or, in serious cases, the Justice Minister; and
- exercise certain powers that are given under the Prison and Young Offender Centre Rules (NI) 2005.

The Prison Rules further require the Board to satisfy itself as to:

- the treatment of prisoners including provision for their healthcare and other welfare while in prison;
- the facilities available to prisoners to allow them to make purposeful use of their time; and the cleanliness and adequacy of prison premises.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have free access at any time to all prisoners and to all parts of the prison to which they are appointed. The Board shall also have reasonable access to any of the records of the prison.

UK NATIONAL PREVENTATIVE MECHANISM

The Independent Monitoring Board is part of the United Kingdom National Preventative Mechanism (UK NPM) as required by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

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CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce this Annual Report by the Independent Monitoring Board for HMP Magilligan which covers its activities for the year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. The members of the Board are appointed by the Minister of Justice and carry out the functions stated earlier.

The IMB at Magilligan started the year with fifteen members but over the course of the period two experienced members came to the end of their appointments and a further two members resigned for personal/business reasons. I wish to thank these members for their dedication and support for their work on the IMB during their periods as members. In particular I wish to thank one retired member Mr Sam McGregor for his total dedication, support and wise counsel in all IMB related matters. Sam was a member of Magilligan IMB for twelve years and during that time his contribution to the IMB and prisoner welfare was outstanding. I further wish to thank him for his untiring support to me as Chair and the Board is poorer for his retirement. It would be remiss of me not to thank Mr Noel McKenna who also served for twelve years mostly on the Maghaberry Board but more latterly in Magilligan. It is a credit to the dedication and commitment of the remaining members that Board business continued seamlessly so I wish to thank them for their continuing work. I wish to thank in particular the Vice Chair, Mr Tom Kerrigan for his help and sterling contribution to the smooth running of the Board.

To fulfil their roles, each member of the Board has the right of access to all parts of the prison and to each prisoner, without exception, at any time. The Board plays a crucial role in monitoring the conditions of the prison and the treatment of prisoners. The Board meets once a month and members visit the prison on a rota basis at least once a week to deal with any complaints received from prisoners. Members attend at adjudications to monitor the process, attend appropriate committee meetings, are also involved in multi-agency case conferences and are present as observers immediately following a death in custody or a major incident. On each rota visit the members visit the Special Supervision Unit (now the CSU) to talk to the prisoners who are being held there under Rule 32 or on cellular confinement following formal action for proven indiscipline offences.

The Governor is invited to attend the monthly Board meetings to give his report, update members on progress of issues and respond to queries. His participation in these meetings is most invaluable and much appreciated by the members. The Governor also keeps the Chair informed of forthcoming developments and new systems and procedures. The Board wishes to acknowledge the unflinching courtesy and co-operation of the current Governor and my job as Chair has been facilitated generously by him. The Governor is most appreciative of the

importance of the work of the IMB and I wish to thank him for his help and support during the current year. The Board also wishes to commend the excellent work carried out by the Governor and his staff who demonstrate dedication and respect to those in their charge.

One of the major events which took place during the reporting year was the report of the Prison Review Team, under the Chairmanship of Dame Anne Owers, which examined in detail the operations of the prison service and estate in Northern Ireland. The Magilligan IMB together with the IMBs from the other two prison establishments was invited to participate and submitted its views to the Review Team. The Report from the Review Team is very forward looking and the vast majority of its proposals are positive and will provide a challenge to the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) in terms of culture etc. It is encouraging to note that the NIPS is in the process of adopting the recommendations in the Report.

However the Magilligan IMB is concerned about the recommendation to close Magilligan prison because of, *inter alia*, its isolated location, which is a common characteristic of a number of major prison establishments in Great Britain. The majority view of the Board is that Magilligan prison should undergo a phased rebuild in its current location and should continue to house low and medium risk prisoners. Over a number of years the various Governors of Magilligan have successfully put in place a large number of prisoner support services in tandem with local commercial, educational and voluntary organisations. Additionally a number of prisoners approaching the end of their sentences and who are currently housed in Foyleview work on a daily basis in business places outside the prison and reports in respect thereof are extremely positive. In the Review Report it states that Magilligan prison is the one prison establishment which experiences the least number of problems and in view of this it is difficult to understand the logic for closing what is clearly accepted to be the least troublesome prison establishment in Northern Ireland.

On a less positive note, there were occasions during the earlier part of the reporting year when there was a failure to communicate relevant information to the IMB with the result that on more than one occasion, IMB members – some of whom had driven a substantial distance - arrived at Magilligan to discover that, for example, the case conference scheduled for that time had been cancelled. The IMB is appreciative of the fact that it is not always possible to provide such information but would urge that the prison should do its utmost to keep members informed of such issues as early as possible. It should however be mentioned that channels of communications operated more effectively in the latter part of the reporting year.

This Report contains a number of recommendations which have appeared in previous Annual Reports and it is disappointing to note that the NIPS has not implemented them despite the

fact that they have been highlighted for some years. It is hoped that the NIPS will examine our recommendations contained herein and implement as many as possible.

In conclusion, the Board and I wish to acknowledge and thank the IMB Secretariat for facilitating and supporting our work and making the Board's job much easier – it is deeply appreciated.

Finally I would like once again to thank all the members of the IMB at Magilligan Prison for their dedication in monitoring the conditions and treatment of prisoners held at that establishment. I look forward to continuing to work with each member of the Board over the next year.

Brian Collins
Chairperson

OVERVIEW OF ESTABLISHMENT

HMP Magilligan is a medium to low security prison which houses around 500 male prisoners serving nine years or less and a small number of life sentence prisoners. The regime focuses on addressing offending behaviour and reducing reoffending.

The majority of prisoners are housed in the three old-style H-Blocks and the dormitory-style facility of Sperrin. Alpha and Halward House are newer additions which have more modern provisions including in-cell sanitation. There is also a separate Special Supervision Unit (SSU).

Outside the main prison wall is Foyleview - the resettlement unit of Magilligan. It is a low security semi-open unit for selected prisoners who are nearing the end of their sentence. This accommodation comprises portacabin living quarters and the larger communal Cunningham building.

Although responsibility for the healthcare for all prisoners has been transferred to the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT), the prison has an in-house Healthcare unit. On-site drug and alcohol services for prisoners with addiction problems are provided by AD:EPT working in partnership with the Trust.

Various charitable and voluntary organizations maintain a presence on the site - NIACRO provide guidance through the Jobtrack scheme for those trying to obtain a job on discharge; CRUSE provides invaluable support in dealing with bereavement issues; Barnardo's support prisoners over family issues; and Housing Rights staff brief prisoners on the complexities of obtaining housing, housing benefits and associated grants.

Spiritual and religious matters are the remit of the prison Chaplaincy Team which aims to facilitate the practice of all faiths within the prison community. Additional spiritual help is provided by Prison Fellowship.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board recommends that –

1 ACCOMMODATION

- a) the H blocks should be replaced with modern accommodation or be provided with in-cell sanitation (paragraph 1.1)

2 ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- a) stronger and more secure medication boxes should be provided as a matter of urgency (paragraph 2.2)
- b) the policy of block-dispensing medication should be reviewed urgently (paragraph 2.2)
- c) greater efforts should be made to move towards a drug-free prison (paragraph 2.3)
- d) further incentives should be introduced for prisoners to be drug-free (paragraph 2.3)

3 CATERING AND KITCHEN

- a) portion control should be revised to ensure equality across all menu options (paragraph 3.2)

4 CHAPLAINCY

- a) the role of chaplains should continue to be adequately funded (paragraph 4.3)

5 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- a) the IT classrooms should be properly resourced and updated with the provision of new computers a priority (paragraph 5.3)
- b) an IT technician should be retained on site (paragraph 5.3)
- c) better music teaching facilities should be provided (paragraph 5.4)

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- a) an exercise to record the actual number of prisoners with a disability should be commenced forthwith (paragraph 6.3)

7 HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

- a) there should be better communication between Healthcare and PECCS to ensure prisoners' hospital appointments are not missed (paragraph 7.3)
- b) a purpose built safe and secure facility should be set up for prisoners with severe personality disorder (paragraph 7.4)

8 LIBRARY

- a) the provision of foreign newspapers should be reinstated immediately (paragraph 8.2)

9 RECEPTION AND INDUCTION – no recommendations

10 RESETTLEMENT

- a) more individualised sentence plans should be introduced (paragraph 10.2)
- b) the Personal Officer Scheme should be reinstated (paragraph 10.3)
- c) Family Support Groups should be continued (paragraph 10.4)
- d) child-centred visits should not be cancelled (paragraph 10.5)

11 SAFER CUSTODY

- a) all staff should be trained in the cultural differences perceived by foreign national prisoners (paragraph 11.3)

12 SEGREGATION – CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

- a) CSU staff should receive training in coping with difficult prisoners (paragraph 12.2)
- b) there should be a reduction in the awarding of Cellular confinement at adjudication (paragraph 12.5)

13 SPORT AND RECREATION

- a) Foyleview should be updated to accommodate an gym facility (paragraph 13.2)

14 TUCK SHOP

- a) profits should be used to increase stock (paragraph 14.2)

b) all products should be competitively priced (paragraph 14.2)

15 VISITS

- a) the Family Officer should not be detailed to other duties (paragraph 15.1)
- b) a wheelchair should be purchased for the Visitors' Centre (paragraph 15.3)

Section 1 - ACCOMODATION

1.1 The main accommodation in Magilligan is three H-Block units comprising old-style cells with capacity to house approximately 300 prisoners. The majority of cells are single occupancy cells. None of the H Blocks has in-cell sanitation which is totally unacceptable in the 21st century. Despite the fact that there are indications that Magilligan Prison may close around 2018, the Board again **recommends** that either the H Blocks be replaced with modern accommodation or at the very least be refurbished to provide in-cell sanitation. This recommendation has been made regularly in previous reports but disappointingly has not been implemented.

1.2 Sperrin Unit is a 64-bedded dormitory-style unit which is divided into four units. Showers and toilets are located outside the sleeping quarters. The unit which is airy, clean and tidy, the cleaning being done by the prisoners themselves. The Board acknowledges their efforts.

1.3 Alpha House can accommodate 50 prisoners in two wings. The cells in Alpha are called rooms and each prisoner has his own key. The unit has shower facilities and both ordinary and disabled toilet facilities. The building is immaculately clean throughout and appears to be an efficiently managed unit. The Board commends both the prisoners and staff for maintaining this standard.

1.4 Halward House is the most modern of the facilities at Magilligan. It is an attractive building and is located separately from other prison units. All cells have toilet facilities and there are communal showers on each landing. Halward House is spotlessly clean and the Board is very impressed with the facility. It was designed as single cell accommodation on two floors but recently there has been doubling up because of the growing population. This has the potential to cause problems but to date no serious difficulties have arisen. The Board **recommends** a return to single room / cell accommodation for all prisoners but recognises the difficulties given the continuing influx of prisoners.

1.5 Foylevue is the resettlement facility in Magilligan. It is situated within the prison compound but outside the main prison's security perimeter. It comprises of five portacabin buildings with bedrooms, a small kitchen, and a shower/toilet area. While the newer ones are in acceptable condition, three of the portacabins have been in use for over 30 years and are no longer fit for purpose. The Board **recommends** that as soon as possible the three oldest units be demolished and replaced with more suitable accommodation. This recommendation has been made in many previous reports and again the Board is disappointed to note that it has not been implemented.

Section 2 - ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

2.1 As with many other prisons, drug and alcohol abuse continues to create problems in Magilligan. Prisoners with addiction problems can avail of the services and programmes provided by ad:dept with the Drug Education Alcohol Management and Combined Substances Programmes having seen over 2000 referrals since April 2011. Meetings of the multi-disciplinary drug strategy forum are held regularly and are chaired by the Governor responsible for the implementation of drug strategy.

2.2 The use and abuse of prescription medication is a particularly serious issue in Magilligan. Whilst the Board accepts the concept that the dispensing of medication within prison should mirror as far as possible the practice in the community, in practice it raises significant problems. Medication becomes a currency and there have been a number of incidents of prisoners being assaulted for refusing to hand over their medication to others. In an effort to combat the theft of medication or the use of threats or duress, lockable medication boxes were installed. Unfortunately these boxes are not secure enough and prisoners find it easy to open them. The Board **recommends** that the NIPS should provide stronger and more secure medication boxes as a matter of urgency. It further **recommends** that the policy of block-dispensing medication should be urgently reviewed.

2.3 Whilst accepting that no system can be 100% effective, the Board **recommends** (once again) that greater efforts should be made to move towards a drug-free prison and that active consideration is given to the introduction of further incentives for prisoners who are drug free.

Section 3 – CATERING AND KITCHENS

3.1 The kitchen is situated well away from the main prison building and is manned by two managers and eight cooks. Shortage of staff is still a problem as there is no automatic replacement for sick leave etc. On occasions the manager has had to call in agency staff. The unit is clinically clean and the staff are appropriately dressed for kitchen work. Considering the staffing issues, the kitchens are well managed and the standard of hygiene is a credit to the manager. Currently the kitchen provides approximately 2,000 meals every day but the Board is concerned that with the ever increasing size of the prisoner population at Magilligan, the catering and kitchen services may struggle.

3.2 The kitchen provides a varied menu which includes Low Fat, Healthy Option and Vegetarian choices. In general the Board hears of few complaints about the food provided but during the reporting year some prisoners reported that those opting for salad received

very small portions. On investigation the Board agreed that this complaint is justified so **recommends** that portion control is revised to ensure equality across all menu options.

Section 4 – CHAPLAINCY

4.1 As prison population has increased, it has placed additional demand on all services, with the Chaplains being no exception. Despite this the Chaplains continue to provide a vital and beneficial service to all prisoners. The Chaplain on duty makes regular visits to the houses. Prisoners speak highly of the Chaplains and appreciate all the help, guidance and support offered to them. Sunday services are well attended and they also appreciate the opportunity that the Mission week offers.

4.2 The Board is aware that there is a NIPS internal review of Chaplaincy ongoing at present. While the Board awaits the outcome, it considers it noteworthy that the Chaplains regularly evaluate their own work. This has included examining the role of Community Chaplains and the benefits that other prisons on the mainland have experienced through this.

4.3 The Board is very aware of the limited budget throughout the NIPS and that the allocation for Chaplaincy is coming under increased pressure. However the work of the Chaplains can never be measured in terms of “value for money” so the Board **recommends** that the role and duties of the Chaplains are adequately funded. As a money-saving measure the Board suggests that video-link could be used by Chaplains to link with their counterparts in the other establishments.

4.4 The Board commends the Chaplains for their excellent work and also appreciates the valuable contribution that the Prison Fellowship makes to the prison.

Section 5 - EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 The past year has been challenging for the Education Department. As a result of the SEE Programme and the Review of Learning and Skills staff numbers have decreased while the number of prisoners has increased. This is causing pressure on the system. Despite this, the year has also been productive with a very high number of education and vocational training certificates being achieved. This is a credit to all staff involved and the Board commends them. They give of their very best but are feeling demoralised at present so a clear way forward needs to be decided as soon as possible.

5.2 The Board records its concern at the lack of support and action from the NIPS in relation to educational provision in Magilligan. If prisoners are to be provided with suitable and effective education for the 21st Century, they must be provided with up-to-date

equipment and resources. The current IT system is extremely outdated and, due to the failure to install sufficient access and content controls, prisoners are frequently unable to use the system. The Board has highlighted this for a number of years, as has a previous CJINI Inspection Report, so again **recommends** that it be remedied immediately. Last year the Board also recommended the provision of an on-site IT technician. To date this has not happened so it **recommends** this once again. The Board is aware that prisons in Great Britain use the 'Virtual Campus' system which meets both the security needs of the prison and the educational needs of the prisoners and **recommends** that it is considered for use in Magilligan.

5.3 The music teaching provision in Magilligan is very poor in comparison to the other two prison establishments. There is a part-time guitar teacher funded by Prison Arts Foundation but funding is required to employ teachers of other instruments, purchase more equipment and provide a dedicated teaching room. Music is very beneficial and is a means of engaging prisoners who would otherwise not participate in education. It can also help reduce problems for both prisoners and staff. The Board **recommends** the provision of better music teaching as soon as possible.

5.4 There are currently ten training workshops operating within the prison providing work for up to 100 prisoners. The workshops are up-to-date and well run by suitably qualified staff who provide excellent training in printing, furniture making, tiling, refurbishment, metal fabrication etc. Prisoners can work towards a range of qualifications from basic level through to diploma level and external verifiers visit the prison twice a year. The courses are popular and there is normally a waiting list to gain entry. The prisoners enjoy the work and the quality of the products manufactured is excellent - indeed some of the products made in Magilligan are used as furnishings in all three prisons and a number of items are also for sale. The Board commends everyone involved in this operation.

5.5 The gardening team provides prisoners with horticultural training which may be very useful to them on release. Teams of prisoners, managed by an officer, work year-round planting seeds etc for the coming year. The prisoners get to decide which flowers and bushes to plant and it is obvious that the prisoners have a special interest in their work. The floral displays and grassy areas are extremely well maintained so all concerned deserve special credit for this sterling work.

Section 6 - EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

6.1 The foreign national prisoner population within Magilligan continues to grow in number and diversity of ethnicity. The inability to speak English continues to be the biggest barrier but the Board welcomes the steps which have been taken by the prison management to ensure,

as far as possible, that foreign prisoners may avail of the services of an interpreter. The Board is content that in the main this population's needs are being addressed.

6.2 The Board continues to have concerns that prisoners from a Roman Catholic background are disproportionately the subject of adjudications. Last year the NIPS commissioned an independent research project into this issue and it has been in possession of the findings of the project for some time. However it is unclear what action will be taken as a result of the findings. In the meantime the disparity appears to continue.

6.3 Last year the Board recommended that efforts should be made to accurately determine the number of prisoners in Magilligan who have a disability in order to give an indication of areas of need and to inform service delivery. This appears not to have happened so the Board **recommends** this is undertaken forthwith.

Section 7 - HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

7.1 The Prison Service's aim is to ensure that prisoners receive medical care treatment commensurate with that of the general population. Currently there is a shortfall in the staff necessary to make this possible. The matter is further exacerbated by an ever increasing population who in general come from a social background which means their level of health is lower than that of people on the outside. They tend to have poorer physical health and addiction to drugs and alcohol is prevalent.

7.2 From 1 April 2012 the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (the Trust) assumed total responsibility for healthcare in prisons. This should hopefully lead to greater accountability but the Board will monitor if this happens. Since the transfer of responsibilities, the Trust deals with healthcare complaints however the Board does listen to complaints and try to effect local resolution before the matter gets that far. During the reporting period, the number of complaints regarding healthcare has been low - the main concerns being delay in appointments and being taken off prescription medication.

7.3 Last year the Board reported an improvement in the number of cancellations of outside hospital appointments because of problems with Prisoner Escorting and Court Custody Service (PECCS). Regrettably this improvement has not been maintained and the number of cancellations rose again this year. This is not a healthcare issue but one of organisation within PECCS. It appears not to have the capacity to transport the number of prisoners who have external hospital appointments and in many cases gives priority to court attendance. The Board **recommends** greater communication between the Healthcare Centre and PECCS so that an appropriate and resilient system is put in place to ensure hospital appointments are kept.

7.4 In addition to lower levels of physical health, mental health problems and personality disorders are three times greater within prison than the general population. About half of all the prisoners in Magilligan are prescribed with psychotropic medication. The Board strongly believes that prison is not the correct place to hold or treat prisoners with serious mental health problems and it **recommends** that there should be a secure unit / hospital outside of prison for the treatment of such prisoners.

7.5 A self-medication regime exists in Magilligan in which most of the prisoners receiving prescription medication participate. Reference has already been made in this report of the problems this system causes. The Board therefore repeats its recommendation that secure medicine cabinets be acquired as soon as possible and that the policy of block-dispensing medication should be urgently reviewed.

Section 8 - LIBRARY

8.1 The Board was pleased to see that during the year the Library moved to newer and bigger accommodation. The facility is well attended and its resources are well utilised but the Board recommends the appointment of a full-time Librarian to ensure that prisoners can make maximum use of the new facility.

8.2 A nice touch is that a number of children's books are available for use at child-centred visits and the Board welcomes this. On the other hand the Board is concerned to hear that provision of newspapers for foreign national prisoners has stopped and **recommends** this service is provided again immediately.

8.3 The Creative Writer course is run there four days a week and is delivered by the writer in residence. Over the years the course has had a very positive impact on prisoners. There are currently a number of prisoners working on projects in the areas of poetry and prose writing and in the past some have even had work published. The Board commends everyone involved in this endeavour.

Section 9 – RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

9.1 The reception area is where prisoners get their first impressions of the prison. The reception area itself is spacious and the holding cells are bright, clean and well maintained. Those who are arriving for the first time may be nervous and apprehensive so the Board commends the staff for the calm and professional manner in which they handle these new arrivals.

9.2 Induction continues to be a comprehensive, structured and well-run process in which

prisoners are given information about prison life including healthcare, visits, home leave, tuck shop and pastoral care. Information relating to work opportunities, education, remedial care, courses and programmes is also included. The Board is pleased to note that an interpreter service is now provided when necessary for the increasing number of prisoners for whom English is a foreign language. The Board also participates in induction sessions to explain to new prisoners how to avail of its services.

9.3 As anxiety is a common feature among new committals the Board recommends that induction staff receive training in mental health awareness to enable them to spot the signs and be able to respond appropriately if they have any concerns. Otherwise the Board commends the good work of the unit staff.

Section 10 – RESETTLEMENT

10.1 Rehabilitation and resettlement is the ultimate goal of incarceration and underpins the work of the whole establishment. It is supported by strategic partnerships in the community and informed by assessment of each prisoner's risk and needs to minimise the likelihood of reoffending on release. Magilligan has a multi-disciplinary offender management team, co-located in the Prisoner Development Unit (PDU) and this shared location helps promote information sharing and collaborative working. As part of the resettlement team PBNI provides in-house staff who deliver a high quality probation service to prisoners; during their sentence; in preparation for release; and post sentence. Despite the increase in the number of prisoners at Magilligan the number of Probation Officers has remained constant at nine for the past number of years. While not making a recommendation, the Board feels that consideration could be given to increasing this number in the future.

10.2 Sentence planning is an integral part of resettlement but many prisoners still see sentence plans merely as paper exercises. The Board **recommends** the introduction of more individualised plans which address each prisoner's particular needs as this may motivate them to change their opinion.

10.3 As the prisoner population continues to increase the availability of meaningful, purposeful activity continues to fall. This is a big obstacle to constructive resettlement. To help balance this deficit the Board continues to **recommend** the reintroduction of Personal Officers tasked to engage with and motivate prisoners. These officers could perform an important role as pro-social models to support prisoners' thinking and behaviours.

10.4 As previously stated Foyleview is the resettlement unit of Magilligan where a prisoner can complete work experience in the community as he approaches the end of his sentence. The Foyleview initiative is highly regarded within the wider prison service and great credit is

due to those who planned it initially and to those who work continually to prepare prisoners for release. In doing so the risk of reoffending is reduced and prisoners are helped to reintegrate meaningfully with their families and the community.

10.5 Family contact is an important area of the resettlement process. Family Support Groups operate successfully in Limavady and Ballymena where families meet monthly with representatives of prison staff, chaplains, the Prison Fellowship, etc at venues outside of the prison. A member of the Board also attends. The success of these groups is mainly due to the involvement of the Family Officer especially because of the trust that has developed with the families. He is fully qualified in counselling and deals very effectively with the emotive issues that can be raised. Rumours surround the findings of the as yet unpublished NIPS Family Strategy Review, indicating that changes are afoot. These meetings are highly valued by all the families and this uncertainty has led to great concern and upset as they value the support. The Board **recommends** that the Family Support Groups must be allowed to continue.

10.6 Child-centred visits is another excellent initiative but the Board expressed its concern that staff shortages caused these visits to be cancelled on three dates in April, May and September and cancelled completely between June and August. It noted the distress caused to prisoners who look forward to spending quality time together with their children. The Board will continue to monitor the provision of child-centred visits and strongly **recommends** that such visits should not be cancelled.

10.7 The Big Book Share continues to be successful with several prisoners undertaking a Media Studies course to support the production of tapes to be sent home to the children. The Education Department and the Family Officer are to be commended on this worthwhile initiative.

Section 11 - SAFER CUSTODY

11.1 A total of 60 SPARs (Supporting Prisoners At Risk) were opened during the year. This shows an increase on last year's figures but this is not unexpected due to the large increase in the population. Thoughts of self-harm were the main cause of a SPAR being opened. The Board continues to visit those prisoners on SPARs and attend the associated reviews.

11.2 The Board closely monitors SPAR and associated Care Plan documentation and is pleased to note that it is kept up-to-date and comprehensively completed. Prison staff display a high level of commitment in supporting those prisoners on SPARs and this level of support continues even when the SPAR is closed. The Board commends this commitment

and also commends the knowledge and professionalism displayed by the prison staff who attend the SPAR reviews.

11.3 In October 2011 a record number of 11 SPARs were opened at one time following co-ordinated group self-harm by a group of foreign nation prisoners. They took the action in support of one of their number who refused to work as an orderly as such a position is seen as demeaning in their culture. This highlights the many unforeseen situations that can arise with a growing foreign population so the Board **recommends** that prison staff should be trained to identify and deal with problems that arise from cultural differences.

11.4 There is a low incidence of bullying reported in Magilligan. Although this could be accounted for by the anti-bullying ethos it may also be due in part to the reluctance of prisoners to report incidents. The Board will continue to monitor this area.

11.5 A success story of note is the Listener scheme which has been operating for ten years in Magilligan. It is the most enduring of its kind in the British Isles and a celebration to recognise this great achievement is being planned. Eleven prisoners in Magilligan are trained as Listeners and they are a great asset. The presence of Listeners in Reception is of particular value to new arrivals as they are very vulnerable at this time. To date younger prisoners have been reluctant to engage with the Listeners so they now make daily visits to the residential areas to try to encourage some interaction. The Board acknowledges that much of the success of the Listener Scheme is due to the continuing commitment of the Samaritans, who deliver an excellent training programme and provide ongoing support.

Section 12 – SEGREGATION – CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

12.1 The CSU houses a number of categories of prisoners - those detained under Rule 32 who have offended against good order and discipline; those undergoing cellular confinement; those awaiting adjudication; violent and refractory prisoners; and vulnerable prisoners who are accommodated there for their own protection. Board members visit the CSU at least once a week and speak to all the prisoners accommodated there but rarely hear any complaints. This is largely due to the sterling work performed by the CSU staff. The Board has been very impressed by the relationship between prisoners and staff in the CSU.

12.2 A large number of prisoners in the CSU can be disruptive and display behavioural difficulties. Many also have personality disorders. The Board feels that it requires training to handle such individuals properly, so **recommends** that staff should receive specialised training in coping with and understanding their needs. Despite this the unit is well run and the Board commends the staff for their care and patience.

12.3 The Board has a statutory duty to attend all Rule 32 case conferences if practicable and to apply critical scrutiny to all the relevant paper work as soon as possible thereafter it is not. This is to ensure that due process has been followed and that the rule has been fairly and reasonably applied. The Board is facilitated in the discharge of this duty by the CSU staff who treat the prisoners with the utmost respect, dignity and fairness.

12.4 Adjudications are also held in the CSU and are conducted by Governors. The Board is pleased to note a decrease in the overall number of adjudications during the reporting period, although numbers do fluctuate from month to month. Board members regularly attend adjudications and it is clear that the proceedings are conducted to the highest professional standards and in accordance with the rules of natural justice. Where any doubt arises, the matter is always resolved in favour of the prisoner and awards are only made when there is clear evidence of, or where the prisoner admits, an offence.

12.5 Despite the fact that there has been a welcome increase in the number of awards of a caution at adjudication, the monthly cellular confinement awards have frequently been as high as 75%+. It is not productive to lock up prisoners throughout the normal working day and even if prison staff make every effort to provide prisoners with meaningful activity, a prisoner may use his time to think of ways to either test the system, to challenge authority or to plan further disruptive behaviour in order to relieve the boredom. The Board **recommends** again that less cellular confinement awards be made and would urge that other appropriate and effective awards are used more frequently. The Board is disappointed to note that despite making the same recommendation in last year's Annual Report, no effective action in this respect appears to have been taken.

Section 13 - SPORT AND RECREATION

13.1 The PE department at Magilligan is a well-equipped facility that over the last year has been used extensively by prisoners. The Board receives few complaints about the gym which is probably due to the high quality of the varied programme of activities offered. These programmes are kept under constant review to monitor success and ensure equality and fairness. Prisoners can also work towards qualifications in various sport related subjects. The gaining of such qualifications can contribute to an increase in self-confidence and make a meaningful contribution to resettlement. The success of the PE department is also due in no small part to the commitment of the staff for which the Board commends them highly.

13.2 Prisoners in Foyleview do not have adequate gym facilities as the floors in the complex are not strong enough to support the equipment. As this puts these prisoners at a

disadvantage the Board **recommends** that the accommodation is upgraded to accommodate an up-to-date gym in the Foyleview complex.

Section 14 - TUCK SHOP

14.1 The Tuck Shop is extremely well managed and operates so efficiently that there are very few problems which the Board commends. It also provides work for five prisoners who all seem to enjoy the work.

14.2 The facility is very well stocked, caters for the needs of all prisoners and has a healthy annual turnover. Whilst any profit made is remitted to the Governor's Fund and used for the prisoners' welfare, the Board would like to see the profits being retained and used to increase the Tuck Shop stock for the benefit of prisoners and **recommends** this be considered. The Board also **recommends** that every effort is made to price products as competitively as possible as prisoners are on low incomes.

Section 15 – VISITS

15.1 The Governor and staff continue to ensure that all visitors to Magilligan are treated in a civilised and courteous manner. Especially commended is the Family Officer. Families appreciate his sterling work and he has such an important role to play during all visits that continuity is vital. Therefore the Board **recommends** the Family Officer should not be detailed to other duties.

15.2 NIACRO continues its excellent work in both the Visitors' Centre and in the Visits Area. The Board is pleased to note the addition of two part time workers which delivers a recommendation made in last year's report. This extra help increases the support available in the play area where excellent play activities are offered to children.

15.3 Also recommended last year was redecoration of the Visitors Centre and more toilet provision so the Board is very pleased to note the recent painting of the facility and complete updating of the toilets. In addition the staff are delighted with the new kitchen facilities. The Board welcomes these improvements which make for a much brighter environment for staff, prisoners and their visitors. While the needs of most visitors are met, the Board **recommends** the purchase of a wheelchair for the Visitors' Centre and the repair of the existing Visits wheelchair to improve the service to disabled visitors

15.4 Child-centred visits are organised by the Family Officer and NIACRO and take place after regular visits. In a 2011 University of Ulster study entitled "Children Of Imprisoned Parents" such visits were lauded as "an example of positive practice by the Northern Ireland Prison Service". The Board echoes this and commends the sterling work of all those involved

in delivering this extremely important service. As stated earlier the Board will continue to monitor the provision of child-centred visits which meets the needs of very vulnerable families. The Board recommends that every effort is made to retain this valuable resource through all future changes in the prison regimes.

APPENDIX 1

MAGILLIGAN BOARD MEMBERS 2010-2011

Mr Brian Collins	Chair
Mr Thomas Kerrigan	Vice Chair
Ms Joan Burke	
Mrs Margaret Campbell	
Mr Paul Devlin	
Mr Brian Doherty	
Mrs Joan Doherty	
Mr Peter Martin	Resigned in July 2011
Mr Patrick McAteer	Resigned in February 2012
Mrs Bernadette McCollum	
Mr Sam McGregor	Time served January 2012
Mr Noel McKenna	Time served January 2012
Ms Christine McLaughlin	
Mrs Rae Morrison	
Mr Jack Walls	