

Prison Governors Association

Representing: The Prison Governors of the United Kingdom since 1987

Response to open letter from PGA President, Andrea Albutt, by Dr. Amanda Goodall, Associate Professor and expert in leadership at Cass Business School

Responding to comments made today by Andrea Albutt, President of the Prison Governors Association, about the decline of the prison service, Dr Amanda Goodall said:

“People who run prisons need to know something about prisons. Shock! Not only is this an entirely logical and some may say obvious statement made by Andrea Albutt, President, Prison Governors Association, but it is also found in evidence. I have done extensive research asking the question ‘how much core-business knowledge should our leaders and managers have?’ A great deal is the answer. Being an expert leader with high levels of core business knowledge is associated in the data with better performing organisations, high employee job satisfaction and low intentions to quit. I have found this pattern in many different settings from hospitals, and universities, basketball and in big samples of US and UK employees matched with their employers.

“The decision, originally made by Liz Truss when she was Secretary of State of Justice and Lord Chancellor, to separate prison decision-making and policy from prison governors was illogical. Of note is that Ms Truss was the first Lord Chancellor to be appointed with no knowledge of the law - no law degree – a point that got a lot of attention at the time. Thus, it is not so surprising that she made this decision with no core business knowledge of either the law or prisons. Unfortunately, the government has essentially rendered prison governors impotent, and at a time when our prisons are in chaos, and they are finding it hard to recruit prison governors.”

Dr Amanda Goodall is an Associate Professor and expert in leadership at Cass Business School. Read more about her work here: <http://www.amandagoodall.com/> and <http://www.cass.city.ac.uk/faculty-and-research/experts/amanda-h-goodall>

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