

Prison Governors Association

Representing: The Prison Governors of the United Kingdom since 1987



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Bulletin 822

21 December 2021

Dear Colleagues,

A Message to Colleagues

As we approach the end of the year there is an unwelcome familiarity in our relationship with Covid, which sees colleagues across HMPPS facing personal and professional challenges in their daily lives; we would not expect to see again the level of restrictions we now see being reintroduced as we write to you today.

When reflecting on the events of the last year, it feels right that we remember those colleagues, friends and family members who we have lost over the last 12 months, the challenges we face within our working lives are often put into perspective when remembering those we have lost.

This year has again shown our members have stood up and delivered, often whilst facing significant challenges, and nearly always against the odds. We have seen some amazing examples from across HMPPS, where individuals, groups and establishments have worked so hard to improve the outcomes for the colleagues who they lead, or for the people in their care.

It's so difficult to accept some of the negative reporting of the work which takes place in our prisons at any time, but during the last 12 months we remain absolute in our position that you and your teams are the 'best of the best'. We genuinely believe that having robust assessment of our organisation's performance is both essential and helpful. We do however want to see more acceptance of the significant impact of Covid and the impact of austerity still has on our organisation

Looking forward, we were immensely pleased to have held our conference last October, being able to see so many colleagues was fantastic, but more important we were able to get a clear direction for the work you, our members, want the PGA to take forward. We remain firm in our belief that our prisons must become safer, equally, for those who work and live in them; we do not underestimate that there remains significant pressure on HMPPS financially, but we also remain firm in our belief that the current recruitment and retention issues impacting our grades and prison officers can only be truly resolved by government intervention.

Work is currently underway in preparation of next year's pay submission, where we hope to be able to include some of the direction we were given by conference; we are also currently reviewing our internal structures to allow some of the work of the PGA to be delivered on a regional basis. As we look forward to the New Year the work of the NEC will focus on improving safety in prisons, to positively influence pay discussions and to improve communications with members through a revised regional approach.

We remain acutely aware of the significant demands being placed on members' time, either through normal business emails or through the demands of COVID; with this in mind we have held off some of our engagement with you – We do however intend during the first few weeks of the New Year to start reaching out to members to start the process of modernising and reshaping our regional structures. Please, could you keep your eyes open for these emails and where necessary reply.

In finishing off, on behalf of your NEC, we send heartfelt good wishes to you and those you care for the most, and truly hope you have a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Thank you.

Andrea Albutt
President

Mitch Albutt
National Officer

Carl Davies
National Officer