

Annual Report 2018
From
Cloverhill Visiting Committee
To the
Minister for Justice and Equality
Charles Flanagan TD.

Introduction

The Visiting Committee is pleased to present the Annual Report to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The Report records our meeting with prisoners seen during the year, the conditions we observe in the prison and the relationship with the prison authorities. The Committee numbers remain at three at the end of 2018. For some time during the year the numbers were reduced to two.

We wish to respectfully acknowledge and thank all prisoners we met during the term. Their welfare, safety and successful rehabilitation remain our prime concern. Each prisoner has his own individual and unique concerns and his own personal history. We are impressed by how open and clear the men are regarding their feelings, fears and hopes for the future. Many speak of the sadness and trauma of their lives, of complex and disturbed lives, the prevalence of substance abuse, of continual ill health. Many prisoners speak of the loss of family and family contact, particularly those with young families. For prisoners on remand waiting for sentencing is a very frustrating time. This is the time a prisoner needs sensitive intervention and practical direction.

Many prisoners show awareness and express regret of crimes committed, accept the reality of life in prison, of finishing their time and express how life will be different for them when they are released. There is apprehension and worry regarding their future life, especially if drugs are a feature. There is a high amount of homelessness among prisoners. This is of huge concern to prisoners and has serious implications for their rehabilitation in society.

We are impressed by the willingness of prisoners to engage with us, with the services provided, and by their desire for self-improvement both mentally and physically. Education in all its forms, the learning and up grading of skills that can be of practical use later, the need to keep fit and active, the merit of partaking in mindfulness classes, anger management, anxiety classes, yoga classes are regularly raised by prisoners during our meetings. The availability of these services and of appropriate support services is vital to the successful re-integration of the prisoner into his community and society.

We are conscious of the good relationship we have with the Governor, staff and members of the prison service we have encountered during the year. We acknowledge and thank the Governor, Assistant Governors, Prison Officers and Prison Staff for the courtesy and consideration they have shown to us at all times. We appreciate the easy access we have to the Governor, the senior staff of Cloverhill and their availability to meet the Visiting Committee at all times. We note the sensitive and humane manner in dealings with prisoners in their care, of their genuine concern for the prisoner and in finding solutions to his issues and his well-being.

From our observation we note the good rapport and interaction continues to exist between prisoners and staff and good name recognition.

The Visiting Committee would like to thank the Secretary to the Governor for her commitment and professionalism in facilitating us at all times, for the high standard of her work for us and for her very good will at all times.

Visits to Prisoners

The Visiting Committee met with 24 prisoners this year. Because of the nature of Cloverhill as a remand prison, some prisoners had been transferred, some had been released before the date of the meeting; some also were in court on the day on the day. Prisoners we plan to revisit in a follow up procedure have often been released. Three prisoners declined to meet the committee. In one of these instances we asked the Chief to keep a watch on him. This was done. The committee continue to monitor the progress of the individual prisoners whom we met during the year.

The main issues raised by the prisoners were:

Health and Healthcare issues – physical.

Mental issues – stress – anxiety – concern for family member outside but also inside Cloverhill.

Visiting Rights – restrictions on family visits and unscreened visits – phone calls.

Overcrowding – transfer request to other cells.

Delays in access to medical doctor.

Access to medical hospital visits.

Transfers to other prisons.

Fear of violence from other prisoners.

P19 issues.

Prisoners also complained of loss of clothing, of lack of access to certain areas for protected prisoners. A small number of prisoners complained of the manner in which prison officers spoke them to. Prisoners regularly refer and request access to medication they used before their detention. These requests generally refer to benzodiazepines or other such medicines. Sleep deprivation is a common reason given when requesting medication. Medical issues arise at almost every meeting but we see an increase of mental health distress in an increasing number of prisoners.

We continue to meet with prisoners in private separate rooms, on the landings. Following the meeting we meet and advise the Governor or Assistant Governors of the issues raised. We are satisfied that the concerns of the prisoners we raised with the Governor or Assistant Governors have been considered and addressed promptly and sympathetically. The Governor or Assistant Governor or the staff officer usually gives a direct feedback to the prisoner, in a fair and practical manner. In the majority of cases there is a practical solution. In some cases there were issues that were not possible to solve. These would include transfers to other prisons and within the prisons and some unscreened visits and medicines not dispensed in the prison service.

A return visit is made to the prisoner on our next visit if the issue remains outstanding. We always seek a second meeting with the prisoner where there is a health issue, especially if the prisoner has complained of mental health matters. Prisoners can also make a complaint in writing form to be lodged in a Complaints Ledger. Complaint forms and the locked box for these forms are visible and accessible on each landing. Details of these issues and prisoner details are recorded and categorised in the Complaints Ledger and are dealt with by the appropriate staff personnel or by external investigator. At each meeting to Cloverhill the Visiting Committee examine the ledger. We observe the nature and frequency and pattern, if any, of the complaints. We also ensure that no unresolved cases remain outstanding and we investigate reasons for delay and the action taken to resolve the complaint. We are satisfied with the complaints system as operated in Cloverhill and those prisoners complaints have been dealt with in accordance with the correct procedure. We have received no complaints from prisoners regarding any aspect of the Complaints procedure.

We again acknowledge and thank the prisoners for the openness and trust in sharing their most private and sensitive thoughts and fears with us. We listen carefully, with total concentration to each prisoner. At all times we respect the dignity of the prisoner, the confidentiality of each person and are conscious of our responsibility to them.

The Visiting Committee are greatly appreciative of the prison staff, the class officers and the staff on the landings, for their willing manners, the co-operation shown to us on each visit and for the courteous manner in which they deal with us. We have observed the interest, concern and interaction between officers and prisoners and would be concerned at the impact aspects of work in the prison has on the staff.

Accommodation

There has been an increase of the prison population in Cloverhill in 2018. The numbers can vary depending on the time of year and at the weekend when there is an increase in the number of foreign nationals arriving at the prison.

Prison population – Irish Prison Service Prisoner \ population – cell occupancy – in cell sanitation – October 2018, below, show again the high number of prisoners sharing triple cells, with a smaller number of prisoners in 4+ cells.

Prison	Number In custody 31 October 2018	No of Prisoners In single Cell.	No of prisoners In Double Cell.	No of Prisoners In a Triple Cell.	No of Prisoners In a 4 + Cells.	No in-Cell Slopping out	Toilet in presence of others.	24 Access to toilet facilities in Private.
Cloverhill	415	58	42	303	12	0	357	58

Once again the Visiting Committee express deep concern at the high level of these figures, in particular the lack of toilet privacy for such a high number of prisoners. These issues have been raised annually by Visiting Committees in previous Annual Reports. We state again that we consider it an affront to the dignity of the human person and contrary to the aspiration that 'all prisoners deprived of their liberty shall be treated with respect for their human rights'

Judge Michael Reilly – Inspector of Prisons 2015.

We note that there has been an increase in the prison population in Cloverhill. During the year there has also been an increase in the number of sentenced prisoners the District Court has been sending to Cloverhill and in the number of migrant prisoners.

There are 16 prisoners in D2, considered to have serious mental health issues and awaiting transfer to the Central Mental Hospital.

Deportations

Persons committed by the Garda National Immigration Bureau should be held in a secure holding centre and not held in a prison. We underline that this is the right of the person. An increasing number of committals continue to arrive in Cloverhill at varying time of the day or night and must sleep on the floor of the cells. This situation naturally leads to increasing tension among prisoners.

Security measures

Cloverhill Prison operates screen visits, which are effective in preventing the passing of drugs at visiting time. However drugs continue to come over the wall from a site outside the perimeter of the prison and we understand there has been an increase in drugs from this source. In their efforts to retrieve these drugs, in climbing the walls, prisoners have been injured during the year with one hospitalisation. Prisoners can gain access to the roof via the nets in the yards.

We understand that this problem is being addressed by the prison authorities with extensive building work to be carried out to secure the netting and any areas of the perimeter that allows access to prisoners.

It is the view of the Visiting Committee that the whole area of drugs and security measures in Cloverhill remain an area of deep concern and needs urgent intervention by the Irish Prison Service.

Video Links

Remand prisoners are collected from Cloverhill early in the morning to attend court appearance that can be countrywide. Some of these remand prisoners may be on medication and may not arrive back to the prison until late in the evening. This operation requires an average of 15 officers per day detailed to assist the Prison Escort Core (PESC), for each operation.

Again the Committee restate our belief that the continued under use of this facility, which is at the discretion of the court, is a serious waste of public funding. We would hope to see this recourse being utilised.

There were no prison fatalities in Cloverhill in 2018.

Health Care

There are still concerns regarding the level of nursing staff and we understand that there are currently two nurses in protective posts, Cloverhill and Mountjoy and two nurses on long term sick leave.

The need for a second nurse for night duty remains a serious issue and has been raised many times by us. This is an area of great concern particularly given the status of Cloverhill as a remand prison. The volume of committals coming into custody at Cloverhill can vary in any one given night from one to 25. As each person has to be individually assessed and checked and as they arrive in the evening nighttime period, it places considerable strain on the nurse on duty.

Committals come from varying sources and have different degrees of poor health, The numbers include homeless persons, many with untreated health problems, some have immigration status, again with differing health issues, and with little or no English, makes the situation extremely difficult to deal with properly. While numbers can vary, the prison can have several committals with infectious diseases such as TB, CRE and Swine flu at the one time. Because there is no isolation cell the safety observation cell (SOC) is used. This leads to complications if later in the night a committal prisoner arrives and needs also be isolated. The close supervision cell (CSE) is then utilised. This change of usage is a regular occurrence, we understand.

The numbers of prisoners using methadone continues to be high. The unit report that a daily average of 97 – 127 prisoners. Prisoners are entitled to have this medication dispensed on time.

We continue our practice of regularly visiting the medical/surgery area and have previously reported on the shabby appearance, the lack of privacy in the treatment rooms and that in our opinion the surgery is unfit for purpose. We consider the surgery is in urgent need of serious work. The original cell rooms and facilities are no longer suitable for the proper health care needed today. We understand that the surgery was condemned in April 2018 under Infection Control and deemed unfit for use and that a business case for a complete overhaul has been submitted to all Governors and to Irish Prison Service, Health Care section.

Of great concern also is the lack of a proper treatment room for prisoners. Currently the holding cell in the surgery is used for many purposes that include – a consultation room for doctor or nurse, treatment room for injuries, assaults, medical emergencies, prisoners awaiting medication, routine reviews. We consider this situation to be unacceptable and disrespectful to the dignity of the prisoner.

We find the surgery a very busy place. On any given day a maximum of 24 staff work in this section. The area is cramped and the working environment is extremely basic and unattractive for staff to operate in. There has been an increase in medical, medicinal and psychiatric services. There has also been an increase in the use of psychoactive substances (head shop products or ‘spice’ as referred to earlier in this report). Because of the increased numbers availing of these services we again state

that in our opinion, improvements/changes need to be made in the delivery of the service in 2019.

The appointment of a Chief Medical Officer remains vacant and need to be addressed as a matter of priority

Again we ask that urgent action be taken in regard to the serious points raised.

Psychology Services

The Cloverhill Psychology team consists of one full time Psychologist and one part-time Assistant psychologist. A Senior Clinical Psychologist from another prison supports the team.

Anxiety and sleep difficulties, along with thoughts of self-harm, anger, relationship difficulties, suicidal thoughts, sleep difficulties and bereavement are common referrals to the psychology service. We understand that there is a waiting list of 40 clients.

The Assistant Psychologist, with support from the School and Prison Officers, delivered four anxiety management groups, one session per week for six weeks. Approximately 40 people attended one or more sessions of each group.

Four sleep management groups were provided, with an average attendance of four participants per group.

Individual 1-1 sessions were offered to 1,296 people. An attendance rate of 84% demonstrates the clients' commitment and interest in mental health wellbeing.

An offence focussed therapy group was introduced in Cloverhill in 2018. Metallisation-based therapy (MBT), a type of long-term psychotherapy, has an introduction programme, MBTi that is 10-12 weeks in duration. The programme supports people to improve their interpersonal relationships with the goal of reducing violence and recidivism. 13 participants, out of 19 participants, have successfully completed two programmes. The transitory nature of Cloverhill means that clients can struggle to attend all group sessions.

The delivery of mental health is greatly dependent on many staff in the prison, the support of the Governor and the co-ordination of Cloverhill services. The MTB course was co-facilitated with a Register from the in reach Forensic Psychiatry Service (PICLS), supported by the school and the Prison Officer team who facilitated attendance through collections and supervisory detail.

Prisoners speak very positively of the programmes and of the good effect participation has on their lives. The course in Mindfulness is frequently referred to. Because of the success of the service some prisoners have requested that the course be extended to work on the landings perhaps at the last out of cell period. We understand that mental care outside the office hours would require greater investment in the prison service. Because of the enormous advantages to the prisoner, the life long skills he has learned, the opportunity he has while in prison to bring some order to a chaotic life, we would ask that this be explored.

Research finds that people in custody report higher levels of mental ill health than the general community, underlying the importance of eschewing that there is equivalence of mental health care in prison, including access to psychological therapies.

(Duffy, Linehan and Kennedy – 'Psychiatric Morbidity in the male sentenced Irish prisoner')

Education Centre

In our Report to the Minister for Justice 2017 we recommended that the issue of access to the Education Centre for protected prisoners be addressed.

We are pleased to see that access to the school for protection prisoners on C2 landing is now available for five afternoons per week. Both protected and non-protection prisoners currently attend these classes. The school report that while the uptake is low the numbers are improving each week.

An earlier six-week pilot project to give access to protected prisoners on C2 landing, two afternoons per week in two subject areas, was carried out in November 2018. The uptake was very low and education informed prison management that the project was not sustainable.

The education centre consider the present afternoon classes of mixed prisoners a big improvement on the earlier pilot model and confirm that it is currently working well. They are encouraged and confident of the future success of this arrangement.

We are also happy that there has only been one closure since the review by prison management of the officer allocation for the education centre in October 2018. This is a huge improvement on the situation in 2017 – 2018.

The education centre provides a range of subjects and courses with high standard of achievements of awards and certification. We have seen the high quality of the facilities but we note that the centre is limited in that activity based subjects are not available. We know that there are seven classrooms and that there is limited space for expansion but the prisoners using the centre would greatly benefit from the provision of more activity based subjects. We note the difficulties for the centre in providing options for both short and long term remand prisoners in a centre that has the capacity and teaching resources it has.

There are also an increasing number of long-term prisoners in Cloverhill. There are an average of 35 sentenced prisoners recorded. The number of sentenced prisoners attending the school is small in comparison to the remand prisoners and it is difficult for the education centre to provide suitable courses for longer-term prisoners. Short-term module courses are therefore prioritised. Increase in the number of classrooms and teaching staff would enable the school to provide more long-term courses on an ongoing basis for prisoners who would greatly benefit from these valuable skills.

Courses in Mindfulness, Meditation, Sleep Management and Anxiety also take place in the education centre facilitated by the psychology department and addiction councillor. Prisoners speak of the positive effect on their lives and some have requested that the classes be held on the landings. We feel that in the time the prisoner is detained every effort should be made to help him avail of services in the prison that would not be available to him outside when he is released.

Library

On our visits to the Library we observe the area to be a busy and friendly centre providing both recreational and educational resource for the prisoner.

It is planned to open the library most evenings to offer greater access to prisoners. Visitors to the library average 100 per month. Links with the school remain strong with a Drop Everything and Read morning being very successful. The school also facilitated taking requests and getting book requests to prisoners during 2018. It is good to see the strengthening of these links and the library intends to develop stronger links with the school during 2019.

C2 Library

When the new library on C2 opened a schedule for visiting by all the factions on C wing was introduced. The Library reports a steady increase in interest month on month since the beginning of the year with a huge peak of 890 prisoners in November 2018. Plans to open libraries in two other divisions towards the end of 2018 are advancing on time and should be open in April/May 2019.

The library is often one of the first places to be closed when prison officers are required for other duties. The Visiting Committee would like to see a regularising of the opening hours to allow greater access for prisoners to this important resource.

Integrated Service Management (ISM)

In our last report we noted the installation of three new interview suits, overseen by ISM. We are pleased to report this year that there are now four interview/therapy rooms, located on E-Division corridor. One of the main responsibilities of for the ISM in Cloverhill is the management of the E-Division, which provides access to the various service providers to meet with their clients. The services that avail of these facilities include: addiction, psychology, Prison In Reach Court Liaison Service (PICLS), chaplains and resettlement services. The service is highly utilised with most having between 85 percent and 100 percent access to their clients.

The team in Cloverhill consists of two ISM officers and an In Reach officer who looks after the needs of the services corridor. All services must pre-book the rooms and are electronically logged. It is vital that that the staffing numbers for this area are maintained to ensure the continued efficient service being provided. Any re-deployment of staff will impact seriously on service and on the sentence management of the prisoners.

We have observed the busy corridor and the well organised, smooth and efficient running of this service. Cloverhill is a remand prison and in comparison with other prisons has different issues to be addressed. The core role of the Integrated Sentence Management officer is to help prisoners to manage their sentence. We understand the process; the initial interview to access the needs of the prisoner, the referral of the prisoner to the appropriate service providers, the progress of the prisoner is monitored and reviewed by the multi-discipline team. Prisoners engaged in this process may be accessed for open prison or the Community Return Programme.

We also note that prisoners who are deemed to be vulnerable or a possible risk to the community on release are subjected to case conference prior to their release and that various internal and external agencies may be invited to attend to determine the best path take for the welfare of the prisoner and the community.

We are impressed with the concern of ISM staff for the well being of the prisoners in their care, with the openness and courtesy shown to us on the Visiting Committee.

We are however deeply concerned at the loss of the Community Welfare Officer from the prisons, withdrawn by the Department of Social Protection. This service was of vital importance for the prisoner in many significant and ways that helped him at a vulnerable time of release. Practically, for example, it allowed a prisoner to receive his social welfare cheque at the time of his release and provided a follow up appointment with the relevant welfare officer, a very important bridging stone in his re entry to his community. It provided an inestimable service and confidence to the prisoner at a very significant time in his life.

Kitchen

The Visiting Committee visit the kitchen regularly and on all occasions have been impressed with the high standards and the efficiency of the service. The main kitchen provides 1,500 covers a day and also provide daily meals for 80 - to 100 to inmates attending Cloverhill Courthouse.

We have observed and sampled the food prepared in the kitchen and have also taken note of the variety and balance of the weekly menu and the separate special area for food free from allergies.

In previous reports we have raised several areas that are of concern to us. These included the bad state of the kitchen floor and the need to replace some kitchen equipment. We regret that these areas have not been addressed. The kitchen floor in particular needs the most urgent attention and needs to be replaced.

In general we feel that the kitchen is in need of modernisation. Except for some remedial work it remains in its original 1999 year format and design. We understand that the present cost of maintenance of the machines and refrigerators is considerable. We feel that an overhaul of the kitchen and new equipment would lead to greater efficiency and savings. We note also that the locker room is inadequate and that the toilet facilities need to be improved.

We also understand that plans to enhance facilities on E division for those inmates who work in the kitchen have been submitted and are of a low cost. This improvement in facilities and conditions would, we feel, have positive benefits for both workers and staff.

An Audit score of 93%, with regard to food production and safety practices, was awarded to the kitchen in Cloverhill. We have never received a complaint regarding the food from the kitchen.

Again, we acknowledge the impressive high standard of the kitchen in Cloverhill. To maintain this high standard and we believe it is vital that the refurbishment and replacement of the present equipment as outlined above be undertaken.

Laundry

The laundry in Cloverhill is a busy efficient unit providing an excellent service to the prison. There continues to be a positive working environment and good relationship between the manager and the workers, which is evident on our visits.

In previous reports we have commented on the under utilisation of the laundry, the roster arrangements and on the state of the laundry equipment.

The laundry operates from Monday to Friday, with limited opening hours. The current roster arrangement means there is approximately 23 hours and 20 minutes per week allocated to wash the clothing and bedding for 360 to 440 prisoners. Given that Cloverhill is a remand prison, with prisoners moving in and out of the prison, it is likely that these figures will at times be in excess of the figures quoted here.

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Wheatfield Prison means that Wheatfield launders some of Cloverhill's bedding requirements. At times this has been problematic as any disruption at Wheatfield, staff shortages, machinery problems, has a serious adverse effect on the laundry service in Cloverhill.

At present there are three 17kg washing machines and four dryers in the laundry in Cloverhill. The washing machines we understand are in good order but aging and regularly breakdown. One of the four dryers is currently not working and is awaiting an End Of Life certificate. One drier is also very old and it too is not reliable.

There is one Work Training Officer (WTO). Prisoner staff numbers can vary between two to four with six being the maximum number. Because, again, Cloverhill is a remand prison there is a consistent turnover in workers in the laundry and prisoners frequently have to attend court. Arrangements made by the WTO and the Education Unit allows prisoners attend their classes in the school. The shortage of working hours for prisoners means that Prisoners only receive practical training, as under these circumstances it is not possible to provide any formal Guild training to prisoners employed there.

Investment in laundry equipment, an increase in prisoner working with back-to back roster, as has been referred to in previous Visiting Committee Reports and would we feel greatly benefit the prisoners and the prison. The provision of extra working hours for prisoners would allow for training and skills relevant and necessary for the labour market. The certificate of Guild of Launderers and Cleaners would be a huge boost in confidence and greatly improve the men's prospects for employment when released.

We have observed the very good atmosphere in the laundry on all our visits and are impressed with the industry, work ethic and general satisfaction expressed by the prisoners working in the laundry. It is a good place to work in.

Stores

There is currently one Prison Executive Officer (PSO) and any one of 10 prison officers working in the stores on any given day.

On the day of our last visit we observed that while the stock was very low in some items that essential toiletry items were in stock. Some items not on shelves included items necessary for the maintenance and cleanliness of the prison.

We understand that there is a tight budget in operation. We also noted the high number of electrical items needing repair and replacement. A remand prison like Cloverhill has different needs and remand prisoners, being transient, have different attitudes. This can result in a higher turnover in prison clothes, runners, toiletries and electrical appliances.

To continue the smooth maintenance of the stores, which we have observed in previous visits, we ask that this situation be addressed. The Visiting Committee ask the Irish Prison Service to take these circumstances into consideration when allotting the budget.

Gym

Prisoners regularly raise issues relating to the standard of gym equipment. Most of the current equipment is over 20 years old and some are now, we understand, beyond repair. Maintenance and replacement parts for gym equipment in use takes an inordinate amount of time with some pieces out of order for over a year. Some prisoners have complained of neck and back injuries. In each instance the prisoners reported that the particular equipment remained unrepaired at the time of their visits.

Lack of access to the gym also features regularly in prisoners visits to the VC. C and E divisions are closed on a regular basis, and gym attendance is in accordance with enhanced regimes.

Remand prisoners in Cloverhill, for the first month of detention, are not permitted to use their own gym clothes; we would like to see new attire to allow inmates to partake in gym facilities as soon as possible following their detention.

We understand that there has been no work training or specialised training for gym officers since 2015 in the gym area.

We have highlighted the dilapidated condition of the equipment in previous Reports, as has the WTO of the gym section. We are also concerned at the risk to prisoners' safety. Because work in the gym, and keeping fit is such an important part of the prisoners' regime as they strive to maintain fitness and order in their daily lives we would ask as a matter of urgency that budget provision be made to bring the gym area to an efficient working standard.

Pastoral Care

We have had several prisoners referred to us by the Chaplains and know of the valuable service they contribute to the prison population and their families.

Chaplaincy service is provided seven days a week with 24 hour availability. However, with the current chaplaincy allocation, we understand it is increasingly difficult to sustain this level of service in the medium to long-term.

The current chaplaincy allocation to Cloverhill is two whole time equivalent posts. As reported last year, this falls short of the three full-time chaplaincy posts that Cloverhill had until 2011. Again, we believe that allocating one more full-time chaplain to Cloverhill would have a strong, positive impact on the services that are of significant value to the prisoners and staff in the prison.

Conclusion

The Visiting Committee is happy to report the many improvements that have taken place in Cloverhill since the last report, in particular the addition of the 'Limerick Windows'. We observe that the prison is well maintained, clean and bright. On our monthly visits and on our unannounced visits, we walk through the communal areas and the landings. We meet and talk with staff in their working areas and meet prisoners on the landings. We are a visible presence and have visited almost every area of the prison in the last year. We have met professional and non-professional prison service staff and in house staff to gain a better understanding of the need to consider both security and prison sub-culture issues in the prison. We welcome this informal interaction with prisoners and class officers on the landings and at their work.

We are greatly impressed with the painting programme, especially by the murals and imaginative painting on display. We see the work of the enhanced prisoners, the care and attention they give to their work; we especially note the spotless condition of areas like the chapel and the surrounding corridor. We commend the quality of work by the inmate painter, the paintings in the chapel and on the walls of the prison, the maintenance of the garden of remembrance for deceased staff and the outdoors seating.

We thank the Governor, the Assistant Governors and prison staff for their courtesy, for the time they give us on our visits and for their availability to meet us. We acknowledge the prompt and fair response to the prisoners and to us regarding the issues raised by inmates at our meetings. During our visits we observe the familiarity of the officers in the affairs of the prisoner and his concerns. We are aware of the support given by prison staff and feel that more training for staff that deal with emotionally distressed inmates would be of benefit.

We hope to continue with this good relationship and to work with prison staff, medical staff, voluntary staff and other sections to identify issues that may arise in 2019.

The Visiting Committee thank the Minister for Justice, Charles Flanagan TD and the Irish Prison Service. We look forward to continue working with them in professional manner in 2019. We again express our concern at the numbers on the Visiting Committee. The Committee currently have three members but we have operated with two members at different times during the year.

During the year the Chairperson attended the quarterly held meeting of the National Chairpersons Group held in the Brian Stack Training Centre Portlaoise. Michael Donnellan, Director General of the Irish Prison Service and the Minister for Justice, Charles Flanagan TD, also attended some meetings. Members of the Visiting Committee also attended three training days in the same venue.

Issues we recommend be addressed in 2019 include:

- Access to medical care to be improved – physical and mental care.
- Additional night nursing care – urgent because of the nature of Cloverhill.
- Surgery refurbishment.
- Toilet privacy.
- Overcrowding cell conditions.
- Access to Education Centre for protected prisoners.
- Increased Staff in areas outlined in report – addiction, counselling service.
- Increase in the number of Chaplains.
- Drugs situation – access of drugs and to roof as a priority.
- Restricted regimes – number of prisoners – their limited access to education and skills to counter isolation and boredom, would also ease reintegration into society.
- Formal Guild training to be available to prisoners – workers in laundry, kitchen.
- More information to be made available to prisoner’s the services available in the prison.
- Reinstatement of a Community Welfare Officer.

Cloverhill Visiting Committee

Nuala Ryan.

Nuala Ryan 2/5/19

Laura Jenkins.

Laura Jenkins 2/5/19

Fintan Hudson

Cloverhill Visiting Committee: Nuala Ryan

Laura Jenkins

Fintan Hudson

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fintan Hudson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the right of a horizontal line.
