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*Dan Peter*

## THE USE OF PAVA IN PRISONS

Thank you for your letter dated 30 October outlining the Prison Reform Trust's conclusions regarding the decision to rollout PAVA. I also welcomed the opportunity to discuss this in person and hope that our discussion has already answered some of your questions outlined in your letter.

I take on board your concerns that the introduction of PAVA has the potential to undermine trust if not used with legitimate authority, this evidence has been considered and influenced the decision to rollout as a Safety initiative alongside a range of other initiatives. The Safety Programme includes significant projects including the Offender Management in Custody rollout and the Rehabilitative Culture Project. It is our intention to ensure that PAVA does not undermine these projects and provides the safety and reassurance both staff and those in our care require to be able to focus on rehabilitation.

Whilst the evaluation has given you cause for concern please note that the decision to rollout was not based solely on this and the output from the evaluation is being used to inform the implementation plans for the wider estate. An example of this is the Operational Readiness assessment that is being developed to ensure that a prison is in the right place to be issued with PAVA. The fundamental underpinning of this assessment is that the prison has the required training, oversight and governance around all Use of Force, and also has implemented Five Minute Intervention training, Body Worn Video Cameras and the Offender Management in Custody Key worker model. These key initiatives are all aimed at improving the relationships between staff and prisoners, developing a rehabilitative culture, and ensuring legitimate authority.

In order to deliver rehabilitation to those in our care, safety, and the reduction of violence needs to be addressed, to provide stable and predictable regimes. We recognise that PAVA alone will not achieve this, hence the decision for the Prison Safety directorate to deliver the implementation. To further enhance the skills of our staff the roll out will also include updated Personal Protection training, this aims to better equip staff to deescalate situations.

From the content of your drafted position paper I note that there is a sense the evaluation has been "kept secret", this was not the intention and we have shared the document in good faith in order to engage with our stakeholders. As you note the introduction of PAVA is a finely balanced decision at a time when we are experiencing a significantly high frequency and severity of violence across the estate, we are therefore focussed on doing all we can to address this whilst continuing to monitor the impact of new initiatives. The rollout will be evaluated and there will be regular lessons learned as it progresses in order to adapt and respond where required.

Equalities Analysis are not static documents, and we will continue to review it as part of the roll out so that we adhere to our Public-Sector Equality Duty. HMPPS strives to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. As part of the process we draw on a wide range of evidence, and where necessary will make changes to our procedures and practices.

The final ask in your letter is that I consider a moratorium in order to consult further and gather more evidence, I feel that the engagement that has is underway has been valuable and we will continue to engage with a range of stakeholders and as above the project itself will involve learning and evaluating as it progresses therefore I do not feel it is necessary to hold a moratorium and hope you can appreciate my reasons for this.

*BA wls*  
*Rory*  
**RORY STEWART MP**