



# HOLLESLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs Judi Hallett, *Clerk to the Council*

Manor Farm, Hollesley, Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 3NB

Tel: 01394 411405 / 07739 411927 [hollesleyparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:hollesleyparishclerk@gmail.com)

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5<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dr Therese Coffey MP  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Dr Coffey,

**Re: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – 190415037**

Firstly, we hope you and your family are all well?

I am forwarding you two documents:

- The decision of the Information Commissioner regarding our complaint to her with reference to information not received from the Ministry of Justice – Complaint Reference FS50872002, and
- The redacted document forwarded to us from the MoJ, as a result of the ICO's decision – entitled '2018.07.13 Submission of Handling of Hollesley Bay and [REDACTED]

As you are aware for a number of months now Hollesley Parish Council (HPC) has sought clarification over the decision to house Men Convicted of Sexual Offences (MCOSO) at HMP & YOI Hollesley Bay. You will recall Cllrs. James Mallinder and Helen Lewis visited Westminster as your guests and spoke to the then Minister for Justice, Rory Stewart MP.

We have received the attached documentation following numerous FOI requests made to the MoJ.

This matter was discussed at the June meeting of HPC and the Councillors concluded that that information now received should have been disclosed to you two years ago. We would like to establish if indeed it was?

It is clear in the MoJ's letter that you *should* have been aware of the decision that had been taken, this information should have been disclosed to you and, if it had been, this would have been information which could have been made available to us.

Page 6 of the MoJ letter states that "*On confirmation that the call with MPs has taken place, the following stakeholders will be notified by MoJ Officials (national) and the Prison Governors (local)*". The list of 'Local' persons to be informed includes 'Local Authorities'. Is it therefore the case that if you were not informed of the decision this information could not therefore be passed down to us? Or, if you were informed, why was the information not passed down to us?

As you will see from the MoJ's letter, much has been redacted but it is obvious that two prisons were selected to take MCOSO, two years ago. Whilst the other prison's name has been withheld, it is common knowledge to be Thorn Cross and it is also commonly known that the MoJ chose not to proceed with that establishment for MCOSO.

It is clear from further investigations that political pressure from the local MP and the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thorn Cross area had some impact on the MoJ when they decided to reverse the decision to hold MCOSO at that prison.

Our further investigations show that according to MoJ website, the one thing that HMP & YOI Hollesley Bay and HMP Thorn Cross have in common is that they are the only two prisons classified as 'dual-designated', i.e. they are allowed to hold young adults. This would appear to suggest that every young adult convicted of a MCOSO will be coming to HMP & YOI Hollesley Bay.

As you can imagine this is of great concern to HPC and our local residents. Clearly the MoJ has not been forthcoming to us and any questions you can ask on our behalf would be appreciated.

Finally, you will note from the document attached that on page 3, the 4th para suggests that HMP & YOI Hollesley Bay was selected in order to increase 'geographical options' for MCOSO. Our investigations show that the only two Category D prisons currently accepting these prisoners are Ley Hill in Gloucestershire and North Sea Camp in Lincolnshire. It is hard therefore to understand how having another prison on the east coast of England, i.e. HMP & YOI Hollesley Bay actually achieves the stated aim.

We very much appreciate your time in considering our concerns and questions.

Kind regards,

*Judi Hallett*

Clerk to Hollesley Parish Council