



Ministry
of Justice

Jeremy Wright MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of
State for Justice
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

T 020 3334 3555
F 020 3334 3669
E general.queries@justice.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/moj

Lord Harris
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Our ref: 7355

31st March 2014

Dear Toby,

INDEPENDENT REVIEW INTO DEATHS IN CUSTODY OF 18-24 YEAR OLDS

Thank you for your letter accepting the invitation extended to the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody to take on the review of self-inflicted deaths of 18-24 year olds in custody according to the Terms of Reference published on 6 February 2014.

I welcome the expertise that the panel will bring to this work and your leadership skills in ensuring the recommendations are practical and objective. I understand that a budget of £150,000 in addition to staff resource has been agreed. I can confirm that after carefully considering the findings of the review, the Government does intend to publish a response.

I understand your disappointment that the deaths of the four children that have taken place within the time period that the review is considering are not included in the terms of reference. When we considered what parameters would facilitate the most effective review, we took into account both ongoing work in respect of youth justice learning and that the youth justice system is, quite rightly, purposefully distinct from the adult justice system. Investigating separate systems will undoubtedly lengthen the time before the IAP is able to publish its report. Given the seriousness of the issues I want to proceed with a review which will provide recommendations as swiftly as possible to address the greatest current need. However, I note that you plan to make use of the discretion in the terms of reference to take account of learning from those tragic deaths.

Please let me know if I can offer assistance such as enabling access to prisons and staff to facilitate understanding of the operational realities and constraints in the secure adult estate.

I would like to invite you to meet me in the autumn to discuss your emerging thoughts and views in regard to the review. My office will be in touch to arrange a suitable date.

Yours ever,

Jeremy

JEREMY WRIGHT