



Alberto Costa MP  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

*Zuh* March 2016

*Per Alberto,*

### HM PRISON AND YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTION GLEN PARVA

When I appeared before the Justice Select Committee last week I undertook to write to you about the planned changes to the prisoner population at Glen Parva prison and young offender institution.

As you know, on 9 November 2015, the Chancellor and I announced our intention to build nine new prisons. We want to create the physical conditions that can improve rehabilitation so that prisoners turn away from a life of crime. To support this work we are conducting due diligence activities on some of our existing sites to establish whether they could be suitable for a new prison. Glen Parva is one such site. I understand Andrew Selous spoke to you about this work in February. No decisions on further development of these sites has yet been taken, and we will of course keep you up-to-date with developments.

We also recently wrote to you about how we manage adult prisoners both now and in the future. Our immediate need is to ensure that we make best use of the existing prison estate to provide places for all of those committed to custody.

The number of young adults in custody has fallen by 40% since 2010 while the adult population has increased by around 10%. This has caused Glen Parva to operate with a significant number of unfilled places at the same time that pressure has grown to provide more places for adult prisoners. This is clearly not a sustainable position and we had three options to manage it: close Glen Parva altogether and move the young offenders further from home, change Glen Parva into an adult prison or retain the young offenders in Glen Parva and fill the empty places with adult prisoners. After careful consideration we chose the third option because it provides the best outcome for the management of both adults and young offenders and it is the way that we already operate successfully in a number of former young offender institutions.

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has extensive experience in holding adults alongside young adults and this is not the first time we have partially re-roled establishments that previously held a young adult population only. HMP/YOI Portland in Dorset, Rochester in Kent and Stoke Heath in Shropshire have all implemented similar changes. The safety of the public, those staff that work in prisons and prisoners themselves will always be the primary consideration for NOMS. For your further

information, I would like to assure you that it is established NOMS policy that young adults held alongside adults in prisons such as Glen Parva are always accommodated in separate cells from adult prisoners.

Andrew Selous advised you of in his letter of 9 March that, as a result of this change, Glen Parva will in the future hold category C prisoners aged 21 and over alongside its existing population of young adult prisoners aged 18 to 20.

If you have any further queries Andrew Selous would be happy to meet you to discuss these. His office can be contacted directly on 020 3444 3688.

Thank you for your continued interest in the work of Glen Parva.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mrs. M. Gove', with a checkmark above the 'Mrs.' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**MICHAEL GOVE**