



**Keep Calm –
Investors in Excellence is coming!**

Yorkshire and Humberside Prisons and the Investors in Excellence Standard

Background to Yorkshire and Humberside Prisons

Investors in Excellence was delighted when, in 2012, the public sector prisons of the Yorkshire and Humberside region committed to becoming Investors in Excellence. They did so whilst working hard on their own day-to-day challenges of driving the Government’s strategic objectives for the rehabilitation of offenders and workforce reorganisation.

Since that time in particular one Governor has seen the value that working with Investors in Excellence can bring, which has seen Governor Diane Pellow develop a strategy for success at three consecutive establishments.

Wherever Diane goes she leads the way with her mantra ‘Keep calm. Investors in Excellence is coming!’



**Keep calm.
Investors in Excellence
is Coming**

Diane Pellow, Governor,
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The Prisons and Investors in Excellence Working Together

A true advocate of excellence, the Principles of Excellence are quickly rolled out and the work soon begins:

At each Establishment Diane begins with a Facilitated Business Diagnostic facilitated by Investors in Excellence. This gives her an opportunity to look afresh at each establishment and to engage her leadership teams in support of a clear vision, understanding the organisational strengths and prioritising areas for improvement assessed against the holistic business framework of the Investors in Excellence Standard.

The Business Diagnostic begins by asking the organisation 'What Matters Most?' and focuses on establishing prioritised plans to achieve:

- Measurable and sustainable improvements
- Removal of value destroying processes
- Significantly improved return on investment
- Reduction of waste and inventory levels
- Better motivated people and customer retention.

Wherever she goes, we are impressed with the number of both senior and ground level staff who attend the sessions and their enthusiasm for highlighting the positives about their working environment whilst identifying areas for improvement.

Following these initial sessions we are able to identify a number of development projects, which are allocated to senior management as 'owners'. Subsequent sessions explore how these will be progressed, with a three-month timeframe set for completion.

Diane set about appointing a senior manager as project manager, a role that is crucial to ensuring continued focus and momentum throughout the project's life.

Critical to clarity is the formulation of a new Strategic Plan for each of the prisons she has worked in. Results are newly formulated, agreed, local objectives, performance measures, branding and values. To raise staff awareness, she holds a number of 'road shows' where she shows the journey ahead and detail of the strategic objectives.

The Results

Diane structures her timeline and her expectations. At HMP & YOI New Hall and HMP & YOI Askham Grange after three months of development work we were keen to see how much progress the

Establishments had made. On our return, we were delighted to find that a number of projects had been significantly progressed. We conducted a 'distance travelled' check by asking staff to grade the current position compared to where they were at the time of the first workshop. Their overall score out of 10 went up significantly demonstrating that they had made substantial improvements through the Investors in Excellence process, even before they started to submit for external assessment.

Assessment applications can take the form of discovery by the Assessor or a written submission of evidence for evaluation. Diane initially choses the written Investors in Excellence Standard application, which while meaning an investment of time, finds the legacy of the document produced really does add value for the organisation. Gathering evidence against the indicator statements allows the person completing the assessment to see where there are obvious gaps in organisational awareness or working practices. These can then be addressed internally or help is at hand if needed. The finished document is often used by organisations as part of the induction pack for new staff, to give an overall picture of the organisation.

The formal assessment process includes a site visit and concludes with a detailed feedback report highlighting both their strengths and further areas for improvement, which are then turned into action plans.

Governor Diane Pellew is an ambassador of Investors in Excellence having found that the Standard and our Business Diagnostics tools help

- Identify What Matters Most,
- Enables robust business assurance
- Pinpoints a clear understanding of performance,
- Leverages the organisation's capacity and capability
- And greatly helps reach consensus on improvement actions.

We always know that wherever Diane moves the journey to excellence remains high in her leadership toolkit.