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94 St. Stephen's Green,  
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## **Visiting Committee Annual Report 2012**

We, the members of the Visiting Committee at Portlaoise Prison are pleased to present our Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 2012.

The Committee meet on the first Tuesday of each month throughout the year and two members of the Committee visit the Prison on an unannounced visit once a month. Each month members of the Committee visit different areas of the Prison and inspect all the facilities and services which are available to the prisoners.

The Committee met with a large number of prisoners throughout the year who had various requests and issues which they wished to raise with the Visiting Committee. The Committee brought these issues and requests to the attention of the Governor along with their recommendations and were satisfied with the decision or action taken on each occasion. The Committee would once again like to highlight the fact that an increasing number of requests were made by prisoners who had been transferred to the new state of the art C Block and were looking to go back to Mountjoy Prison or Dublin based Prisons. Most of these requests to return to Dublin prisons were to facilitate family visits.

Throughout the year, the Committee visited the new C Block and are delighted to report that this new Block is a very modern building with in cell sanitation and provides a wide range of workshops and education facilities for offenders housed in this Block. However, the committee are very disappointed to report that only two of the workshops are in operation to date. Despite, several requests by the Governor for more staff to operate the rest of the Workshops, to date, no extra staff have been transferred to Portlaoise to make provision for the opening of these workshops.

We are happy to report that all prisoners have access to a very good health care system which includes a full time Medical Officer, who along with the Nurse Officers and Medical Orderlies provide excellent care for all the prisoners. A Physiotherapist from the local hospital visits the Prison on a weekly basis and a visiting Psychologist also attends at the Prison on a regular basis. The following clinics are also provided on a regular basis or as required : Psychiatrist, Dentist, Chiropodist and Optician.

The Catholic chaplain, Fr Drumm and the Church of Ireland Minister continue to care for the spiritual needs of the prisoners.

The Prison also has a full time Probation Officer who addresses a wide range of issues with the prisoners such as offending behaviour, anger management, addiction, coping skills, problem solving skills and resettlement issues. Most of the

work is carried out on an individual basis but some group work programmes also took place during the year. Some prisoners also requested help with sourcing accommodation, social welfare and employment in preparation for their release throughout the year.

The Education Centre offers prisoners a wide range of subjects at basic, intermediate and advanced levels. The Education Centre held a number of examinations by accredited bodies during the year and a number of prisoners sat these exams. A number of pre release courses were also offered during the year which include courses in Goal Setting, Personal Development, Relationships and Job preparation.

Visiting speakers from the following agencies also visited and gave great assistance and were very informative and beneficial to the Pre Release Programme.

- Citizens Information Centre
- Linkage (Employment issues)
- FAS
- Pathways
- Pace
- Addiction Centres

The following courses were also completed to aid prisoners with their needs and requirements for employment upon release :

- Environmental Food Hygiene (Leonardo)
- City & Guilds, Skills Foundation, Skills Proficiency
- Pre Release Programme
- European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL)
- Web Design
- First Aid / CPR/ Order of Malta
- Addiction Studies

The Education Centre had an average enrolment of between 250 and 260 prisoners throughout the year. The Centre has a teaching staff of 9 full time teachers and 20 part time teachers. The education programme runs from 9.15 am until 7.30 pm for 206 days per annum.

The Education Centre holds examinations accredited by the following bodies :

Junior Certificate  
Leaving Certificate  
FETAC Level 3  
FETAC Level 4  
FETAC Level 5  
Open University/Distance Learning  
Trinity Guildhall  
Scrudu Ceol Tire Comhaltas  
Royal Irish Academy of Music  
Rockschool

The Education Programme regarding projects and extra curricular activities is continuously evolving and developing and a large number of extra educational projects and activities were developed and encouraged by teachers in the Prison during the year including Poetry & Creative Writing workshops, Music & Song Writing, Motivational Workshop, Craft Workshop, First Aid and Philosophy Workshop.

Industrial Supervisor in charge of the Kitchen and his team of Assistant Industrial Supervisors continue to produce and maintain very high standards in the preparation, cooking and distribution of food on a daily basis. The 28 day menu caters for both normal and vegetarian diet.

Prisoners working in this area must take part in a number of certifiable training courses which assists them in the performance of their work and helps them maintain an interest in their work.

Once again, we congratulate the Governor and his staff in this area on their many achievements during the year.

In conclusion, we would like to thank Governors Mullen and Moran, his management team and staff for the courtesy, assistance and hospitality provided to us on our visits to the Prison at all times during the year.

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Tom Colgan  
Chairman

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Anne Turley

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Eilish Croke

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Michael Hough

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William Foley

An tUasal Alan Shatter T.D.,  
An tAire Dlí agus Cirt, Comhionannais & Cosanta,  
94 Faiche Stiabhna,  
Baile Átha Cliath 2.

## **Tuarascáil Bhliantúil an Choiste Cuairte 2012**

Táimidne, baill an Choiste Cuairte ag Príosún Phort Laoise, sásta ár dTuarascáil Bhliantúil le haghaidh na bliana dar críoch 31 Nollaig, 2012, a chur i láthair.

Buailéann an Coiste le chéile ar an gcéad Mháirt de gach mí i rith na bliana agus tugann beirt bhall de chuid an Choiste cuairt gan fógra ar an bPríosún uair amháin sa mhí. Tugann baill den Choiste cuairt ar réimsí éagsúla den Phríosún gach mí agus déanann siad iniúchadh ar na saoráidí agus ar na seirbhísí ar fad atá ar fáil do na príosúnaigh.

Bhuail an Coiste le líon mór príosúnach le linn na bliana ag a bhí ag iarraidh iarratais agus ceisteanna éagsúla a ardú leis an gCoiste Cuairte. Chuir an Coiste na ceisteanna agus na hiarratais seo ar aird an Ghobharnóra mar aon lena moltaí agus bhí siad sásta leis an gcinneadh nó leis an mbeart a rinneadh gach uair. Ba mhaith leis an gCoiste an fhíríc a thabhairt chun suntais arís go ndearna na príosúnaigh líon iarratas atá ag méadú, príosúnaigh a aistríodh go dtí an Bloc C úr den scoth agus a bhí ag iarraidh dul ar ais go Príosún Mhuinseo nó go Príosúin lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath. Bhain an chuid is mó de na hiarratais sin le dul ar ais go príosúin i mBaile Átha Cliath le cuairteanna teaghlaigh a éascú.

Le linn na bliana, thug an Coiste cuairt ar an mBloc C úr agus tá an-áthas orainn a thuairisciú go bhfuil an Bloc úr seo ina fhoirgneamh an-chomhaimseartha le sláintíocht laistigh de na cillíní agus soláthraítear raon leathan ceardlann agus saoráidí oideachais ann le haghaidh ciontóirí a bhfuil a gcóiríocht sa Bhloc seo. Mar sin féin, tá an-díomá ar an gcoiste a thuairisciú nach bhfuil ach dhá cheardlann ag feidhmiú go dtí seo. In ainneoin roinnt iarratas a rinne an Gobharnóir maidir le tuilleadh foirne leis an gcuid eile de na Ceardlanna a fheidhmiú, go dtí seo, níor aistríodh foireann bhreise ar bith go Port Laoise d'fhonn soláthar a dhéanamh d'oscailt na gceardlann sin.

Táimid sásta a thuairisciú go bhfuil rochtain ag na príosúnaigh go léir ar chóras cúram sláinte maith ina bhfuil Oifigeach Leighis, a chuireann cúram sármhaith ar fáil, mar aon leis na hOifigigh Altra agus na Giollaí Leighis, do na príosúnaigh ar fad. Tugann Fisiteiripeoir ón ospidéal áitiúil cuairt ar an bPríosún ar bhonn seachtainiúil agus freastalaíonn Síceolaí cuairte ar an bPríosún ar bhonn rialta. Cuirtear na clinicí seo a leanas ar fáil ar bhonn rialta nó más cuí chomh maith: Sícriatraí, Fiaclóir, Cosla agus Radharceolaí.

Leanann an séiplíneach Caitliceach, an tAthair Drumm agus Ministir Eaglais na hÉireann d'aire a thabhairt do riachtanais eaglasta na bpríosúnach.

Tá Oifigeach Promhaidh lánaimseartha ag an bPríosún chomh maith a thugann aghaidh ar raon leathan ceisteanna leis na príosúnaigh amhail iompraíocht ionsaitheach, láimhseáil feirge, andúil, scileanna láimhseála, scileanna réitithe fadhbanna agus ceisteanna athlonnaithe. Déantar an chuid is mó den obair ar bhonn aonair ach cuireadh roinnt clár um obair ghrúpa i gcrích le linn na bliana chomh maith. D'iarr roinnt príosúnach cuidiú maidir le cóiríocht a fháil, leas sóisialta agus fostaíocht agus iad ag ullmhú dá scaoileadh amach i rith na bliana.

Cuirtear raon leathan ábhar ar fáil do na Príosúnaigh san Ionad Oideachais ag an mbunleibhéal, meánleibhéal agus ardleibhéal. Thionóil comhlachtaí creidiúnaithe roinnt scrúduithe san Ionad Oideachais le linn na bliana agus rinne cuid de na príosúnaigh na scrúduithe sin. Cuireadh roinnt cúrsaí réamhscaoilte amach ar fáil le linn na bliana chomh maith lena áiríodh cúrsaí maidir le Spriocanna a Leagan Síos, Forbairt Phearsanta, Caidreamh agus ullmhú le haghaidh Post.

Thug cainteoirí cuairte ó na gníomhaireachtaí seo a leanas cuairt ar an bpríosún chomh maith agus thug siad an-chuidiú agus bhí siad an-fhaisnéiseach agus tairbhiúil don Chlár Réamhscaoilte Amach.

- An tIonad Eolais do Shaoránaigh
- Linkage (Ceisteanna Fostaíochta)
- FÁS
- Pathways
- Pace
- Ionaid Andúile

Cuireadh na cúrsaí seo a leanas i gcrích chomh maith le cuidiú le príosúnaigh lena riachtanais i gcomhair fostaíochta i ndiaidh a scaoilte amach:

- Sláinteachas Bia Comhshaoil (Leonardo)
- City & Guilds, Bunscileanna, Oilteacht Scileanna
- Clár um Réamhscaoileadh Amach
- Ceadúnas Eorpach Tiomána Ríomhairí (ECDL)
- Dearadh Gréasáin
- Garchabhair / CPR/ Ord Mhálta
- Staidéar ar Andúil

Tá meánchlárú ag an Ionad Oideachais idir 250 agus 260 príosúnach i rith na bliana. Tá foirne teagaisc san Ionad de 9 múinteoirí lánaimseartha agus 20 múinteoir páirtaimseartha. Bíonn an clár oideachais ar siúl idir 9.15 am go dtí 7.30 pm le haghaidh 206 lá in aghaidh na bliana.

Tionóltar scrúduithe san Ionad Oideachais atá creidiúnaithe ag na comhlachtaí seo a leanas:

An Teastas Sóisearach  
An Ardteistiméireacht  
Leibhéal 3 FETAC  
Leibhéal 4 FETAC

Leibhéal 5 FETAC  
An Ollscoil Oscailte/Cianfhoghlaim  
Trinity Guildhall  
Scrúdú Ceol Tíre Chomhaltas  
Ceol-Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann  
Rockschool

Tá an Clár Oideachais maidir le tionscadail agus gníomhaíochtaí breise seachchuraclaim ag fabhrú agus ag forbairt go leanúnach agus rinne na múinteoirí sa Phríosún roinnt mhór tionscadal agus gníomhaíochtaí oideachais breise a fhorbairt agus a spreagadh le linn na bliana lena n-áirítear ceardlann ar Fhilíocht agus Scríbhneoireacht Chruthaitheach, Ceol agus Scríbhneoireacht Amhrán, Ceardlann Inspreagtha, Ceardlann Ceardaíochta, Ceardlann Garchabhrach agus Fealsúnachta.

Leanann an Maoirseoir Tionscail atá i gceannas ar an gCistin agus a fhoireann de Mhaoirseoirí Tionscail Cúnta de chaighdeán an-ard a tháirgeadh agus a choinneáil maidir le hullmhú, cócaireacht agus dáileadh bia ar bhonn laethúil. Freastalaíonn an biachlár 28 lá ar ghnáthaiste bia agus ar aiste bia veigeatórach.

Ní mór do phríosúnaigh a oibríonn sa réimse seo páirt a ghlacadh i roinnt cúrsaí oiliúna indeimhnithe ina gcuidítear leo i bhfeidhmíocht a gcuid oibre agus ina gcuidítear leo suim a choinneáil ina gcuid oibre.

Arís, ba mhaith linn comhghairdeas a dhéanamh leis an nGobharnóir agus lena fhoireann sa réimse seo as na héachtaí suntasacha ar fad le linn na bliana.

Ar deireadh, ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghabháil leis an nGobharnóir Mullen agus leis an nGobharnóir Moran, lena fhoireann bainistíochta agus leis an bhfoireann as an gcúirtéis, as an gcúnamh agus as an bhfáilte a tugadh dúinn ar ár gcuariteanna ar an bPríosún gach uair le linn na bliana.

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Tom Colgan  
Cathaoirleach

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Anne Turley

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