



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Michelle Jarman-Howe
Director General of Operations
HM Prison and Probation Service
8th Floor Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

Mr Paul D Smith
HM Senior Coroner for the coroner
area of Greater Lincolnshire
The Myle Cross Centre
92 Macaulay Drive
Lincoln
LN2 4EL

Email: DGOperationsHMPPS@justice.gov.uk

21 May 2026

Dear Mr Smith,

REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS: MR LUKE ASHCROFT

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 20 March 2026 following the inquest into the death of Luke Ashcroft at HMP Lincoln on 1 July 2020. I am providing the response on behalf of His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

I know that you will share a copy of this response with Mr Ashcroft's family, and I would first like to express my condolences for their loss. Every death in custody is a tragedy and the safety of those in our care is my absolute priority.

You have raised concerns regarding the provision of telephones in the Care and Separation Unit (CSU) at HMP Lincoln, including location of the cord during use and access to telephones which in the CSU is on request.

The establishment has undertaken a review of the current telephony arrangements within the CSU. While the relocation of telephone sockets within cells has been considered, this would require significant structural alteration and capital investment. The Governor of HMP Lincoln is therefore developing a formal business case to assess the feasibility, proportionality, and associated operational and security risks of implementing such a longer-term solution.

In the interim, a number of risk reduction measures are being implemented including work to modify the CSU cell doors to enable telephone cables to be routed securely beneath the door. This adjustment will remove the requirement for cables to pass over the top of cell doors, thereby reducing the identified ligature risk.

In addition, telephones will have the ability to be fixed to the internal wall to minimise excess slack and restrict the potential for inappropriate use. A fixed, non-weight bearing handset cradle will also be installed within cells using appropriate attachments, ensuring that the handset can be safely stored without the need for prisoners to maintain tension on the cable during use.

To support access to telephony for prisoners who may be in crisis, and where it is assessed as appropriate, telephones may be retained within cells in an adapted cradle designed to mitigate risk. Such arrangements will be subject to an individual, case-by-case risk assessment, taking full account of the prisoner's presentation, including any risks identified through Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) processes, and will be kept under regular review.

In parallel with these physical adjustments, the establishment is strengthening governance and oversight within the CSU. There will be enhanced scrutiny of defensible decision-making documentation to ensure that all decisions relating to regime, risk management, and access to telephony are clearly recorded, justified, and proportionate. This will be supported through oversight by senior managers.

The implementation and effectiveness of these measures will be monitored through the establishment's safety and assurance frameworks. The controls introduced will be subject to ongoing review to ensure that they remain effective, proportionate, and responsive to any emerging risks or learning.

Thank you for bringing these matters to my attention. I trust that this response provides assurance that appropriate and proportionate action is being taken to address the concerns identified.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Jarman-Howe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Michelle Jarman-Howe
Interim Director General of Operations