

An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education



Ms. Sarah Cremin  
Committee Secretariat  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Kildare St.  
Dublin 2

8 March 2022

Ref: S0525 PAC33

Dear Ms. Cremin

I refer to your letter of 23 February last regarding previous enquiries made by the Committee on behalf of certain individuals who had engaged with the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Board (Caranua).

As you are aware, an interim Board has been appointed to Caranua to provide appropriate governance and oversight until such time as the legislation dissolving Caranua is passed by the Oireachtas. In previous correspondence to the Committee, my predecessor advised that the Department was seeking to put in place a temporary executive function to support the interim Board and I can now confirm that this temporary resource is in place.

The Department, on behalf of the Board, has engaged with each of the individuals in considering how best to progress the issues raised by the Committee and, as set out in the letter from the then Secretary General dated 19 April 2021, can continue to update the Committee as required. The Department has also referred some of the matters raised by the Committee, and in particular the queries attached to the Committee's correspondence of 1 April 2021, to Caranua in order to get a better insight into some of the particular issues arising in these cases. The Department will continue to engage with the individuals concerned and the Board of Caranua in this regard and as appropriate. However, it remains the position that the performance of Caranua's functions is a matter for the Board of Caranua and the Department is not in a position to undertake those functions on its behalf.

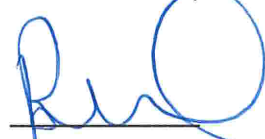
At this point, it is not possible to indicate a definitive timeline or potential estimated costs involved in respect of these matters. As the Department had no previous involvement with these cases prior to receiving the Committee's correspondence, the Department's focus has been on actively engaging with the individuals concerned to get a full insight into the various issues involved, some of which are proving to be particularly complex and intractable. It is the Department's understanding that, in one of the cases, it is likely that a

significant cost could be incurred in order to resolve the matter to the individual's satisfaction.

The Department understands that there is currently just over €160,000 remaining in Caranua's operational account. The Committee may wish to note that a significant proportion of the remaining funds will be required to discharge legal costs and other outgoings.

While the legislative programme is a matter for Government and the Oireachtas, it is understood that the General Scheme providing for the final dissolution of Caranua, which has been prepared by the Department, will undergo Pre-Legislative Scrutiny over the coming months. The drafting and passage of the Bill will proceed thereafter.

Yours sincerely

  
Bernie McNally  
Secretary General