

## Questions Raised At PAC Committee 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022

### 5. A note on the movement of staff from Harcourt Square, and associated buildings, including:

- Which buildings staff were moved to, and the costs of all these buildings,
- The OPW expenditure on Block J of the Garda Headquarters in Phoenix Park,

#### **Response**

A number of projects were undertaken to respond to the original decant numbers of Harcourt Square, the recent recruitment of additional Garda personnel and the Garda Commissioner's restructuring of the specialist units. All accommodation solutions were agreed with An Garda Síochána. The opportunity was also taken to resolve other Garda Accommodation issues. Work undertaken include;

#### *a) Walter Scott House, Military Road*

This project was completed on time and on budget. The construction programme was 30 months and substantial completion was achieved in October 2022. The building was handed over to An Garda Síochána on Tuesday 1st November 2022. Official opening of Walter Scott House took place on 25th November 2022. Seven An Garda Síochána Bureaus/Units that were located in Harcourt Square are now accommodated in new Garda Security and Crime Operations Centre, Military Road. The development consists of the construction of a new 10,060 sq.m six and four storey office building with a green roof and central atrium, over two floors of 9,275 sq.m basement car parking with ancillary accommodation, on a site of circa 0.86 ha. The total Project Budget was €86m.

#### *b) Block J Refurbishment, Garda Headquarters*

Block J in Garda Headquarters is one of the original nineteenth century RIC buildings. Due to its age and condition it needed to be refurbished / restored. It is also a protected structure. It will accommodate two Garda Bureaus that operated from Harcourt Square and a third Garda Bureau relocated from another building in Garda Headquarters. The Total Project Budget is confidential as the project is on site. The project will be completed later this year.

#### *c) Phoenix House Refurbishment*

Phoenix House on Conyngham Road is under lease by the OPW to accommodate An Garda Síochána personnel that were once based in Block J. The lease is for 10 years at an annual rent of €647,075 plus VAT. The total project budget is confidential as it is commercially sensitive.

#### *d) Heuston Station – National Train Control Centre (NTCC) project*

As part of a more integrated, emergency 'blue light' response system the co-location of An Garda Síochána, Dublin City Council and Irish Rail was agreed. This project was delivered by the National Transport Authority for Irish Rail. No OPW contribution towards the capital and fit out costs were sought or made. Nominal Rent of €10 per annum plus €1,100 per Garda car parking space (29 spaces)

#### *e) Fit-out at Clyde House, Blanchardstown*

Clyde House will accommodate two Garda Bureaus that were based in Harcourt Square. The OPW has entered into a lease of the building which will commence when the fit-out is completed by the landlord. The Landlord fit-out commenced in September 2022 and

Substantial Completion is planned in Q2 2023. The two units will be relocated to Clyde House in Q2 2023. As the fit-out is ongoing and the Lease has not yet commenced costings are commercially sensitive.

*f) Dublin Castle*

The office of Assistant Commissioner, Dublin Metropolitan Region, and a series of Regional Resources were relocated from Harcourt Square to existing Garda accommodation in Dublin Castle. No costs were expended in respect to this relocation.

*g) Interim Temporary Accommodation*

With both Clyde House and Block J works running into 2023, interim temporary solutions were required. The interim solutions, which were agreed with An Garda Síochána, are the Former Intreo Office, Navan Road, Dublin 7 and the 1970's extension to 52 St Stephens Green

- a. State owned former Intreo Office, Navan Road, Dublin 7 which was closed in 2019 - The cost of the works was € 116,547.00 ex VAT
- b. State owned 1970's extension to 52 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2 - The cost of the works was €355,494.82 ex VAT. These works will contribute to the proposed deep retrofit of this building when the Gardaí decant to Clyde House.

### **Additional Staff Numbers**

Additional accommodation requirements were as a result of a combination of factors including;

- Garda general numbers and Garda specialist unit numbers increasing significantly,
- the introduction of the new Garda Commissioner Operating Model which also affected Garda numbers and specialist units and
- the additional recruitment to specialist Garda units located in Harcourt Square.

In overall terms, between end 2016 and end 2022, total whole time equivalent numbers for Garda Staff and Garda Members increased by approximately 2,200 persons or 14.5%. The bureaux located in Harcourt Square, in that time frame, increased from 906 personnel to over 1,300 personnel. This is an increase of over 40% in the six year timeframe of the extension of the lease for Harcourt Square.

### **• The issues encountered with Clyde House**

#### ***Response***

The Commissioners of Public Works (OPW) entered into an Agreement for Lease / Lease for office space in Clyde House, Blanchardstown, to accommodate two specialist Bureaus based at Harcourt Square. It was agreed that the Landlord would carry out both the Landlord & Tenant fit-out works. The Agreement for Lease had an agreed Target Date for substantial completion of the Landlord & Tenant fit-out works of the 8th November 2022. Since the signing of the Agreement for Lease, the OPW engaged with the landlord to ensure that they had all the necessary information to allow them to progress with the works as per the Agreement for Lease. OPW were also in regular contact to address any issues as they occurred and to avoid causing any delays to the Landlord contractors.

However the landlord's programme for the Landlord & Tenant fit-out works indicated a Target Date for substantial completion in mid-January 2023, some two months later than the target date of 8th

November 2022. OPW entered into the Agreement for Lease in good faith that the agreed Target Date of the 8th November 2022 would be achieved. Since receiving the Landlords programme, OPW actively and intensively engaged with the Landlord to improve on the January 2023 date. However despite this, the Landlord was unable to achieve partial or substantial Completion in either November 2022 or January 2023 as originally agreed. To ensure full vacation of Harcourt Square by year end 2022, the OPW was required to provide Interim Temporary Accommodation at the State owned Former Intreo Office, Navan Road, Dublin 7 and in 1970's extension to 52 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2.

- **Whether there is sufficient parking on the Military Road site, and if not, how that is being accommodated,**

***Response***

The development at Military Road maximised the provision of parking by providing a double basement that occupies the full extent of the site. Additional parking facilities are also being provided on the adjacent OPW owned site and at IMMA.

- **A breakdown of the numbers of staff that have needed to be accommodated since 2015, and how they will be accommodated going forward**

***Response***

At end 2016, there were c 830 personnel in Harcourt Square. Military Road accommodates this number of Garda personnel. A further 126 were located in Dublin Castle. At end of 2022, the number of Garda personnel affected by the Harcourt Square Decant and staff reorganisation due to the increase in the numbers in the impacted Garda Bureaus amounted to c 1500 staff. During this timeframe Garda numbers as a whole increased by 14.5%.

This increase in Garda numbers, combined with the introduction of a new Bureau and changes as a result of the New Garda Operating Model led to an unforeseeable increase in Garda numbers. Nevertheless the OPW and An Garda Síochána managed the move almost 10% of the overall Garda numbers at the end of 2022.

The overall strategy to meet the requirements of An Garda Síochána are constantly under review and include a range of different type of projects. Both the OPW and An Garda Síochána are aware of the impact of a changing workforce on the property solutions currently being advanced. The OPW continues to assist An Garda Síochána in its task in mapping out what it envisages is likely to be its property requirements in the coming years, in line with its workforce plans, insofar as it can anticipate those requirements.

- **Whether the Military Road building is deemed to be totally safe (pgs. 28, 29, 30, 52 and 53).**

***Proposed response***

The Military Road building is deemed to be safe for occupation. It also incorporates many special security elements.

**6. The cost to move An Garda Síochána staff into the Intreo office in Dublin 7 (pg. 31).**

***Response***

The cost of the works at the Intreo office in Dublin 7 was € 116,547.00 ex VAT.

**13. A note on the site on Mountrath Road, Portlaoise, including its current status and whether it can be used (pgs. 60-61).**

***Response***

The site on Mountrath Road, Portlaoise is to be used for the temporary accommodation for An Garda Síochána staff during the construction of the redevelopment of Portlaoise Garda station. An Garda Síochána have just signed off on the proposed temporary accommodation for the decentralised site. A Part IX planning application is being prepared for the site and it is proposed to submit it in early April/May 2023. Tender documents are being prepared for construction works on the site in parallel with the planning permission application. A PIN for these works has been put on E Tenders. It is expected that An Garda Síochána staff will decant to the site on Mountrath Road, Portlaoise before the end of 2023.