



Deputy Aidan Farrelly
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6th June 2025

Dear Deputy Farrelly,

PQ 16678/25: To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if she will provide a schedule of all capital projects being delivered or which have been completed by her Department and organisations under the aegis of her Department since 1 January 2020; and the total project cost of projects in excess of €500,000, or of any other capital projects below this that have come to her Department's attention for reasons of overspend or due to the fact that they failed to be delivered; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

I refer to your recent PQ, above, and the Department's holding response, dated 8 April 2025. The reason for this delayed response was to ensure that all budget holders within the Department were consulted.

I have now gathered the information you requested regarding the capital projects being delivered or which have been completed by this Department and organisations under the aegis of this Department since 1 January 2020, and the relevant schedule is detailed below, as well as a further schedule of capital projects that have incurred overspends.

Yours sincerely

Norma Foley TD
Minister for Children, Disability and Equality

Schedule of Capital Projects 1 January 2020 – Present

Year	Capital Project	Description	Expenditure
2020	Early Years COVID-19 Capital Grant	<p>The COVID-19 Capital grant consisted of a once-off capital grant for childcare services and childminders registered with Tusla or notified to their City or County Childcare Committee. This grant was to help services to adhere to the reopening guidelines by improving hygiene facilities and outdoor play areas. Permissible expenditure under the grant included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outdoor play equipment; - Outdoor shade and shelter to enable outdoor play as much as possible; - Additional handwashing and toilet facilities; - Purchase of partitions or room dividers to enable play pods to remain separate in larger rooms; and - Installation of screens in reception areas. 	€13,000,000
2021	Early Years Fire Safety capital scheme	Capital grants of between €1,000 and €10,000 were available to contribute towards the costs of remedial works required to	€4,700,000

		receive a Fire Safety Certificate. This certificate is an essential part of the statutory regulation process undertaken by Tusla, the independent regulator of the sector.	
2021	Early Years Playing Outside Grant	The objective of the Playing Outside Grant 2021 was to support services to facilitate greater outdoor activities and/or create a new or develop an existing outdoor learning and play space to support an increase in provision of early learning and childcare outdoors and improve natural ventilation indoors in line with the National Public Health Strategy.	€4,600,000
2021	Tusla Barnahus West Project	Barnahus was a joint venture with the HSE and AGS and Tusla. Tusla Estates contributed two payments of €236,308.32 and €92,661.75 towards the total cost of the project. The payments were made as part of a legal agreement for a fit out of a leased building.	€328,970.07
2021 - 2022	National Disability Authority	Building electrical works.	€276,087
2022	Early Years Core Funding IT Scheme	Core Funding, launched in 2022 is a payment to providers designed to support quality, sustainability, and enhanced public management, with associated conditions in relation to fee control and cost transparency, incorporating funding for administration and	€800,000

		to support the employment of graduate staff. A new IT system was developed within budget to deliver this scheme.	
2022	State-owned International Protection Accommodation	Acquisition of 35 properties for Vulnerable Accommodation.	€8,465,305.15
2022	Tusla	St Josephs, Limerick Phase One.	€8,400,000
2022	Tusla	St Fintans, Portlaoise.	€4,860,000
2022	Oberstown Children Detention Campus	Payment to OPW - roof repair project.	€543,064
2023	Oberstown Children Detention Campus	Trinity Buildings Administration and Tuition Heating System Upgrade Progress.	€198,124
2023	Oberstown Children Detention Campus	Main Kitchen Heating and Hot Water System Upgrade Progress Payment 1.	€314,434
2023	Early Years Building Blocks Improvement Grant	The Building Blocks Improvement Grant scheme offered green energy and retrofit upgrade grants of €35,000 to €75,000 to improve energy efficiency standards across the Early Learning Care sector.	€9,000,000
2023	State-owned International Protection Accommodation	Acquisition of two properties for Vulnerable Accommodation.	€711,000.00
2024	Oberstown Children Detention Campus	Project 1 - CCTV Software.	€510,019
2024	Early Years Building Blocks Improvement Grant	The Building Blocks Improvement Grant scheme offered green energy and retrofit upgrade grants of €35,000 to €75,000 to	€300,000

		improve energy efficiency standards across the Early Learning Care sector.	
2024	Early Years Building Blocks Expansion Grant	The Building Blocks Expansion Scheme provided grants to the Early Learning Care sector to renovate or upgrade existing premises to increase childcare capacity.	€1,300,000
2024	State-owned International Protection Accommodation	Renovation of Vulnerable Accommodation Properties.	€765,923.18
2024	State-owned International Protection Accommodation	Modular Homes Project.	€3,736,033.32
2024 - 2025	National Disability Authority	Building accessibility and fire safety works.	€1,973,132
2025	State-owned International Protection Accommodation	Renovation of Vulnerable Accommodation properties.	€242,270.83
2025	State-owned International Protection Accommodation	Modular Homes Project.	€1,677,625.49
TOTAL			€71,268,456

Schedule of Capital Projects with Overspends 1 January 2020 - Present

Year	Capital Project	Description	Budget	Expenditure	Overspend
Commenced in 2022 with 10 sites delivered to date; one final site to be delivered in 2025.	Rapid Build Homes Programme	A programme to deliver 654 rapid build modular units at 11 sites across the country to accommodate 2,640 people who have fled the war in Ukraine.	€237.4m	Estimated €285.3m	Estimated €47.9m

The Rapid Build Homes programme, sponsored by OPW and with my Department as the approving Authority, was an emergency response to the accommodation needs of Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection fleeing the war in Ukraine. The urgent need and dynamic nature of the programme meant that as sites became available and suitability assessments carried out, revision to the number of units and cost estimates were necessary. The costs of the Programme have developed in real time with the increases reflecting challenges that have presented through the nature of the project itself, plus the wider economic and supply chain environment.

In this regard, the programme is not readily comparable to other programmes such as the delivery of social housing. As prime 'Housing for All' sites were to be excluded from the Programme to the greatest extent possible, many of the sites provided proved to be sub-optimal for site development works. In addition, owing to the size of sites expected economies of scale proved challenging to realise. This resulted in significant additional costs to the overall programme. Notwithstanding this, it should be noted that the original target of accommodation for 2,000 BOTPs, has been achieved and surpassed.

While the cost rises have been significant, the cost comparison of rapid build homes to house 2,640 Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection versus other forms of accommodation shows that it will take just five years to deliver significant savings to the State. The average cost of the units is €436K. Based on 2023 figures, the cost per hotel room is based at €65 per night per person. This would equate to €62.63m per year (€65 X 365 x 2640) to accommodate numbers currently in Rapid Build homes. The estimated Rapid Build programme cost is €285.3m meaning it would take 4.55 years to pay back this amount.

Central to this Programme is the future use of these sites. Each of the developed sites has been future proofed and can be used for further housing developments accordingly, as the expected life span of the units is in the region of 60 years. As Government policy continues to evolve in relation to the Ukraine response and International Protection, my Department has commenced a multi-stakeholder process to determine the long-term strategy for the sites, post the Temporary Protection Directive. In this regard, other options for long-term use will also be considered.

As Government policy continues to evolve in relation to the Ukraine response and International Protection, my Department had commenced a multi-stakeholder process to determine the long-term strategy for the sites, post the Temporary Protection Directive. In this regard, other options for long-term use were also be considered. You might note that further to the completion of Transfer of Functions responsibility for this programme has now transferred to the Department of Justice, who is now considering these matters.

Year	Capital Project	Description	Budget	Expenditure	Overspend
2023	Modular Proof of Concept Project	Columb Barracks was selected by Government in March 2023 as a <i>proof of concept</i> site to examine the potential of 'pod' style accommodation for those fleeing the war in Ukraine. The project delivered 62 units with a capacity to accommodate 257 people.	€10.2m	€15.20	€5.0m

Columb Barracks in Mullingar was selected by Government in March 2023 as a 'proof of concept site' to examine the potential of rapid build 'pod' style accommodation for Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs) fleeing the war in Ukraine. The situation regarding accommodation for BOTPs at the time of the Government Decision was extremely challenging. The decision to press forward with the proof-of-concept project in Mullingar was taken in this context. While five sites were originally identified as potential sites for proof-of-concept projects, only the site in Mullingar was eventually pursued.

This project was the first of its kind being delivered in an atypical location. Additional unforeseen costs arose as the project progressed for the construction of dedicated laundry and refuse units and for the necessary enhancement of services to the site such as the

installation of a high-capacity broadband line, a new electricity substation and high-capacity electrical line as well as an enhanced water connection. The costs of the project therefore rose significantly, in particular the ground works and ancillary building costs.

Originally, 50 self-contained, 2-bedroom (4 person) units were to be supplied, delivered, erected, and fitted out. Following discussion at the Humanitarian Accommodation Working Group, it was decided that a further 12 slightly larger units should be placed on site, increasing overall capacity to 257 people.

Discussions have commenced on the future use of these post Temporary Protection Directive as they have a potential lifespan of 30 to 40 years.

You might note that further to the completion of Transfer of Functions responsibility for this programme has now transferred to the Department of Justice.

