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'La-Z-Boy' recliner requested for Leinster House office by TD to 'enhance the workspace's comfort'

Independent Ireland TD Kenneth O'Flynn looked for 10 separate items for his parliamentary office

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Ken Foxe

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A TD who has been critical of government over wasteful spending asked for a 'La-Z-Boy' recliner to be supplied for his [Leinster House](#) office for “breaks and informal meetings.”

[Independent Ireland](#) TD Kenneth O'Flynn has been at loggerheads with [Oireachtas](#) management over delays in getting his office fitted out since he was elected.

In an email in mid-February to facilities management, Mr O'Flynn looked for ten separate items for his parliamentary office to “enhance the workspace's comfort and functionality.”

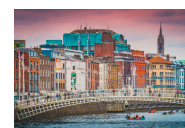
That included a La-Z-Boy recliner as “comfortable seating” for use during break periods and office meetings with such seats often retailing at well over €1,000.

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In response, the Oireachtas said they had no recliners in stock and that they were not “commonly purchased”.

Mr O'Flynn also sought book shelves, cabinets, and a side-table “for holding items like lamps or personal effects near the La-Z-Boy or desk.”

The Independent Ireland TD asked as well for a fan and a desk lamp but was told even these were not available as Leinster House was trying to cut its emissions and energy costs.

An email said this was in line with the “government’s targets” around climate change and that if the light or temperature in the room were a problem, other options could be explored.

Mr O’Flynn has had frosty relations with the Oireachtas since his appointment and in January accused them of a “disregard for the dignity” of his office in a row over lengthy delays in the fit-out of his office after the election.

In February, he was still seeking updates on when he could expect to have chairs delivered to his own office and that of his parliamentary assistant.

He wrote: “It is essential that these items are addressed promptly to facilitate our team’s productivity.”

Mr O’Flynn also said there had been delays in providing IT equipment and printing services saying these facilities were “imperative for a functioning office environment.”

Asked about his request for the La-Z-Boy, Mr O’Flynn said: “Maybe I used the wrong word – there is a chair in quite a few of the offices, which looks to me like a recliner.

“I was just looking for the same furniture as they have in the other offices.”

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He said he was still waiting to have all the IT equipment he needed fully installed.

“We’re now six months on [from the election] – I have worked in other big organisations, and my experience there would have been very different,” he said.

Last week, Mr O’Flynn commented on the [published audit](#) of the €336,000 spend on the Leinster House bike shelter, saying that the spend reflected a “culture of casual complacency and indifference to taxpayers’ money”.

The requests were among dozens made by TDs and Senators to Oireachtas officials in recent months.

Another new TD, [Sinn Féin](#)'s Fionntán Ó Súilleabháin, also sought a recliner as well as an extremely specific paint job for his office.

An email said: "I would like the wall papered or painted in turquoise, with the little vertical strip on the left, between the two doors, in yellow."

However, a month later Mr Ó Súilleabháin wrote again to facilities management saying they should "disregard [his] request for painting/wallpapering."

One senator contacted OPW to conduct an inspection to see what was causing the malodour.

However, they were unable to detect its source and believed it might have been related to the cutting open of a radiator cover.

An email to Senator Linda Nelson Murray said: "I also asked one of the cleaning staff to visit the room to wipe all surfaces with a disinfectant – the cleaner reported a mild smell coming from the radiator area."

Other requests included full-length mirrors for the offices of [Fianna Fáil](#)'s [Erin McGreehan](#) and [Jennifer Whitmore](#) of the [Social Democrats](#).

One politician wrote to ask if he could have the old windows of his office taped over in some way because of a draught through the room and hallway.

"I already got a dreadful flu," said an email from the office of Senator Garret Ahearn to Leinster House management.

Health Minister [Jennifer Carroll MacNeill](#) asked for a "small tabletop fridge" for her office while multiple TDs and Senators complained about bins being removed from their offices. However, they were told this was a new policy around waste disposal.

An email said: "Individual bins are no longer placed at office desks. Instead, we have segregated waste receptacles located in the corridors.

"This system has many benefits including enhanced waste segregation, reduced waste generation and improved efficiency for cleaners."

Asked about the records, a spokeswoman for the Oireachtas said they had no comment to make.



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