

Benefits Realisation: Case Studies in Public Major Project Delivery with Recommendations for Practice

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In this session we will..

Consider two case studies in (dis)benefits realisation through the lens of 'transformation and service delivery' projects

Williams et. al. 2023 'Benefits realisation: case studies in public major project delivery with recommendations for practice, Production Planning and Control, 1-21

Kirkham, R in Williams, Samset and Volden (2022) The Front-end of Large Public Projects, Routledge

What is a ‘transformation project’

- **Simple answer:** it is one of four classifications of major projects in the UK Government, the others being military capability, infrastructure and construction, information and communications technology
- **Complicated answer:** “Transformation and service delivery projects (are concerned with) changing ways of working and improving the relationship between government and the people of the UK, and harnessing new technology to improve public services and/or make government more efficient.” (IPA, 2023)

2022-23 GMPP summary for projects reporting monetised benefits

Figure 1a: Summary of the 2022-23 GMPP*

	Government Major Projects Portfolio	115 projects	£345bn** Whole life cost	£758bn** Monetised benefits
This comprises:				
	Infrastructure and Construction	45 projects	£223bn Whole life cost	£348bn Monetised benefits
	Government Transformation and Service Delivery	48 projects	£95bn Whole life cost	£345bn Monetised benefits
	Military Capability	1 projects	£5bn Whole life cost	£5bn Monetised benefits
	Information and Communications Technology (ICT)	21 projects	£22bn Whole life cost	£59bn Monetised benefits

*Figures include exempted data **Figures may not add due to rounding

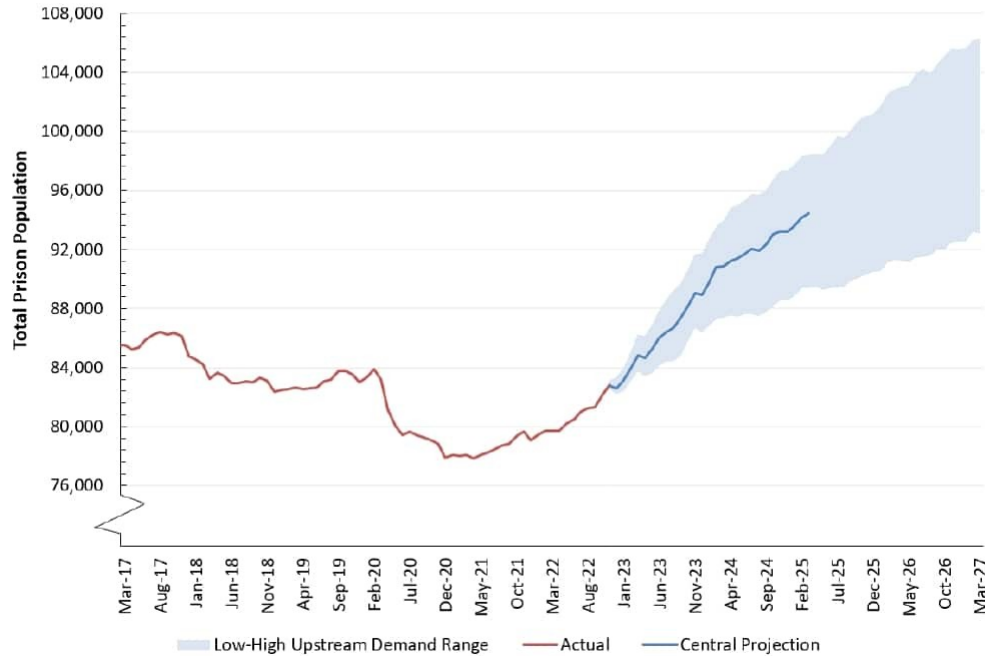
Case Study 1: Prison Estate Transformation Programme (PETP)



His Majesty's Prison Five Wells
(Photo: Bryden Wood
Architects)

The policy problem

Figure 1.1: Total prison population projection, November 2022 to March 2027⁷
(Source: Table A4).



We warned that the prisoners could riot. But the minister didn't listen

A member of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Bedford raised the alarm about its perilous conditions, and wants an urgent rethink about jails



The policy solution

The Conservative Government of 2015-2017 identified a need to transform the prison estate in its 2016 white paper **Prison Safety and Reform**.

“The physical environment that many staff and prisoners face on a daily basis is not fostering the kind of culture or regime needed for prisoners to turn their lives around. For prisons to be places of safety and reform, there needs to be a fundamental shift in the way that the prison estate is organised and operates and a significant improvement in the overall quality of the buildings across the prison estate.

The PETP was set up with the following objectives:

- invest £1.3 billion to build up to 10,000 new adult prison places
- close prisons that are in poor condition and those that do not have a long-term future in the estate
- simplify the organisation of the estate, placing prisoners at the right level of security in prisons with appropriately tailored regimes
- build and open five new community prisons for women.” (House of Commons, 2023)



Credit: PCE Ltd/Lendlease/Crown House Technologies

The programme

March 2018 - the Ministry of Justice decided not to deliver the PETP in full due to budget pressures and removed around 6,500 places from the programme.

Summer 2019 - the PETP was 'retired' and a new programme created (the New Prisons Programme)

February 2020 - National Audit Office published a report 'Improving the prison estate'. It concluded that HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) plans to provide a safe, secure and decent prison estate were failing, stating that the PETP's plans to create up to 10,000 new prison places had proved undeliverable.

The Public Accounts Committee's report on improving the prison estate, published in September 2020, was also critical. It stated that the Ministry of Justice and HMPPS had failed in their attempts to improve the condition and suitability of the prison estate. It said that despite promises to create 10,000 new-for-old prison places by 2020, just 206 new places had been delivered, and prisoners continued to be held in unsafe, crowded conditions that did not meet their needs.

"The Prison Service has been operating hand to mouth, by reacting to immediate crises rather than developing a long-term strategy for the prison estate"

"The Ministry and HMPPS have been slow to develop a strategy for the prison estate and we are not convinced by their assurance that they now have the ingredients for a long-term strategy to come together in time for the next Spending Review."

The 'Black Swan'



Reflection

- There was a lack of a strategic anchor to the PETP
- This (in my view) was compounded by insufficient evidence to suggest that building more prisons actually ‘works’
- The UK riots ‘stress-tested’ our justice system; maybe we need to focus harder on evidencing the benefits of resilience spending (PETP provides an excellent ex-ante example)?

Case Study 2: Extended Services Transformation Programme



The Department for Work and
Pensions (DWP)

The policy problem

- There was an inefficient use of buildings and footprint across the DWP estate.



The policy solution

- Deliver a new transformation programme to improve access to DWP services for citizens.
- A new organisational strategy to 'right-size' buildings in the DWP estate



The programme

- Develop a new service operating model
- Manage dependencies between the programme and the future footprint of the estate
- Facilitate development of delivery plans to support specific transformations
- Manage commercial arrangements

The outcome

- Project and programme stakeholders – tensions between desires of civil servants and end users (citizens)
- Risk tolerance – given the politicised nature of the environment in DWP at the time, risk tolerance was unaffected
- Use of ‘test-and-learn’ to create safe spaces for innovation
- Very strong emphasis on the importance of the project back-end (transition to operations)