



Angela Burns AM  
Chair  
Finance Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
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1 February 2011

Dear Angela

### **Assembly Commission Budget 2011-12**

In your Committee's report on the Assembly Commission's draft budget proposals 2011-12 you asked us to provide you with additional information on the range of projects we have underway and an assessment of the improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery that will result from their implementation (paragraph 30). I am writing to provide this information.

The Commission established a business change programme to ensure high quality co-ordinated and planned change across the organisation. This approach helps to ensure that we are prioritising individual projects against agreed corporate priorities and strategic goals and delivering outcomes efficiently. Resources are allocated to the highest priority projects from a budget which is managed by the Programme Office, with regular project updates and financial reporting throughout the financial year.

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**Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh**

The change programme provides an overall picture of the work being undertaken and allows more control of the delivery of individual changes into the Assembly. Over time, using a business-led programme approach will:

- enable more effective delivery of change, including more efficient control of a complex range of activities;
- keep the focus on the business change objectives;
- provide a framework for senior management to direct the change process;
- encourage more efficient use of resources through project prioritisation and integration;
- provide better management of risk because the wider context is understood;
- achieve and monitor business benefits during and after the programme, with clear benefits realisation plans;
- improve control of costs, standards and quality; and
- ensure that the programme fits with other corporate strategies.

In the letter that the Presiding Officer and I sent you on 16 November 2010, we listed the following improvement projects in Annex B:

1. Assembly Business Management System
2. Legislation drafting
3. Translation and Reporting Service – FTR Gold upgrade
4. Members’ Research Service Enquiry Database
5. Senedd Broadcasting equipment refresh

These projects are at different stages, ranging from project development to implementation, with the majority completing in 2011-12; consequently the benefits realisation plans are also at varying stages. Where benefits include financial savings, these will start to be realised in the last quarter of 2011-12. The latest estimates are for approximately £175,000 in recurring annual savings.

These projects will also have considerable benefits in terms of:

- the Assembly's engagement and services to the public;
- Members' access to information so that they can better serve the electorate; and
- processes for staff so that the Assembly is more accessible and easier to understand.

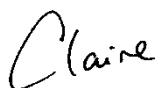
Further information on each project is contained in Annex A.

We still have more work to do to ensure that benefits which cannot be readily quantified are properly recognised and monitored. Some of the Commission's future projects, such as the Broadcasting and ICT refresh in the Senedd are essential to business continuity and risk management. These projects are aimed at improving the quality of service, for example acquiring HD ready broadcasting equipment, and at mitigating any downtime caused by equipment failure or overly complex processes.

Commissioners have made it clear that they want to monitor the benefits of our key projects, such as UNO. As an important part of this, the Commission will be tracking the financial savings achieved in future years as a result of these projects. We will therefore be reporting to the Commission on a regular basis and these reports will be published.

I hope this additional information is helpful. If you would like any further details, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours sincerely



**Claire Clancy**

**Prif Weithredwr a Chlerc/Chief Executive and Clerk  
Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru/National Assembly for Wales**

### Improvement projects in the Assembly Change Programme

<b>Project Title</b>	Assembly Business Management System
<b>Description</b>	The development of an IT system to manage documents and improve business processes within the Assembly Business directorate, making information and documents relating to Assembly business more accessible to the public, civic society and Assembly Members and less resource intensive to produce and distribute. This project includes delivery of the Assembly business element of <a href="http://www.assemblywales.org">www.assemblywales.org</a> in the Fourth Assembly.
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>There are four defined benefit themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefit 1 – improved communication, and accessibility, of business information and documents for external audiences;</li> <li>• benefit 2 – releasing resource from within the Assembly Business Directorate through more efficient working;</li> <li>• benefit 3 – improved communication of business information and documents to Assembly Members; and</li> <li>• benefit 4 – better internal communication, and accessibility, of business information and documents.</li> </ul>
<b>Quantified Savings</b>	Benefit 2 is estimated to release two full time posts once fully implemented. These posts equate to an annual recurring savings of £53,000.
<b>Benefits Realisation Plan</b>	Plan is in place to monitor the accrual of benefits. The plan consists of the method and frequency of measurement together with target dates and responsibility for measurement on a one-off or quarterly basis.

<b>Project Title</b>	Legislation Drafting – joint project with Welsh Government
<b>Description</b>	Development of software to improve the deficiencies within the current system and deliver a solution to enable the consistent processing, amending and publication of reliable and accurate legislation.
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>There are two main benefits that will be realised from successful delivery of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the ability to produce documents that are of a high standard, both in terms of presentation and accuracy; and</li> <li>• the ability to prepare documents in a much more efficient way, resulting in (a) direct savings in staff time, and (b) more timely presentation/publication of Measures and Amendment lists (c) minimise the risk of us being unable to present a Measure to Privy Council to the required deadline.</li> </ul> <p>The specific benefits that will be realised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delivery of a more reliable, long term system for managing the legislative process;</li> <li>• maximising business efficiency by reducing the need for staff to manually correct errors arising from the current system;</li> <li>• improved services to Assembly Members by ensuring amendment lists are prepared to internal Legislation Office deadlines and thereby maximising the time available to Assembly Members to prepare for Assembly proceedings;</li> <li>• high quality, accurate and consistent documents that enable Assembly Members to perform their duties effectively; and</li> <li>• more efficient use of staff resources, ability to produce consistent and reliable documents which are of fundamental importance in the making of laws.</li> </ul>
<b>Quantified Savings</b>	In terms of staff resources, there will be a real term reduction in the time spent by staff in drafting Measures and preparing and publishing amendments lists. Legislation Office clerks have

	identified the average time spent, and also where time savings should be made once the new software is in operation. This benefit is expected to release savings of at least £30,000 to £60,000 of recurring annual savings per annum (based on drafting 6 Assembly Measures per year).
<b>Benefits Realisation Plan</b>	The plan is underway with the expected benefits outlined.

<b>Project Title</b>	Translation and Reporting Service – FTR Gold and XML publishing
<b>Description</b>	<p>Two phased project delivering an xml-based internet publishing solution for the Record of Proceedings and a stable sound feed for Assembly proceedings to significantly reduce the risk of digital recording system failure.</p> <p>To secure enhanced capability for the Fourth Assembly to produce state of the art transcription services for Assembly Members and the people of Wales via improved search-ability and accessibility in both Welsh and English.</p> <p>The updated transcription services will form the basis of accessible e-democracy website projects.</p>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to deliver full, individual search-ability of the record of Proceedings. Enhance search facilities are expected to significantly reduce the need for externally held database searches;</li> <li>• to deliver a quicker and more robust/stable method to publish the record of proceedings;</li> <li>• to deliver a simpler and more effective way of assigning and managing workloads enabling staff members to perform their roles to the highest standards. Expected to deliver 5 per cent more staff able to work effectively from home; and</li> <li>• to deliver the Independent Bilingual Services Review Panel recommendations for greater accessibility and transparency and to resolve the search facilities short comings.</li> </ul>
<b>Quantified Savings</b>	<p>External database searches are a delivered on a subscription basis which would no longer be required. This is estimated to save a recurring £90,000 per annum.</p> <p>Other benefits identified are not sufficiently advanced to quantify savings. Staff savings or more effective use of staff time is an expected deliverable.</p>
<b>Benefits Realisation Plan</b>	The plan is being developed - expected benefits identified in outline.

<b>Project Title</b>	Members Research Service enquiry Database Phase 2
<b>Description</b>	To resolve technical problems and amend existing database in readiness for Fourth Assembly. The service currently produces more than 4,000 written outputs per annum, including responses to confidential enquiries from Assembly Members, Committee briefings and Research Papers. The database is a vital system used to keep track of all this work, partly as a workflow and performance monitoring system and partly as a way of storing all incoming requests, all completed work, and to provide an audit trail of responses for future reference.
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>It will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better monitoring of enquiries;</li> <li>• improvements in managing and responding to enquiries from Assembly Members;</li> <li>• monitoring the time taken for the Welsh Government to respond to information requests from Members sent to them by MRS;</li> <li>• better reporting and management of the workload in MRS; and</li> <li>• improvements in provision of service to Members in the Fourth Assembly arising from enhanced stability and reliability of system.</li> </ul>
<b>Quantified Savings</b>	Limited quantified savings identified to date
<b>Benefits Realisation Plan</b>	Not applicable



<b>Project Title</b>	Senedd Broadcasting equipment refresh
<b>Description</b>	To provide a newer, more sustainable and reliable broadcasting infrastructure in Tŷ Hywel and the Senedd, installing efficient equipment with the aim of ensuring that there is no loss of service when covering the Assembly's proceedings.
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>The main benefits of this project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduced risk of equipment failing;</li> <li>• more advanced, economical and greener equipment;</li> <li>• better quality audio and video for media outlets engaged in democracy in Wales; and</li> <li>• more reliable audio feeds to the Record of Proceedings team and translators.</li> </ul> <p>The E-democracy Strategy is highly dependent upon this service.</p>
<b>Quantified Savings</b>	Minimal quantified savings identified to date. The majority of the equipment being replaced was either purchased in 1999 or 2004-05 and is reaching the end of its life. There will be some savings in procuring replacement parts, often at short notice and at an impact to Assembly business.
<b>Benefits Realisation Plan</b>	To be developed in detail; an initial benefit will be the development of a strategic roadmap towards High-definition television acquisition, in line with the requirements of the broadcasters who use our footage, BBC, ITV and S4C.