



AC(4)2012(2) Paper 2 part 1

Date: Thursday 8 March 2012

Time: 11:00 –13:00

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

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ICT service improvement update

1.0 Purpose and summary

1.1 To inform the Commission about the steps being taken to improve ICT services for Members and their staff.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Commission is asked to:

- a. note the on-going work on the service improvement programme;
- b. propose any additional work that might improve service delivery.

3.0 ICT Service Improvement Programme

3.1 In response to concerns raised by Members about aspects of the ICT service provided, the following immediate action has been taken:-

- The Chief Executive wrote to the Chief Executive of Atos (the ICT contractor) and the Welsh Government's Permanent Secretary (as ICT contract holder) expressing concern about service delivery and priority given to Assembly services. She subsequently met with the Permanent Secretary and the Atos team, and will be meeting the Chief Executive of Atos UK and Ireland with the Presiding Officer and Peter Black AM on 8 March.
- An improvement plan has been agreed with Atos which will provide immediate service enhancements (set out below). Arrangements are in place to monitor achievement against that plan, including weekly reports to the Chief Executive.

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- Direct discussions have been arranged between each Assembly Member and Assembly staff to identify any outstanding service issues and likely future needs.

3.2 A service improvement plan has been agreed with Atos. The main points are:

- Atos Helpdesk engineers have been further briefed on the importance of dealing consistently with Members and AMSS to the same high standards.
- An engineer will visit every constituency office and perform a system and layout health check, putting problems right immediately where he can, advising on technical issues and providing or arranging training where a need is identified. To date 14 visits have been undertaken and feedback has been good. Our plan is to arrange such visits to every new office when a Member moves, provide a similar service regularly on an annual basis and extend the facility to home offices. A report will be produced to identify common issues.
- All discussions with Members will be followed up by general support staff and engineers who will implement quick fixes and arrange any necessary training. Additional resource from Atos has been brought in to ensure that Assembly staff can secure fixes on some issues.
- A guide reminding users of the appropriate route to the support available in a simple, understandable format will be produced and supplied to everyone.
- Following problems with constituency office connectivity, all will be moved to the new BT infrastructure as and when their BT Exchanges are made ready – 11 offices have already been moved.
- Where the local BT Exchange is not yet ready and is not on the list for upgrades between now and the summer, we will move the data circuits to a different area of the BT network to provide an improved service. One office has been moved successfully and has seen an improvement.
- We have changed the way the ICT Team and Atos engineers and managers work together, to avoid wasteful duplication and enhance communication.

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- Atos are providing increased project management and technical design support to enable us to deliver improvement projects more quickly.
- We are reviewing our security rules and approach to service provision to tailor more effectively to Members' support needs (more details set out below).

Although many of the above service enhancement steps can be accommodated within the cost framework of the Merlin contract, some represent additional services and the Assembly will incur extra costs. We are talking to Atos about the extent to which these costs are shared between us.

3.3 There are also medium to longer term options which will begin a transformation of our ICT services, some extending into new contracting arrangements post 2014 but others for delivery beforehand. There will be contract and cost constraints to be considered. Options include:

- a. Opening up access to a wider choice of kit, sharing thinking to provide improved services for Members;
- b. Establishing a "use your own kit" project and begin to build it into our plans, to allow greater flexibility for Members;
- c. Reviewing our current broadband offering for Members' homes and offices to provide more flexibility and choice in the future;
- d. Reviewing our Blackberry offering to provide more flexibility and choice;
- e. Introducing changes to the service framework provided by Atos, subject to costs.

3.4 Agreeing an improved set of clear performance criteria tailored to the Assembly's needs which enable us to judge quickly and how well the improvement plan is working.