

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY THE CONNÉTABLE OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 14th JULY 2014**

Question

Would the Minister –

- (1) provide a detailed breakdown for the last three years in relation to the maintenance expenditure of the Department's IT infrastructure?
- (2) advise whether the company Logicalis has been contracted to rewire the majority of ESC sites to enable wifi and, if so,
 - (a) was this put out to tender?
 - (b) what, if any, were the alternatives?
 - (c) why was this quote accepted?
- (3) advise whether an electrical contractor was used for the wiring and, if not, why?
- (4) advise whether the existing wifi infrastructure that is, in some cases not even a year old, has been replaced?

Will the new wireless network allows teachers and students to work remotely and, if not, why?

Are some schools still waiting for their ICT Business Plan policies to be accepted and on what basis have some not been accepted?

Have schools been made aware of their budgets for September early enough to allocate funds for teacher training in ICT and, if not, why?

Does the Minister consider it is acceptable to have just one local network services provider for ESC, and what measures, if any, are in place to ensure that this monopoly position is not abused?

Answer

- (1) The detailed breakdown would put commercially sensitive information in the public domain. However, I am happy to provide the details to the Connétable in confidence. The overall maintenance expenditure is as follows. This includes the cost internet provision, firewall and filtering, Wide Area Network provision, Wi-Fi networks, PC replacement, managed services provision, server replacement and repairs.

| | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total | <u>£1,215,685</u> | <u>£864,170</u> | <u>£1,176,242</u> | <u>£2,224,485</u> |

The 2014 costs include committed spend and anticipated spend

- (2) Logicalis is an approved States contractor. They are carrying out wiring in some of the schools but are also managing the project overall and co-ordinating the subcontractors. This means there is a single point of contact and also that Logicalis will test the cabling and provide a single warranty for all the work.

Each school building is different and the cabling requirements vary as a result. Each school was therefore regarded as a separate project and none reached the tender threshold. The work allocated to Logicalis was awarded in line with the requirements of the States of Jersey Financial Directions and States procurement procedures. There is a full Procurement Strategy for the Wireless Network Project.

Approved sub-contractors have been used that have existing relationships with schools and knowledge of the particular requirements of those buildings. The alternative would have been to use contractors with no prior knowledge of the schools. This would have increased risk in terms of cost and completion time.

- (3) Yes. Local electrical contractors that are approved to carry out States work have been used for this project.
- (4) As part of the Procurement Strategy for the Wireless Network Project full site surveys of all school buildings were completed. Existing cabling was reviewed to ascertain whether it could meet the requirements of the new wireless network. In some schools it was not suitable.

The new wireless networks will be connected to the new Wide Area Network (WAN) and associated new Internet feed. These networks need to be able to handle significant throughput with multiple devices connected simultaneously and many of the existing school networks are not designed to handle either the amount of traffic or the number of concurrent users.

Existing wireless hardware is being re-cycled where possible. However, in line with the “Thinking Differently” strategy, it is important to ensure there is no digital divide between schools and that all students and staff have the same new, fast, wireless network performance. This means existing wireless equipment may need to be upgraded with appropriate hardware. Length of time it has been in the building is not relevant. The equipment needs to be compatible with the latest requirements, which have been upgraded within the last six months.

Secure remote access to the network requires an additional application. This is currently being tested to ensure the design is correct, cost is minimised and security requirements are met. Once it is in place it will support the concept of “anytime, anywhere” learning to ensure teachers and students can work remotely.

The majority of business plans have been approved. Some schools are waiting for final approval and have been asked to fine-tune or enhance certain details. They have been supported by the Project Team at the Department and all the business plans are likely to be approved by the end of term or early in September.

- 26 business plans have been approved and approval letters and funding have been issued to those schools.
- Three schools are due to submit revised business plans imminently following the initial feedback from the Project Team.

All schools were provided with a high level indicator of their budgets in December 2013. Further details were provided to every school in January 2014 so they have been made aware of their budget allocation well in advance and in time to plan for the autumn term. Funding is transferred immediately once business plans have been approved.

Yes. Having a single supplier is beneficial and helps to ensure consistency of service, security requirements, best value for money and ongoing support services.

This WAN contract is for a fixed period of three years with costs fixed over that term to ensure no monopoly position is created. The contract will be monitored and managed throughout and reviewed at the end of the period.