

4.11 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the J.T. Gigabit project:

Would the Minister, as the shareholder representative, confirm that the Gigabit project of J.T. (Jersey Telecom) is meeting its installation and financial targets and that, when completed, it will come within budget?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

I am pleased to report that at my regular update with the J.T. Board I was advised that the Gigabit programme is meeting its installation and financial targets and is on schedule to be within the budget of £41.5 million when it completes in 2016. This information has not changed since, I am advised, on 24 January - just 3 weeks ago - Deputy Le Hérissier took up J.T.'s offer of a tour of its facilities and had the opportunity to hear first-hand about the experience of the manner in which the programme is being delivered and the progress J.T. is making against its commitments.

4.11.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Yes, Deputy Baudains and I were received and looked at all the call centres as well and we must thank J.T. That being the case, I wonder if the Minister could outline to the House, in terms of risk analysis, where does he think the major risks lie in the project?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

Risk mitigation and risk is one of the major issues that the Treasury considers in all of the entities that we deal with. I think it is fair to say that we have passed the major risk issues for the Gigabit programme. The major issue was the third party contractor which did not perform. That has been a matter which has been debated and rehearsed in this Assembly on a number of occasions. I am now satisfied and we do receive a quarterly report from J.T. which sets out all of their progress and I hope that they continue to keep on track with what is going to be the programme in the rollout. Perhaps St. Helier may be the biggest risk because it is more complicated to connect.

4.11.2 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Could the Minister confirm how many subscribers are now connected to the fibre in their homes?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

The last number that I have, which is the report from Q3, was 6,581 premises at the end of 2013. I will not make up a number. I will come back to Senator Ferguson with a number, but they have in fact been exceeding their targets for January already.

4.11.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Is the Minister happy, wearing his other hat, that the decision to proceed with the rural areas and not to place the carbon fibre in St. Helier first and thus service business, was a wise decision given all the problems that have occurred with ducts and buried cables and broken cables, *et cetera*?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I have challenged J.T. on this and I think that a number of Members perhaps in the rural areas of the Island would warmly welcome the fact as those areas are the areas that have the very worst internet speed so, in fact, it is the concentration of improving the areas with the worst internet that have gone first. The counter argument, of course, is the concentration of businesses and other residents in St. Helier. J.T. are very aware of these issues but I am

confident that they have targeted and rolled-out the programme in the best way and the more they become experienced in dealing with the connection of homes, also the better that they are going to be in dealing with what is a much more concentrated area in St. Helier.