

2018.11.20

1 Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour of the Chief Minister regarding the e-Gov programme: [OQ.185/2018]

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Will the Chief Minister update Members on the progress of the e-Gov programme and provide the estimated completion and roll-out date; and will he confirm how long this programme has been ongoing?

Connétable R.A. Buchanan of St. Ouen (Assistant Chief Minister - rapporteur):

The programme started in 2013 and the first phase will finish this December with the delivery of the customer service platform. This will provide a single digital identity, access to online forms, online payments, a transaction history, and the underlying systems infrastructure. This is in addition to the work already delivered, including apps and mobile sites, such as Love Jersey, Active Jersey and, of course, the bus tracker. I have spent some time with the officers who are developing this programme and I have to say I am impressed with what they are delivering, and I have to say also that much of the work that has happened is very much down to the political oversight of Deputy Wickenden, and personally I would like to offer my congratulations for the work that has taken place. **[Approbation]** In January this year, we will start delivering the substantial new programme to further improve our digital offering to the public.

3.1.1 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I thank the Assistant Minister for his answer. He did not quite answer it all. I did ask when the completion date was, and that is for the entirety of the programme. When exactly is the estimated completion date?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It is a slightly difficult question to answer because it depends on the completion date of what. The completion date of the underlying substantial platform, on which we can spin out services to the general public, will be completed this December. But then we start another phase of e-Government projects, which will deliver more apps to the general public, including things like income tax online.

3.1.2 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:

Rather than congratulations, is it not the case that commiserations are more in order because it has taken us the best part of 5 years to produce any form of reliable, basically, names and address register over this time?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I think my response would be there is a lot more that has to be done behind the scenes to produce a robust service than what one sees on the face of it. Given that we are a government site it has to be robust and it also has to have sufficient capacity to deal with any usage that may take place. My experience of these things is there is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes before you can launch something like this. I accept that it has been a while but I think we would be happier if we delivered something that worked, was robust and was safe, than something that was perhaps less reliable.

3.1.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

In the absence of a proper peopling of this register, is it not the case that we are going to once more be reliant on a census in 2021 rather than this particular list, which still, as far as I understand, from my sources, is nowhere near complete?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I cannot say, when I spoke to the officers, that I discussed the census. I would hope that at some stage we would be able to get the census online. Whether it will happen in 2021 I do not know. But certainly my discussions with the officers, there is robustness within the system to deliver such a piece of work.

3.1.4 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Will the Minister reassure those who have no access to computers, particularly the elderly, that they will not be forgotten?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I think the short answer is yes. They will not be forgotten, and I think the Computer Services Department are acutely aware that there are people who do not have access to P.C.s (personal computers) or, in some cases, the willingness or the ability to use them. There will always be a paper-based alternative on offer. It is a question of education, as we all know, and the Parish Halls, for example, have laptops available for people to use. But, yes, I think the answer to that question, we will be cognisant of the needs of the elderly and those who are not particularly computer literate.

3.1.5 Senator S.W. Pallett:

A great deal of money has been spent on delivering the programme to date. Can the Assistant Chief Minister give the Assembly an update on what the programme has cost to date, and what financing is still required to complete the work?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I can answer the first part of that question. The total programme costs so far over the period is £10 million of which £3 million has been spent on staff costs. The balance has been spent on software and programming costs. As far as I am aware - and I did not particularly ask that question - I am not 100 per cent certain what the costs going forward will be, but I can undertake to provide the Senator with those figures once I have asked the question.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Can you make that information available to all States Members please?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes, absolutely.

3.1.6 Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour:

My question to the Assistant Minister is rather similar to Senator Ferguson's. As to the future planning for the roll-out of e-Gov, are there any contingencies, budgets, plans, to educate people in homes, especially the vulnerable and the elderly, how they can get connected and join in with this way forward?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I am not specifically aware of any budget for that going forward but I am aware that that is a consideration that they are thinking about, about expanding the use of I.T. (information technology) throughout the Island. As we have seen, we are now all on fibre, so those of us who have iPads work much quicker. But education is an important part of doing this and I will take those comments back to the team, and make sure they are borne in mind.

3.1.7 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I wonder if the Assistant Minister could talk more about when the completion of the people directory will be ready? For example, it is holding up work on P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) to sort out our central electoral register. It is holding up work with other government departments. I wonder if the Assistant Minister could tell us when that will be ready and that way it will allow other committees and departments to better a lot of bureaucracy.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

My understanding is that that should be ready in December, but I will check that, and if that is different I will come back to him and let him know.

Information subsequently provided by the Chief Minister:

1. What thought had the team given to ensuring paper based options will remain for non IT users when a government service such as Income tax returns goes on line?

New online services are built with offline alternatives. Much of the technology we are using to deliver services offers offline capability and staff will be available to support customers. This blog sets out our principles which remain the same. The approach to piloting has since developed.

[blog on approach to assisted digital](#)

2. What was the state of progress on the people directory and when was it expected to go fully live?

The People Directory is being deployed.

Customers will be able to access their records in People Directory through the one.gov.je portal in early December 2018 by using their digital ID (Yoti) and we can provide an update in December 2018 in relation to it being populated with customer records. Officers are also content to provide a demonstration so any Member can get a true sense of what we are delivering for customers, [and if any of you are interested, please contact Jonathan Williams.](#)

3. What is the budget for future developments in 2019 when the first phase ends?

Budgets are currently being determined as part of the assessment of business cases to support investment that will add to existing capability and capacity so we can deliver more online services. I will provide an update with numbers in January 2019.