Comisiwn y Cynulliad
Assembly Commission

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

Date: 20 October 2011
Time: 13.00
Venue: Presiding Officer's Office
Author name and contact number: Dianne Bevan, ext 8991

UNO benefits and savings review

1.0 Purpose and summary

1.1 At their meeting in January 2011, the Commission emphasised the importance of monitoring the achievements of benefits and savings delivered by the UNO project and that six-monthly reviews be undertaken and reported to the Commission.

1.2 This paper provides the first update on the project, achievement of its objectives and assessment of benefits and savings realised to date.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Commission is invited to note the progress report and the measures put in place to resolve the outstanding issues.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 All users of the system were asked to contribute to the lessons learned and the project board undertook a benefits realisation exercise. Assembly Members' views have been sought on a one to one basis at their ICT account manager meetings.

Discussion

4.0 Background

4.1 The main aims of the UNO project were to create an up to date ICT system, to enable the Assembly to work independently of the Welsh Government, to improve business continuity and to enable the Assembly to make appropriate cost effective choices for future ICT services.

4.2 The benefits anticipated from the project were as follows:

- delivery of a more co-ordinated use of resources by putting Members, their staff and Assembly staff on the same network, so increasing working efficiency;

- achievement of savings through the provision of an independent platform for integrated service delivery, to be sourced by the most cost effective and efficient route;

- measureable outcomes from the implementation of new technologies, systems and processes through modernisation of the ICT estate and provision of the latest technology to enhance public engagement;

- improved business continuity and resilience of the system; and

- better connectivity, particularly from constituency offices.

4.3   The system was installed for 800 users at over 100 locations and created a new, remote server centre to give considerable resilience and recovery for all Assembly IT. Fifty applications were migrated from the old system to the new and each user received the latest version of Microsoft software. Although the majority of the transfer to the new system has worked well, there are several significant technical issues which are causing continued problems for users.

5.0   Outstanding technical issues

5.1   A series of outstanding technical issues have not yet been signed off. These do not affect all users at all times, but are very unsatisfactory for those who are affected. The main outstanding issues are:

- Office applications – email signatures disappearing, hyperlinks in word documents not working, custom dictionary not being updated, access to recent documents not being updated;

- Internet Explorer – not retaining favourites;

- GF & Local settings – differences between Office applications;

- Printing – default printers reverting to previous printer settings; and

- Caseworker – error messages when attaching documents and emails to the system.

5.2 A plan to resolve the outstanding technical issues is in place and Atos (formerly Siemens Business Services) are providing dedicated technical resources to investigate and progress solutions, at no further cost to the Assembly.

5.3 The changes made to fix the outstanding system issues were provided by Atos to the Assembly during the summer, when extensive testing was undertaken. As at 6 October just over 100 users, mostly Assembly staff, have moved to the new infrastructure which incorporates these changes. Final planning is taking place to roll out the system changes to the rest of the users during October. With the exception of the Casework error message when attaching documents, which requires a change to the Casework application, Atos believe that all other issues will be resolved by this change. The Casework system change is being planned at the moment.

6.0 Financial investment

6.1 The total financial investment in the project was £4,256,525, against a final budget of £4.3m. In undertaking this work in 2010-11, as a single project, the Commission saved an estimated £0.9 million (20 per cent) in costs, which would otherwise have been incurred in spasmodic replacement and updating of systems.

7.0 Benefits review

7.1 The benefits review seeks to determine whether the project has delivered an appropriate level of quantifiable benefits in line with the level of investment. The measures include monitoring costs, gathering feedback from users, regular meetings with suppliers and monitoring the effectiveness of new processes and procedures. A benefits plan is included at **Annex A** and a summary of progress is set out below.

8.0 Cash savings

8.1 The UNO project enabled the Assembly to rationalise user numbers and negotiate its own support agreement (PSM2) based upon a new service model, which will also provide the Assembly with a clearer understanding of its ICT costs. Negotiations on PSM2 have been protracted but are nearing completion. Once concluded this will put us in a much better position to decide what improvements or reductions

should be made to align services to future strategy development and determine the subsequent impact on costs.

8.2 In this financial year delivery of new data circuits to Assembly Members' constituency and regional offices, homes and the homes of support staff and Assembly staff is underway with a target completion date of December 2011. This will deliver estimated savings for the Commission of approximately £200,000 per annum, along with improved connectivity.

9.0 Efficiency improvements

9.1 Integrating the two networks into a single platform means that we are able to track and record user numbers more readily, which affects our charges. Applications can also be tracked and recorded more accurately, for asset management purposes, which will improve our planning for future changes.

9.2 The latest version of Microsoft Office has provided improved and more efficient presentation of work to Members and in publications.

9.3 Whilst support calls to the Help Desk were initially very high, following implementation these have now reduced. Assembly users now share a common Help Desk which is separate from that of the Government (although services are provided for Ministers in Cardiff Bay). There is a more consistent delivery platform, reducing the complexity and number of systems being supported.

10.0 Service improvement

10.1 The new service support agreement (PSM2) is being negotiated with Atos. This aims to improve service levels to users driven by the needs, priorities and strategy of the Assembly, to improve services and ensure that they are cost-effective. An interim support arrangement has been in place since implementation.

10.2 A more secure and less complex method of connection to Assembly services has been provided through the roll out of new wide area network data circuits to Members. This provides a faster and more responsive level of on-line remote support than available previously and was an area that Members previously scored very low in the annual ICT survey.

10.3 An increased number of users are remotely accessing Assembly systems through secure and accessible systems, enabling a more flexible working approach.

10.4 The project allowed Assembly staff to leave the government secure internet (gsi). This has had benefits in our use of e-democracy as Assembly staff are more freely able to access social media profiles to alert them about issues and stories relevant to their work and to improve the Assembly's public engagement. Use of social media for Assembly purposes has been enhanced, for example, the Research Service has introduced twitter updates to further promote their work and that of Members.

11.0 Customer satisfaction

11.1 There has been a very mixed reaction from users of the new system. Whilst the majority appear to be reasonably satisfied, the outstanding issues described above are causing a significant amount of difficulty and frustration. A plan is in place to resolve these issues and ICT account managers are working very closely with users to keep them updated on progress. Although some users of the system clearly prefer the one it replaced, we aim to improve their experience and are providing tuition where needed.

11.2 The system was originally designed through consultation with Members, their staff and Assembly staff. The first user survey after UNO implementation was conducted in March 2011. The results are being used to gauge user satisfaction levels and achievement of benefits over time. **Annex B** is a summary of the results of the first survey, although there was a low response rate from Members. Another survey will be undertaken when the outstanding issues have been resolved and users have had more experience of both the system and the new data circuits, which are currently being installed.

12.0 Methodology

12.1 A consistent methodology is being developed in order to measure each of the identified benefits and provide for more accurate reporting over time. Baseline data information is being collated and will be used to develop a set of metrics for future comparison.

13.0 ICT strategy

AC(4)2011(5) Paper 3 part 1
UNO benefits and savings review

13.1 The main aim of UNO was to position the Assembly so that it could make an independent decision on the provision of ICT services post 2014.

13.2 An ICT Strategy group has been in place since March 2011, looking at the various options available. The group has sought advice from other public sector organisations, conducted a gap analysis with Gartner and has undertaken benchmarking with other UK legislatures. Options will be presented to the Commission in November.