



Royal Court of Jersey
Judicial Greffe

Your Ref:
 Our Ref: AJC/dmd

30th October 2020

Deputy Kirsten Morel
 Chair
 Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel
 Morier House
 St Helier
 Jersey JE1 1DD

Dear Deputy Morel

Government Plan 2021-2024 Review

Thank you for your letter of the 15th October 2020 in regard to the above and specifically your queries in respect of the projects identified as relating to the Judicial Greffe.

I take this opportunity to respond to those queries as set out below.

Court Digitisation

1. **Please could you provide us with an update on this project?**
 - a. **Are court processes still paper-based?**

Yes. The project is still in its research and procurement phase. No new systems or processes have been fully integrated into the Court processes yet as a result of this project, but procurement of an e-bundling system and a case management system is also underway. An e-bundling system is undergoing a successful proof of concept within the Royal Court (civil, criminal and public cases), the hearings of the Master of the Royal Court and the Family Division.

- b. **What new technology has been introduced into the Department, if any, in recent years?**

In addition to the proof of concept referred to above, the Jersey Legal Information Board has initiated a number of projects including creating introducing electronic bundles of authorities in public children cases, a video link pilot for the Royal Court, Family Court and Magistrate's Court No. 2, together with the installation of video equipment in the Magistrate's Court No.2, the Prison, the Customs Department and the Police Station. This equipment has proven its value during Covid-19. In addition the digital audio recording system (fitted in all courtrooms) is currently undergoing a major upgrade.

2. **How much of the funding identified for 2020 (£500k) has been spent?**



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A Department of the Jersey Court Service

The project was expected to begin in January 2020 but the appointment of the expert third party assistance in the project team was not finalized until April 2020. While excellent analytical progress was made during lockdown, it was not possible to visit working courtrooms or hold in-person meetings to observe processes or have demonstrations of existing systems until July 2020. Likewise, it has not been possible to visit courts in other jurisdictions that are well advanced in their digital transformation, nor to attend conferences. These challenges have resulted in the procurement process for new electronic case management systems starting in September 2020 instead of March 2020. This is reflected in the reduced 2020 spending.

As of 30 September, £181,977 had been spent. There are open orders to the value of £117,691 committed to be spent in quarter four, though those may underspend by £24,000. Quotes are being obtained to supply and fit new and essential audio-visual equipment in several courtrooms to ensure consistency of functionality between courts and to improve Business Continuity for the Court Service. If these quotes are accepted that will be a further £30-45,000 spend. £5,000 is also allocated to providing the Jurats of the Royal Court with a secure email facility (Office 365) for the transfer of private and sensitive court documents. The forecast total for 2020 is between £310,668 and £325,668.

Pride Software

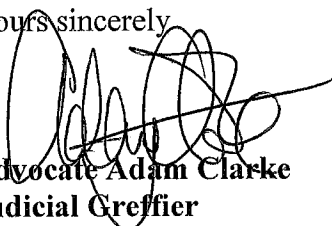
- 3. We can see from last year's business case that the system has not been upgraded for 7 years and will require a major upgrade in 2022 to encompass new legislation and functionality. Given the disruption the pandemic has caused this year and its drain on public funds, is this project still on track for an upgrade in 2022?**

The PRIDE system is the public facing digital database for the Public Registry (contracts for alienation of land in Jersey, registered powers of attorney, wills of real estate etc.) and is therefore the research backbone of the conveyancing process in the Island. Were the PRIDE system to lose functionality, it would have a considerable impact on the ability of the practitioners in the Island to convey land, which in turn would result in a sizeable downturn in the considerable Stamp Duties received by the Treasury.

The bulk of the investment is required for upgrading the functionality of the software. However, a further enhancement is planned to be undertaken to permit the registration of Lasting Powers of Attorney (as opposed to specific powers of attorney utilised for the passing of contracts) created under the Capacity and Self-Determination (Jersey) Law 2016. The project is still on track for an upgrade in 2022. This might potentially be capable of being delayed to 2023 but at the risk identified in the paragraph above.

I hope the Panel finds the enclosed to be helpful.

Yours sincerely



Advocate Adam Clarke
Judicial Greffier