



Royal Court of Jersey  
**Viscount's Department**

30 September 2019

Deputy Kirsten Morel  
Chairman  
Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel  
States Greffe: Scrutiny  
Morier House  
Halkett Place  
St Helier  
JERSEY

Dear Deputy Morel

**Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel: Government Plan Review  
Phoenix Software – Viscounts**

Thank you for your letter of 20 September in respect of our software upgrade proposal for 2023 and the related expenditure (the **Project**).

For clarification, "Phoenix" was our former financial management system and database, which was over 15 years old and no longer fit for purpose. We replaced it in July 2018 with a new system, known as "Plainsail", following a development project which began early in 2017. The Project relates to anticipated further development or replacement of Plainsail.

It may assist the Panel if I explain why the Viscount's Department needs this system. The Viscount receives, manages and pays money in several capacities and on a daily basis. We play an essential part in both the criminal and civil justice systems. In particular:

1. We collect fines imposed for criminal offences, either in a lump sum or in instalments over a period of time;
2. We receive and hold bail monies for persons charged with a criminal offence;
3. We enforce compensation orders in criminal matters and pay the funds received to the victims of crime;
4. We take possession of and manage funds confiscated or seized under Proceeds of Crime and Civil Asset Recovery legislation (both in local matters and for foreign proceedings, under mutual recognition and assistance arrangements);
5. We enforce and collect the payment of civil judgment debt on behalf of creditors;
6. We receive payments of maintenance (i.e. alimony and child support) and pay the funds to the person entitled to them;
7. We manage and realise the assets of bankrupts and distribute the net proceeds to creditors;
8. We manage the funds of persons who do not have capacity to manage their own financial affairs on a "last resort" basis.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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*A Department of the Jersey Court Service*

We process in the region of a thousand transactions per month and have responsibility for a significant volume of third-party assets. For example, at the end of 2018, we were managing over £300 million of seized assets.

In response to the Panel's questions:

**1. Why does the Viscount's Department require this upgrade?**

Funding for a replacement of PlainSail after five years in operation is best practice and recommended for all Government of Jersey line-of-business applications. The current contract period for PlainSail is five years, which deliberately aligns with this recommendation.

ISD have recommended that the use of PlainSail is reviewed annually after three years to ensure it continues to meet business and technical expectations. The review may recommend the following:

- that the current system is working well and should continue as is (with potential contract extension);
- that the current system is enhanced/modified to meet new business requirements; or
- that the current system is failing to meet requirement and should be replaced.

The proposed funding in 2023 will provide resources to pursue the recommendations of the review, the budget being set for the most expensive option of full replacement.

**2. In developing this Project, were any other similar providers contacted?**

As described above, the exact parameters of the Project will be established following the review of Plainsail, in the context of its performance and continuing "fitness for purpose", its technical capabilities and the needs of the business. The review will also take into account legal and accounting/financial changes that have occurred in the interim.

Should we decide to replace Plainsail, selection of a provider will only happen after an appropriate procurement exercise has been conducted. The developers of Plainsail were themselves selected after a thorough procurement process.

**3. When was Plainsail originally installed?**

After a lengthy period of development, training and user testing, Plainsail was installed and "went live" over the weekend of 30 June and 1 July 2018.

**4. How will you ensure appropriate project management of the delivery of this software?**

As ISD were unable to provide project management support for the procurement, development and implementation of Plainsail, we engaged the services of a project manager. The project manager managed the process and produced project plans and timelines, arranged meetings and kept minutes of the project board and maintained risk and issues logs, ensuring that project governance requirements were observed.

I would expect that if project management resource could not be provided from within Government resources to assist in the management of the Project, we would again look to engage a project manager.

I hope that this is helpful but if the Panel has any further questions, please do let me know.

Yours sincerely



Advocate Elaine Millar  
Viscount