



Ministry
of Justice

Accounting Officer Memorandum

Local Area Networks (LAN) Full Business Case (FBC)

14/11/2023

It is normal practice for accounting officers to scrutinise significant policy proposals or plans to start or vary major projects, and then assess whether they measure up to the standards set out in Managing Public Money. From April 2017, the government has committed to make a summary of the key points from these assessments available to Parliament when an accounting officer has agreed an assessment of projects within the Government's Major Projects Portfolio.

Background and context

LAN Services provide secure connectivity of the Ministry of Justice's (MoJ's) Devices within Authority Sites to other devices, and to the WAN (Wide Area Network) service, in all parts of the MoJ, across all sites. These services are fundamental to allow the MoJ to operate and achieve its overall objectives.

The LAN FBC follows on from an Outline Business Case that was approved in late 2022 recommending the disaggregation of the existing Networks Contract with Vodafone Ltd, with separate procurements covering all relevant outsourced LAN and WAN services.

This FBC seeks approval to sign a LAN-specific contract with the preferred LAN supplier. A transition from the legacy contracts to a single modern, consolidated replacement LAN contract will provide the MoJ with critical service continuity; better oversight of the LAN estate; greater flexibility to adjust the service; improved commercial efficiencies; and the opportunity to take more direct ownership of specific services over time.

Assessment against the accounting officer standards

Regularity

This project is assessed as regular. The provision of LAN services is set out within the Ambit of the Vote under the broad Departmental Expenditure Limits descriptor "Administration of the Ministry of Justice, its agencies, Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) and associated offices".

Propriety

A policy meets this test if high standards of public conduct have been made, if robust governance has been put in place and relevant parliamentary expectations, including transparency, have been maintained.

This project is assessed as proper.



A board is established to support the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) deliver the programme and its benefit. The board and SRO are supported by the department's key functions and the FBC has been scrutinised by the department's Investment Committee.

Value for Money

The FBC has assessed the value for money of a replacement contract with the preferred bidder – as identified from the LAN Services procurement process and the preferred option in the OBC – against the baseline comparator prior to contract signature.

Preferred Option

The replacement contract with the preferred bidder represents the best value-for-money option for taxpayers – providing replacement LAN services under a single, new LAN-specific contract. This option delivers the project objectives, provides significant benefits against the counterfactual, and carries lower risk at a lower cost than other options.

Feasibility

The programme is considered feasible, with the latest IPA review having assessed the programme as having a green delivery confidence assessment. Actions are being taken to address the risks outlined through the IPA review.

The preferred supplier will carry out a managed transition of Fixed LAN Wi-Fi services. Detailed delivery, transition and exit plans have been developed as part of the FBC.

Conclusion

As the accounting officer for the Ministry of Justice I considered this assessment of the Local Area Networks (LAN) Full Business Case (FBC) project and approved it on 28 November 2023.

I have prepared this summary to set out the key points which informed my decision. If any of these factors change materially during the lifetime of this project, I undertake to prepare a revised summary, setting out my assessment of them.

This summary will be published on the government's website (GOV.UK). Copies will be deposited in the Library of the House of Commons and sent to the Comptroller and Auditor General and Treasury Officer of Accounts.



Antonia Romeo 28/11/23