

Andrew Davies AM/AC
 Y Gweinidog dros Gyllid a Chyflenwi Gwasanaethau
 Cyhoeddus
 Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
 Welsh Assembly Government

Our Ref: WAQ54588

Darren Millar
 AM for Clwyd West
 National Assembly for Wales
 Cardiff Bay
 Cardiff
 CF99 1NA

24 September 2009

David Davies

I am writing in response to your written assembly question with regards to how many laptop computers have been provided to (a) Minister and Deputy Ministers, (b) special advisers and (c) civil servants by the Welsh Assembly Government in each of the last 5 financial years and at what cost.

I can confirm that when Ministers and Deputy Ministers had their ICT facilities transformed at the end of August three Ministers were each provided with a laptop. The cost of each laptop had until very recently been £898.70. However, Her Majesty Revenue and Customs (HMRC) agreed that, for ICT Hardware and Software purchased under the Transformation element of the Merlin Contract, the Welsh Assembly Government can recover the VAT. This decision is retrospective to the start of the Transformation Project in April 2008. The cost of each laptop provided to Ministers, and all previous laptops purchased as part of the Merlin Transformation Project was therefore £781.48, a significant reduction on £898.70 before recovery of VAT.

Retail Price Comparison Web Sites indicate that the cost of an equivalent specified business use laptop ranges from £887.01 to £989.49 (inclusive of VAT). The price paid by the Welsh Assembly Government is regularly benchmarked against a range of commercial and Office of Government Commerce (OGC) comparison indices to ensure competitive pricing.

Currently 3,749 laptops are installed in the Welsh Assembly Government. Given that the entire Welsh Assembly Government ICT estate is currently being transformed it is therefore sensible to consider the replacement cost of the laptops rather than the historic cost.

When Transformation is complete on 31 March 2010 the 3,749 laptops currently in use will reduce to approximately 2,600, with the remaining 4,000 users converting to thin clients, which cost £280.55 each and are environmentally more friendly. Of these 2,600 laptops, 2,273 have been or will be purchased under the Transformation Project with the remaining 327 laptops provided from recycled stock. These 2,273 laptops will therefore cost the Welsh Assembly Government £781.48 each or £1.776M in total. The remaining 327 laptops can also be valued at a replacement of cost of £781.48 or £0.256M in total. The total cost of the Welsh Assembly Government laptop estate at replacement cost is therefore £2.032M.

I trust this information answers your query, if you require any further information please feel free to contact me.

John
Andrew