

From the Office of the
Minister for Finance & Personnel



Department of
**Finance and
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Your reference:

Our reference: SUB/51/10

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin MLA
Parliament Buildings
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Dear Mitchel

// February 2010

During the December Monitoring debate you raised the issue of the £1.5 million reduced requirement surrendered by DFP in respect of IT Assist, and asked if this was an indication of a weakness in the financial management of IT Assist.

As you suggested, the reduced requirement was partly due to transfers from other departments in respect of the shared service being higher than originally anticipated. In addition, expenditure is expected to be lower than originally forecast as a number of planned fixed asset transfers into IT Assist will not now take place.

However the differences in estimated funding and expenditure must be viewed in the context of this being the first full year of operation for IT Assist. The relatively short period of time over which IT Assist has assumed responsibility for the costs of common ICT services that were previously managed by other departments, combined the ongoing transfer of fixed assets and contractual responsibilities has undoubtedly led to some initial difficulties in accurately forecasting costs and funding. However, as the organisation is placed on a firmer footing these difficulties should be resolved.

A copy of this letter will be sent to the Speaker and a copy will be placed in the Assembly library.

Yours sincerely

SAMMY WILSON MP MLA