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BRIEFING NOTE

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| Reference | SLTS/8083/08 |
| Subject | Value Wales : Schools Revenue Support Project |

Introduction

The Welsh Assembly Government's *Schools Revenue Support Project* was set up to help schools to save money by linking up with the rest of the public sector when purchasing their equipment, teaching and office materials. The project was undertaken in collaboration with Directors of Education, local authority procurement units, the WLGA and the Association of School and College Leaders.

To help schools understand what the project is, how it works and how to utilise it, a DVD and accompanying booklet will be sent to schools by the start of the Autumn term 2008.

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide schools with information as to how the project should be used within the context of the procurement service provided by SLTS.

Schools Revenue Support Project, SLTS and procurement of ICT equipment

The above project provides access to contracts and framework agreements, including ICT equipment and consumables, within Value Wales (a division of the Welsh Assembly Government, which was formed as the result of the 'Making Connections' review of public services) – these are shown below :

The screenshot shows the 'buywales' website interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Login', and 'Contact us'. Below the navigation bar, there is a search bar and a list of menu items: 'Search Suppliers', 'Add Notices', 'Manage Notices', 'My Profile', 'My Suppliers', 'News', 'Events', 'Contracts & Resources', and 'Procurement Road Planner'. The main content area is titled 'Contracts & Resources' and features a search bar. On the left, there is a 'Categories' sidebar with a tree view showing 'Contracts, Frameworks & Guidance', 'Catalogue', 'Business', 'Plan', 'IT & Workforce', 'Marketing', 'Office and Educational Needs', 'Postal Services', and 'Professional Services'. Under 'IT & Workforce', the 'ICT' category is expanded, showing a list of sub-categories: 'I.T. Equipment & Associated Services', 'Interactive Whiteboards & Audio Visual Products', 'Mobile Telephones', 'Photocopiers', 'Software', 'Telecomms', and 'Non-Value Wales Framework Agreements'. A callout box on the right highlights the 'ICT' category with a list of sub-categories: 'I.T. Equipment & Associated Services', 'Interactive Whiteboards & Audio Visual Products', 'Mobile Telephones', 'Photocopiers', 'Software', 'Telecomms', and 'Non-Value Wales Framework Agreements'.

Schools will now be **able** to access these contracts and framework agreements directly from the 'buy4wales' website, however, this does not mean to say that a school **should** buy directly utilising a supplier contained within them – this is explained below :

- **Service Level Agreement (SLA)**

Applicable to primary/special schools only – SLTS has a prescribed minimum specification for PCs and laptops that must be met to ensure support can be provided for equipment under the terms of its SLA. The default specification provided under a supplier's specific offering may not completely satisfy that minimum specification.

SLTS has already undertaken a mini-tender within the *Value Wales* framework to provide 2 options for PCs and laptops, both of which meet the required minimum specification and at a price that compares very favourably with the default offerings within the framework agreement.

- **Installation**

SLTS is currently working on the automation of the installation of equipment as part of the procurement process, i.e. upon receipt of an order from a school, delivery is confirmed with the supplier and a request for change (*RFC*) with the Service Desk for its installation by technical support (who will contact the school concerned and arrange for a convenient date/time).

- **Technical Support**

Applicable to primary/special schools only – to facilitate support of equipment SLTS liaises with all suppliers (for equipment acquired via its procurement service) in relation to any hardware warranty calls, e.g. hard disk failure – this ensures a seamless service to the school.

- **Duplication of effort and cost**

As part of the SLA with SLTS, schools already pay for its procurement service.

Should a school wish to procure equipment via the *Value Wales* framework, notwithstanding the issue with minimum specifications outlined above, it is likely that they will want to customise that system to a certain extent, e.g. more RAM, larger hard drive, etc. If that is the case, the school would have to create a required specification and request a quotation from the supplier concerned before ordering – this takes up the time of both administrative, technical and teaching staff within the school and duplicates the effort of SLTS' procurement service that could do it on behalf of the school, as well as the cost of that school staff time (which could be employed elsewhere in the school for greater benefit) which is already paid for SLTS procurement staff within its SLA.

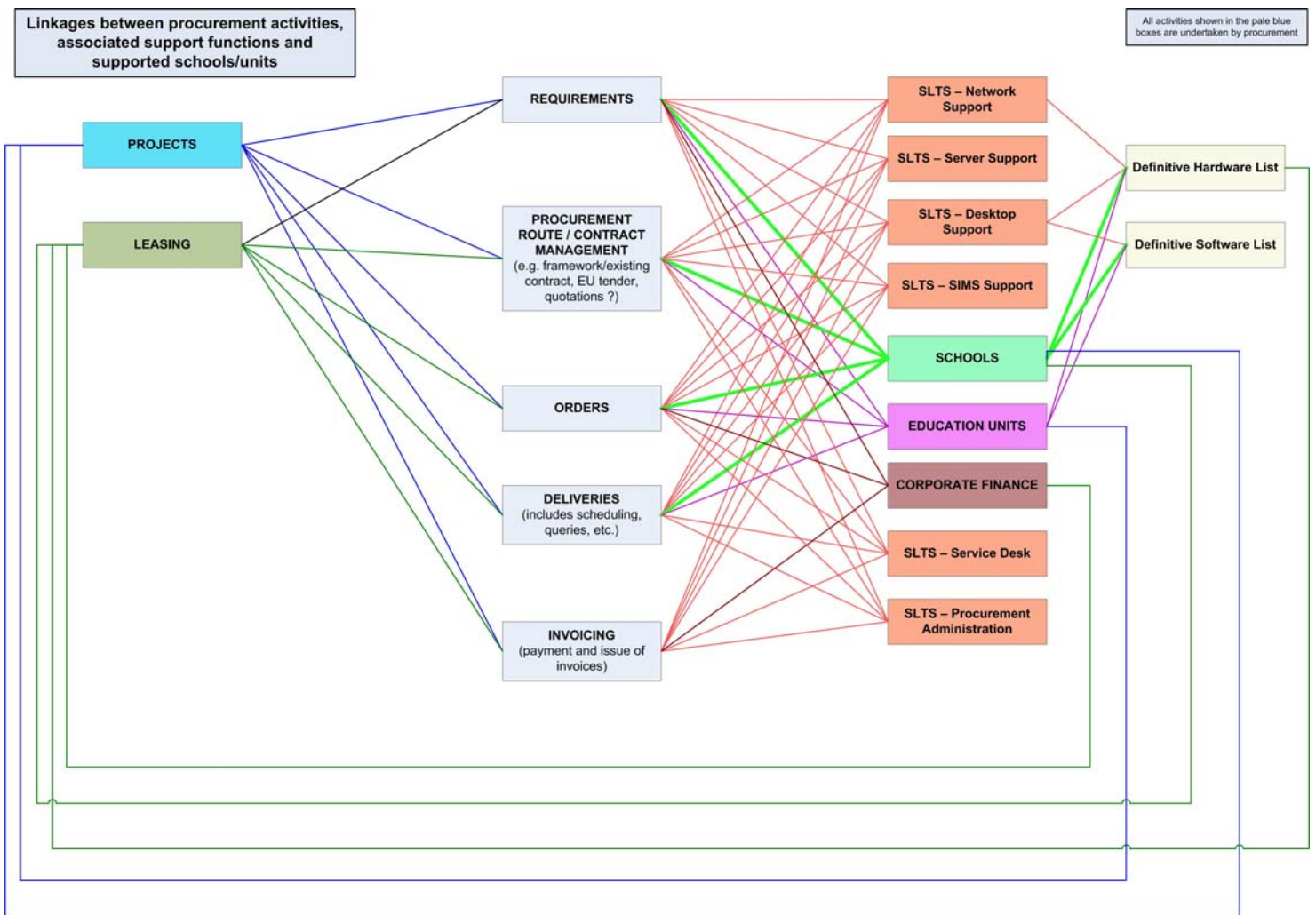
This duplication also applies to handling warranty calls for equipment not acquired through SLTS, as outlined in the last point.

- **Contract management**

In conjunction with its technical support sections, the SLTS procurement service ensures that the quality of equipment supplied and the post sales support (replacement of 'dead on arrival' equipment, warranty call response and resolution, etc.) is monitored and addressed where it falls below the expected standard.

- **Linkages with other SLTS provided services**

The diagram below illustrates the linkages that SLTS' procurement service (*its activities are shown in pale blue*) has in relation to its other services (in addition to technical support described previously). Some of these may become disjointed where procurement is undertaken by a school directly (particularly a primary/special school), e.g. being able to operate an effective leasing framework is dependent upon knowing what equipment is to be installed, supported and ultimately returned at the end of the lease period.



Queries

Should schools have any queries in relation to the content of this briefing note, please contact Ricky Holdsworth or Ian Dowling (tel. 01792 637472 or email slts.procurement@swansea-edunet.gov.uk) in the first instance.