

Documents in the Edinburgh Tram Inquiry will be managed in new £100,000 system

More than £100,000 will be spent on a document management system for the millions of files associated with the Edinburgh Tram Inquiry, it has emerged.

The investigation looking into why the capital's 14 kilometre Edinburgh Airport to York Place line was completed years late and costing double the anticipated budget when it opened in 2014, is yet to release its findings.

More than three million documents have to be "carefully considered" as part of the investigation according to an Edinburgh Tram Inquiry spokesperson.

In November a spokesperson said "good progress" was being made towards producing a final report.

The following month The Scottish Government announced an additional £500,000 for the inquiry, suggesting it could continue through 2022.

It has now been revealed nearly a quarter of that will be spent storing and managing more than three million documents being reviewed as part of the ongoing investigation.

A Scottish Government contract worth £120,000 for an online document management system for the Edinburgh Tram Inquiry was awarded to tech firm Atos UK.

All of the evidence will be uploaded to the company's Relativity System, which allows documents to be searched and analysed quickly.

The probe into the building of part of the tram line, in which public hearings ended in 2018, has also come under fire for incurring delays and overspends, costing over £12 million since it was launched seven years ago – and taking longer to complete than the construction project itself.

It was set up to establish “why the Edinburgh Tram project incurred delays, cost more than originally budgeted and through reductions in scope delivered significantly less than projected”.

A spokesperson for the Edinburgh Tram Inquiry said: “Lord Hardie's remit is to conduct a robust inquiry and he has made it clear it will take as long as is necessary to get the answers the public wants in relation to the issues surrounding the Edinburgh Trams project.

“The Inquiry's evidential database contains over three million documents that have to be carefully considered which is an extensive but vital task.

“We continue to make good progress towards producing the final report and recommendations which will be published as soon as practicable.

“The Inquiries Act 2005 obliges the Chair to consider cost at all times since it is funded from the public purse. Throughout the process all efforts have been made to ensure the Inquiry delivers best value.”

by Donald Turvill, Local Democracy Reporter

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