Executive Summary

This document lays out the reasoning behind the implementation of a new IT support system that will enable the Enforcement Unit to satisfy its statutory obligations for the issuing of an extended range of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) under the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005.Implementing the new system will significantly improve current working processes/practises and allow the enforcement unit to deal with the increased work load whilst at the same time improving its service. The cost of the system is £24024 and it is expected to yield efficiency savings that will provide a notional payback within 18 months.

Why the project is needed

The project is needed to allow the enforcement unit to provide an extended service without the need to expand the existing team resources.

The new system will allow the introduction of 'mobile integration' through the sending and receiving of email to the handheld units to enforcement officers in the field which will thus enable 'real time' updates to be received back to the system, This will improve customer service significantly by up-to-date information on the system as well as improving responses to customer calls/enquiries. This will directly support the Council in its objectives for E-Government and support the customer service standards for both in and out of office hours.

The current system is very labour intensive, for example it requires manual loading/unloading of data from hand-held units and cameras. In addition, all existing FPN's need to be issued manually and require specific paperwork to enable them to be processed. Given the additional requirements of the new format and process of issuing FPN's under the CNEA it is not practicable to continue with the existing system. Furthermore, it is not viable or cost effective to develop the current system to satisfy the requirements of CNEA or maintain the current working practises due to high levels of inefficiency. This is due to the lack of functionality (i.e. the system doesn't have the ability to issue any FPN's, and the reporting suite is inaccurate)

As part of the restructure savings where taken in anticipation of both the transfer of work to Copeland Direct and the introduction of new technology to bring about savings within L&ES. Without this new technology, the department could not take on the additional powers without additional operational resources i.e. additional administration staff.

Options considered

This system has been selected as a result of the research into the improvements of technology, and the systems available in the current market place and, at the same time, to bring about efficiencies within the enforcement department.

Three potential solutions have been examined, and the summary of the findings can be seen in appendix 2 attached.

The preferred solution is that being offered by Chipside, which is the only system that clearly satisfies the full functional requirements.

Costs and Benefits

The initial cost of the Chipside system is £24024, with an annual licence fee of £5000. Appendix 1 provides a detailed breakdown of these costs.

Total estimated (non cashable) savings are £15500 per year based on not having to recruit one additional full time member of staff required to meet the additional demand and workload growth.

In addition to these efficiency savings the Chipside system has other beneficial advantages for the organisation in terms of;

Time and efficiency gains;
Improved quality;
Improved Customer Service;
Ease of operation / technical support;
Process improvement;
Enhanced controls (e.g. security).

These are explained in more detail in Appendix 3 attached.

Consultation

The following departments have been consulted on the system:

IT Department

IT department have confirmed they can give the project any support required, not only is the new system much better from their point of view it also takes a big step in the right direction towards integration and mobile working.

Audit department

Audit department have reviewed the system in detail and will be involved in aspects of the system development.

Process Improvement Team

Process improvement team are currently involved in the project in developing new processes to integrate Chipside into Copeland Direct as required.

Customer Service Department – Copeland Direct

Customer service department have confirmed that they support the objectives of the project and recognise the potential for service enhancement. The Customer Service department is committed to working with enforcement department to ensure the appropriate department handles administration and customer contact in order to deliver both the service improvements and efficiency gains.

A full review of other management systems currently being operated in north Cumbria has also been undertaken and analysed, this can be seen in appendix 4 attached.

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Appendix 1

Chipside system Costs

3no Enforcement Staff Licences @ £1250 each	= £ 3750
2no Copeland Direct Staff licences @ £1250 each	= £ 2500 *
10no Mobile Licences (Officers) @ £250 each	= £ 2500
1no Implementation/Training Fees	= £ 2000
10no Psion Workabout Pro (hand-held unit) @ £630.40	= £ 6304
10no Seiko DPU Bluetooth Printer @ £445.00	= £ 4450
2no Mulit-docking station for 4 units @ £290.50	= £ 581
2no Single docking station @ £52 each	= £ 104
10no GPRS card for real-time coms @ £188.50	= £ 1885
Total	= £24074*

* These costs include all upgrades to the software and any new developments within the Chipside system.

Comparative costs for the solutions from the other potential suppliers are:

Compex - £35000 for the software – approximately £2500 per handheld unit with GPS/GPRS capability (yet to be developed) – equating to a total cost of £55500

Traffic Management - £30000 for software – approximately £3000+ for handheld units with GPS/GPRS (yet to be developed) equating to total costs of £60000

However, as Appendix 2 shows, neither of the other supplier packages meet the technical requirement and so have not been considered as suitable solutions.

Appendix 2 – Evaluation Model

2 = Fullfills / exceeds requirements

1 = Partially meets requirements

0 = Doesn't meet requirements

	Chipside	Compex	Traffic Management
Automatic uploading of hand-helds	2	0	2
Linked photographs to cases	2	0	2
Mobile working/email capable	2 (cost £600)	2 (cost £2500+ yet to be developed)	2 (cost £4000 yet to be developed)
Ability to issue FPN's?	2	0	0
Ability to link car park machines?	2	0	0
Ability to manage market income?	2	0	0
Ability to manage car park income	2	0	0
Ability to manage abandoned vehicles?	2	0	0
Ability to link to other servies/systems? (En Health / Copeland Direct)	2	0	0
Off site technical support	2	1	2
System development into other areas	2 – areas developed free of charge and annual upgrades included	2 – additional areas can be developed at cost – average £10000+	0
SCORE	22/22	5/22	8/22

Appendix 3 - Benefits

Implementing the Chipside solution will bring benefits in terms of:

Non cashable Efficiencies –

- Savings in administration demand to process the new FPN's estimated at £20,000 per year by delivering within enforcements departments existing resources.

- Savings as result of introducing an electronic format FPN's - estimated at £1000 per year

- Savings as a result of minimising IT department's support dependency, estimated at £2500 per annum

Time and efficiency gains

- Approximately the 30hrs a week additional requirement to administrate the new CNEA saved

- Minimising the major impact of the new CNEA by enabling us to deliver within existing resources.

- Increased speed of processing and system management

- Potential £5000 per annum from issuing additional FPN's

Improved quality

- Standardised FPN's through issue from new hand-held units

- Mobile working (by sending/receiving emails to the officers in the field) improving the unit's ability to react to our customers needs

- Quality of Customer service

Process improvement

- Comprehensive reporting suite allowing improved performance management of team and financial management of unit

- Automatic loading/unloading of hand-held unit/cameras which link into each case file (currently separate and manually stored)

- Automatic production of the full range of FPN's supporting both the officers in the field, administration and legal services by swifter and simpler systems.

- Allowing greater multi-functions of enforcement officers in field, leading to improved customer service responses

- Improving out of hours (weekend/late evening) reaction to customers needs and obligation of services from the Council

- Swifter payments of fines through the council's web site

- All Case files managed holistically in one system rather than current-3 independent systems

- System connectivity to link into other services (Pest Control, Environmental Health and Sport/Leisure Centres)

- Improving performance management and measurement of the departments activities

Enhanced controls (e.g. security)

- Management of car park income against actual income

- Management of market income against expected and banked

NB –above were highlighted as key issues within the departments councils audit action points

Ease of operation / technical support

- Out of hours management of the enforcement team (currently none existent)

- No administration required to upload/unload cameras and hand-held units

- Reporting suite more comprehensive and ability to create new reports

- Free technical support for issues without having to tie up our internal IT department – presently receiving approximately 4 calls (1hr) per issue – approx 2-3 per month

- Case files show all notes and pictures/CCTV footage (currently only able to search manually for pictures in separate files) heralding potential benefits (no further software potentially required) under the new Traffic Management Act due out in Summer 06

- Link to Copeland Direct Software to provide simpler/less duplication of procedures improving Customer Service delivery from Copeland Directs perspective and the Enforcement Unit.

Benefits Realisation

The timescales for benefits realisation are as follows:

- Efficiency Savings – realisation within first financial year

- Efficiency Gains – realisation immediately

- Improved Quality - immediately

- Process improvement - Immediately

- Enhanced Controls – immediately

- Ease of operation – immediately – system integration with Copeland Direct will be approximately 6-8 months after installation

  The CNEA being one of the main contributors to new fines, the final implementation (based on current guidance from SoS) will be Spring 07.

  Potential benefits and continued development potential of the system for the Council in other departments is expected to continue throughout a period of potentially 1-2 years.

  All of the above benefits linking to Customer Service will show benefits immediately.

The benefits identified will be measured as follows:

1. Improved response times to customers calls including out of office hours calls and updates via mobile technology.

2. Reduction in response times to queries/appeals

3. Reduction in IT support hours

4. Increase in revenue from FPN's

The following controls will be established to ensure that the benefit is being realised:

1. Customer service standards agreed with line management for ideal response times – regular review by EU Manager and Copeland Direct Manager

2. Targets as set within BV199 – reviewed by EU Manager, Open Spaces Manager, Waste Management Manager, Head of Leisure and Environmental Services Manager

3. Individual performance indicators for staff reviewed monthly in 1:1 meetings.

The end point for realisation of benefits

Majority of these benefits would be realised immediately and continue to show benefit throughout the year and continue each year the system is in use.

Appendix 4 - Cumbrian Review

Summary

At time of writing, there is no awareness of any current potential procurement for a new enforcement back office system within the Cumbrian district councils.

Some council's are considering Enforcement Units as per Copeland borough council's model

Allerdale BC

Currently, the Chipside system is in use within Allerdale Borough Council's Parking Services department. Despite the functionality of the system, they do not, currently use this for environmental enforcement. They are however, presently considering the option to create an 'enforcement' type unit to better utilise the staff and systems already in place.

Barrow DC

Barrow DC have the updated Compex system in place (that was used in this business case as a comparable system) and are already experiencing (as are other councils with this system) user problems. Barrow are not currently looking to commence an Enforcement Unit.

Carlisle Council's

Carlisle is presently conducting a re-structure and are considering the options open to them. There are no in-house dog wardens as this is contracted out. Their systems are not as advanced as Copeland Borough Council's and they may be considering the setting up of an Enforcement Unit although this hasn't, as yet, been decided. They are considering following the Copeland borough council model

South Lakeland DC

South Lakeland DC currently have a Traffic Management system in place (that was used in this business case as a comparable system) but this does not include any ability to manage FPN's or free system development to include other areas of our departmental roles. SDLC currently employ 1 part time as their 'dog warden' and currently do not have an active programme to deal with dog fouling and its enforcement.