

NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL, BUILDING CONTROL AND LAND CHARGES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllrs C Geil and A Holliday
LEAD OFFICER: Martin Jepson Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Michael Tichford Head of Regeneration
REPORT AUTHOR: Chris Lloyd Business Development Manager

Summary and Recommendation:

This report seeks authority from Executive to proceed with tendering and implementation of a new software system for Development Control, Building Control and Land Charges

Executive is asked to approve the process outlined for managing the project and to agree to:

1. The Ad Hoc list of 5 Tenderers,
2. The invitation of tenders,
3. Delegation of acceptance of a tender to the Heads of Legal and Democratic Services, Finance and Business Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holders and Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Management), subject to approval of funding though budget at Full Council on 26 February 2008.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report deals with the provision of an integrated software system to electronically enable and co-ordinate the service provision of Development Control (DC), Building Control (BC) and Land Charges (LC).
- 1.2. These are three important Fee earning services where efficiency, customer service and satisfaction are important, and where the Council needs to score well in terms of Key Performance Indicators and support Transformational Government.
- 1.3. Proposals were put forward at the Executive meeting on 30 August 2007, and further noted at the executive meeting on 02 10 2007. These related to the unsuitability of the M3 software system developed over 5 years ago, and further problems with the provider which had culminated in a decision that the system would have to be replaced (see Notes Appendix C).
- 1.4. The present circumstances, where the services are relying in the short term on the previous MIS system, with only limited maintenance available mean that there is a high a risk of system breakdown or failure.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1. Members supported a range of proposals to take the project forward to review and confirm requirements and identify and obtain a suitable new system, broadly through
 - 2.1.1. A tender enquiry exercise for a new system:
 - 2.1.2. Informal communication with other Cumbria authorities about their systems and appropriateness and potential for working with CBC.
 - 2.1.3. The interim measures to use the Reality system and the Property gazetteer.
 - 2.1.4. Earmarking the potential additional cost for the interim measures (through existing Trading Accounts), with:
 - 2.1.5. Further reporting to the Executive in relation to the tender enquiry and review of other systems in Cumbria.

3. PREPARING AND PLANNING

- 3.1. Project management techniques are being applied utilising an external project manager employed part time to co-ordinate progress and delivery.
- 3.2. A project brief and project plan have been prepared to establish scope of the project and monitor progress through the various stages, to be developed further should the project be implemented.
- 3.3. Resources in DC, BC, LC, ICT and Procurement have been deployed into a Project team to deliver this stage of the project with weekly meetings held to agree actions, discuss results, and monitor progress.
- 3.4. Contact has been made with adjoining District Councils to identify the software systems used, the satisfaction levels and replacement proposals in order to take a view on extending their use to Copeland. The results are summarised in Part 2.
- 3.5. All of the three Service areas have reviewed their procedures and requirements and have produced detailed Output Specifications defining their requirements for the present and looking forward.
- 3.6. An assessment of the benefits that will accrue from the installation of a new software system including known future requirements has been undertaken, results are summarised below:
 - 3.6.1. Members of the public will be able to access the relevant information, on properties and applications, so that they will be able to track the progress of applications.

- 3.6.2. Land Charges searches and Building Control/Development Control applications will be capable of being received, distributed and processed electronically.
- 3.6.3. Consultations with Statutory Bodies, Applicants and elected Members will be handled electronically.
- 3.6.4. The above benefits will free up staff resources and allow them to become more pro-active (once dual processing – electronic and manual – is stopped).
- 3.6.5. Duplication of information will be removed as it will only need to be recorded once in the system to become available to everyone.
- 3.6.6. The need to hold manual records will be reduced as more and more information is held electronically in the new system.
- 3.6.7. The system will link with the Council's GIS system.
- 3.6.8. Efficiency and service provision will be improved because the system will:
- Automatically generate correspondence, such as reminder letters, when they become due
 - Provide improved performance monitoring, such as reminders for dates due etc.
 - Automatically calculate and bill fees and keep a track of when they become due
 - Store all the relevant information, including that shared across all 3 sections, so query resolution and report production will be much quicker and more comprehensive

3.7. Tender documentation has been assembled in readiness to seek competitive prices to meet the Output Specifications and contract conditions.

4. BUDGETARY PROVISION

- 4.1. Now that a thorough exercise has been undertaken to consider options and identify specific requirements Members are being asked to agree to the invitation of tenders.
- 4.2. The precise cost of the most economically advantageous offer will not be known until such tenders have been received and evaluated.
- 4.3. A worst case budget has been estimated based on information provided by software suppliers; this would need to be reviewed against actual tenders received (details in Part 2).

- 4.4. In order to look forward and make some provision for funding, budgetary provision over the next three years has been included within the T-enabling bid with revenue implications also confirmed (details in Part 2).

5. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

- 5.1. As the estimated value of the project is in excess of the minimum threshold for advertising Service Contracts (£90,319 as at 01 01 2008) a Contract Notice has been placed in the European Journal. This is to seek expressions of interest from software providers.
- 5.2. Seven organisations responded and they have now been technically and financially evaluated, and the following five are recommended for inclusion on an Ad Hoc List, should members be minded to approve further progress of the project (details in part 2 Appendix A).

Civica
Idox
MIS
Plantech
Swift LG

The remaining two Fusemetrix and Innogistic were eliminated after the evaluation by Finance, of the financial information supplied.

6. INVITATIONS TO TENDER

It is recommended that the above 5 organisations be invited to tender for the supply of the new system.

7. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 7.1. The Service units have ongoing revenue budgets for this type of software that can be deployed to a new system.
- 7.2. As part of the budgetary planning process a report was presented to Executive on 15 January 2008 for a number of projects under the Transformation Enabling headline. It is understood that further consultation is to be undertaken with members on the budget and that provision of funding for this project is subject to this, and approval of the budget at Full Council on 26 February 2008.
- 7.3. Budgetary provision has been included for this project. At present the precise cost is not known, the tender exercise will determine this. A worst case budgetary allowance has been sought. Please refer to Appendix C for the extract from Executive report and for the full life (say over 5 years) estimated system costs.
- 7.4. Consideration will have to be made in any implementation stage to ensuring that the additional resources required are obtained and deployed.

In general terms this means that where staff are to be employed full-time on the implementation then suitable temporary staff must be employed prior to, and during, the implementation. It cannot be stressed enough that without this full-time commitment of staff to the implementation of the new system then this project will fail.

7.5. The level of budgetary provision is estimated, once tenders are received the cost of accepting a tender, providing all required resources will need to be reviewed against the budgetary provision (details in part 2 Appendix D).

8. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

Please refer to the benefits identified which are all aimed at improving customer delivery and satisfaction and improving the efficiency of these services.

List of Appendices

Part 1

None

Part 2

- Appendix A Evaluation of Expressions of Interest (rejected companies)
- Appendix B Notes to Executive
- Appendix C Summary of Gathering Information from Other Authorities
- Appendix D Matrix of costs

List of Background Documents:

Project files

List of Consultees:

MIS Group, Corporate team, Leader, Portfolio Holder,

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	None
Impact on Sustainability	None
Impact on Rural Proofing	None
Health and Safety Implications	None
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	None
Children and Young Persons Implications	None
Human Rights Act Implications	None
Monitoring Officer comments	Nothing to add to report
S. 151 Officer comments	

Is this a Key Decision? Yes/No

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Appendix A – Evaluation of the Expressions of Interest

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL: TENDER FOR REGENERATION LAND CHARGES SOFTWARE SYSTEM EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST EVALUATION CHART

COMPLETED BY: Diane Parkinson, Maggie Toomey, Mark Key
DATE: 22/01/2008

Purpose of evaluation: To score applicants in order to identify minimum of 4 for inclusion on select tender list.

Quality	Plantech		IDOX		MIS		Swift LG		Civica	
	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Declaration of Solvency	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5
Declarations re criminal offences and/or misconduct	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5
Professional body/organisation registration or membership	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5
Social Security payments declaration	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5
Taxes payments declaration	1	3	0.6	1.8	1	3	1	3	1	3
Bank reference	0.8	4	0.4	2	1	5	1	5	0.4	2
P I Insurance £5M	0.2	1	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5
3 years Accounts										
Staff numbers	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5

Exe 120208
 Item 15
 Appendix
 A

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Appendix A – Evaluation of the Expressions of Interest

Management Qualifications, Technical facilities, training	5.00%	1	5	0.8	4	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5
Quality Assurance	5.00%	0.6	3	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5
Details, samples of Systems	20.00%	1	20	1	20	1	20	1	20	1	20	0.8	16
Subcontracting	2.00%	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Examples of Projects over last three years	20.00%	1	20	0.6	12	1	20	1	20	1	20	0.8	16
TOTAL SCORE	100.00%	11.6	73.0	11.4	66.8	13.0	80.0	13.0	80.0	13.0	80.0	12.0	69.0

Scoring Key

Score	Evaluation
1	Excellent
0.8	Very Good
0.6	Good
0.4	Fair
0.2	Poor

APPENDIX B

SUPPLEMENT TO EXEC REPORT AUGUST 2007-08-30

SOFTWARE SYSTEM PROVISION FOR: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEVELOPMENT CONTROL BUILDING CONTROL LAND CHARGES

CURRENT POSITION

Regeneration, Legal and ICT have conferred to take a further look at the implications of the software provision.

The M3 system was designed over 5 years ago. It is unclear whether the way in which staff would require the system to support them was not analysed prior to obtaining the system. Environmental health implemented a simple stand alone module, but considerable time elapsed before a start was made on the principal system.

Further issues have also developed highlighting that the system was not designed to deal with subsequent Government initiatives (IEG, Planning and Building Control portals, electronic land Charges Forms).

Staff have found the system unwieldy, difficult to use and as a result they are reluctant to rely on it.

Costly modifications are continually required for integration and development to keep up with changes. Further training involves costs that are prohibitive. Consequently it has not been fully implemented.

As the existing 5 year contract expires on 30 September 2007 current budgetary provision is unlikely to be sufficient for future software system provision. The Provider has indicated an increase of average £11,000 per annum for a 5 year contract, or £45,000 per annum for a three year contract. This includes further training and integration.

PROPOSAL

It is recommended that the following two options are taken forward.

1. Assemble a tender enquiry for a new system and seek competitive prices for a 5 year contract (likely to take 6 – 9 months to implement).

2. Consider shared service implications – contact all 7 neighbouring authorities, investigate, if suitable seek to join their current systems (likely to take less time).

As a short term measure linked to the above it is possible to retain the Reality based MIS system which has been kept as back up for a limited period of time with some loss of integration (say 6 – 12 months).

There is a gazetteer which will also need to be retained, this can be resolved within current resources.

The above proposal can be broadly contained within current budgets, (to be confirmed), there may be a potential additional cost of up to £5,000 this financial year.

All three sections have now produced output specifications for their services to identify their specific requirements which will form the basis of further enquiries.

From information already assembled it is expected that a new system or systems would cost within the range of an additional of an average of £12,000 to £40,000 per year or total £60,000 to £200,000 for a 5 year contract (approx at this stage).

CONCLUSION

Executive is asked to support:

- 1 A tender enquiry exercise for a new system;
- 2 Informal communication with other Cumbria authorities about their systems and appropriateness and potential for working with CBC;
- 3 The interim measures using the Reality system and the Property gazetteer;
- 4 Earmarking the potential additional cost for the interim measures;
- 5 Further reports to the Executive will be in relation to the tender enquiry and review of other systems in Cumbria.

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Appendix C – Summary of Gathering Information from Other Authorities

Authority: Carlisle City Council

Overall Summary

Business Area	System Used	Supplier	How long has it been in use?	Going to replace within 12 months?	How long to implement?	Recommend system to Copeland?
Building Control	Accolaid	Plantech	1992	No	Roughly 6-12 months	Y
Development Control	Accolaid	Plantech	1992	No	Roughly 6 – 12 months	Y
Land Charges	Accolaid	Plantech	4 years	No	2 Weeks for Land Charges (Con29 only)	Y

Supplier Satisfaction Summary

Business Area	Supplier Relationship Satisfaction Rating (1 – Very Poor 5 – Excellent)
Building Control	4
Development Control	4
Land Charges	5
IT/ICT	5
Overall Rating	4.5

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Business Information Summary

Please note whilst in conversation with Carlisle they commented that the initial training wasn't great.

All reports are run from Crystal Reports which is separate from the system and would require training.

Experience in Structured Query Language (computer language designed for the retrieval and management of data) is essential although Plantech do give some basic training.

Carlisle DC spent quite a few Saturdays working to get the system running in the beginning due to staff having to continue with their day to day work.

Carlisle have also got within the maintenance agreement that a site manager calls to the office every 3 months to update on any enhancements, govt changes to the system, if they have any problems with the system they usually use this time to resolve.

Help & Assistance from Plantech was given on a scale 1-5 of an average of 4 this being dependent on how urgent the request is, and where possible to resolve on the visit from the site manager.

Overall a good response from Carlisle. They are more than willing to have users go on site to see the software in use, have suggested this would probably be better around about Feb/March 08

The following has been extracted from an e-mail received by Steve Harrison, from ICT:

Comments:

Robert Stapleton BSc (Hons) CGeog (GIS) FRGS
GIS/LLPG Manager
Carlisle City Council
Rickergate
Carlisle
CA3 8QG

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Appendix C- Summary of Gathering Information from Other Authorities

Tel: 01228 817 073
Mobile: 07816 756 394

Overall we are extremely happy with Plantech. We use the Plantech Praid BS7666 gazetteer management system for our LLPG and it has developed immeasurably in line with our suggested improvements. Plantech support has been excellent in particular during the transition to BS7666:2006 - unlike virtually every other vendor they have provided consultancy and support for the migration at no extra cost on top of the normal annual maintenance charge. Contrast and compare with the charges levied by CAPS, Northgate etc!

Plantech have an embedded GIS plug-in that allows for the on screen capture of BLPUs points and polygons that is easy to use and obviously integrates the graphics with our main corporate GIS. It is used here mainly for the LLPG but it can also be used in other modules (Building Control, Development Control, Land Charges etc). We use the ESRI ArcGIS plug-in but they also support MapInfo and it also allows for the overlay of other business layers.

Plantech supply an XML connector that allows on-the-fly query of the LLPG direct from their database and we have developed a simple application using it to integrate the gazetteer directly into our main ESRI GIS and Intranet mapping system so that all staff effectively have bang up to date access.

Really I haven't now got a bad word to say about them.

John Mattinson
Corporate Services
Carlisle City Council
Tel: 01228 817252
Mob: 07889 377881

As far as I am aware the users of the Plantech system are very pleased with it.

We have had the Plantech system for many years now - at least 12 I would guess. Firstly we had a DOS based Plantech system and then migrated to the Windows based Acolaid system. When we first bought the Plantech systems most of the work for IT involved the migration of data from our ICL Planaps system. When we migrated to Acolaid, Plantech undertook most of the data conversion and transfer. We originally bought the DCAid and BCAid modules for Development Control and Building Control but we now also run:-

DSAid - Dangerous structures
LBAid - Listed Buildings
GRAid - Grants

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PRAid - Property Database
ECAid - Enforcements
SNAid - Street Naming and numbering
LCAid - Land Charges
Acolate - Document Management.

These modules now also link to our GIS system, which Rob will have told you about, to NLIS (National Land Information Service) which enables solicitors etc to submit searches, to the Planning Portal and to Submit-a-plan to allow the submission of Planning and Building Control applications and to the NLPG. We also extract application data to display on our web site and to allow the public to search on planning applications. As you can imagine all this integration is now quite complex. In the next few weeks we intend to go live with online consultation responses. There is a sense in which implementation has never really finished and is still ongoing because of all the changes/enhancements forced upon Authorities by Central Gov. (NLIS, NLPG etc) and because Planning Services see the possibilities in implementing new modules.

As part of the annual maintenance we have quarterly on-site visits at which time any enhancements or fixes are installed. These are very useful. However, if we have any other problems between site visits, Plantech dial in and resolve the problems. If it is necessary to dial in because of software bugs etc (of which there are very few) then there is no charge but if we do something which causes a problem then there may (but not always) be a charge.

Other than ensuring that the server/networking infrastructure is in place and monitoring that it continues to work well and that nightly backups are carried out there is very little IT involvement. There may be an occasional need to copy files sent as email attachments to the Acolaid server.

Overall Plantech provide an excellent level of service and the Acolaid software causes very few, if any, problems and Planning Services seem very happy with it.

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Appendix C – Summary of Gathering Information from Other Authorities

Authority: Eden District Council

Overall Summary

Business Area	System Used	Supplier	How long has it been in use?	Going to replace within 12 months?	How long to implement?	Recommend system to Copeland?
Building Control	FastControl	Innogistic	5 years	No	9 months	No
Development Control	FastPlanning	Innogistic	5 years	No	9 months	No
Land Charges	FastCharges	Innogistic	5 years	No	9 months	No

Supplier Satisfaction Summary

Business Area	Supplier Relationship Satisfaction Rating (1 – Very Poor 5 – Excellent)
Building Control	4
Development Control	4
Land Charges	2
IT/ICT	2
Overall Rating	3

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Appendix C-- Summary of Gathering Information from Other Authorities

Authority: South Lakeland District Council

Overall Summary

Business Area	System Used	Supplier	How long has it been in use?	Going to replace within 12 months?	How long to implement?	Recommend system to Copeland?
Building Control	FastControl	Innogistic	2003	No	6mnths	No
Development Control	FastPlanning	Innogistic	2003	No	6mnths	No
Land Charges	FastCharge	Innogistic	3-4 Years	No	On-going	No

Supplier Satisfaction Summary

Business Area	Supplier Relationship Satisfaction Rating (1 – Very Poor 5 – Excellent)
Building Control	2
Development Control	3
Land Charges	2
IT/ICT	2
Overall Rating	2

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Appendix C-- Summary of Gathering Information from Other Authorities

Business Information Summary

Not happy with the Innogistic system at all, very slow very frustrating they use a lot of workarounds to get the information they require, the end users need to be very IT literate to enable them to use this system.

IT support from both supplier and authority was rubbish, a lot of man hours were put in and the system is still unsatisfactory.

South Lakes have purchased SubmittaPlan however it does not work with the system, they also use Anite for document management again this does not work with the Innogistic system.

It is the feeling, of the investigator, that after talking to the department users that this system is not functioning as it should and the advice would be to keep clear of this supplier.

Authority	System Used	Satisfaction Level
Carlisle City Council	Plantech	High
Eden District Council	Innogistics	Low
South Lakeland District Council	Innogistics	Low

APPENDIX D

T-ENABLING PROJECTS - REGENERATION SOFTWARE - FUNDING

In order to look forward and make some provision for funding, budgetary provision over the next three years of approx £189,000 has been included within the T-enabling bid with revenue implications of an additional £10,000 per year.

SUMMARY DEC 2007

POINTS

- 1 Costs need to be confirmed by Service Units/Accountancy, reviewed t tender stage
- 2 Recognise that development projects cannot be undertaken at nil cost
- 3 Take account that existing projects must have revenue costs associated with them
These must be clearly identified at initiation, together with sources
- 4 For each project the (full life) capital and revenue costs of implementation must be estimated

NEW/ADDITIONAL BUDGET REQUIREMENTS 2007/8 2008/9 2009/10 2010/11 2011/12 2012/13 TOTALS

GROSS COSTS

Capital costs	10000	174525	5000	0	0	189525
Revenue costs	26267	35623	35623	35623	35623	204382
Less current revenue provision	-26267	-26267	-26267	-26267	-26267	-157602
BUDGET REQUIRED Capital and revenue	10000	183881	14356	9356	9356	236305
additional cost smoothed over 5 years		45261				

CAPITAL BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

Project management	10000	20000	5000			
Development Control	0	36619	0			
Building Control	0	19723	0			
Land Charges	0	23798	0			
E access	0	29610	0			
interfaces	0	17475	0			
CBC management stafftime Servers etc	0	27300	0			
TOTALS	10000	174525	5000			

REVENUE - RUNNING COSTS

Current MAINTENANCE	14000	14000	14000	14000	14000	C/S
Required Software licences extra costs	0	21623	21623	21623	21623	I/T

APPENDIX D

TOTALS	14000	35623	35623	35623
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