

New Expenditure Proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

1. Service: Development Services
Department – Development Control

2. Submitted by: Gareth Jones,
Development Services Director

3. Brief Description of the proposal: On-line enquiries

Full implementation of the Planning Permission Enquiry Expert System (PPEES). This standalone software answers the question “Do I need planning permission?” The general public will be able to access this service either via a hosted Planning Portal, SCDC’s website and/or via a mediated service enabling frontline council staff to walk through the process with the customer. This will remove a significant amount of time spent on initial customer enquiries in Planning allowing highly qualified staff to get on with the task of Planning while providing an e-enabled modern initial contact or query point for the public.

SCDC has developed their own Development Control system DevCon using Oracle and has made considerable inroads into establishing an on-line presence currently affording 15 Pendleton points.

SCDC is keen to deploy the PPEES system which is host application independent but will interface with SCDC’s MapXtreme GIS system and constraints data.

The PPEES system comprises three software AG components, Tamino an XML database that stores the constraints data and XML PPEES enquiries, Mediator routes XML requests and generates emails and the Integrated Electronic Delivery (IESD) manages the workflow processes and allows the authority to amend and create additional workflows.

4. Costs (£000s)

Detail	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/8
Software AG’s Tamino, IESD and Mediator Licence for use with the PPEES system for single CPU server		19,838.00		
Annual Maintenance on the above software		3,967.50		
Services (8 man days for the implementation and training on the PPEES)		7,000.00		
On the anniversary of the installation of the PPEES, carry out an on site 1 man day health check on the integrity of the constraints data. This is not included in the package price + expenses		875.00 + expenses		
Total Costs:		31,680.50		

5. Reason for bid:

Inescapable

Related to one or more of the three priorities

6. Policy Justification:

Corporate objective: High Quality, Accessible, Value for Money Services and Council priority for the improvement of customer service.

Factors: Priorities of the government including the provision of more accessible services using ICT; development pressures south Cambridgeshire over the next 15 years and the need to meet regional planning guidance for housing provision and the environment.

7. Benefit for service users/public:

- Deliver a high-quality, consistent self-help planning advice service to all citizens, via the web and/or through a mediated service offered by the authority by non specialist front office staff within a CRM environment.
- Enable the more efficient use of professional planners time by dispensing with initial queries.
- Assist in making the planning process more transparent by allowing citizens to access any development constraint that may apply to a specific property.
- Make the planning process more accessible so users can access information remotely and at their own convenience (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).
- Improve citizen satisfaction through the delivery of an on-line, effective and modernized service.
- Give a positive customer experience to all citizens using the service whether it be over broadband or a 56k dial up connection.

8. Impact on Performance Indicators: The proposal will have an impact on a range of planning performance indicators:-

- BV 109 – determination of planning applications
- SP 921 – determination of householder applications
- BV 205 – score against a planning quality of service checklist
- BV204 - % of appeals allowed
- SH320 – Affordable housing planning permissions as % of all residential permissions
- BV111 – Satisfaction with the planning service

At this stage the impact has not been quantified.

Performance Indicator		Estimated performance in 2004/2005	Estimated improved performance in 2005/2006
#	Description		

9. Implications if not approved:

Inefficient, demotivated, ineffective staff experiencing the burden of thousands of queries and/or questions put directly to Planners by members of the general public asking “Do I need Planning Permission?” Lower quality of service to the public and lower satisfaction levels.

No ‘best practice’ award as an urban and rural authority.

No rating for criteria number 1 in the National e-Planning Service Delivery Standards which will jeopardise the authority gaining additional Pendleton points and planning delivery grant monies.