Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-071-2008/09

Date of meeting: 15 December 2008

Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio:	**Corporate Support Services & ICT.**
Subject:	**Gazetteer Consolidation.**
Responsible Officer:	**David Newton**　　**(01992 564850).**
Democratic Services Officer:	**Gary Woodhall**　　**(01992 564470).**

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1)   To agree that the Corporate Gazetteer Consolidation solution be progressed, continuing with the Northgate M3 Environmental and Public Protection systems;

(2)   To authorise the Director of Finance & ICT to negotiate a contract for consultancy support, in accordance with Contract Standing Order 9;

(3)   To agree that the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) held by the Directorate of Planning & Economic Development be recognised as the Authority's master address list; and

(4)   To agree that the National Land and Property Gazetteer should be recognised as the main source of all addressing data.

Executive Summary:

A Corporate Gazetteer, which is a single address database, has been a long term objective for the Council, but the high level of resources required to implement and maintain it have limited progress so far. Recently a number of Government initiatives and Council specific issues have given this project a higher priority.

This is a substantial project for the Council to undertake but it can be implemented in stages. It is anticipated that the next stage of this proposal will be achievable within existing staff levels and capital resources. However, the Council do not have the in-house skills to fully support a complex data matching exercise and this would require an amount of external consultancy support.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

As more computer systems become spatial (utilise maps), it is vital that a common database is created for all property based systems within the Council. A Corporate Gazetteer would also be the primary link for any potential Customer Service Centre & Customer Relationship Management system, as well as facilitating public access to information via the internet, as demonstrated by recent developments within the Planning system.

Other Options for Action:

Do nothing. This would not prepare the Council for the future and as there are adequate staff and capital resources to support the next stage of the development, there seems little sense in not progressing.

Purchase and implement a completely new system. This option would be far more expensive and time consuming.

Report:

1.   Current issues which need to be addressed and would benefit from Corporate Gazetteer Consolidation are;

(a)   The final stage of the Local Land Charges (LLC) and the Northgate Planning system integration is approaching completion. This requires the combining of the property Database (DB) of both systems.

(b)   Ministry of Justice legislation requires the electoral system to use a Corporate Gazetteer Unique Property Reference (UPRN).

(c)   The Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) module needs to link with a single combined spatial DB within the Northgate M3 ESS system to be effective.

2.   The current Council Corporate Gazetteer is an integral part of the Northgate M3 Planning system, which is compliant with the standards required for the National Land & Property Gazetteer (NLPG). This system is recognised as having the most comprehensive property database within the Authority, due to the large amount of work (data cleansing) carried out during the planning system implementation and is the DB used to update Government NLPG hub. Therefore it is recommended that the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) held by the Directorate of Planning & Economic Development be recognised as the Authority's master address list.

3.   The NLPG hub is the definitive national address list and provides unique identification for all properties. A directive from the Department for Communities and Local Government has recommended that local authorities should evidence their commitment to the hub by formally recognising it as the main source of all addressing data.

4.   As part of the LLC and Planning system integration, a Business Process Review was presented to Management Board by consultants Supporta Terraquest. They highlighted that the Environmental & Street Scene (ESS) system is currently running two separate instances of the property database. This means that the systems within ESS do not link up making them neither as cost effective nor efficient as they could be and this would restrict progress in making data available via the internet in the future.

5.   As the work being proposed is to systems provided by Northgate, Northgate would usually be asked to supply the consultancy support. However, Northgate have confirmed that currently they are only able to offer limited assistance in this proposal due to internal resourcing issues. The Northgate account manager has confirmed that they do have a very close working relationship with Supporta and use them direct, as a preference, in these situations.

6.   Contract Standing Order C9 can apply where Cabinet has resolved that tenders need not be invited and that a contract may be negotiated. One of the grounds for using C9 is that there is no effective competition for the subject matter because the subject matter is a patented or proprietary article or is available from only one source. In this case, given the need for co-operation from Northgate, there is no practical alternative to using Supporta.

7.   The majority of other Council computer systems are now BS7666 compliant. BS7666 is the national standard format for holding all property and street details. This will enable these other systems to connect more easily to the Corporate Gazetteer in the future.

Resource Implications:

Consultancy can be funded from within the existing capital budget and is likely to be in the order of £50,000.

Future revenue savings may arise from a reduction of licences, servers and support following implementation.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

None

Impact Assessments:

Equalities Impacts
None.

Risk Management
The potential for incorrect and conflicting data to cause issues will reduce with a Corporate Gazetteer.

Future performance targets in respect of NI14 (avoidable contact) may be more difficult to achieve without a Corporate Gazetteer in place.