

E-PLANNING NEWSLETTER

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Foreword

Graham Jones

The Scottish Government remains committed to the e-Planning programme as a key element of planning reform. Scottish Ministers reflected this in their recent decision to approve funding for the programme following the spending review. This is an important achievement which allows us to remove much of the uncertainty surrounding elements of the programme.

Over the coming weeks the programme team will be considering the spend profile for each of the projects to determine what can be achieved within the strict time frames allocated to fund. This does not affect the scope or spend on the OAA or OPIS projects. We are also pleased to announce that procurement activity on OLP has been resumed. With regard to the expert systems and e-consultation projects we are examining what can be successfully implemented in the current financial year and the implications for any spend next year. We will provide a fuller update early in 2008.

In the meantime good progress has been made on all five stands of the programme. Much of the success outlined below is due to the team work and commitment shown by our partner project managers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and involvement. As OAA and OPIS move quickly over coming months, an important focus for partners will be ensuring their business and technical readiness. Challenges will inevitably arise, but the programme team remains committed to do whatever is within our scope to help resolve them as speedily as possible.

We look forward to the coming year, making further good progress and bringing real benefits to the operation of planning system.

Contents

Foreword	1
Upcoming events	1
Projects Status Update	2/3
Change & Communications	3/4
Benefit Realisation	4

Upcoming Events

- TBC OLP Working Group Meeting (WG members only)
- TBC OAA Working Group Meeting (WG members only)
- TBC OPIS Working Group Meeting (WG members only)
- 23/01/08 Expert Systems Working Group Meeting (WG members only)
- 22/01/08 E-Consultation Working Group Meeting (WG members only)
- 16/01/08 E-Planning Group Meeting (COSLA, open to all partners)
- 09/01/08 e-Planning Programme Board Meeting (Board members only)
- 22/01/08 Benefits Realisation Workshop (Participating groups only)

Invites will be sent via email with full details

Projects Status Update

Online Applications and Appeals

Rhys Morgan

Following the signing of contracts with SAIC there has been a flurry of activity to undertake all the necessary preparation to ensure the project timescales are met. A series of workshops looking at the solution, forms, branding and testing have now been completed and thank you to all those who took part in these sessions which were scheduled at very short notice. These workshops proved to be an invaluable exercise in understanding the next key steps for the project and the approach for development, it also generated some really useful discussion and raised relevant considerations for the project moving forward, all of which are now being investigated.

We are continuing to work closely with SAIC in planning for the implementation of OAA and capturing the key dates for development. We will be publishing these shortly to ensure everyone is clear of what is happening and when, so we can all schedule resource accordingly for the next set of activities such as development, implementation and training where partners will obviously be playing a vital role. The project is still aiming for a Go Live date of June /July 2008.

Online Planning Information Systems

Rhys Morgan

The Competitive Dialogue (CD) process for the procurement of the Online Planning Information Systems project was recently completed resulting in an Invitation to Tender (ITT) being issued to the marketplace. The final ITT was issued on 19 October and we received comprehensive responses from three suppliers Civica, IBM, and IDOX on 23 November. The evaluation panel are now preparing for the review and evaluation of these proposals, and a moderation meeting will be held on 11 December to discuss the evaluation panel's findings. A supplier presentation will follow on 17 and 18 December and we hope to move to a preferred bidder in late January 2008.

Comments on the draft User Agreement were due back on 23rd November from partners. User Agreements are a key part of the contracts and we hope partners had a chance to review these documents and feed back comments and / or potential revisions. As we are aiming to award contracts in early 2008, ensuring User Agreements have been circulated to the necessary departments is vital to the successful and timely delivery of these systems.

To be considerate of local arrangements for hardware sourcing, standard builds, security policies etc the Programme Board recently made the decision that hardware such as scanners, monitors, and servers for the OPIS software could be procured locally. We believe this approach is more befitting to the project in terms of expediting hardware provision and mitigating some of the risks. However this approach still requires careful planning and due consideration to ensure that hardware is procured in a cost effective and timely way.

Partners who are not receiving the OPIS software solutions but are receiving hardware only, will have received instructions on how this process should work. They are advised to return their quotes to the programme team by the date specified in the correspondence. Partners who will be receiving OPIS will have to wait before procuring hardware as we need to ensure its compatibility with the future OPIS solution which is as yet, still to be decided upon. Once we move to a preferred bidder in January 2008 further instructions will follow.

Given that we are nearing the end of the comprehensive procurement, the programme team are starting to consider the implementation plan for OPIS. We have already had several partners stating a preference in terms of when they are looking to receive the systems i.e. be an early adopter or be included in the second, third or final phase. Although the final implementation plan will not be completed until February or March next year, we are still keen to gauge partner's thoughts on where they would like to "sit" on the implementation schedule and understand any other internal initiatives, projects or commitments which may need to coincide with the OPIS implementation. As always, please call me to discuss informally. Something formal will be issued in the near future to firm up on this, but it's worthwhile considering this now.

If you have any questions on either of these projects please contact Rhys Morgan, rhys.morgan@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, 0131 244 7358 – mobile 07917067638

Online Local Plans

Tom Moore

The result of the spending review is that we now have assurance that there is budget for the OLP procurement. As such we re-started the OLP procurement on the 4th of December with a view to short listing suppliers for the next stages at the beginning of February.

The best practice guidance for OLP creation and maintenance is currently under review by the working group and other select partners. The finalised document will be released in the new year with workshops to introduce and explain the concepts and practices described within. OLP partners will be informed in due course of the dates of these workshop sessions.

Despite the delay in the procurement of OLP, positive feedback has been received from bidders that they are still very keen to be involved with the project. They welcome the opportunity to work with the Scottish Government and OLP partners to deliver the aims of this project

If you have any questions please contact Tom Moore, tom.moore@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, 0131 244 7467

Expert System

Sharon McCormack

In light of the Spending Review the Programme Team are currently reviewing options for delivery of an Expert Systems solution, including examining aspects that can be realistically achieved this financial year. The options will be outlined in the Delivery Options Appraisal paper currently being drafted. Once reviewed and signed off by the Working Group the paper will be presented to the E-Planning Programme Board early next year. Work on the Expert Systems question set will commence shortly.

The next Expert Systems Working Group meet is being proposed for 23rd January 2008.

e-Consultation

Sharon McCormack

The e-Consultation project is also subject to discussions surrounding the profiling of spend. The team is in the process of finalising what can be achieved in the current financial year and what elements would require funding in 2008/2009. An update will be provided to relevant stakeholders shortly.

In the meantime work continues on the Delivery Options Appraisal for the e-Consultation Triggers. A report on the findings will be produced and discussed with the Working Group before being presented to the e-Planning Programme Board early next year. The e-Consultation Triggers document is currently being reviewed by the Scottish Government Planning Directorate and will shortly be issued to all Partners.

Partner reviews of the e-Consultation Standards document is now complete and thanks to all for comments. The programme team are currently considering all comments and the document will go to the Working Group for sign off once comments are reviewed. Where relevant implications of these standards to the OPIS project are being discussed within the programme team.

The next E-Consultation Working Group meeting is proposed for 22nd January 2008.

If you would like further information on either of these projects please contact Sharon McCormack - email sharon.mccormack@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, 0131 244 7589.

Change & Communications

Avril Anderson

A Business, Technical and Organisational Readiness survey has been compiled by the programme team and will be available for all partners to complete shortly. This is a questionnaire which will help evaluate each partners state of readiness for OAA and OPIS and partners will access the web based application "Survey Monkey" to complete the questionnaire. Once completed it will provide an indication to each partner of their own level of readiness and identify to the programme team where support may be useful.

The Account Managers list has been revised to take account of changes to the programme team. The revised list will show which Account Manager will be the point of contact for each Project Manager and is available on Share Point now.

The Change Management Approach and Communications toolkit is having it's final review and will be available on Share Point soon. It is important that partners familiarise themselves with it and programme the key activities into their local action and implementation plans.

The FAQ is now successfully up and running and partners are encouraged to forward further questions for inclusion. The FAQ is an ideal forum for sharing questions and answers with partners and the programme team hope that partners will continue to make full use of this facility.

If you have any questions or would like any assistance with change management issues please contact Avril Anderson – e mail avril.anderson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, 0131 244 5902

Benefits Realisation

Helen Byers

Benefits Realisation planning work has commenced with an OAA Benefits workshop scheduled in Falkirk for late January. OPIS volunteers are currently being selected with the OPIS workshop scheduled for February. An OGC Gateway Review is planned for late December and as part of this process, the Benefits work is being reviewed.

Please contact Helen Byers if you have any queries around Benefits Realisation or if you are keen to be involved in the measurement process of any of the projects - helen.byers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, 0131 244 7975.