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Co Cllr Nick Harrison
Chairman of Audit & Governance Committee
C/o County Hall

18 November 2013

Dear Nick

Re: Concerns regarding mapping systems

Thank you for letter dated 1 November 2013 which challenges the recent purchase of an Asset Management focused GIS mapping system in highways. I hope the following explanation will assist with easing your stated concerns.

Initially, the system concerned effectively provides much more than just a GIS mapping system in the traditional sense. It is a product that has primarily been developed with and for local authorities for them to use as a ready-made and fit-for-purpose Asset Management System. What makes this system unique at present is its specialist visual interface and the opportunity for us to easily input, manipulate, analyse and report on the huge amounts of asset data and inventory information currently available. As a result it will enable us to project the future condition of our various highways and transport assets using different funding scenarios for example and also generate work programmes based on different criteria and maintenance opportunities.

In this way we will be able to make more informed and quicker decisions using current information and the best life cycle planning and maintenance options available. Another significant advantage is that the system is sufficiently quick and responsive to demonstrate these asset management options and outcomes to a wider audience, including members.

For information the Corporate GIS team was represented on the project team and also contributed to exploring the possibility of developing an existing in-house GIS system as an alternative solution. It was jointly concluded that such a proposal would take at least two years to complete and require a substantial amount of internal resource which was not readily available. The project team therefore agreed that it would be more cost-effective and timely to procure an already developed, proven and operational system. The new system should effectively replace or consolidate existing GIS facilities used for Asset Management purposes and also complement and enhance our capability to view and use asset data and inventory information throughout the service.

I hope my comments have helped allay your concerns but if you require any further information or would like to discuss any aspect of the above in more detail please do not hesitate to contact either Peter Agent or Amanda Richards.

Yours sincerely

John Furey



Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment

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