



SWIFT LG OPTS FOR INOVEM COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK

Bristol – January 29th 2007 – Land and Property software specialist, Swift LG, has today formally announced the launch of its Local Development Framework solution. This latest addition to the Swift LG range incorporates online consultation tools from iNovem.

“Stipulating that the wider community has to be involved in Local Development framework consultations very early on is a sound principle but creates a whole new set of challenges for Planning Authorities,” says Swift LG Director, Nigel Doré. “iNovem has an outstanding, purpose built e-consultation system that really capitalises on the Internet’s strengths as a medium for interactive dialogue. We have taken iNovem’s “front end” collaboration framework and closely integrated it with our core tools so that officers have an accessible and meaningful method of incorporating, tracking and analysing the information gathered over the Web. This takes LPAs many steps beyond publishing documents for comment on their web sites and gives them an easily manageable framework to “discuss” and monitor progress throughout the evolution of the Local Development Framework.”

The combined E-Consultation system manages, monitors and controls the Local Development Framework process and documents, providing innovative online tools to support both “front loading” consultations prior to document creation and facilities to make representations against formal submission documents. The system also provides a controlled structure for document production and full management of contributions received. Seamless integration with “back office” functionality including GIS for spatial analysis, Corporate EDMS and Web based enquiry and reporting ensures that outcomes of E-Consultation are accessible both within the Authority and to external agencies. The joint solution incorporates PARSOL recommendations on Better Planning Service Standards.

“Authorities are expected to meet the objectives for wider participation at several levels and across a very wide spectrum of stakeholders,” says John Glover, Sales & Marketing Director for iNovem. “If you consider the complexities of keeping key stakeholders, local communities and members of the public informed of proposed planning and site development policies, consulting on a one to one basis and then engaging every interested party in the process, then purpose built Internet communication tools have a clear advantage over traditional methods. Beyond providing a framework for managing LDF participation, our systems offer underlying functions that support improvements in collaborative working, and that’s going to be all important in managing the inevitable increase in LPAs’ workloads.”

Those Planning Authorities that pro-actively invest in software to support LDF e-consultation will be able to apply for PDG e-planning awards in April 2007, even if they have not yet gone live with an online submission document. As with previous PDG awards, there is an increased financial incentive to do this sooner rather than later.

“PDG allocations are obviously an incentive to carrying out wider consultations with technologies such as iNovem as a route to achieving consultation objectives,” says Doré. “But aside from the financial incentive, we are seeing real enthusiasm for this next stage in widening the appeal of the democratic process at local level and we’re looking forward to hearing LPAs air their views on the future of E-Consultation at the Public Sector Forum LDF event in March”.

ENDS

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Notes for Editors

About Swift LG

Swift LG is a long-standing supplier of Land and Property Administration software, Local and Central Government applications and Geospatial Solutions.

Swift LG has a proven track record in integration with solutions from selected specialist third party providers, including GIS, and has particular expertise in public sector Land and Property applications.

Our Geospatial Division supplies a range of desktop, mobile and web based GIS. The Geospatial Consultancy division provides guidance on strategy and practical "hands on" services to major organisations looking to capitalise on existing investments in Geospatial technologies or to explore new possibilities.

Swift LG's strategic partners include Compuware Corporation, Anite Public Sector, ESRI, MapInfo Corporation and Ordnance Survey. Clients range from smaller district councils to major metropolitan Authorities and Central Government agencies.

Contact Information:

Elaine Clough
Group Marketing Manager
Swift LG Limited

T: 01275 376 180
E: Elaine.clough@swiftlg.com
www.swiftlg.com/geospatial.shtml

About iNovem

iNovem Limited is a leading supplier of e-Participation software to the UK public sector. Their solutions are used by a growing number of local and central government organisations to support a variety of stakeholder engagement and consultation activities. In Local Authorities, their solutions are currently used to support:

- LDF consultations
- Corporate, staff and Local Strategic Partnership consultations
- Local Strategic Partnership collaborative extranets
- The development of Local Area Agreements

iNovem continues to play an active part in the development of best practice in the field of e-Participation through their work with the National Local e-Democracy project, PARSOL's LDF Schema Steering Group and The Consultation Institute.

Their business model is non-proprietary in that they work closely with specialist service providers such as Swift LG to help their clients achieve their business goals.

Contact Information

John Glover
Marketing Director
iNovem Limited

T: 01488 648 468
E: info@inovem.com
www.inovem.com