

Finance News

 **Norfolk** County Council

Issue 49

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News and views for
everyone interested
in finance

★ FIMS Clinics



FIMS Clinics have been held in Norwich, Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth in the last month. The Clinics had a number of aims:

- to provide users with the latest news from the project and operational services;
- to start building a community of users to share experiences and expertise;
- to provide a safe environment for people to ask questions one to one;

and very importantly...

- to hear direct from “the coal face” questions, concerns and suggestions for improvement.

Trainers, Change Agents and Process Owners were all on hand to answer questions and demonstrate solutions on the system.

We were especially grateful for the feedback from users on areas needing further attention, so that we can deal with issues as quickly and effectively as possible.

If you missed this round of Clinics, look out for the adverts for future sessions – we’d love to see you there.



TRAINER, MARY ALCOCK (SECOND LEFT), ADVISES DELEGATES AT THE FIRST FIMS CLINIC

Included in this issue:

- Spotlight on Income and Charging
- iProcurement
- FIMS update
- New banking services - ATM in County Hall



Spotlight on

Income and Charging Policy

The Best Value Review on Income and Charging reported to the Service Development Committee in April 2002. The report put forward a number of recommendations to be implemented in order that the authority reach the standards of best practice in the area of income and charging, highlighted by the Audit Commission paper 'The Price is Right' in September 1999.

The recent New Powers to Charge issued in 2004 have added to the possibilities for further increasing income and the provision of chargeable services.

Progress during the Current Financial Year

- A group was drawn together with representatives from departments to consider a **definition of cost** necessary to outline what types of cost should be recovered where possible through the charging process. A template was drawn up to aid departments to build up their income budgets and was used within the 2005/06 budget round.
- The **Corporate Policy on Income and Charging** has now been finalised following consideration by the Financial Management Group. The policy includes a set of key principles for charging together with **Concessions Guidelines** (reported to the Service Development Committee in November 2004.) Chief Officers have received a copy of the policy and further considerations are being made as to how the policy can be shared further amongst the finance community.
- The **Budget Guidelines** issued in September 2004 for the 2005/06 budget setting round included for the first time a set of guidelines on income. These referred to the use of the key elements set down in the policy together with use of the template to aid setting charges.
- A reconciliation of the data held on the **Database for Fees and Charges** to the data held on Norbas/FIMS has been carried out and is under continual review.

Looking ahead -

Departments were asked to report and comment on income performance and the results are now being collated. We will use these results to undertake further work with departments to develop a better understanding of income from fees and charges, and try to identify trends and opportunities.

******* Many thanks for all the work departments have carried out to assist in updating the database *******

This is a continual process necessary to have data available for reporting purposes and is planned to be made available to departments through the intranet in due course.

Although the policy is in its final form, it will be revisited where necessary, in response to feedback and consideration by departments.

For a copy of the policy and any queries please contact:

Rachel Beswick
01603 223221
Financial Projects Accountant
Department of Finance

iProcurement

Firstly thanks to all of those who have used iProcurement and for your patience as we have gone through the initial learning curve. There have been a few discoveries that have kept us on our toes, but on the whole everything appears to be working as expected.

There are now 3 major pieces of work continuing:

- (1) Rolling out iProcurement to more users. Around 700 iProcurement users have now been set up and the rest should have access by the end of the financial year.
- (2) Ensuring a smooth transition as Oracle HR/payroll is introduced
- (3) Increasing the number of catalogues available. We all want to see more available and would like to be further ahead than we are in this area. The general catalogues that are available at the moment are:

● ESPO	ESPO General Catalogue
● Shermond Surgical Supply Limited	Disposable gloves, aprons etc.
● BGU Internal Catalogue	Library equipment
● NCS Beverages	Teas, coffees, refreshments for meetings
● Saber Daynes	Office furniture
● Alexandra Workwear	Protective clothing
● Arco Safety	Safety wear
● Arriva Rental	Vehicle rental
● Kalon	Decorative products
● Nature Springs	Watercoolers, bottled water and cups
● PHS Group - Waterlogic	Plumbed in watercoolers, and cups
● Gresswells	Library equipment
● NCS Interprint	Paper and letterheads



Work is continuing with ESPO to make more supplier catalogues available, such as XMA for computer consumables. However, there is much work to do here and we are trying to prioritise those suppliers where we place high volumes of orders. If you have a supplier that you use regularly and need the catalogue loaded for them please let me know. This will help us to prioritise our catalogue and supplier loading.

Anton Bull
01603 495806

FIMS - update

Questions – and answers

Do you still have lots of questions about using FIMS? If so you might like to have another look at the FAQ (frequently asked questions) section of our Intranet site, which has now been updated.

Questions covered include how to change payment terms, why the system won't accept a project code, how to cancel an invoice - and lots more besides. The address is:

http://intranet.norfolk.gov.uk/new_fims/Content/faqs.asp

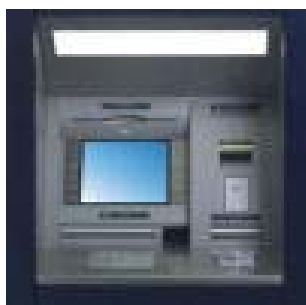
The questions have been split into the different areas of work (eg purchasing, accounts payable and grants) for easy access.

ATM comes to County Hall

Good news!

County Hall is gaining an ATM, provided by the Co-operative Bank plc on a trial basis. It will be installed next month in the main reception of County Hall.

You won't incur any charges for using it and you can also use it to top up the credit on your mobile phone, as it will have a top up facility that will cover all major networks.



We won't be able to keep the ATM in county hall unless, by the end of the trial period, the Co-operative Bank can see that enough people are using it to justify its continuation.

So if you value this facility please do use it, or we will most certainly lose it!

Andy Feek 01603 222826

If you need this newsletter in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact the Department of Finance on 01603 223488 (minicom 223833) and we will do our best to help.

