

---

## Business Matters Stage 3 Final Report

Status	Author	Version	Date
Draft	Steve Laslett	1.0	30 04 2008
For Release	Steve Laslett	2.0	15 05 2008

# BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

## CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction and summary of achievements.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Background.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Workstream 1.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1. Background.....	8
3.2. WS 1-1 Design an approach to regional data sharing.....	8
3.3. WS1-2 Research Potential for Gazetteer and BDS3 to converge to address the need for a business index.....	11
3.4. WS1-3 Review BDS3 revisions.....	12
<b>4. Workstream 2 - Local Area Agreements Better Engagement with Businesses.....</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1. Background.....	14
4.2. Local Authorities and the Single Business Account.....	14
4.3. WS2.1 – Making the difference: How does the SBA help address LAA Block 4 objectives? Guidelines for all West Midlands Local Authorities.....	16
4.4. WS 2.2 – Making the difference: Regulatory Services, the SBA and the LAA. Guidelines for all West Midlands Local Authorities.....	18
4.5. WS 2-3: Measuring the Difference: Learning From Experience: Compilation of lessons learned.....	19
<b>5. Appendix 1 - Diagrammatic representation of Core Index Update Process.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>6. Appendix 2 - “Making the Difference and Learning from Experience”.....</b>	<b>25</b>
6.1. Businesses Registered on SBA.....	25
6.2. Number of service requests by access channel and type for the whole period.....	25
6.3. Existing and new services developed during Stage 3.....	26
6.4. Next Steps.....	27
<b>7. Appendix 3 - Lichfield District Council Data Set Review.....</b>	<b>28</b>
7.1. Overview.....	28
7.2. Purpose of Review report.....	28

# BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

<a href="#">7.3. Background.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">7.4. Methodology.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">7.5. Management Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">7.6. The key business datasets.....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">7.7. Data consistency.....</a>	<a href="#">30</a>
<a href="#">7.8. Examples of issues identified during the review.....</a>	<a href="#">31</a>

# 1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

---

This is the final report of Stage 3 of Business Matters, a regional project involving Lichfield DC, Dudley, Bridgnorth, Solihull and Redditch Councils among others, supported by the West Midlands Centre of Excellence. This is the third phase of the project. Reports from stage 1 and stage 2 are available from the project web site at [www.wmlga.gov.uk/businessmatters](http://www.wmlga.gov.uk/businessmatters)

During the course of the project Business Matters was nominated and short listed as finalists in the National e Government Excellence Awards in the category 'Excellence in Innovation'. This helped ensure wider recognition of the work of the project. This, together with funding from Advantage West Midlands through Business Link West Midlands to ensure that the project continues as Business Matters Stage 4 – BM4.

The project SRO, Rita Wilson, has been invited to join the Organisational Entity Group as part of the Information Domain agenda within the Government Transformational Government programme. This is helping ensure that Business Matters outputs are being reported and discussed at the National level and that all parts of government, both Central and Local are fully engaged.

The Business Matters Board has appreciated the continued support from the RIEP programme and is pleased that the support has led to such positive outcomes.

### Summary of Achievements

- Agreed enhancements to the Business Description Schema and released version 4, identifying Core Index elements as part of a layered model. (The Schema defines the data elements that all systems should hold about a business at a particular location and is the basis of the Single Business Account).
- Designed the concept of the Core Index Update process to ensure that partners can share data about businesses and keep data sets aligned, up to date, and accurate on an automatic, ongoing basis. This will lead to significant cost reductions and efficiency gains.
- Secured ongoing close working with Custodians of Local and National Gazetteers and clarification of the significance of this important national asset to the business engagement agenda.

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

- Agreed a practical data sharing project between Business Link West Midlands and Business Matters with funding from Advantage West Midlands: Business Matters Stage 4. This will be the most significant and robust business support data sharing project to date with the expectation that it will lead to a clean, accurate regional index of businesses and improved multi agency working.
- Continuing input into the National Data Sharing and Business Identity Management agenda via several national government level bodies and groups with a steadily increasing recognition nationally of the importance of the project's work
- Continuing support of the deployment of the Schema by other projects including Better Regulation Executive (BRE) funded Retail Enforcement Pilot (REP) projects. This has ensured that Business Matters is closely engaged with the Regulatory Reform Agenda as well as Business Support.
- Strengthened contact with the newly formed Local Better Regulation Office – LBRO with a commitment to ongoing joint working
- Clarification of the significance of the Single Business Account in meeting Local Business Support and Economic objectives via the Local Area Agreement and other initiatives.
- Strengthened Engagement with Staffordshire Councils and the establishment of a County wide Single Business Account project to support Local and Regional Business Engagement and Economic development agendas
- Continuing work at Bridgnorth to identify real efficiency gains that follow from the deployment of the SBA
- Agreement in principle to continue the work at Bridgnorth into the new Shropshire County Unitary Status framework
- Engagement with Birmingham City Council to share Business Matters progress and agreement in principle to build on it at a later project stage
- Continued support from key Business Matters key partners – Lichfield, Dudley, Solihull, Bridgnorth and commitment to Business Matters Stage 4

---

## 2. BACKGROUND

---

The concept of 'citizen centric services' is easy to grasp, delivering services in a way, and at a time, that suits individual's needs. But what about businesses? Can new ways of working help councils to design an approach that has the potential not only to improve services businesses receive, but also improve economic prosperity?

The Business Matters team believes it can. Over the past three years the project has worked to create a standardised approach to identity assurance and data collection for businesses that enables data sharing both within an authority and across agencies.

The Business Matters project is based on a very simple concept – that by applying data standards to the way that we capture and hold core data about businesses we can share that data in ways that will improve efficiency both for business and the public sector. It introduces the Single Business Account – bringing together one true source of data around businesses within a local authority which can then form the basis for being shared with business support, regulatory services and other parts of the public sector. The Business Description Schema defines the data fields and format for data storage and interchange that makes implementing the Single Business Account possible.

The typical picture at present, before introducing the SBA is this:



Workstream 1 was initiated to continue with the technical work strand initiated in previous stages. Its prime objective was to ensure that the Business Description Schema continued to evolve. This is becoming increasingly important to a number of agendas as the SBA delivers

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

the supporting infrastructure to facilitate change, process improvement, transformation and efficiencies.

Workstream 2 focussed on Better Engagement with Business and how the Single Business Account can support Business and Economic activity and related agendas.

Business Matter Stage 1 was funded by the then ODPM as a regional e government project. It was this stage that first defined the Schema. Stage 2 was funded by the west Midlands Regional centre of Excellence. The project worked with a number of authorities in the West Midlands region to turn the proof of concept work undertaken in the original project into practical piloting. The work-strands included building on the solutions architecture developed with Oracle and other CRM vendors; identifying the cost of transactions; tracking efficiency gains; practical deployment of the Single Business Account with a selection of businesses and researching the benefits from sharing data.

One of the key outcomes was to produce a more detailed business case to support the Single Business Account. This included measuring the efficiency benefits to come from sharing information across numerous processes. Several processes measured showed efficiency gains made by introducing the SBA to be around 20%. One example of a district Council using the Single Business Account to encourage on-line transactions showed over 60% savings could be made. More significant gains can be made if the Single Business Account is introduced as part of a wider transformational strategy.

## 3. WORKSTREAM 1

---

### 3.1. Background

---

Workstream 1 continued to develop the technical infrastructure to underpin the deployment of the SBA. The work stream concluded with a positive outcome:

- A new revision to the schema BDS4 was released
- A blueprint for sharing business related information across the West Midlands Region has been designed
- The Regional development Agency, AWM, has agreed to support a further phase of the data sharing work (BM4)
- The BM3 strand 1 team has agreed to continue working as BM4

The following pages summarise the deliverables agreed at project initiation for this work strand. Tasks were identified at project initiation to ensure that the deliverables are achieved. A summary of progress against each task follows. *Italic font denotes that text has been copied from the original project aims and objectives set in September 2007 as part of the project initiation process.*

### 3.2. WS 1-1 Design an approach to regional data sharing

---

***Description: The need for data sharing and a regional index of businesses is becoming clearer and better established. The objective of this workstream is to design a practical solution for all West Midlands Local Authorities and Business Link to deploy. Extending the scope to other partners such as Fire & Rescue Service and DEFRA is desirable but out of scope until funding is identified to address it.***

***Tasks:***

*Confirm the business need for data sharing and incrementally enhance the business case for the SBA as discreet examples of the benefits of data sharing become evident. Input understanding into workstream 2, LAA working.*

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

Completed. The business case was enhanced by adding several business life cycle scenarios to the AWM/Business Link 'Business Case and Scoping' document. This document can be found on the project web site.

*Design use case scenarios to model the benefits of and methods of bi-directional updating data, ie LA to Business Link and Business Link to LAs. Start with a business ceasing to trade and a business starting up.*

Completed as above. Special focus has been given to business start up and close down and the scope for information sharing across multiple agencies.

*Review sufficient samples of data from enough partners to identify probable issues and challenges that need to be addressed. As a minimum this will include Dudley, Lichfield, Bridgnorth and Business Link West Midlands.*

Completed. Post code level samples have been exchanged for all of the above. Solihull MBC has also been included. The issues identified include:

- Data being held in different formats
- Inconsistencies between data sets
- Probably as many as 20% of businesses do not appear in one or other database
- Data protection issues that need to be clarified before live working.

These issues are summarised and documented in the 'Business Case and Scoping' document referred to above.

*Document the perceived technical challenges to bi-directional data sharing*

The first phase of this has been completed. The challenge to take the design principles behind the 'Core Index Update Process' and turn them into practical delivery has now been handed on to the next project phase, BM4

*Document recommended solutions to the technical challenges*

Completed. A series of workshops were held to design Core Index data elements and a design for the Core Index Update Process.

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

It has confirmed that the Core Index elements should be as few as possible. They should also only be elements that can only hold 'one version of the truth', so since more than one telephone number can be legitimate, this cannot be a Core Index Field.

Nominated fields are ;

- LA SNAC code
- Registered Name
- Trading Name
- SBA Link Field (CHN, NINO etc)
- Address
- UPRN

Please refer to the Business Description Schema Version 4: BDS4 on the project web site for further detail.

Proposals for the Core Index Update Process recommend that the NLPG be used as the hub for all issues spatial and that this should be mirrored by Business Link West Midlands CRM database being the hub for business Identity issues. BLWM would be the arbiters of discrepancies about business identity issues. A schematic overview of this recommendation is appended. See appendix 1

*Design a technical specification working with LA staff, Business Link and commercial systems suppliers as appropriate that would serve as a blueprint for a practical pilot or live deployment.*

The workshops have documented an approach that can be turned into a detailed specification by BM4 and other projects to deploy locally. Progress has been shared with other projects including the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities who are planning to implement BM3 recommendations including adoption of BDS4.

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

### **3.3. WS1-2 Research Potential for Gazetteer and BDS3 to converge to address the need for a business index.**

---

***Description: Each Local Authority maintains a Local Land and Property Gazetteer – the LLPG. A national Gazetteer, the NLPG, is formed by combining the LLPGs. Recent extensions to the Gazetteer include a field for property type. Further extensions could enhance the gazetteers to a level whereby they meet the needs of a business index.***

***Tasks:***

*Document high level observations from local LLPG custodians that suggest that building on the Gazetteer may be a sensible development to address the needs of different agencies' needs for an index of businesses.*

Valuable input was received from West Midlands Custodians of Gazetteers in particular from Dudley MBC (Brian Higgs) and Lichfield DC (Gareth Thomas) whose custodians are Regional Chair and Vice Chair of the custodians' group. Their guidance and recommendations have been an important input to the project. Project recommendations have been shared with the National Chair of the group, David Heyes, Wigan MBC. David is keen to promote the recommendations widely as part of a recommended national solution. Their input is an integral part of the set of documentation delivered by the project.

*Meet with IDeA and other interested parties to initiate and continue a joint evaluation of possible developments and recommendations to appropriate bodies*

Completed. Steve Brandwood (IDeA and Simon Barlow (Intelligent Addressing attended West Midlands workshops and supported the recommendations. Meetings in London between BM and IDeA were held with input from BM project manager (Steve Laslett) and Brian Higgs.

*Document how using an extended gazetteer would help LAs move towards a practical deployment of the SBA*

Completed. An important design decision was to develop the BLWM CRM hub as the master index of businesses for business identity purposes rather than hold this information in the NLPG. A link field has been recommended. This would involve using 'BL' as a field stored in the LLPG to denote that an entry is a business and that a record exists on the BLWM system. This has an important added advantage: if a business is being run from a residential address, the LLPG will classify the address as residential. The existence of BL in the link field will

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

denote that it is also a business. A request has been made that NLPG should reserve this code to be used nationally.

*Document specific recommendations for review by LAs regionally and wider and for IDeA review.*

Completed. In addition to workshop notes a PowerPoint presentation has been created to help dissemination regionally and wider. Some elements of this presentation are reproduced in appendix 1.

*Make appropriate recommendations to other agencies or systems 'owners' eg EDS toolkit about relevant implications of a gazetteer led approach.*

Ongoing. Significant dissemination of the project has been made through the Better Regulation Executive funded Retail Enforcement Pilot projects. These include live data sharing deployments at Hampshire, Torbay, South Yorkshire and Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and their respective Fire and Rescue services.

### **3.4. WS1-3 Review BDS3 revisions**

---

***Description: BDS version 3.1 was 'frozen' at March 31st 2006. It highlighted the need to refine the SBA link field for 'others' eg by taking input from HMRC. It also needs a periodic revision and upgrade to reflect feedback from Local Authority SBA deployments.***

***Tasks:***

*Take input from WS1-1 and WS1-2 to help identify the need for Schema revisions and enhancements*

Completed. The workshops that were well attended throughout the project ensured that all work strands were progressed in a coordinated way and that knowledge was shared throughout the project.

*Meet with HMRC and initiate a review of Business UIDs especially category D 'others'*

Ongoing. This process has not been completed but it is a significant challenge that BM3 has made good input into. The project was represented at two important national forum meetings including all key central government departments and all regulatory bodies. The progress of

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

BM3 has been shared and feedback from other bodies received. According to these forum meetings, HMRC, BRE and others recognise the work done by BM3.

*Liaise with NWeGG and London Connects, REP and others as relevant to ensure that input from other regions' SBA and related projects informs the review*

Close working with other regions has been ensured by the Better Regulation sponsored Retail Enforcement projects. These have included key NWeGG members through the Greater Manchester project, and London Connects members, Camden and Bexley in particular.

*Document recommended revisions to the schema*

Completed. The schema has been updated:

- The diagrammatic representation has been updated
- The plain English paragraphs have been re-written
- An overview of Core Index fields and Core Index Update concepts has been added

The new schema, BDS4 has been added to the project web site.

*Review with LeGSB (Tameside MBC) medium and long term schema custodianship and management issues.*

Completed. Paul Davidson, director of the standards body has advised on short and medium term procedures. Lichfield DC will continue to be 'guardians' of the schema and will update the LeGSB catalogue as needed.

*Document a recommended approach to ensure that the schema aims and objectives are met beyond the anticipated life cycle of Business Matters.*

Ongoing. This has been referred to the standards body. Recommendations have been requested and will be acted on.

# 4. WORKSTREAM 2 - LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS BETTER ENGAGEMENT WITH BUSINESSES

---

## 4.1. Background

---

At the time the project was initiated, Local Agreement Block 4 confirmed that each Local Area Agreement should ensure that plans are in place to support economic activity and development. The project agreed to ensure that the contribution the widescale adoption of the Single Business Account would make was fully understood.

During the course of Stage 3 LAAs evolved and local agendas were shaped more slowly than was originally anticipated. Nonetheless stage 3 continued to work with a number of Midlands Authorities to explore the contribution the SBA can make if aligned to local initiatives. A number of workshops help clarify the organisational as well as technical issues that need to be addressed.

## 4.2. Local Authorities and the Single Business Account

---

The adoption of the Single Business Account by local authorities was written into the original Local Area Agreement for Staffordshire. Subsequently there has been a degree of promotion of the SBA and the role it can play through several Staffordshire LAA partner briefings, and specific discussions with individual local authorities. However the nature of the LAA refresh this year, with its focus on a limited number of designated indicators, means it does not now feature as a specific target. This does not lessen partner commitment to its adoption and the work to progress the “business engagement flagship project in the Staffordshire LAA only reinforces the relevance of the SBA.

Challenges Ahead: Whilst progress in terms of broad awareness raising has been made we should not underestimate the challenges ahead. We can identify 4 specific barriers

1. Limited evidence to show local authorities of the direct savings to be made
2. Annual pressures on local authorities to focus on short term year on year saving targets
3. Uncertainty over the LAA process, and the relationship of the district LAs to the County targets
4. No clear strategic ownership of “business” information within local authorities

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

Whilst specific work with individual authorities will carry on (as noted in the report) there is a clear need to work through a step by process that builds confidence and knowledge over 12 - 18 months to really underpin the widest commitment to the SBA.

Business Engagement Flagship Project: As the Staffordshire LAA was developed there was recognition that the focus on delivery by the public sector partners needed to be matched by the establishment of a robust relationship with the business community - where the actual economic improvements would be delivered from. The Business Engagement project has scoped out who (in terms of business support) delivered what and how they engaged business to support that delivery. An action plan has been developed and is being discussed with LAA partners in Staffordshire. Its long term goals include the adoption of the SBA and the short term progress is seen as coming through the established "Think Local" infrastructure.

Think Local: Think Local is the Staffordshire portal for encouraging business to business trade, and will now be developed as the infrastructure for supporting public sector sharing of information with the aim of

- a) being a catalyst for partners to align engagement strategies and share relevant information
- b) delivering discretionary business engagement through district based local economic partnerships

A development programme for Think Local over the next 12 months will build a degree of confidence amongst public sector agencies to share information, join up engagement activities and sign up to a programme of strategic programme of engagement. As this confidence is established and the benefits of a co-ordinated approach to dealing with business are realised, partners will be specifically encouraged to adopt the SBA.

Businesses: To support the Staffordshire wide business engagement project some bespoke work is being undertaken in Tamworth to better understand the challenges facing business and to tailor the way the public sector operates more in line with their needs. Alongside this is the developing relationship with the new regional Business Link

Business Link: Over the past 6 months, through the Southern Staffordshire Partnership, discussions have taken place with Business Link to develop a Memorandum of Understanding. This clearly articulates the relationship between Staffordshire partners and Business Link, and confirms the Partnerships commitment to the adoption of the SBA.

# BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

Local Authorities: Specific SBA briefings/discussions have been held with Staffordshire Economic Development Forum, Tamworth, Stafford and South Staffordshire Councils. These have highlighted the considerable amount of work that remains to be done around identifying the various business databases they hold, their technical capabilities, the costs of integrating the SBA, the benefits that would result, and the HR implications.

At Tamworth Borough Council a briefing to departmental heads identified a clear interest in the SBA but some specific challenges to be addressed. These included

- Limited shared working knowledge of databases owned across the authority
- Differing technical functionalities of databases
- Unclear as to the Corporate ownership of the business interface

At a briefing to South Staffordshire officers similar challenges were identified. Senior Officer input is however helping take forward the work in South Staffordshire with discussions now taking place with the technical officers at the District Council on the databases held and how the SBA can be incorporated.

Summary: The delivery of the initial stages of the “business engagement” project will do a lot of the underpinning necessary to get the SBA adopted within the Local Authorities in Staffordshire. This will then act as the springboard to secure the regional commitment to the SBA.

The Following Pages Summarise the Deliverables agreed at project initiation for this work strand. Tasks were identified at project initiation to ensure that the deliverables are achieved. A summary of progress against each task follows. Italic font denotes that text has been copied from the original project aims and objectives set in September 2007 as part of the project initiation process.

## **4.3. WS2.1 – Making the difference: How does the SBA help address LAA Block 4 objectives? Guidelines for all West Midlands Local Authorities.**

---

***The strand focus will be on the outcomes that will follow from introducing the SBA relevant to Local Area Agreement Block 4 objectives. Both Business Support and Regulatory Services will be addressed. Business Matters will also endeavour to ensure Block 4 informs other LAA blocks as appropriate.***

**Tasks:**

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

*Establish a workstream team and agree series of meeting dates*

Completed. Valuable input was received from a number of participants from different authorities.

*Ensure input from a sufficient number of West Midlands LAs and other partners – eg Birmingham City, Staffs County*

Completed. Meetings with Birmingham City Council early in the project underlined how different authorities have significantly different agendas that reflect their size, location and economic challenges. This was reflected in LAA guidance notes that stress the importance of local vision and programmes. A recommendation to Staffordshire Connects at project completion has been to establish a county wide SBA group. This has been approved.

*Ensure input from other partners – eg Fire Service, AWM, Job Centre Plus, LSC*

AWM worked closely with the project throughout and has agreed to fund BM4 via Business Link West Midlands. Jeff Marlow, Southern Staffordshire Economic Development partnership, liaised closely with a wide range of organisations through the Staffordshire Economic Forum. Close working with the Fire & Rescue Service has been ensured through the related REP pilot projects.

*Liaise with AWM simplification programme and agree key areas of overlap and synergy. Help identify appropriate service delivery in a multi agency framework*

During the life cycle of the project the importance of Multi Agency working in addition to LAA became more apparent. The Challenges of Block 4 LAA became more focussed on reflecting local priorities and establishing a multi agency programme to suit each partnership.

*Compare Staffordshire and BCC approach to LAA Block 4 – identify key learning points, specially with regard to potential efficiency gains*

During the project the LAA agenda changed and the focus on Block 4 was replaced by more general business and economic prosperity targets. The efficiency gains that follow from the SBA as reported in this and previous documents are however just as relevant.

*Construct guidelines for all West Midlands LAs – ‘Why the SBA should be an integral part of your LAA programme - how it delivers quantifiable benefits’.*

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

Workshops with Tamworth, South Staffordshire and Dudley and work ongoing with all Business Matters partners continues to identify the strategic and efficiency gains that follow from implementing the SBA. The Business Case continues to be a key source of guideline to brief others.

*Construct guidelines: Addressing the organisational issues associated from implementing a corporate SBA*

Ongoing. The workshops at Tamworth, South Staffordshire and Dudley in particular helped identify key issues including the need for senior level ownership and support and the need to see business related information as a corporate asset. Specific guidance to the Staffordshire District Councils has been the recommendation to establish a county wide SBA group to ensure effective 2 tier implementation. Bridgnorth has ensured that the work of Business Matters and Bridgnorth DC will be carried forward into the new Shropshire Unitary structure. Lichfield DC commissioned a study of data sets in use to help identify the corporate challenge involved in adopting the SBA. See report appended at the end of this section.

### **4.4. WS 2.2 – Making the difference: Regulatory Services, the SBA and the LAA. Guidelines for all West Midlands Local Authorities**

***Several drivers are changing the way regulatory services deliver support, advice and guidance as well as regulatory services to businesses. These include the Hampton review, the RES bill and the guidance that will follow from the LBRO.***

#### ***Tasks:***

*Ensure that Regulatory Services personnel are part of the workstream team*

Secured. The significance of implementing Hampton principles and changes affecting Regulatory Services became more evident during the project. Input from Lichfield personnel and, via the REP project increased steadily.

*Engage with the LBRO and ensure a continuing dialogue. Represent West Midlands LAs to LBRO as appropriate.*

Secured. Several meetings were held with LBRO personnel. Rita Wilson input into an LBRO strategy setting forum. LBRO Directors continue to express positive support to Business Matters.

# BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

*Review BCC study and assimilate lessons learned into workstream.*

Completed. Birmingham released the study, funded by BRE, as part of Business Matters stage 3 project research. It confirmed that the majority of small to medium sized businesses respect the support and guidance obtained from regulators and inspectors given as part of their regulatory process.

*Track REP stage 2 pilots, assimilate lessons learned*

Ongoing. Business Matters and REP have worked together closely on a number of projects. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities – AGMA – project is researching innovative ways to modernise and improve the delivery of regulatory services based on multi agency working and information sharing as defined by Business Matters Schema. As all REP projects deploy the schema, good feedback is being received that has led to some suggestions for next release enhancements. As REP projects are handed over to LBRO close working with key LBRO senior officers will be further strengthened.

*Track ReGS project, assimilate lessons learned*

Completed. Several meetings have been held, via REP, at ReGS Barnsley Project. ReGS has focussed on the implications of mobile and flexible working and has adopted the BDS schema to ensure robust data sharing.

*Ensure that good practice, general advice and scope for efficiency gain is shared with all West Midlands LAs via BM dissemination*

Ensured. The project web site and numerous newsletters have ensured ongoing dissemination.

## **4.5. WS 2-3: Measuring the Difference: Learning From Experience: Compilation of lessons learned**

---

***Tracking the corporate deployment of the SBA at Bridgnorth and comparing with other deployments such as REP stage 2 pilots will help determine practical lessons learned***

### **Tasks**

*Support Bridgnorth DC corporate roll out of the SBA as far as practicable – share knowledge gained from all work streams*

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

Bridgnorth has continued its corporate deployment of the SBA. See report following this section. Key messages include that the website remains the most popular channel for businesses to use and that the SBA has helped Bridgnorth towards achieving its vision for customer access and channel migration. BM3 has shown that the SBA can be extended to include Environmental Health for the H&S self assessment risk assessment with benefits to businesses in capturing, maintaining and storing their H&S information.

*Encourage Bridgnorth to continue to measure progress and efficiency gains- share with others*

The report from Bridgnorth shows that since they introduced the SBA in June 06, they have seen an increase of 133 businesses registering since the close of BM2 and an additional 535 transactions. This progress continues to help inform other councils and partners.

*Take quantitative data from other projects including REP and ReGS and translate into potential for West Midlands LAs to achieve similar results.*

Ongoing. Feedback from other project has mostly been about the technical challenges of data sharing rather than the subsequent efficiency gains. The time lag between other projects' initiation and final feedback suggest that more valuable data will be available in the near future and will be captured by BM4.

*Publish guidelines for successful deployment of the SBA*

Ongoing. Since BM3 started the national agenda has moved on considerably. Rep and ReGS are deploying the Business Description Schema and practical lessons learned are being shared through user groups and other channels. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities has commissioned an ICT company to design the Core Index Update Process which will build still further on lessons learned. BM representatives continue to share guidance with National bodies including the data sharing forum and the Business Entity Group.

*Feed into WS2-1 task to construct guidelines on addressing the organisational issues associated with introducing a corporate SBA*

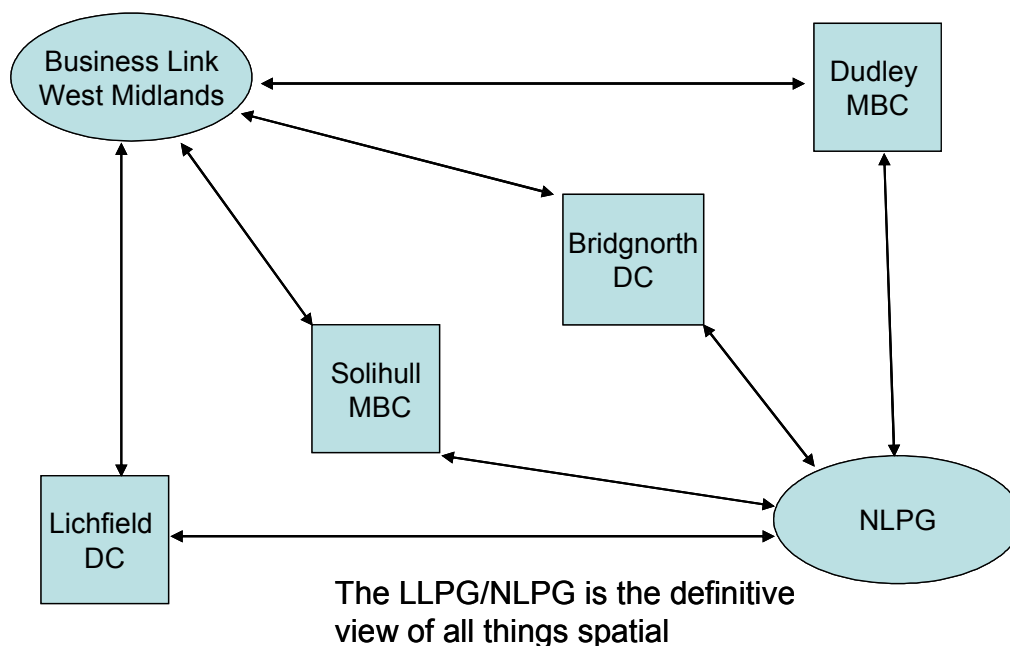
Completed. Feedback from Dudley MBC, Tamworth, Lichfield and Bridgnorth has been shared with all strands.

## 5. APPENDIX 1 - DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF CORE INDEX UPDATE PROCESS

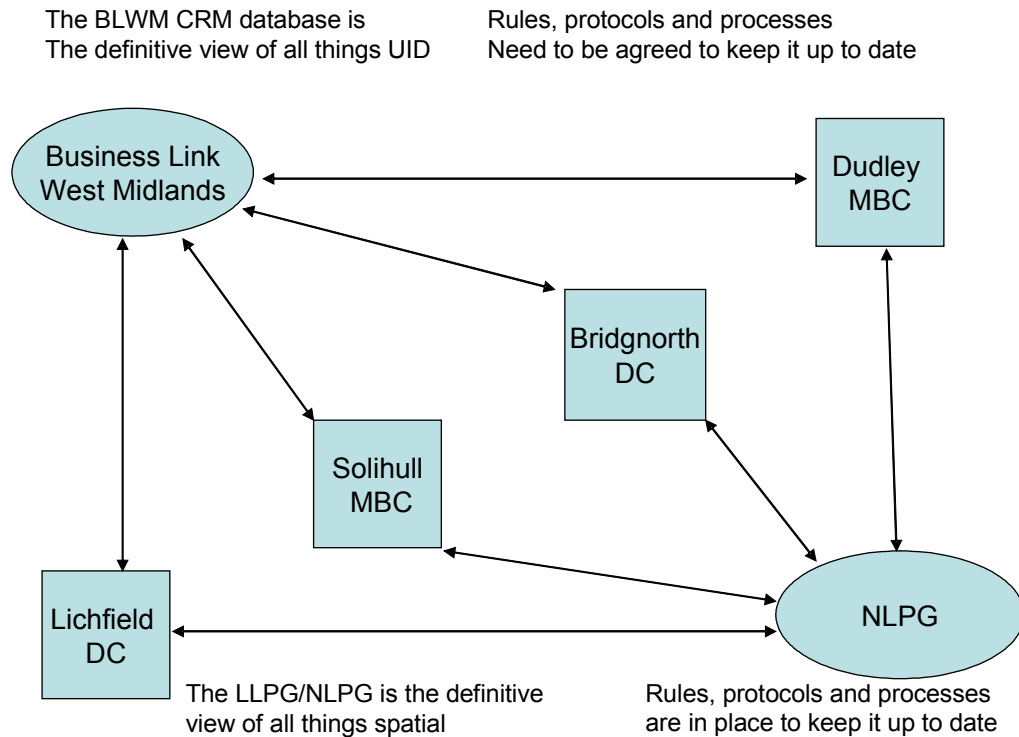
See section 3.2: Proposals for the Core Index Update Process recommend that the NLPG be used as the hub for all issues spatial and that this should be mirrored by Business Link West Midlands CRM database being the hub for all issues spatial and that this should be mirrored by Business Link West Midlands CRM database being the hub for business Identity issues. BLWM would be the arbiters of discrepancies about business identity issues. A schematic overview of this recommendation is:

### The Core Index Update Process

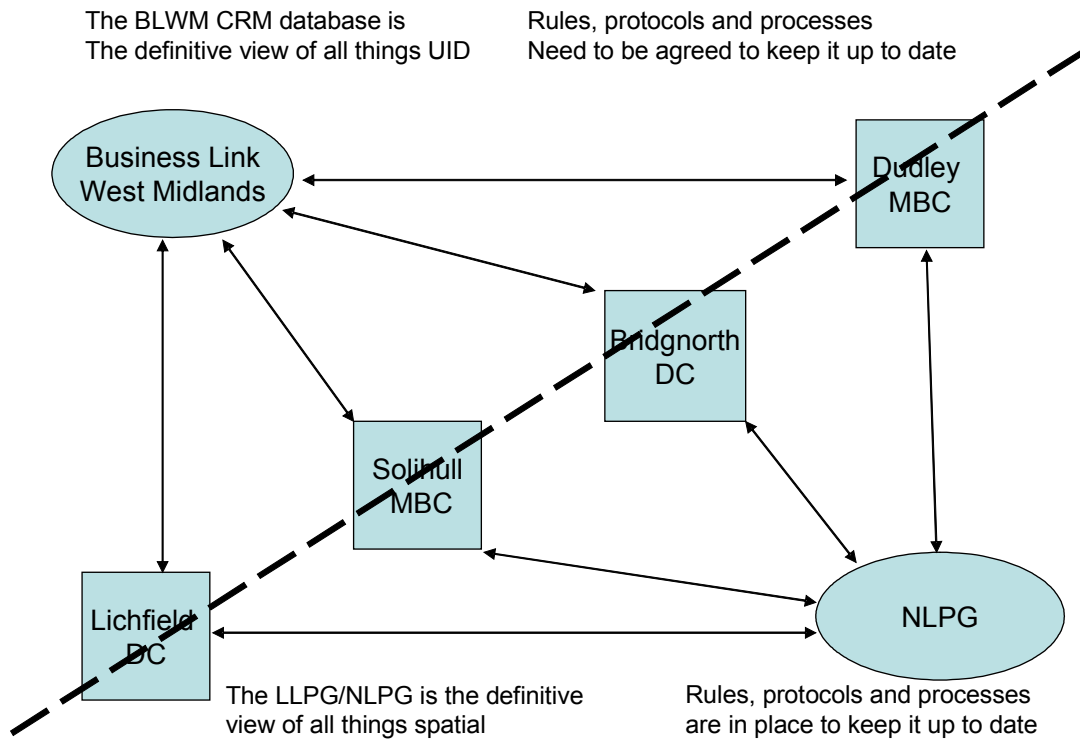
The BLWM CRM database is  
The definitive view of all things UID



# The Core Index Update Process

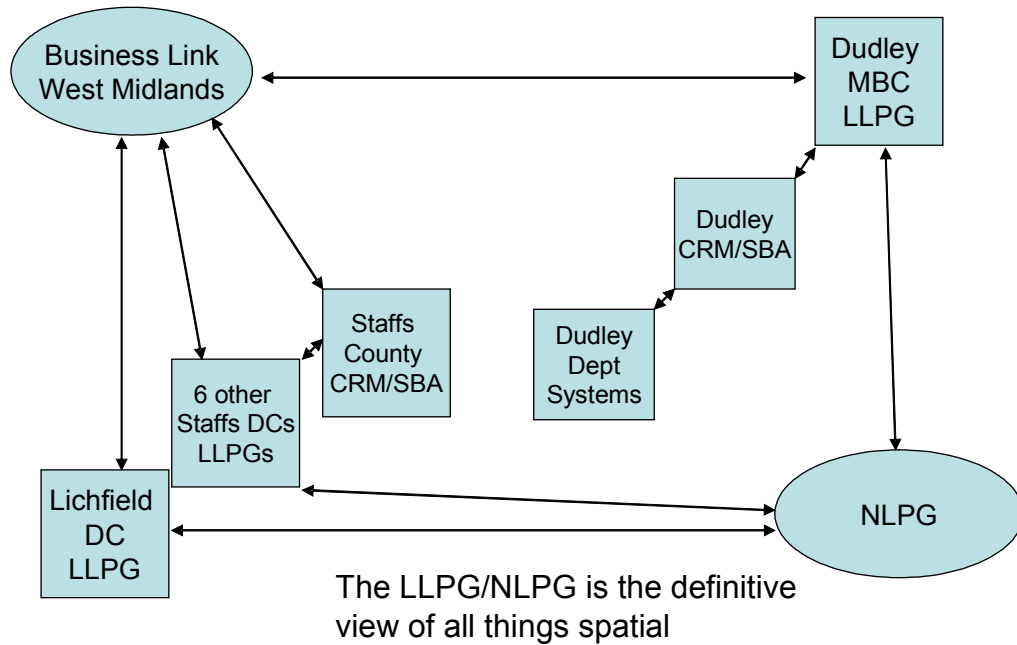


## The Core Index Update Process: Mirror Image the Process on both sides



# Joining up internally– 2 tier, Unitary

The BLWM CRM database is  
The definitive view of all things UID



### 6. APPENDIX 2 - “MAKING THE DIFFERENCE AND LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE”

*See section 4.5 Tasks: Support Bridgnorth DC corporate roll out of the SBA as far as practicable – share knowledge gained from all work streams*

The Single Business Account (SBA) was launched at Bridgnorth District Council on the 1st June 2006 as part of the Council’s Customer Access strategy:

- The SBA sits alongside the citizen account in the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM), in line with the Council’s vision of case management for all customer contact regardless of the point of entry or service used;
- The SBA is multi-channel to enable business customers to see the progress of their case / service request online or by calling the Customer Service Centre;
- The SBA has full comprehensive reporting and performance monitoring, which assists with the Council’s decision making so that services can be tailored around the needs of local businesses and their feedback.

#### 6.1. Businesses Registered on SBA

No promotion or marketing of the SBA has been undertaken by the Council yet. The decision was taken to expand the service corporately across services in pilot form before embarking on a full scale roll out. So far 249 businesses have registered on the Council’s SBA since its launch.

Period	Type of Business						Total
	Charity	Limited Co.	Limited Liability Partnership	Partnership	Sole Trader	Other Organisation	
1 <sup>st</sup> June 06 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 08	7	110	7	20	57	48	249

#### 6.2. Number of service requests by access channel and type for the whole period

Actual use of the SBA shows that the registered businesses prefer to use the web channel. The figure is distorted slightly due to the choice of services currently being used through the

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

SBA, however it is anticipated this will change as more services go live over the next twelve months, e.g. launch of Environmental Health self assessments.

Channel	Type of Business					Total
	Limited Company	Partnership	Charity	Other Organisation	Sole Trader	
Contact Centre	94	21	1	38	43	197
Website	710	5	4	3	14	736
Email	2	0	0	0	0	2
In Person	0	0	0	0	0	0
Letter	14	0	0	0	0	14
Type of enquiry	Business rate account enquiries and payments, commercial refuse, street naming and numbering and land charges*.	Business Rate enquiries	Search for a grant, refuse collection	Business Rate enquiries, payments and change of address	Commercial properties to rent or buy, search for a grant, Business rate account enquiries and payments	
TOTAL	820	26	5	41	57	949

\* Land charges - high volume as this is completely self-service. Businesses have no other way of requesting and paying for this service.

### 6.3. Existing and new services developed during Stage 3

The SBA at Bridgnorth utilises e-forms linked to the CRM. Currently e-forms for businesses include:

- Business Rates enquiries, e.g. account enquiries;
- Booking a Land Charges appointment;
- Change of address;
- Making a payment.

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

The aim of stage 3 has been to begin the corporate roll out to other services beginning with Environmental Health. Functionality has been developed in the SBA for businesses to undertake Health & Safety self assessment risk assessments. The system is not live yet but the diagram below shows changes to the process. Benefits of using the SBA for businesses include:

- An electronic version of their self assessment which can be easily updated and maintained is held within the SBA;
- Quick access to the information for the Council without inconveniencing the business to arrange a visit;

Benefits for the Council include:

- Comprehensive reporting mechanism to enable the Environmental Health department to see which self assessments have been completed and the last time they were updated / inspected;
- Reduces the number of on-site inspections.

### **6.4. Next Steps**

---

These include:

- Incorporation of all self assessment risk assessments for Environmental Health so that information can be submitted electronically at times which suit business customers. Queries or questions can then be raised by Environmental Health officers prior to inspection;
- Roll out of the SBA as part of the move to One Council for Shropshire.

# 7. APPENDIX 3 - LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL DATA SET REVIEW

---

## 7.1. Overview

---

As part of Business Matters Stage 3, strand 2, Lichfield District Council commissioned a review of business facing services and their use of data. In addition to help map the data against the potential benefits of implementing the Single Business Account – SBA – LDC also wanted to establish the extent of ‘unofficial’ or local databases in addition to the corporate perspective.

## 7.2. Purpose of Review report

---

The purpose of the document was to document the datasets identified around Lichfield District Council’s that contain in their various forms Business Contact information.

## 7.3. Background

---

Lichfield District Council is the lead authority on the Business Matters national project. The focus of the Business Matters project is to rationalise the communications which the business community has with local authorities through the concept of the Single Business Account and the creation of a 360o view of businesses.

While work is progressing on the data sharing between the four pilot authorities and Business Link West Midlands, there is a need to identify the processes that touch businesses and where the data resulting from those touch points is held.

A sample exercise was been undertaken by LDC Principal Environmental Health Officer In addition there has been data matching undertaken between databases belonging to Health and Safety, Food Safety, Business Rates and Premises requiring smoking legislation visits. A further extension to match with an Economic Development database is planned.

## 7.4. Methodology

---

This review was conducted using a Soft Systems Analysis and:

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

- Identify areas within scope
- Identify datasets from key services
- Identify common links within current services
- Identify generic impact on current service

### **7.5. Management Summary**

---

Nearly 90 datasets were identified across the LDC estate.

Extrapolating across the estate there are probably 20 to 30 more similar datasets in those sections not reviewed in detail.

Most of the LDC departments rely on traditional manual methods for managing “Contacts, Quotes and Contracts”. Some rely on such methods: business cards, paper quotes and physical contracts; almost entirely. Given the experience of staff, the specialisation of their work and the opportunity cost of knowledge sharing this is to be expected.

There are expected occurrences of similar dataset e.g. emergency building contractors are available all over the Council. And some suppliers regularly appear in different departments with limited co-ordination.

However the surprising result of the work is how many sections of LDC are involved in ‘Marketing and Sales’, from the Leisure Centres to Environmental Health to Building Control. And this is over and above the obvious; the Communications team, Garrick Theatre and Tourist Information. As an example Environmental Health officers visiting sites check the current recycling provider is approved (if they exist) and otherwise suggest that LDC Ops Services as an option.

### **7.6. The key business datasets**

---

LDC have already identified and are feeding key datasets into the appropriate key systems. These key systems are the LLPG, the CRM system and Uniform (for some services). The key feeds for this are from the active Environmental Health systems.

On top of this, the following would seem a useful and efficient source for further commercial contacts. They are highlighted in the spreadsheet in the section Structured Datasets.

- Think Local
- The LDF contacts datasets

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

- Sundry debtors Creditor payments
- Housing's B&B lists – not in the Visit Lichfield guide
- Housing's Letting agents and private landlords
- Building Control 'Marketing' spreadsheet
- Tourism's targets for the Lichfield Visitor Guide
- Ops Services commercial waste services

### **7.7. Data consistency**

---

A couple of significant datasets were reviewed in some detail. The Think Local database is used by Business Support as its core dataset, it contains the details of 2800 odd business' in the LDC area.

The Local Development Forum contacts database contains details of people and organisations who have voluntarily contacted Lichfield regarding consultation of the Local Development Plan.

There is an overlap of records but at least 30% of the commercial records identified in the LDF dataset were not in the Think Local dataset.

Of 1616 records in the LDF contacts database

- 55% were in LDC area
- 6% were classed as commercial
- 2% were government - ldc, parish councils, fire, police
- 3% were educational - mainly schools
- 1% were 'semi-state' health, enviromental agency, homezone
- 3% were 'third sector' voluntary
- the most contacts were with not surprisingly a planning consultancy with 20 odd representations.
- approx 12% contacts were duplicated

The overlap with the Think Local database is very good but a number of records at least 20 were in the LDF but not on the Think Local dataset.

A number of other issues were identified and reported to management.

# BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

## **7.8. Examples of issues identified during the review**

---

### **Geography**

Few if any of the datasets reviewed were contained within Lichfield's boundaries. Scope creep in this respect occurs in even the oddest areas.

Environmental Health have been asked by a Lichfield business on the environmental risks of neighbouring land in Walsall.

Tesco UK based in Hertfordshire has raised a drains issue for Tesco Lichfield.

### **Private Sector**

Typical complications with identifying private sector organisations are unless eligible for NNDR or a licence they don't need to report to LDC.

Businesses declared bankrupt do not have to inform such to their local authority, in such cases there is officially no-one to do so.

Sole traders operate under the radar

Other issues include complex relationships where a company may have parent and child and siblings and in the worst cases these can be circular!

Companies can legally have multiple identities and addresses.

The Lichfield Connects database is not currently set up to cope with such complexities – though it is progressing on a case by case basis.

What value are they to LDC?

What value is LDC to them?

### **Public Sector**

Public sector bodies' can be just as obscure. Even LDC has land that was inherited from previous organisations pre 1974 which are not on the Land Registry.

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

Health Authorities are notorious for not knowing what they own and indeed for using land and property they do not own.

Schools are semi autonomous organisations but their land is usually officially owned by the LEA.

Within some Lichfield databases the Parish Council are identified by their secretaries home address some which are outside of LDC's area.

### **Data protection**

A number of areas spoken to were under the impression that the DPA meant that

- a) LDC had to ask companies explicit permission to market to them and were actively chasing companies for such and
- b) That business roles were protected by the DPA – so that where a name and address were given as a contact by an organisation that this could not be shared with the rest of LDC.

It is recommended that an overview of how the business data is impacted by the DPA is published to relevant staff.

### **Case management**

Many, if not all departments had their own manual case management system (i.e. manual filing) for managing suppliers and customer. For quotes and contracts the Comino system should be able to provide a centralised repository.

One issue that came up again and again in the interviews was how individual knowledge was important in knowing the quality of the companies being dealt with. For any centralised system would be most useful to LDC if such information could be reliable.

### **Miscellaneous Issues identified**

The datasets identified lack validity because they aren't named: Uniform and i-World are memorable and mean something but f:/ISDSM/BuilCont/newdev.mdb is not.

## BUSINESS MATTERS: STAGE 3 REPORT

Regulation expectations change: e.g. licences for chainsaws

Corporate members in Burntwood but not Garrick – some in group tourists

Burntwood have a partnership with marketing company

Reps change regularly

Procurement issue – one man band – traditional crafts