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27th September 2011

Dear XXXXXX

Freedom of Information request F0008069

Thank you for your information request of 31st August 2011.

Blackpool Council was awarded DfT grant funding under the Elements 2 initiative as their proposal offered a different approach to asset management. Any commercial arrangements Blackpool entered into to achieve those desired outcomes is subject their procurement procedures. DfT would not have any involvement in these arrangements.

I cannot comment on your view that GAIST is actively marketing the highway asset management system. You may wish to know that DfT has asked Blackpool to encourage a number of local authorities to participate in a pilot programme to further test the asset management proposal. GAIST may have participated in securing other parties interest.

DfT is still in the process of developing the pilot proposal with Blackpool and the question of Intellectual Property Rights will be covered in discussions. DfT will not be the holder of those rights and is not a software developer.

In response to your question on the additional facilities the Blackpool asset management system provides and whether the same result could have been achieved by an alternative means. Elements 2 provided funding to explore a number of different approaches to asset management. Depending on the existing systems deployed by local authorities and or the level of ambition required on asset management, there are a number of different tools to

support asset management. The Blackpool system will be a further tool which will be offered to local authorities as appropriate to their requirements.

Although strictly this is not a Freedom of Information Request, I am happy to provide a view on the progress of the Blackpool asset management system. In the coming months DfT will post to the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme web site further details of the pilot programme including an evaluation methodology.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. A copy of this response and the information provided may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

If you are unhappy with the way the Department has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter by writing to the Department's Information Rights Unit at:

Zone D/04
Ashdown House
Sedlescombe Road North
Hastings
East Sussex TN37 7GA
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

XXXXXX
XXXXXX
Department for Transport
76 Marsham Street
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Your right to complain to [DfT/Agency] and the Information Commissioner

You have the right to complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its FOI publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF