

Transformational Government and Smartcards Executive Summary



Transformational Government and Smartcards



This Executive Summary is written for local authority Chief Executives and their management teams to help them understand the opportunities of smartcards.

It is taken from a business case published by Bracknell Forest Borough Council as part of the National Smartcard Project (NSCP). The full document can be obtained on request from national.smartcard@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

| WHY SMARTCARDS? | |
|-----------------|---|
| ✓ | Transformational Government and its emphasis on shared services |
| ✓ | Gershon efficiency savings, both cashable and non-cashable |
| ✓ | Disability Discrimination Act compliance for e-enabled services |
| ✓ | Citizen Identity Management and the use of Government Connect |
| ✓ | Modernisation of public services and the delivery of e-Government |
| ✓ | Meeting the ODPM's Priority Service Outcomes |

This document shows a way forward on how SmartConnect, can make a significant contribution to Transformational Government. It sets out four steps along the road towards eventual smartcard deployment, none of which is particularly difficult.

| A FOUR STEP PLAN | |
|------------------|--|
| Step 1 | Conduct a card audit to find how much effort is already going into citizen registration and card issuing |
| Step 2 | Deploy SmartConnect as your council's single citizen registration tool, but continue to use your existing card technologies |
| Step 3 | Undertake a business case assessment for priority services |
| Step 4 | As and when the investment can be justified, introduce smartcards |

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SmartConnect is a Citizen Registration Tool and Card Management System developed by local authorities for local authorities by the NSCP. In July 2005, ODPM transferred ownership and control of the software to Bracknell Forest Borough Council (BFBC). **SmartConnect** is now being managed and developed by BFBC on behalf of the community of local authority users. For more help, please contact national.smartcard@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

1.1 Citizen Identity Management (or “It’s Not About the Card”)

Local Authorities do not have a “Smartcard” problem: what they have is a Citizen Identity Management problem.

As the services invest in e-enabled systems, they create an electronic identity representing their customers. One recent audit¹ revealed that in a Shire County of under 600,000 population, the Councils between them were maintaining over 2.7 million electronic identities; more than four per citizen. These were being maintained on 39 separate databases, and involved over 130 staff for at least part of their working week in the effort to keep everything up to date.

This is classic Gershon² efficiency saving territory, as it involves duplication of effort, and the possibility of reorganising that effort by investing in new business processes.

1.2 Step 1: Conduct a Card Audit

If you do nothing else towards implementing Smartcards, you should at least find out how much staff time and money your Council is already committing to managing citizen’s electronic Identities, and maintaining card schemes. The most obvious areas to include in the audit are as follows:

| | Met London Borough Unitary | County | Shire District |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Library Card | X | X | |
| Leisure Card | X | | X |
| Bus Pass | X | X | X |
| Proof of Age Card | X | | X |
| School ID and Site Security | X | X | |
| Door Entry/Access Control | X | X | X |
| Car Park Season Ticket | X | | X |
| Council Tax Payment Card | X | | X |
| Housing Rent Payment Card | X | | X |

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We recommend that Counties and Districts collaborate because they are serving the same residents. There are bound to be other services which register citizens and issue cards to them, but the service areas in the table cover the most common high volume card schemes.

1.3 Step 2: Deploy SmartConnect

SmartConnect is a software tool that has been developed by the National Smartcard Project, and tested and evaluated by Bolton MBC, Cornwall CC, Chester CC and Mid Suffolk DC. It has been specifically designed and refined to meet the requirements of the local authority users. The development work was funded by ODPM grants to Cornwall CC for their pioneering work on the Smartcard Pathfinder, and then to BFBC who supported the early adopters (led by Bolton MBC) in refining the product.

It is an SQL server database and runs on Windows 2000 or better. Therefore it uses tried and tested technologies, and does not present an IT challenge. At this stage, it is not necessary to invest in smartcards or any other infrastructure. **SmartConnect** can be developed to produce export files which will enable you to carry on producing your existing card types, using your existing card suppliers. Reaching this stage would meet the test for compliance with Priority Service Outcome G12.

1.4 Step 3: Undertake a business case analysis

Once your Council is comfortable with its centralised citizen registration arrangements which itself will bring considerable efficiencies, you need then to consider what additional efficiencies, customer benefit and further achievement of strategic objectives using a smartcard might bring. This would require undertaking a business case analysis of your priority areas.

1.5 Step 4: Deploy Smartcards

Only when your Council is satisfied that the previous 3 stages have demonstrated the need and benefits, do you need to consider the expense of introducing Smartcards to replace your existing bar code or magnetic stripe card systems. Some Councils choose to do this as they invest in upgrades to Library or Leisure Management Systems. Others have chosen to do it to coincide with other service changes such as the alteration of the Concessionary Bus Fare scheme. Further steps would involve developing the functionality of the cards to include e-purse, authentication and interface to other services provided by the Council, or other public services.

1.6 The Business Case

The full version of the paper goes on to describe in more detail opportunities and possibilities presented by smartcards. It also presents a “self completion” Business Case tool to help you decide whether or not you should be recommending significant investment in smartcards. There is also an Appendix 3 setting out a Business Case in the Treasury “green book” style.

¹ Audit conducted in Suffolk. Contact national.smartcard@bracknell-forest.gov.uk for further details

² [Releasing Resources to the Front Line - Independent Review of Public Sector Efficiency](#) The “Gershon” Report, HM Treasury July 2004