Processes involved in the creation of street name and property number information in five case study councils in England and Wales

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Contents

Executive Summary

This report presents findings from research which explored the processes involved in the creation and maintenance of street naming and numbering information within a sample of local authorities in England and Wales. The report also includes reference to the onward creation of address and street data within local authorities.

The report begins with background information, namely why local authorities are involved with naming of streets and numbering properties. It then introduces how these processes interact with the current version of the LLPG and SN&N Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the NLPG, Version 2.0, 2006 used by authorities for the compilation of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) and the National Street Gazetteer (NSG). The report also briefly touches on the value of examining business processes. Case studies for five local authorities are presented. These are: Newport City Council; Mid Sussex District Council; London Borough of Southwark; Tandridge District Council and Wigan Metropolitan Council.

The findings from each of the five case studies are used to present a generic process diagram which attempts to draw together the combined process based upon the five authorities involved. This research does not intend to present the optimum arrangement within a local authority for the creation of the data. This is documented in the current version of the LLPG and SN&N Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the NLPG, Version 2.0, 2006. Rather the aim is to present the commonalities and differences between the five case study areas in order to help authorities who wish to examine their own business processes.

Finally, the report concludes with key findings common across all case study areas in terms of how they might be improved against the new version of the Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the NLPG, Version 3.1, 2010. This includes the conclusion that the individual officers employed to maintain the information are vital for the smooth running of the process. A further conclusion is that good communication between the Street Naming and Numbering Officer, Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) custodian and Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) custodian is vital. Finally, a commonality between all case studies is that the resulting Street Naming and Numbering information, incorporated as part of the Local

Land and Property Gazetteer service, is seen as vital for the ongoing business arrangements within the local authorities and for the wider address user community.

1. Introduction

This report presents findings from research examining back office processes within local authorities for the creation and maintenance of street naming and numbering, address and street data. Within this report, the term *process* refers to the set of linked tasks, either carried out by a person or by a machine, to achieve an overall aim with particular reference to the creation of a specific type of data.   This report is aimed at all individuals interested in back office business processes.

The report is based on interviews with five authorities across England and Wales. The process arrangements are presented along with case study narratives. This information is used as the basis to present a "common" process across all five authorities, at the end of the report.

Authorities carry out the function of naming and numbering streets and properties under a variety of statutory duties. Drivers for this report stem from the identified need for greater sharing of current practices in back office arrangements for the creation and maintenance of street and property information. This report does not intend to present the ideal model for the creation of this data. However, through improved knowledge of the various methods for creating the information, new and potentially improved ways of creating the information can begin to emerge.

There is little published information regarding how authorities organise the creation and maintenance of street naming and numbering information. It was therefore an aim of this research to share current practices which may aid other authorities and their improvement in their own processes where necessary. Not all the processes in this report are deemed "best practice" however. Each arrangement suits the individual authority and their own local needs. Furthermore, this project does not attempt to present every possible way the processes could be organised. Nevertheless, the research has developed a generic model, based on common activities across each of the five interviewed authorities.

2. Background

There are a variety of functions carried out by local authorities which are covered in this report. The following sections briefly introduce these.

2.1. Street Naming and Numbering

The naming of streets and numbering of properties is carried out under statutory powers within councils across England and Wales. Street naming and numbering (SNN) involves ensuring all properties and streets are properly named and numbered within the authority. There are a variety of acts which place the requirement to name streets and number or name properties on local authorities. These include:

- Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 (sections 64 and 65) together with Section 21 of the Public Health Act Amendment Act 1907.
- Public Health Act 1925 (sections 17 to 19).

The SNN process is usually carried out by a SNN officer within an authority. It is a skilled role. The role involves a variety of tasks and can be situated within a number of council functions.

2.2. The National and Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Street Gazetteer (LSG)

The National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) and National Street Gazetteer (NSG) are multi-lingual electronic records of land and property units and streets. Each record is identified by a geographical address and referenced by a Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) and Unique Street Reference Number (USRN). The NLPG and NSG include information sourced through the street naming and numbering process.

The NLPG and NSG are created by amalgamating Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPGs) and Local Street Gazetteers (LSGs) from across England and Wales at a national hub. This information is then supplied to other organisations across England and Wales. The model is based on a key principle of Information Management, which is to provide direct access to the source of the data.

The model provides a framework for sharing and integrating data from a range of local and cross government applications using a unique address key. This supports policy making and monitoring as well as direct shared delivery of services.

A single centralised gazetteer has led to a significant reduction in the number of duplicate datasets in different organisations, and provides a basis for interoperability and data sharing between organisations.

2.3. Functions relevant to different types of authority

Relevant to this report are the different types of authorities who have varying responsibilities for street and property information management. District councils have responsibilities for street naming and numbering and LLPG creation. County councils have responsibility solely for the creation of LSG information. Unitary councils, London Boroughs and metropolitan districts have responsibility for both the LLPG and LSG and also SNN duties.

2.4. Business process modelling

Business process modelling is a method for improving organisational efficiency and quality. It is being increasingly used beyond conventional businesses, in all sorts of other organisations, for example government organisations and departments, and within charities. Business process modelling aims to improve business performance by optimising the efficiency of connecting activities in the provision of a product or service. Business process modelling techniques are concerned with 'mapping' and 'workflow' to enable understanding, analysis and positive change. Models, or diagrams, are a central feature of the methodology, and are used to show the relationship between major parts of the system, i.e. the process at a high level.

Any job can be considered as being composed of processes designed to add value by transforming inputs into useful outputs. In this case, inputs will be addressing updates or when construction begins for example. Outputs would be NLPG feeds or revised address lists.

The first step to process modelling is to analyse the activities in order to understand the activities, their relationships, and the values of relevant tasks. Process analysis generally involves the following tasks:

- define the process boundaries that mark the entry points of the process inputs and the exit points of the process outputs.
- construct a process flow diagram that illustrates the various process activities and their interrelationships.
- use the analysis to make operating decisions and to improve the process.

2.5. The value of business process modelling

The process model diagram is a valuable tool for understanding the process using graphic elements to represent tasks, flows, and relationships.

Once these processes are understood, potential improvements in cost, quality, flexibility, and speed can be identified, and implemented where possible. For example, ways that processes can be improved include:

- add additional resources, people or software, to increase capacity of the bottleneck.
- move work away from limited resources, or delegate where possible.
- minimize non-essential activities, such as reworking, waiting, and support activities.
- redesign the output for better use, or use the same output for multiple destinations.
- flexibility can be improved by outsourcing certain activities to other departments, or postponing work until a 'batch' can be done.

In some cases, dramatic improvements can be made at minimal cost simply by identifying bottleneck activities and working round them. On the other hand, in well-optimised processes, significant investment may be required to achieve a small operational improvement, which may not be worthwhile.

A cost-benefit analysis should be performed to determine if a process change is worth the investment. Ultimately, this will determine whether a process "improvement" really is an improvement, and this will vary from organisation to organisation.

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3. Approach

The report is based on research employing semi-structured interviews with five authorities. The authorities were identified through known previous interest and activity in the area of business processes.

The information gathered from these interviews formed the basis of the core chapters of this report. These consist of a process diagram and a case study narrative for each authority.

The findings were then used to create a generic diagram which is based on the common activities among all the authorities interviewed.

4. Council Case Studies

4.1. Newport City Council

4.1.1. Summary

Newport City Council is a unitary authority in South Wales. The authority has a mature and well established process in place to manage street naming and numbering and the onward creation and maintenance of Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) information.

4.1.2. Background to the authority and to the process

Newport City Council is a mixed urban and rural council in South Wales and has 140,400 residents (2009 Mid-Year population estimates, ONS). The council is a unitary council and is the eighth largest council in Wales. The council use the 1925 Public Health Act for street naming and numbering and charge for the discretionary service of property numbering and/or naming under the Local Government Act 2000.

Newport City Council have a well established system in place for managing the street naming and numbering process and the onwards maintenance of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Local Street Gazetteer (LSG). This is demonstrated through the policy of using the gazetteer as the master address list, made available via both the council's intranet and internet sites. Staff can also raise queries on the information if necessary. In total, there are 15 systems currently linked to the LLPG within the council.

In recent times, Newport City Council has migrated towards an increasingly electronic based approach to the process. Part of the success towards moving to electronic processes has been due to the existence of a "champion" at senior level who has encouraged the migration to electronic document and records management. This person has actively promoted the transference of records to electronic storage, and championed the additional benefits that a more automated system could bring. The senior level Champion was instrumental in enabling the move to electronic working as they provided the endorsement for other staff to consider allowing changes to existing ways of working, which is often a challenging task without senior level support.

4.1.3. Diagram

The process diagram on the following page has been adapted and condensed from a highly detailed diagram used internally and provided by Newport City Council. Their detailed processes provide a step by step approach to all aspects of their SNN process.

Many of these steps have been generalised or combined to form the diagram overleaf, however the diagram provided here does give an overview of their SNN work.

Flowchart

Top left flow:

⏰ As and when → **Receive and scan planning Application, and register in ERDMS and Development Control RDBMS** → **Validate submitted planning application** → ◇ (Invalid → **Change status in RDBMS, and inform applicant**; Valid → **Inform planning, and check application has exisiting BLPU and UPRN**)

Inform planning, and check application has exisiting BLPU and UPRN → ◇ (No → **Allocate UPRN and create BLPU with correct status, state and classification**; Yes → **Verify address, confirm BLPU extent and boundary with applicant, and add geometry to GIS**)

→ **Receive planning application decision** → ◇

- Refused → **Retain BLPU pending appeal or future inclusion**
- No SNN needed → **No further action needed**
- SNN Required → **Issue SNN application form with appropriate notices**

Top right flow:

⏰ As and when → **Address query identified via systems and requests** → **Conduct site visit to determine if SNN required** → ◇

- No → **Notify / confirm correct UPRN and address record**
- Yes → **Contact owner/occupier to discuss process, and agree SNN submission** → ◇
  - No → **Allocate UPRN, create BLPU, and inform owner / occupier of consequences**
  - Yes → **Issue SNN application form with appropriate notices**

⏰ As and when → **SNN application submitted directly**

Issue SNN application form with appropriate notices → **Receive SNN application and check paid and valid** ← (SNN application submitted directly)

Receive SNN application and check paid and valid → ◇

- Invalid → **Reject application and ask for resubmission**
- Valid → **Scan application, register in ERDMS and Performance Monitoring System** → **Determine application type**

Determine application type → ◇

- Existing Property
- New Development
- Residents request → **Determine if street name already exists**

Existing Property branch

Determine if property name already exists nearby → ◇

- Yes → **Re-consult applicant**
- No → **Update LLPG LPI, and synchronise linked systems with daily COU** → **Inform Royal Mail Address Management Unit of change** → **Synchronise all linked systems with daily COU**

Residents request branch

Determine if street name already exists → ◇

- Yes → **Re-consult applicant**
- No → **Consult residents, and get change agreement** → ◇
  - Reject
  - Approve → **Consult ward members and community council** → ◇
    - Reject
    - Approve → **Post relevant 1925 Public Health Act notices** → **Update LSG street and LLPG LPI** → **Complete SNN schedule** → **Synchronise all linked systems with daily COU**

Complete SNN schedule → **Notify applicant and Internal / External Stakeholders**

New Development branch

Determine whether existing property or new build → ◇

- Existing → **Create UPRNs for merged, split, or sub-divided records** → **Inform Royal Mail Address Management Unit of change**
- New Build → **Determine whether new streets required** → ◇
  - No → **Create appropriate UPRNs** → **Request postcode from Royal Mail Address Management Unit**
  - Yes → **Check Developer's suggested name against policy and DEC** → **Agree with Developer** → **Consult ward members and community council** → ◇
    - Reject → (back to Check Developer's suggested name)
    - Approve → **Request postcode from Royal Mail Address Management Unit** → **Create LSG USRN Street(s) and LLPG UPRNs**

→ **Synchronise all linked systems with daily COU** → **Complete SNN schedule** → **Notify applicant and Internal / External Stakeholders** → **Applicant notifies SNN of intended occupation date** → **SNN notify Royal Mail to activate property as live**

4.1.4. Business process organisation for street naming and numbering

There are a variety of sources for Newport City Councils street naming and numbering (SNN) process. This includes various services or departments such as:

- Planning (including applications and enforcements);
- building control;
- City Contact Centre and CRMs
- council tax;
- non domestic rates;
- electoral registration;
- land charges;
- trading standards;
- environmental health;
- licensing;
- housing renovation grants;

The team also manage a generic email address which provides a shared source of address change intelligence from internal staff who can email queries to this generic address; and also via feedback from the internal address system provided to all Newport staff who use the information daily for frontline service delivery.

Depending on the source of the information, a variety of tasks are carried out when new information comes into the department. In the case of queries or requests requiring new or amended SNN activity, this requires a fee to be paid by the applicant. This is explained through an information pack which is sent to the applicant at the beginning of the process or is accessible via the Council's internet. No further action is taken to commence the formal process or liaison with Royal Mail or subsequent notification to external stakeholders until appropriate payment is received – but the appropriate entries are made in the Gazetteer(s) and filtered through to current linked application systems (and designated MSA signatories or Receiving Authorities) to ensure continuity and delivery of services.

Newport City Council have invested heavily in creating a robust process with a particular emphasis on the start of the process and capturing change intelligence on the ground as it occurs (or is likely to occur) and ensuring that the full life cycle of the property(s) is recorded from the outset. This is in part due to the fact that the process is relatively automated but

also due to the emphasis placed by the team on ensuring that as information moves down through the process and its normal life-cycle that all records are as accurate and reliable as they can be. For example, records are verified very early on as to whether they will require a new street name or property number. This type of approach also mitigates against wasted effort later on in the process. This is also the case in terms of the information required by the applicant. They are asked to provide appropriate plans i.e. location or developer plans outlining the exact location of the property in relation to its geographical surroundings and other supplementary information, such as intended use (i.e. classification) etc to enrich the LLPG (NLPG) – enabling a smooth process for the team.

As soon as the plans and other information are received, it is scanned and managed electronically. This is a relatively new aspect of the process for the team but the aim is that it will ensure a quicker turnaround at each stage and also reduces the risk of errors.

From this point, the technical knowledge and skills of the team are required to decide the type of action required on the application, such as whether a new street is required, property re-numbering or re-naming or new building development numbering and so on.

The street naming and numbering procedure involves a consultation period where approval is sought on the proposed street name from the Elected Council Members or Community Council who represent the area in question. For larger developments, the consultation period is limited to six weeks. However the applicant is kept fully up to date with the process so they are aware of progress in their application.

All completed street naming and numbering schedules (including the confirmed Royal Mail postcode) are issued to the applicant and internal and external stakeholders. The applicant is also asked to contact the team prior to occupation of the property(s), to ensure that notification is issued to Royal Mail's Address Management Unit that the address can be activated as live on their system. Once the SNN process is complete a crucial part of the arrangements at Newport are that all valid information is fed dynamically out to 15 linked systems across the council automatically and via the Council's intranet address lookup. This is made possible because the SNN information automatically feeds to the LLPG which is itself the source of address intelligence within the council. This ensures that all staff work to

the most up to date and reliable information which is updated once centrally by the team and is available across the council almost instantly.

4.1.5. Other key points to note

The team at Newport work according to an evolved process. Interestingly the team do not currently have a formally adopted policy for street naming and numbering but do place an emphasis on maintaining an historic link or heritage to the proposed development site. There is a draft policy in circulation for consultation and plans are that it will become part of corporate use in the future but the current arrangements have been developed without such a policy in place and have been extremely effective

The team operate under five or six locally introduced key performance indicators (KPIs), which the Gazetteer Management team have developed themselves. These are mainly based on turnaround time but record additional information such as fees, type of application etc. This helps monitor the teams workload, generated income, development activity and individual output and whether any subsequent delays are occurring which require investigation and attention.

4.2. Mid Sussex District Council

4.2.1. Summary

Mid Sussex District Council is a largely rural authority in South East England. It has approximately 132,000 residents (2009 Mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics) and three large towns.

The authority has specific business processes in place to manage street naming and numbering and the onward creation and maintenance of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) information.

4.2.2. Background to the authority and to the process

Mid Sussex DC use the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 for street naming and numbering (SNN). They do not charge for the service currently, although they at looking at introducing charges to cover some of the cost of running the service.

The function was originally carried out by the Engineers section and then subsumed into the Cleansing Services department. However three years ago, following the creation of the council's LLPG, a new street naming and numbering officer was appointed and the service moved to the Planning Department. Mid Sussex DC have one part time member of staff, working three days per week. Another member of staff provides cover during the rest of the week and over periods of leave.
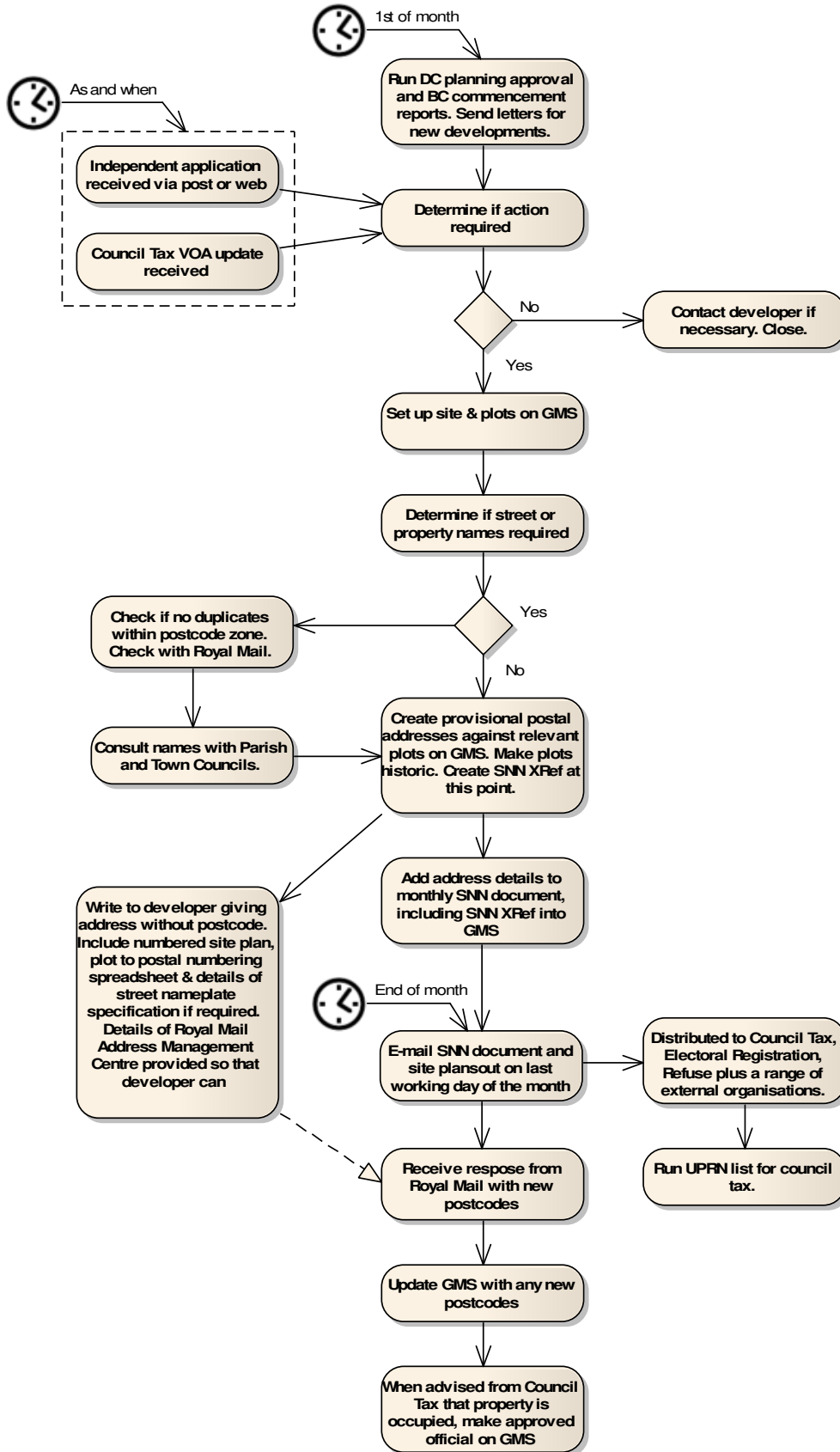
The new staff member introduced an intelligence driven SNN process that brought a very proactive approach to the role. Key to the success of the process has been the establishment of excellent working relationships between the various departments that have an interest in the address management process. The SNN officer has full access to Planning, Building Control and Environmental Health systems and read only access to Council Tax / NNDR and Electoral Registration systems in order to enable quick resolution of address anomalies and customer queries.

Mid Sussex DC take a very functional view to the creation and maintenance of street and property information. The focus is on providing a good service to customers, whether residents or developers, rather than spending a huge amount of time on internal processes. The team have developed a comprehensive set of web pages, including on-line forms on the council website providing support and information for applicants: http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4215

Figure 4.2.3.outlines the usual process involved in the creation and maintenance of SNN information within Mid Sussex DC. The majority of this process is carried out manually by the SNN officer, which works very well in this council where the officer is so proactive.

4.2.3. Diagram

1st of month

Run DC planning approval and BC commencement reports. Send letters for new developments.

As and when

Independent application received via post or web

Council Tax VOA update received

Determine if action required

→ **No** → **Contact developer if necessary. Close.**

↓ **Yes**

Set up site & plots on GMS

Determine if street or property names required

→ **Yes**

Check if no duplicates within postcode zone. Check with Royal Mail.

Consult names with Parish and Town Councils.

↓ **No**

Create provisional postal addresses against relevant plots on GMS. Make plots historic. Create SNN XRef at this point.

Write to developer giving address without postcode. Include numbered site plan, plot to postal numbering spreadsheet & details of street nameplate specification if required. Details of Royal Mail Address Management Centre provided so that developer can

Add address details to monthly SNN document, including SNN XRef into GMS

End of month

E-mail SNN document and site plansout on last working day of the month

→ **Distributed to Council Tax, Electoral Registration, Refuse plus a range of external organisations.**

↓

Run UPRN list for council tax.

Receive respose from Royal Mail with new postcodes

Update GMS with any new postcodes

When advised from Council Tax that property is occupied, make approved official on GMS

4.2.4. Business process organisation for street naming and numbering

Mid Sussex DC run a time bound process, whereby at the start of each month, new developments and planning approval information is received from the planning department. This information is used by the SNN officer to then issue formal information packs to the applicants, thereby starting the process. A further source of information is through ad hoc applications. Feeds are also taken from the Valuation Office Agency.

The council follows the best practice guidance contained in the National Land and Property Gazetteer Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice Guidance. New provisional Basic Land and Property Units (BLPUs) are created within the council's internal system and a template document is created which also includes a plan.

Where a new street record is required, the local town or parish council is consulted over the choice of name. Once a name has been agreed, the council has an arrangement with the Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) Custodian at West Sussex County Council. This is to provide a block of Unique Street Reference Numbers (USRNs) for use when required (in much the same way that Unique Property Reference Numbers (UPRNs) are provided by the hub). These are provided in blocks of ten and the LSG custodian is kept aware of all new street creation activity by email, which also includes a map file indicating the location of the new street.

Once the internal processes are complete, the applicant is informed of the new address. Mid Sussex, like some of the other case study areas, distinguish between the council's role and the role of external contributors. For example, the applicant is informed of their new address and also given information so that the applicant can then source the new postcode directly from Royal Mail.

The end of the process is also time bound to sending revised SNN lists to key internal contacts at the end of each month. This ensures that all colleagues are aware of change on a consistent month by month basis. If new information is received either that it is now an inhabited address or that the postcode information has been received, this is added to the record.

4.2.5. Other key points to note

The SNN process is underpinned by a Management Plan for the Local Land and Property Gazetteer. Furthermore a SNN policy plan is also due to be published.

Mid Sussex DC consider that combining the SNN role with that of LLPG maintenance was key to achieving an integrated approach to address management. All new SNN activity is recorded on the LLPG, which is fed to the national hub on a daily basis. This includes any new information as change only updates. This ensures that the national hub is maintained to the same standard as the local gazetteer.

As part of the drive to provide good customer service, the team have a series of standard letters they use to communicate the process to customers. These provide updates for the customer regarding the stage of the process they are at. Importantly, the letters also clearly highlight the distinction in roles between the council who provide the street name and number, and Royal Mail who provide the post-town and postcode.

Mid Sussex DC also have a keen focus on good communication links with other partners. For example, there is a county NLPG group which includes LLPG and LSG custodians. The group also includes the Fire and Rescue Service to ensure there is clear communication in place between all those who have an interest in, and use, the information.

Overall, performance and development of the SNN role and function is overseen by staff performance targets and through the appraisal programme. The vital role the officer has in offering the statutory service is a key aspect to the process.

4.3. London Borough of Southwark

4.3.1. Summary

The London Borough (LB) of Southwark is an inner city London borough with approximately 285,600 residents (2009 Mid-year population estimates ONS). The authority has a relatively established process encompassing their Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG), Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) and Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) practices.
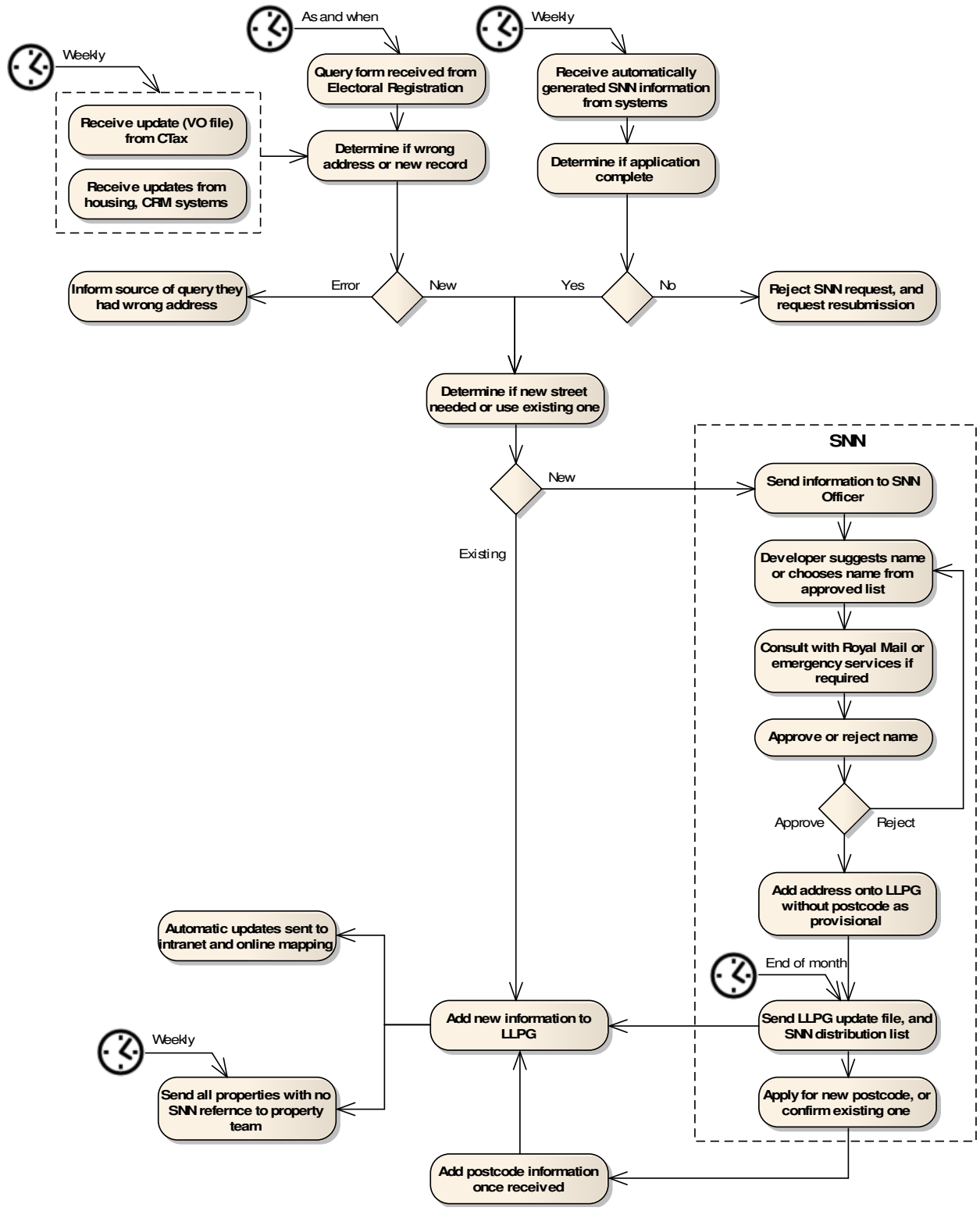
4.3.2. Background to the authority and to the process

The LB of Southwark operate under the 1939 London Building Act for Street Naming and Numbering. The council does charge for the service. They require a clear set of documents to be produced before beginning the SNN process.

All SNN activity is carried out by one individual under delegated power. This means that this person has the authority to name and number streets and properties. However the role holder does engage in a large amount of discussion with various stakeholders, including the developer and also the Fire and Rescue Service, the ambulance services and Royal Mail on new road names.

The Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) are maintained by individual role holders. There is a great deal of interaction between the two custodians over particular aspects of the information, such as new road names. Both the LLPG and LSG role holders both sit within the Finance and Resources service area within the council. The SNN Officer sits within the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods department.

4.3.3. Diagram

As and when

Weekly

Weekly

Query form received from Electoral Registration

Receive automatically generated SNN information from systems

Receive update (VO file) from CTax

Receive updates from housing, CRM systems

Determine if wrong address or new record

Determine if application complete

Error → **Inform source of query they had wrong address**

New

Yes

No → **Reject SNN request, and request resubmission**

Determine if new street needed or use existing one

New → **SNN**

Send information to SNN Officer

Developer suggests name or chooses name from approved list

Consult with Royal Mail or emergency services if required

Approve or reject name

Approve / Reject

Existing

Add address onto LLPG without postcode as provisional

Automatic updates sent to intranet and online mapping

Add new information to LLPG

End of month → **Send LLPG update file, and SNN distribution list**

Weekly

Send all properties with no SNN refernce to property team

Apply for new postcode, or confirm existing one

Add postcode information once received

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4.3.4. Business process organisation for street naming and numbering

The SNN policy is that no work begins until payment is received and the necessary information is supplied, as in many other case study examples.

Some aspects of the SNN process are time bound and others occur on an as and when basis. For example, the team receive weekly feeds from a variety of internal sources such as from the internal customer relationship management (CRM) records. They also receive ad hoc inputs from other sources such as electoral registrations and through feedback from online mapping services.

The next phase of the process is defined by whether a new street record will be required. If so, then a process of consultation takes place. At this point, if a new street is created, this is added to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and the Local Street Gazetteer (LSG). If a new street record isn't required, the new information is added to the LLPG at this point. This is done whether or not a Postcode is available to ensure that at least a record is held on the central LLPG. The record is updated later once the Postcode is received from Royal Mail.

Links between the LSG and LLPG are aided by the close working relationship between the two custodians, but also by the fact that both gazetteers use the same software management system. This ensures that there can be smooth transition of information from one system to another without the need for time intensive data conversion.

On a weekly basis the new information is fed to other council departments in the form of the LLPG and is used to update council intranet, and internet mapping sources. This ensures that all parts of the council have access to the same up to date information.

4.3.5. Other key points to note

The LLPG is used to generate over 165,000 planning application consultations over the average year. Part of the LLPG custodian's role is to help other parts of the council find out about new and changed addresses to ensure business continuity across the entire council. The back office processes at LB Southwark means that the council can supply daily updates to the national hub, ensuring all information is kept as live as possible.

The fact that the LLPG team sit within the Finance and Resources section ensures that the financial value of the LLPG is recognised and continues to remain a priority.

There are working links between the LLPG custodian and the Census Liaison Officer for example. This is because the LLPG is being used as part of the development of the 2011 Census Address list. The team have found that the Census preparation has been useful in gaining more recognition for their work.

Beyond the Census, the LLPG has been accepted by the LB Southwark as the master address list which supports other council systems. This further reinforces the vital nature of the process of creating and maintaining the LLPG and LSG information. This also provides further quality assurance as the information is used extensively within the council on a day to day basis.

4.4. Tandridge District Council

4.4.1. Summary

Tandridge District Council is a mainly rural council in Surrey, South East England. The authority has a well established Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) process.

4.4.2. Background to the authority and to the process

There are approximately 82,200 residents within Tandridge (2009 Mid-year population estimates, ONS). The council boundary includes four main towns and approximately 94% of the district is Green Belt land (source http://www.tandridge.gov.uk/YourCouncil/CorporateInformation/key_facts_figures.htm).

The council use the Public Health Act 1925 for all SNN activity. They do not charge for the service. The SNN and Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) roles are included in the duties of one full time member of staff. The diagram in section 4.4.3 outlines the tasks for the SNN process.

The individual role holder is very proactive, ensuring that she knows about all new developments which require SNN or LLPG activity. Information can come from a variety of sources, including developer requests, advertisements in the local paper, as well as housing benefit and other parts of the council. It is important therefore that anyone working on SNN or LLPG has the skills necessary to understand the disparate array of information available to properly manage the onward processing of that information.

The developer is asked to supply suggested names. The SNN officer checks to ensure that any suggested street names would be acceptable to Royal Mail and the Police. She then sends suggestions for new street names to Ward Councillors and the Parish council. Once the street name has been agreed, she approaches Royal Mail for a postcode.

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4.4.3. Diagram
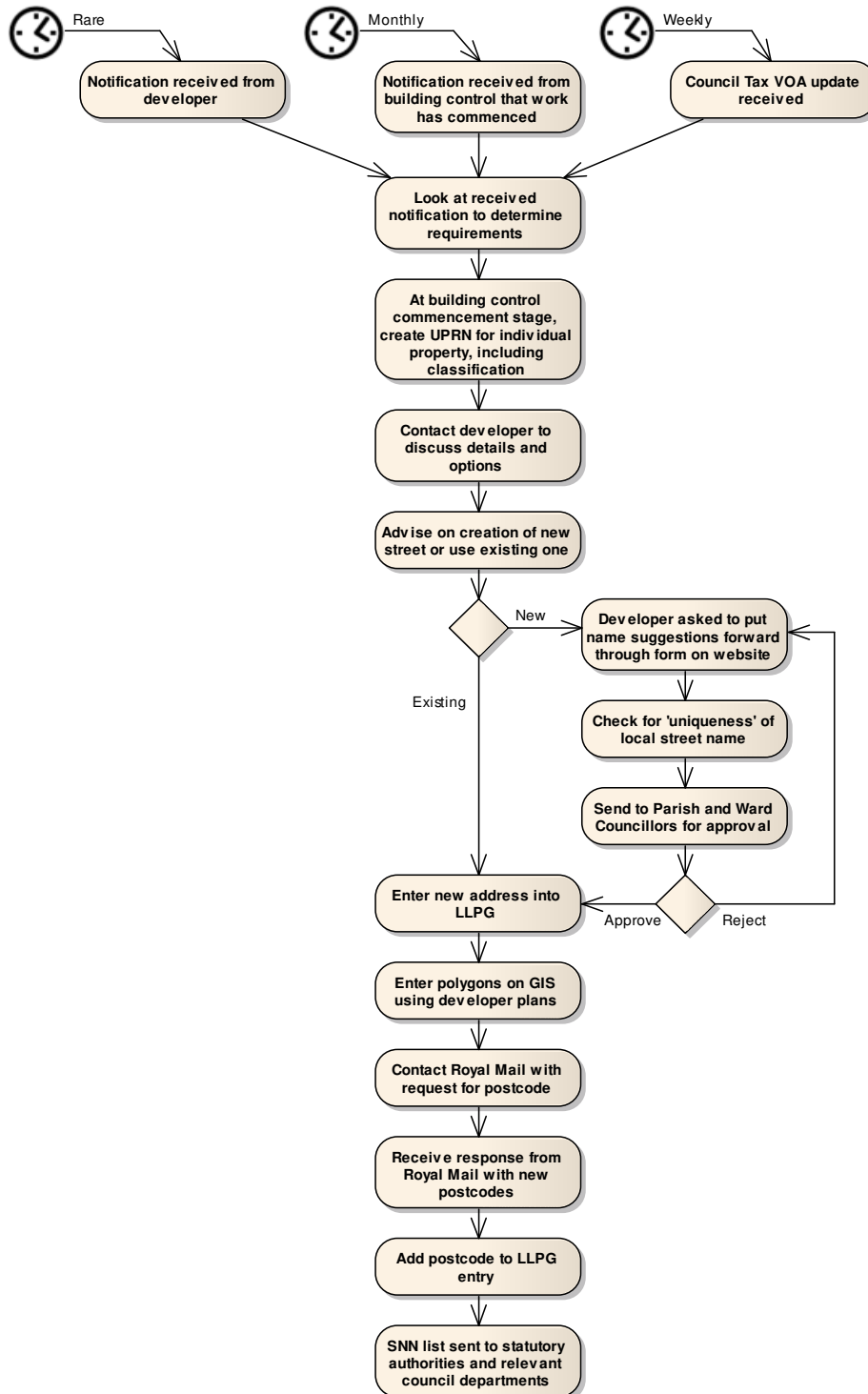
4.4.4. Business process organisation for street naming and numbering

Council tax and business rate reports to and from the Valuation Office are a weekly source of information. This includes information on demolitions, name changes mergers/splits and new

properties. Further sources of information include ad hoc requests from the public and also internal requests. The SNN officer also receives lists from building control of all development commencements and completions during the previous month. The SNN officer reviews the information received and decides on the appropriate action.

The LLPG Custodian carries out a twice yearly comparison with records from the councils planning lists. She does this to ensure changes to the BLPU status are properly recorded on the LLPG.

The LLPG Custodian carries out a biannual comparison of the LLPG with electoral register, council tax and non domestic rates. This ensures that department records are linked to the correct UPRN, addresses in electoral registration remain accurate and that every property has a UPRN. This provides another source of intelligence into the SNN process.

The LLPG Custodian classifies the type of record early on in the process. If the new information requires that a new street record is created then the SNN officer has a set of established processes in place. This is done in close consultation with the applicant, who is asked to suggest names for the new street. The suggestions are checked to ensure they comply with guidance issued in the SN&N Data Entry Conventions. The names are then put forward for consultation with the Parish council and Ward Councillors. The SNN officer manages this consultation process and liaises between the Parish council, Ward Councillors and the applicant until a name is agreed.

Once the new street name has been approved the new street is created on the LLPG. The plan included in the original planning application is used to create a spatially based record of the new development in the form of polygon records.

The SNN officer then requests a postcode from Royal Mail. Once Royal Mail has issued a postcode this is added to the address created by the council. An email is then sent to all statutory authorities giving details of the new addresses together with a plan of the new development. A copy is sent to the applicant including instructions on actions they should take in relation to contacting Royal Mail when the property is completed. The council has

found that as a result of the inclusion of this information the number of queries as to missing addresses on the Postcode Address File (PAF) has reduced considerably.

The LLPG Custodian provides a Unique Street Reference Number (USRN) for the new street record based on an allocation of USRNs provided by the county council. She passes new street information to the county council on a monthly basis, which ensures a effective feedback loop between the county and district council.

4.4.5. Other key points to note

Tandridge DC has combined the roles of the LLPG custodian role and the SNN officer role. Combining these two roles has been very beneficial for the council because it has meant one role holder maintains a hands-on overview of the whole process, end to end. This means that the process is quicker as the role holder knows the full details of each application and is able to own and manage the whole process. Furthermore, that person becomes the source of address intelligence within the council, providing a focal point for other staff. The other member of the team is both the Authority Liaison Officer (ALO) and GIS Officer.

Tandridge DC makes good use of the LLPG. To support the council in its use of addresses, they have developed an internal computer system to provide a reference list for addresses. Features include a front page which includes a look up tool which is colour coded to indicate whether an address is approved preferred, historic, provisional or alternative. A further page includes all the information held for a specific property. Users of the system can raise queries directly on the system. They can do such things as request new addresses, amendments to addresses and new cross references.

Areas which make particularly heavy use of the LLPG include:
- amenities
- building control
- bus passes
- council tax and non domestic rates
- customer services
- development control

- electoral registration

- environmental health

- housing

- land charges

Finally, of note is the fact that Tandridge maintains an excellent quality gazetteer at the national hub. The council submit daily updates of their LLPG and the few errors in the data are quickly corrected. In part this may be due to the level of proactive working within the council and the detailed processes in place to ensure all addresses are maintained through the LLPG. The level of integration of the LLPG throughout the council also adds to the value of the data as constant use ensures the data is reliable and maintained for a daily service delivery purpose.

4.5. Wigan Council

4.5.1. Summary

Wigan council is a large urban borough in North West England. The authority includes approximately 307,000 residents (2009 Mid-year population estimates, ONS). The authority has a mature Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) and Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) process.

4.5.2. Background to the authority and to the process

In 2004 Wigan council created an Address Management Team (AMT) consisting of one full time Address Manager (LLPG custodian) and one full time Address Management Technician. The team are responsible for both Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) databases and also the councils statutory Street Naming and Numbering function.

To underpin these functions, corporate policies have been established for the SNN process and the use of the LLPG as the councils master address database. The SNN policy is promoted on the council's website to guide and advise all developers on the transparency, consistency and standards for this service.

Prior to the creation of the AMT, Wigan council operated in silos through the use of many disparate databases held within different departments. The ability for each department to electronically "talk" with one another was therefore very difficult. To tackle this, meetings between various departmental heads were held to explain the benefits to the council of the use of the same address records across all departments. Such benefits included:

- Reduction in third party address datasets and therefore reduction in corresponding licence fees
- Incorporation of the SNN function to ensure timely, more accurate, and fit for purpose data
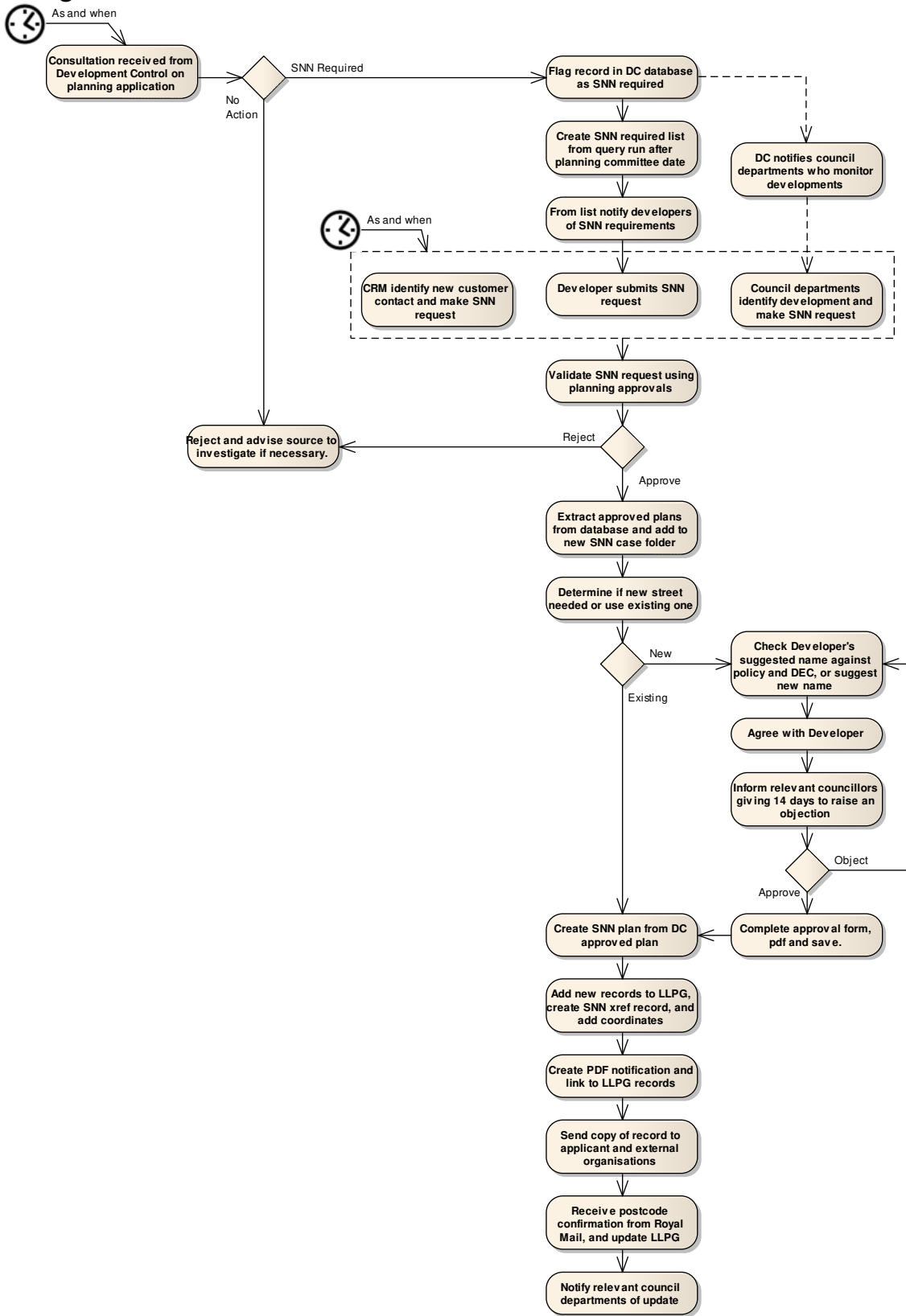- Web deployment of spatial address records for all council staff

- An offer from the AMT who can support real time address creation and change to meet departments needs

These meetings lead to an agreement that the council would benefit from a corporate address gazetteer and that the LLPG would be used as the master address dataset within the council. To promote departmental confidence in this new arrangement and alleviate any concerns over the LLPG arrangement, Service Level Agreements (SLA) were drawn up between departments and the AMT.

To underpin the SLAs corporate policies have been established for the SNN process and the use of the LLPG as the councils master address database.

The team are very keen to maintain engagement with colleagues across the council. They support all departments through an intranet system and encourage any errors to be reported to them through the same system. This helps improve user confidence in the data, as addresses are constantly verified, and also increases user participation in the process. The development of the SLA has assisted with the internal recognition of the value of the address management team. With the help of departments the address management team have created a mature and robust set of workflow tasks. This ensures that the council works with common, accurate and up to date information, which in turn aids accurate service delivery.

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4.5.3. Diagram

As and when

Consultation received from Development Control on planning application

No Action

SNN Required → **Flag record in DC database as SNN required**

Create SNN required list from query run after planning committee date

DC notifies council departments who monitor developments

From list notify developers of SNN requirements

As and when

CRM identify new customer contact and make SNN request

Developer submits SNN request

Council departments identify development and make SNN request

Validate SNN request using planning approvals

Reject → **Reject and advise source to investigate if necessary.**

Approve

Extract approved plans from database and add to new SNN case folder

Determine if new street needed or use existing one

New → **Check Developer's suggested name against policy and DEC, or suggest new name**

Existing

Agree with Developer

Inform relevant councillors giving 14 days to raise an objection

Object

Approve

Create SNN plan from DC approved plan ← **Complete approval form, pdf and save.**

Add new records to LLPG, create SNN xref record, and add coordinates

Create PDF notification and link to LLPG records

Send copy of record to applicant and external organisations

Receive postcode confirmation from Royal Mail, and update LLPG

Notify relevant council departments of update

4.5.4. Business process for street naming and numbering

Wigan council have implemented a proactive approach to SNN to ensure all relevant developments are allocated new addresses at the earliest possible stages of construction or conversion. This ensures that their LLPG contains accurate "under construction" as well as "in use/occupied" address state records.

The process starts with the receipt of planning application consultations from development control. This allows the team to determine whether future development proposals will require SNN activities. For those applications that may require SNN tasks the team have access privileges to the development control database. This database includes a checkbox denoting that SNN activities are required.

The team only concern themselves with applications where new addresses are required. Building or planning changes, such as home extensions, do not concern the team as they do not require any SNN action

Every month at the end of the planning committee process, a query is run in the development control database that identifies all planning applications that have been granted approval and also contain the SNN checkbox. This report then forms the basis of Wigan's future SNN work. Communications are then sent to developers advising them on Wigan council's SNN policies and the need to apply for new addresses as soon as development work is started. The report is shared with various council departments who monitor development starts and report back to the team. These departments include Development Control, Building Control, CTax, NDR, SNN, Refuse, Land Charges amongst others.

Wigan council receive as and when feeds of information from a wide variety of sources via telephone, email or an internal intranet SNN request facility. This includes information from council tax, development control as well as through SNN applications from outside the council. The councils customer relationship management system also identifies new developments through customer contact when registering for council services such as wheelie bins or CTax for example.

At this point, the team manually analyse the information to decide the next course of action. This takes skill and knowledge and involves checking against numerous data sources to be able to accurately decide the next course of action.

Planning and building approvals are always checked to ensure the development is being constructed in accordance with the correct approvals. Any that do not are referred to the planning enforcement team and the SNN process put on hold until the resolution of any enforcement action.

Electronic copies of the planning application approved plan are extracted from the council's document management system and added to a newly created SNN case folder. These plans will form the basis of future SNN plans. In some cases the developer may be asked to submit a better quality electronic plan by email.

Where a new street is required, an established process is in place. This includes liaising directly with the developer, inviting them to suggest appropriate names for the new streets which must comply with the councils published SNN policy.   The team ensures that all new street names comply with the council's rules. This includes, specifically, that names cannot be duplicated and where possible names should reflect the history of the site or acknowledge the geography of the area. Some developers do not make suggestions and have confidence in the team allocating appropriate street names. Relevant local Councillors are notified on the final street name and given 14 days to raise any objection. If no objections are received then the new street name is approved under delegated powers

The new street details are then added to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). The appropriate property numbering conventions are also applied and the new property records are added directly to the LLPG. The BLPU state is marked as "under construction", and LPI official address is marked "postcode requested". Coordinates records are added from either visual guess or geocoded from DC approved plan The relevant SNN Xref record is also created. The official SNN document is then produced directly from document templates held within the LLPG. A SNN plan is created using graphics software and embedded into the official document.

From this point, the official SNN document is converted into a PDF file, and linked to the appropriate BLPU records in the LLPG. The document is then emailled to the applicant as well as external organisations, including Royal Mail, Fire, Police and Land Registry. The information from the LLPG, including relevant SNN cross references are then fed to the national hub through daily change only updates. As with other case examples, this ensures the national hub information is kept as up to date as the locally held gazetteer.

The team monitor Postcode responses from Royal Mail, and chase them if no response is received within their 5 day response time. The LLPG is updated with confirmed Postcodes. Email notifications are then sent to internal council departments advising them that new address records, including Postcodes, are now available in the LLPG.

4.5.5. Other points to note

The team have undertaken a programme of promotion of the LLPG as previously outlined. This has resulting in it being used as the master address list. However, the team are still hampered in some areas by the fact that third party software used by different departments cannot accept LLPG or BS7666 address data. This does cause problems and sometimes results in LLPG data being blamed for being inaccurate whereas it is often software or hardware configuration problems.

Nevertheless the way the team undertook the programme of work to gain corporate wider recognition for the LLPG was through both engagement at senior management level and also involving those who would use the information on a daily basis. For example, the team made the LLPG information available over the intranet before it was embedded in council systems, to allow those who would use it time to review and feedback. This helped to give users confidence in the LLPG for their day to day work.

5. A generic approach

5.1.   Similarities and differences in business process organisation for street naming and numbering

This research presents the findings from a small sample of local authorities who are responsible for street naming and numbering. As previously stated, this research does not intend to outline the optimum process arrangements. The aim is to present examples of the current business process to add to the area of knowledge of this area. The research has found some emerging trends however and these are outlined below.

Due to the wide variety of local needs and arrangements, there are local variations in SNN data creation. Each authority featured as a case study follows the current version of the LLPG and SN&N Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the NLPG, Version 2.0, 2006 but also has a set of local processes they must work within. The local arrangements presented within this research demonstrate how local processes have been developed according to the specific needs of each organisation. The distinct differences include:

- The timing of information flowing into the team varies greatly. Often, within the sample section, this appeared to be related to the amount of resources and/or staff that have responsibility for maintaining the SNN data.

- There is a great variety between the case study areas regarding whether Royal Mail is engaged to gather Posttown and Postcode information. In some councils, those applicants seeking new address information are advised to contact Royal Mail for the Posttown and Postcode themselves to add to the official address provided by the council. In other councils they provide the Posttown and Postcode directly to the applicant after liaising with Royal Mail on their behalf.

- Some councils have a SNN policy in place whereas others do not.

- A further difference relates to who authorises new street names. In some councils, the SNN officer has delegated power to decide the name whereas in other councils, the street name is approved by council committee meeting.

- A final major difference relates to whether the council charges for the SNN service. All councils provide the statutory power part of their activity for free but some councils

charge a fee for activities which have discretionary powers beyond this. Others do not charge at all for any of the process.

Despite these variations, this research has identified a common set of tasks or process steps found to be shared between the majority of case study areas. This is summarised in the diagram in the next section.

5.2. Diagram
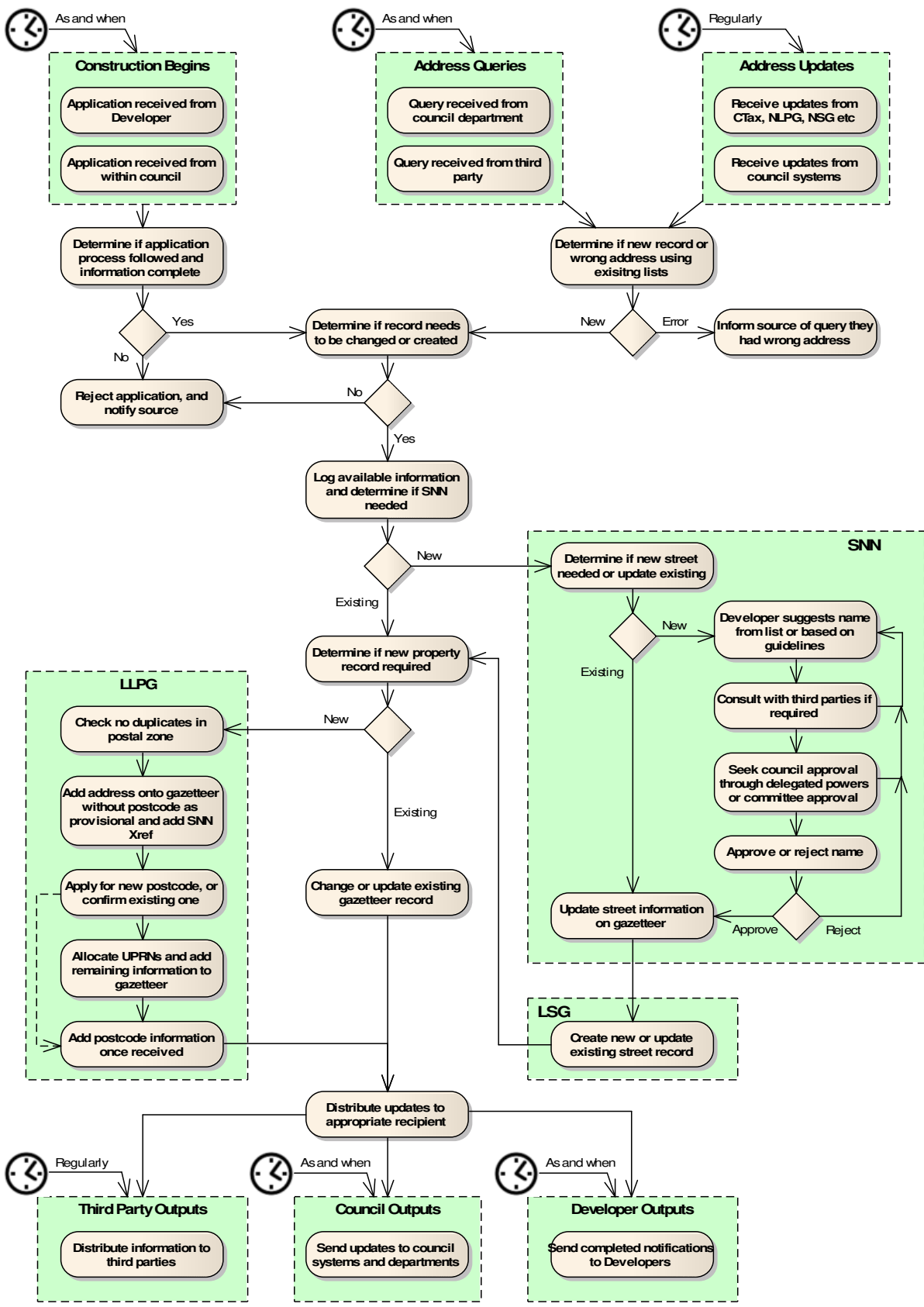
5.3. Generic business processes for street naming and numbering

There are several common themes between all the case study areas in terms of the processes in place for the creation of street naming and numbering information. Firstly their sources of new information come from three main areas. These are broadly shown in the diagram as planning related sources; address queries or updates. From these sources comes a further commonality which is that the smooth running of the process require the skill and knowledge of the SNN officer. They have to determine whether the record warrants any further stages in the process. From this point also, the separate process, either creating a new street or feeding through to the LLPG or LSG can occur.

In terms of the different processes involved in creating a new street name, again there were common themes between all those interviewed. This includes consultation with the street name and also providing this information to others. Finally, a further commonality is through the distribution of that information on to other interested parties within the council.

It is important to note that the diagram in section 5.2 does not necessarily show the tasks carried out by one member of staff. Often these tasks can be split between different members of staff. Furthermore, in some areas it is necessary to carry out further tasks either to satisfy local needs or procedures. However the basic structure of the process generally takes the form of the generic process diagram in section 5.2.

6. Conclusions

This report has presented a range of case studies from very different authorities across England and Wales. The authors would like to stress that this research does not intend to present the ideal arrangement for the creation of street naming and numbering information. The research does not claim to be exhaustive or to present all the possible ways that SNN information is created and maintained and supplied to other parts of an authority.

There is a great variety of local needs and variances which will affect how and when a particular stage of SNN data creation is carried out. The optimum arrangement is outlined in the new version of the Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the NLPG, Version 3.1, 2010 guidance which can be found on the Local Government Improvement and Development website at http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8035843. The focus of this research is to capture the range of processes involved in a small sample of authorities to help other councils identify areas where they might review their own processes and work to improve them where required.

There were a number of key common similarities found amongst the case study areas. These are as follows:

- Recognition that custodians and SNN officers are vital for the ongoing smooth operation of address data creation and management within the council. The role holders have the knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm to ensure records are created and maintained to a high enough quality to then be used to support day to day council service delivery.
- There should be a SNN policy in place.
- The SNN information flows directly into the Local Land and Property Gazetteer at an early stage in the process. This is common amongst all the case study areas.
- Each case study area shares a similar range of input sources of new information including planning or internal queries.
- The level of integration and linkage between the LLPG custodian, LSG custodian and SNN officer is also very important and is a key common aspect between those interviewed. Each case study had a good relationship between these role holders, or they are roles held by one person in other cases.

- Finally, irrespective of whether they charge for the service, all councils view the SNN process as a service in one form or another and offer a range of customer service orientated guides and progress materials for applicants.

A key conclusion from this research is that the creation of street naming and numbering information is not just a statutory task. It is an important process which can offer a great deal of value to the council. The information can be used as part of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and supplied to other parts of the council, providing financial savings through linked systems and joined up data supply.

Further research may be required in the future to investigate whether some of the key SNN good practice aspects such as: how splits and mergers of existing properties and internal numbering of properties are undertaken, best practice SNN policies are implemented and the best sources of address change intelligence are identified.

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7. Acknowledgements