

REPORT TO Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 12 March 2015

Report of: Chris Powell

Title: Progress Report on Strata Service Solutions Implementation Plan

Is this a Key Decision? No

Is this an Executive or Council Function? No

1. What is the report about?

Update on progress of Strata.

2. Recommendations:

To note the progress of the implementation plan for Strata.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

To monitor progress of Strata implementation.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

All included within the Strata business case.

5. What are the legal aspects?

None

6. Report details:

Progress Report on Strata Service Solutions Implementation Plan

Introduction

The three partner Councils agreed the formation of Strata Service Solutions and its associated Implementation Plan in July 2014. This report is an update on the progress and issues in achieving the plan up till early January 2015 (there will also be a short presentation at the Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting).

The high level plan is illustrated by fig 1 and fig 2

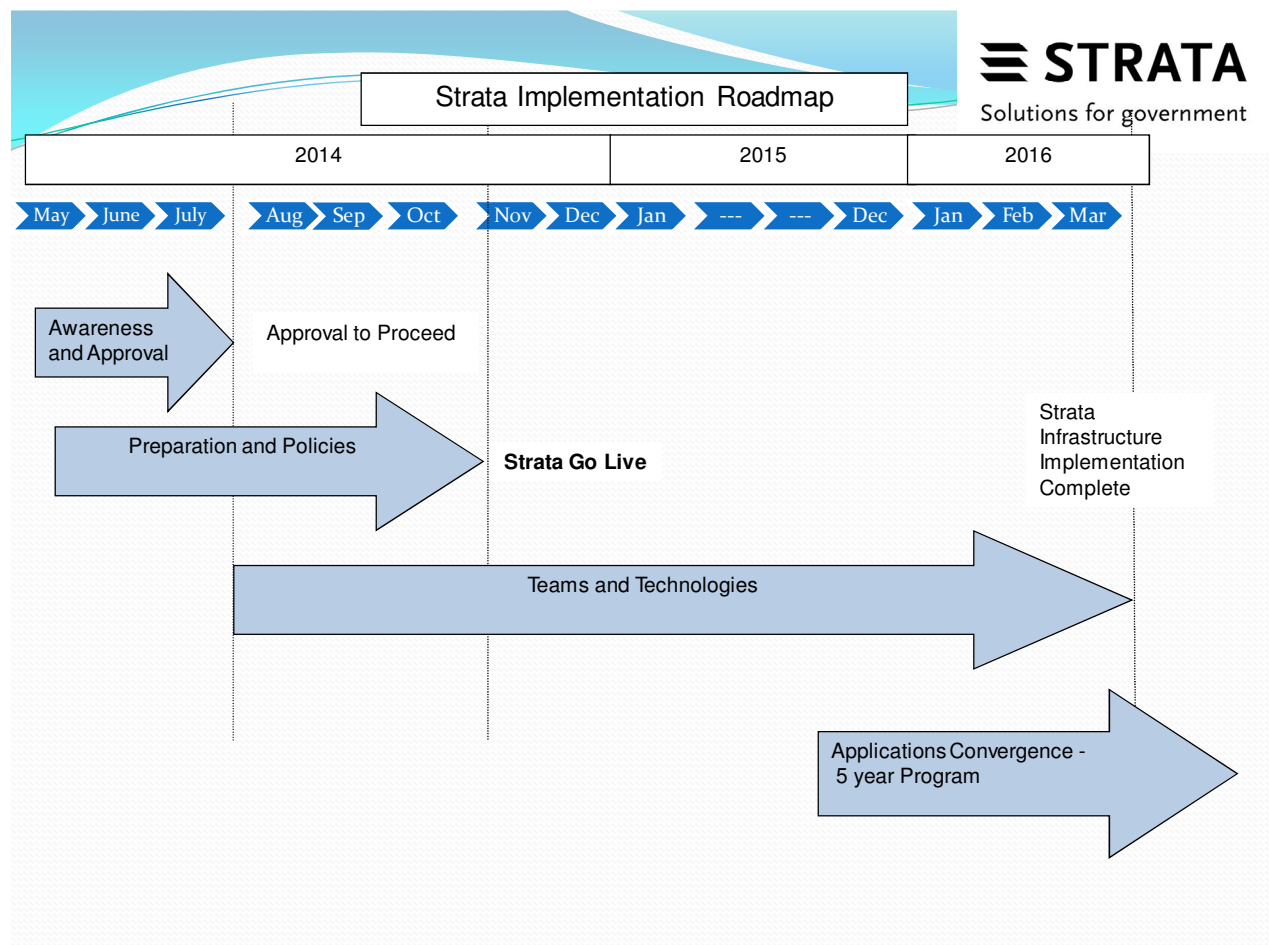


Fig 1 High level plan

Summary

Implementation projects have so far produced few surprises, and none that have significantly altered the plan. The progress highlights are:

- Strata went live on Nov 1 as planned – all staff transferred to Strata under TUPE conditions; agreed budgets were transferred.

- Main elements of plan are on schedule – main exceptions are:
 - Strata time and attendance system incomplete – now likely March
 - Councils yet to be asked to begin process of file and email clean-up
- COO and all of Strata management team recruited and in post. Compliance and Security Manager started post in February after external recruitment.
- As expected, the organisation change is making some posts redundant. This process is continuing with due tact and consultation. However, redundancy costs are expected to be higher than anticipated but these extra costs will be met by the Technology Challenge Award grant.
- The TCA grant has allowed the two data centres to be built with additional safeguards and improved electrical efficiency.
- Data centre builds are being hit by the most surprises – concrete plinth for generator; reinforced floor for DR site; lack of electrical contactors – which may result in a delay of up to 3 weeks for this part of the project.
- The major infrastructure procurements have so far come in under the budget identified in the Business Case. Contracts have been awarded for:
 - The main servers and storage systems
 - Thin-client server infrastructure
 - Wide area data network
 - Enterprise agreement for Microsoft licences
- Creation of a common Service Desk across the sites has produced early benefit with instances of mutual support being provided across sites to reduce risks due to absence of key staff.
- JEC and Scrutiny committee meetings set for year ahead

Financial Highlights

- Strata is fully functioning from a finance perspective with the following appointments having been made:
 - Insurance – Zurich Municipal;
 - External Accountants / Audit – Francis Clark;
 - Banking & Credit Cards – Lloyds Bank;
- The Company is registered for VAT and Corporation Tax and has amended its year-end to 31 March to tie in with the year-end of its owners.

- **Budget Monitoring 2014-15**
 - Appendix A sets out the Revenue and Capital expenditure to date;
 - Within Revenue, the income is made up of the Transformation Challenge Awards funds and predominantly salaries budgets transferred to the Company from the three owners. At the end of the year an analysis will be undertaken to identify any costs paid for by Strata for which a budget has not been transferred and any costs paid for by the Councils for which a budget had been transferred. An invoice for each amount will be raised;
 - Within Capital, the budget represents the initial implementation plan, which was set out in the Business Plan. Expenditure to date covers the equipment and software required for the data centre.
- **Budget 2015-16**
 - The budget for 2015-16 is currently being finalised and will be presented to the next round of meetings.

Main objectives for the next period

The Strata organisation is in the early days of developing its operating processes, creating its culture and establishing relationships with the Councils. The immediate main challenges ahead are:

- Understanding each Council's current IT project and change requirements and developing Strata project plans and resource plans to deliver as many of the requirements as possible.
- Developing the communication processes between Strata and Councils, especially at SMT/CMT level to ensure good dialogue about performance and business issues and to ensure that projects requiring IT are discussed with Strata from the very start.
- Developing a process to enable Application Convergence decisions by the JEC.
- Developing the Strata performance measures for reporting to the various groups.

7. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

None

8 Are there any other options?

N/A

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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