

REPORT TO Strata Joint Executive Committee

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2015

Report of: Chris Powell, COO Strata Service Solutions Ltd

Title: Progress Report on Strata Implementation Plan- June 2015

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 implementation of Strata.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

Progress report.

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 Implementation Plan – June 2015

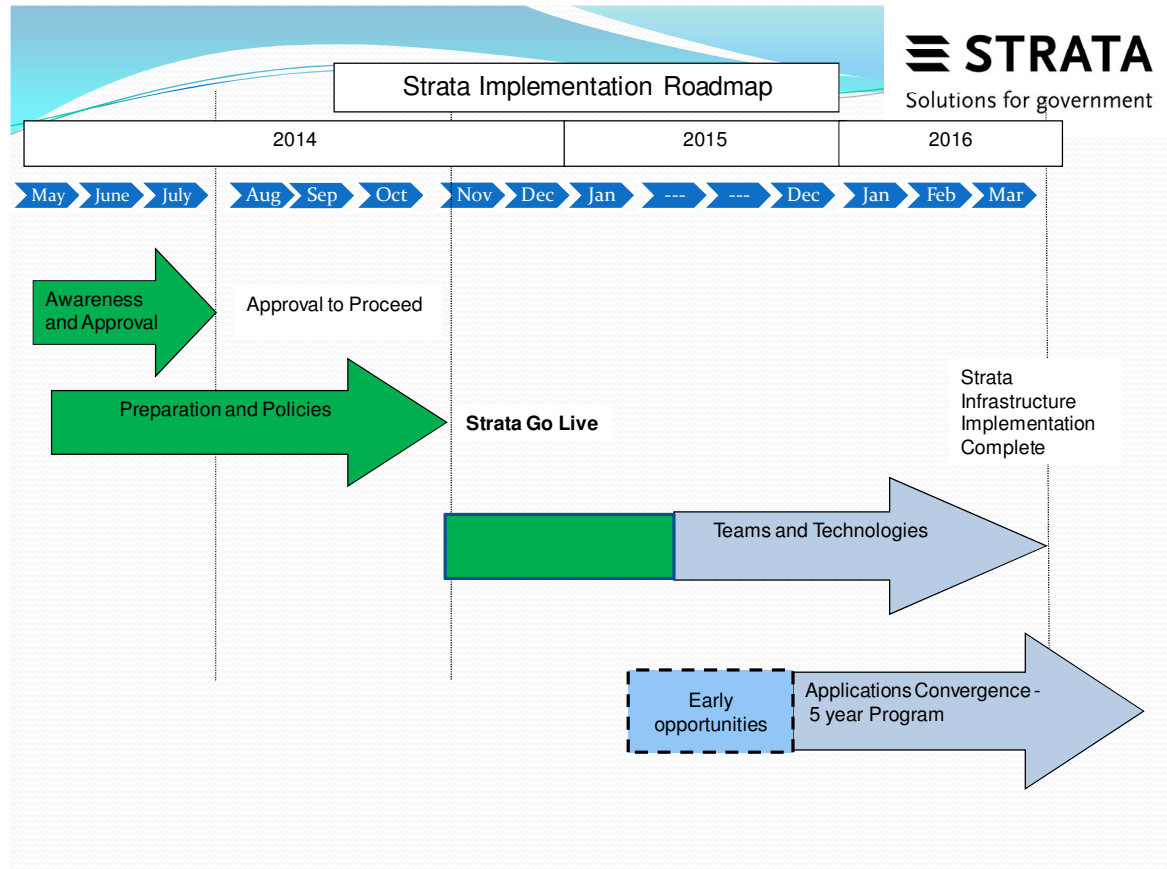


Fig 1 High level plan

Highlights

- With the first phase of infrastructure build more or less complete the second phase has undergone detailed planning. The result is a shifting of expected date for first “global desktop” from August to October. This is an 8 week shift from the original business case some of which may be possible to recover during the desktop roll out phase at the end of the programme. The delay is mainly caused by:
 - a. 4 week delay to the Civic Centre and Oakwood data centre builds
 - b. Main tender requiring extra selection processes
 - c. Supplier needing more time to implement design
 - d. Skills training for Strata staff need to be fitted in
 - e. Application packaging is going more slowly than planned

- The main issues affecting the business case so far are:
 - a. a nasty surprise from incorrect licence specification for the telephony element of Microsoft Lync which could add £30K to the business case costs. This fortunately is being offset by other tenders coming that are better than the business case estimates eg WAN lower by £40K on average
 - b. the process to turn the business applications into a form suitable for the thin-client desktop is proving slower and more difficult than estimated We are urgently evaluating a very new product that may solve this problem.
 - c. Difficulties in freeing up key staff from business-as-usual activities to work on the new infrastructure. This is creating stress in the team but the re-planning will help alleviate.

- Organisation changes:
 - a. Of the five redundant management posts identified in the business plan, one member of staff has been retained on temporary contract to assist with telephony projects (cost being taken from the Transformation Challenge Award grant)
 - b. Two staff resigned from Strata employment in April/May. One from the Teignbridge document centre and the other the Teignbridge Street Name and Numbering resource. The latter has created an opportunity to investigate co-locating the majority of the resources in Exeter.
 - c. Three Principal Analyst posts appointed in May. These posts have a portfolio of business applications and service customers to support.

- A process for investigating joint “opportunities for new ways of working” has been drafted The intention is that we will have a single process for starting and carrying out reviews of potential sharing opportunities, including the Application Convergence plans, in a single transparent and consultative manner which can be owned and managed by the JEC and JSC.

- Ongoing and new project work from around the three councils has been identified and is being brought together into a single project management process for reporting to the Councils. This reporting tool has been received well by customers.

- A number of presentations have been made to senior management teams at the three councils as part of ongoing engagement activities. One of the next events planned is a “customer forum” where IT-savvy customers can be involved in some of the design aspects of such things as file formats; Outlook settings; network issues etc.

- The Strata Programme and Resources Manager has begun IT Service Reviews with individual service managers across the three councils. Good customer feedback has been received from managers saying they appreciate the regular scheduled meetings.

- One of the big challenges is to carry out business-as-usual (BAU) support while implementing a major IT infrastructure redesign. The Teignbridge site infrastructure is

considered fragile and many instances of downtime are occurring which we are looking to prevent through some careful investment of time and money.

- BAU also takes the form of projects that were already in progress when Strata came on the scene. Where possible Strata is developing IT solutions that are common to all partners and this means essentially bringing forward the Application Convergence Workstream by a year to take advantage of any opportunities that arise now. This work is having to be done at great pace to fit in with existing service plans. Examples of common IT solutions, although they are not shared projects at this stage, are:
 - a. Website design, using .Gov principles using the same content management system, an open source product called Umbraco. Exeter and East Devon are in progress and Teignbridge are considering.
 - b. Customer portal – initiated by Exeter’s business case Strata is developing a comprehensive set of IT solutions which can be applied to all three councils without delaying the implementation at Exeter.
 - c. In-cab technology – negotiations have taken place to enable Teignbridge to use Exeter’s system at a very advantageous cost. East Devon are considering the same system for their new waste contract in April 2016. .
 - d. Member IT systems – the O365 system in place at East Devon and currently being rolled out at Teignbridge will also be proposed to Exeter later in the year.
 - e. Mobile device policy – where common mobile frameworks and devices will reduce costs for the partners.
 - f. Audio Visual – Teignbridge have a project to refresh the audio visual equipment in their Committee Rooms and East Devon are looking to procure for their new Council offices.
 - g. Planning systems – Strata is working closely with Exeter to investigate possibility of using the IDOX system (Uniform), which is common to East Devon and Teignbridge, to deliver the innovative work demand processes designed by Exeter. This is an important decision as it has big implications for the Application Workstream part of the Strata business case

- One of the consequences of a high level of BAU project work is that contract virement negotiations with suppliers is suffering. This is another key part of savings in the business case and we need to recover the situation by refocusing resources within Strata.

- Although Strata staff are still mainly supporting and working with their previous councils there are increasing examples of cross support eg:
 - a. Martin Millmow, the Document Centre Manager, developing a postal strategy paper with the Teignbridge BID team
 - b. Street Name and Numbering support at Teignbridge from ex East Devon and ex Exeter staff.
 - c. Mobile Working expertise from ex East Devon staff supporting Teignbridge’s mobile working strategy generation
 - d. JBase (a programming language) support from ex Teignbridge staff to Exeter
 - e. A group of analysts from the three councils working together to design the Exeter customer portal.

- A case for recruitment of three apprentices for the Service Desk is to be made to the Strata Board. Their costs will use the budgets from vacancies for two higher level posts.
- The person responsible for Street Name and Numbering within Teignbridge has resigned. The Strata Board have agreed to replace this 0.6 FTE post with a full time post as capacity was on the edge of being insufficient for the work. This also provides the opportunity to reshape the team and try and co-locate where they can provide mutual support. Moving to a single Street Name and Numbering Policy and charging scheme is needed for the effective operation of this unit.
- The timeline for the implementation of the Strata infrastructure after re-planning.

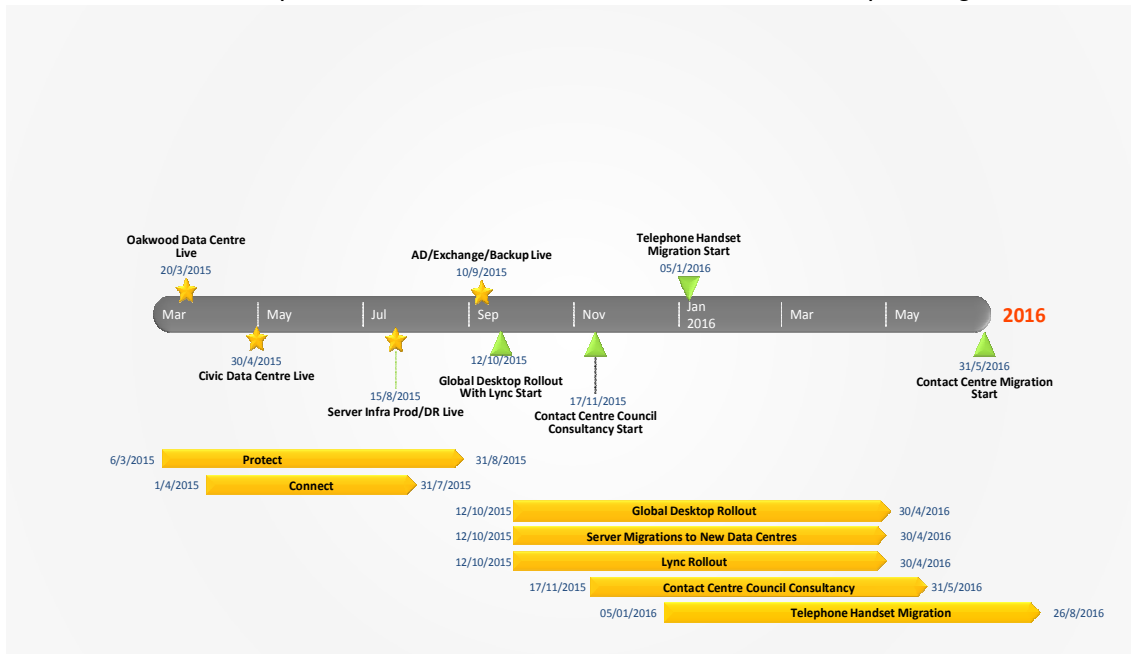


Fig 2 Strata Timeline

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

12. 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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