



Solutions for
government

Strata Discussion Document

Information Technology Training Needs & Delivery

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Building and delivering flexible, responsive and cost effective IT solutions and services for Local Government

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Purpose of this Discussion Document

The purpose of this discussion document is to provide a high level overview and proposed solution to address what is perceived as a need for Information Technology training across the three authorities which Strata supports.

This document is being presented to the Strata Board for discussion on Friday 20th April and to the JSC / JEC at the next round of committee meetings in May and June.

Initial Thoughts

It is clear that as IT becomes more embedded into practically all council activities, then ensuring that staff are sufficiently trained both on the devices they use and on the applications that they need to perform their everyday tasks, is essential to ensure that the desired efficiencies and outcomes are achieved through the introduction of technology. The impact of staff not having the required level of skills or not being given access to relevant and timely training can lead to both user inefficiencies and frustrations, whilst authorities will not gain maximum value from their investment.

Currently IT training budgets are allocated to the HR departments of each authority, and users are able to access online training (i.e. eLearning Nexus – EDDC) or to book themselves onto suitable training course run by 3rd party organisation, in addition knowledge transfer between staff within a department appears to take place as and when required.

Strata believe that there is now a real need for a more formalised approach to end user IT training to ensure that each authorities staff have the ability to access IT training in a structured way as and when required, whether it be on line, in the classroom, or at the desk. It is felt that a pro-active approach to training needs to be developed in order to allow users to select the best form of training for their needs, as users commonly learn in different ways.

Since the introduction of the Strata service desk, it has been recognised that IT incidents are being logged by users which probably would have been best addressed through effective application or/and device training.

Strata would therefore like to propose the provision of a roving training resource, which could be booked by users via the Strata service desk. The Strata training resource would arrange face to face sessions, hold on site surgeries, run classroom style training on applications and devices. The resource could also

be used to co-ordinate training with a 3rd party organisation when new applications or technologies are being introduced.

Regular reviews of the skills of users across each authority, will enable skills gaps to be analysed and addressed. Whilst not aimed as being a 'one stop shop' for all IT training needs, the introduction of this resource will act to address a recognised issue.

Training Needs

The Strata IT Training Specialists would work with the HR departments within each authority to identify pro-active training needs on a rolling 12 month schedule. This training may be, for example, Microsoft Office suite training, or training on new applications, services or devices.

The IT Training Specialist will then create, communicate and manage a matrix of training courses / surgeries available over a 12 month period.

In addition, the IT Training Specialist will engage with highlighted departments within each authority to perform a gap analysis on staff against the needs and requirements of the authority. This information will be compiled into a report for the IT Client Lead within each authority, and a training plan drawn up.

Working closely with the Service Desk Manager, the Training Specialist will identify demand based on logged Service Incidents, this will show specific areas of demand where training might be required to reduce the level of service incidents being logged with the Service Desk.

Training Delivery

Users (or managers) who identify that they have a specific training will need to contact the Strata service desk to log a service request (SR) for training. A user will be provided with a Service Request reference number and this will need to be used in all correspondence. Training Service Requests will be assigned to the Training Specialist for review / delivery.

The Training Specialist will ascertain whether they have the skills / capacity to deliver the training or whether the training will need to be brought in from an external source. The Training Specialist will also identify the type of training to be given, i.e. face to face, eLearning (if available through the relevant authority), classroom, off site, etc.

Should training need to be brought in, the end users authority will be advised of the costs for the delivery of the required training.

Should classroom style training be required (i.e. more than one user needing training), then the relevant authority would need to ensure that a suitable room is available to enable the training to take place. Any IT equipment requirements to enable training to be given will hopefully be able to be provided by Strata out of spare stock, however, should it be necessary to rent in equipment, the costs will be passed onto the requesting authority.

On successful completion of training the user will receive an acknowledgement from Strata in the form of an email confirming that the training has been given and also requesting feedback on the quality of the training. Feedback will be reported to the authorities via the Strata Monthly reporting process. Should classroom training be given, Strata will aim to issue a certificate of attendance and successful completion of the course.

Costings

It is felt that a full time trainer would be able to provide the majority of IT training needs. Whilst some degree of 3rd party involvement might be needed, having a dedicated training resource as part of Strata's resource pool would enable a far more effective mechanism for delivery of the required training across the three authorities.

It is believed that an initial two year term would be appropriate in order to understand and address the current training gaps, after that, and depending on the success of the programme, the position could move to being full time post.

The costings based on currently agreed authority percentages are shown as below:

Resource	Annual Resource Charge	Term
IT Training Specialist	£42,000	Two Years

Authority	Percentage Contribution	Annual Resource Charge
Exeter City Council	35.93%	£15,091.60
East Devon District Council	36.692%	£15,411.64
Teignbridge District Council	27.372%	£11,496.74

Please Note : the above pricing is based upon the provision of one FTE, it is not intended that this resource will address all IT training requirements, and should it be deemed necessary Strata would propose bringing in additional full time or part time training resource as and when required and based upon identified demand.

Summary

Strata believe that the introduction of a roving IT training resource will enable authorities to deliver a much more professional approach to IT, enabling skills shortages to be identified and addressed.

Using the shared cost model is a very effective way of bringing in a training resource without one single authority having to carry the full cost.

Using the existing defined processes for recruitment, Strata believe that identifying and shortlisting suitable candidates for this role would not be a major challenge, and should it be agreed that budget can be allocated to this post, Strata would look to have suitable resource in place and operational by 1st Sept 2018.
