REPORT TO Strata Joint Executive Committee
Date of Meeting: 3 Feb 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 and a review of a technology decision making process.

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 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 JEC meeting).
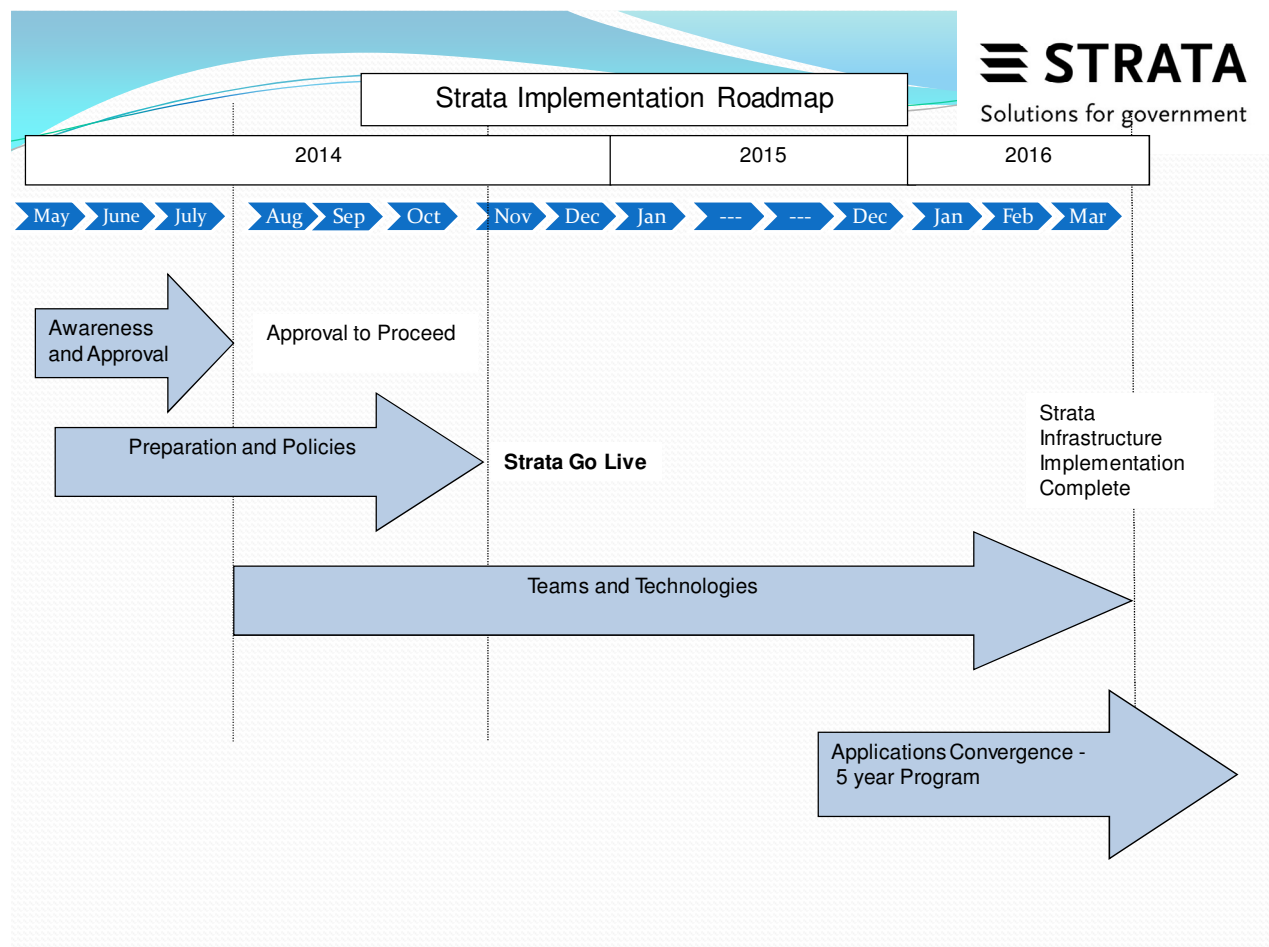The high level plan is illustrated by fig 1 and fig 2

Fig 1 High level plan

Summary
Implementation so far has produced a few surprises and a few issues. Most of these are being dealt with but some will need JEC guidance. The highlights are:
- Strata went live on Nov 1 as planned – all staff TUPE to Strata; agreed budgets transferred.

	2014						2015												2016		
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Strata implementation agreed ...	X																				
Governance arrangements	X	X	X	X																	
Agree constitution; scrutiny; governance				X																	
Agree Board of Strata				X																	
Transfer budgets to Strata					X																
Obtain asset lists for h/w and s/w																					
Clean up files in Councils to minimise transfer	X	X	X	X																	
Asset lists; contract list clean up	X	X	X	X																	
Appoint interim to Strata - share costs	X																				
Create common IT policies	X	X	X	X	X	X															
Write JDs;get mgt jobs JE	X	X	X																		
Create HR policies; T&Cs	X	X	X	X	X	X															
Create Strata finance and operating policies	X	X	X	X																	
Create payroll		X	X	X	X																
Create finance system		X	X	X	X																
TUPE staff					X	X															
Recruit and appoint Strata managers and key roles				X	X																
Develop structure for all staff								X	X	X	X										
Begin procurement processes	X	X	X	X	X	X	X														
Hire BAU support and project manager			X	X	X																
Build data centres facilities					X	X	X														

Task	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Buy and Install new production computers					X	X	X	X	X	X									
Buy and Install DR equipment						X	X	X	X	X									
Implement Ad and Exchange design							X	X	X	X	X	X							
Order and install WAN and network in place					X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
Order and install Lync systems							X	X	X	X	X								
Design, buy and install security systems		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Implement common helpdesk system and process	X	X	X	X	X	X													
Single Telecomms contract and transfer to SIP					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Systems transfer to VDI																			
Virtualise and test applications					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
develop golden VDI images								X	X	X	X	X	X						
Transfer East Devon to VDI												X	X	X	X				
Transfer Exeter to VDI													X	X	X	X			
Transfer Teignbridge to VMWare and VDI															X	X	X	X	x

Fig 2 First level of plan detail

- 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 most of Strata management team recruited and in post (Compliance and Security Manager post was offered, initially accepted, but later turned down. External recruitment since carried out and likely to fill post in early February).

- 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 4 weeks for this part of the project.

- The main infrastructure procurements have so far come in close to or under the Business Case budgets and are on schedule.

- 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 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;

  o Within Capital, the budget represents the initial implementation plan, which was set out in the Business Plan. The only expenditure to date is in respect of the software for the data centre although other orders have been placed.

- **Budget 2015-16**
  o The budget for 2015-16 is currently being finalised and final figures are awaited from the three owner Councils, before Strata's budget can be set.

Main Issue requiring guidance from JEC
One of the dependencies to achieving the Strata business case is Councils agreeing to use common technology and common business applications. Without this convergence many of the benefits will fall short of expectations, especially the objective to increase capacity for transformation through IT.
At the time of Strata going live, Exeter approved a channel shift business case which included the procurement of new technology for a "customer portal" and a "dial-by-voice" system. This technology does not currently exist amongst the three Councils.
In an ideal world the three Councils would have a common strategy and Strata would create common projects to deliver the strategy. In reality each Council is in a different place at present and Strata does not want to hold up Exeter's business case. However, Strata has a duty to ensure that any new technology is suitable for use across all three Councils.
The proposal is that Strata will work with Exeter as the lead Council on the "customer portal" and "dial-by-voice" technologies. Strata will recommend the technologies that will meet the needs of the business case taking into consideration existing and planned investments across the partnership.
Whatever technology platforms emerge will be considered as the common technology platform for all

Main objectives for the next period
The Strata organisation is in the early days of developing it's operating processes, creating it's 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 much 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 at the very start.

- Developing a process to enable Application Convergence decisions by the JEC. These could be:

- 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

12. Are there any other options?

N/A

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