STRATA – JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (JSC)

DATE: 23 July 2015

**REPORT OF:** Chris Powell, Chief operating Officer, Strata.

SUBJECT: Progress report on Strata Implementation Plan

1. **PURPOSE of the Report**
   To advise the JSC of the progress that Strata has made in the Implementation Plan

2. **RECOMMENDATION**
   That the JSC note the content of the report.

3. **Is this a Key Decision?**
   No

4. **Is this an Executive/Cabinet or Council Function?**
   No

5. **What are the resource implications including non financial resources?**
   All included within the Strata business case.

6. **What are the legal aspects?**
   None

7 Report details

Progress on Implementation of Strata – July 2015

7.1   IT Infrastructure
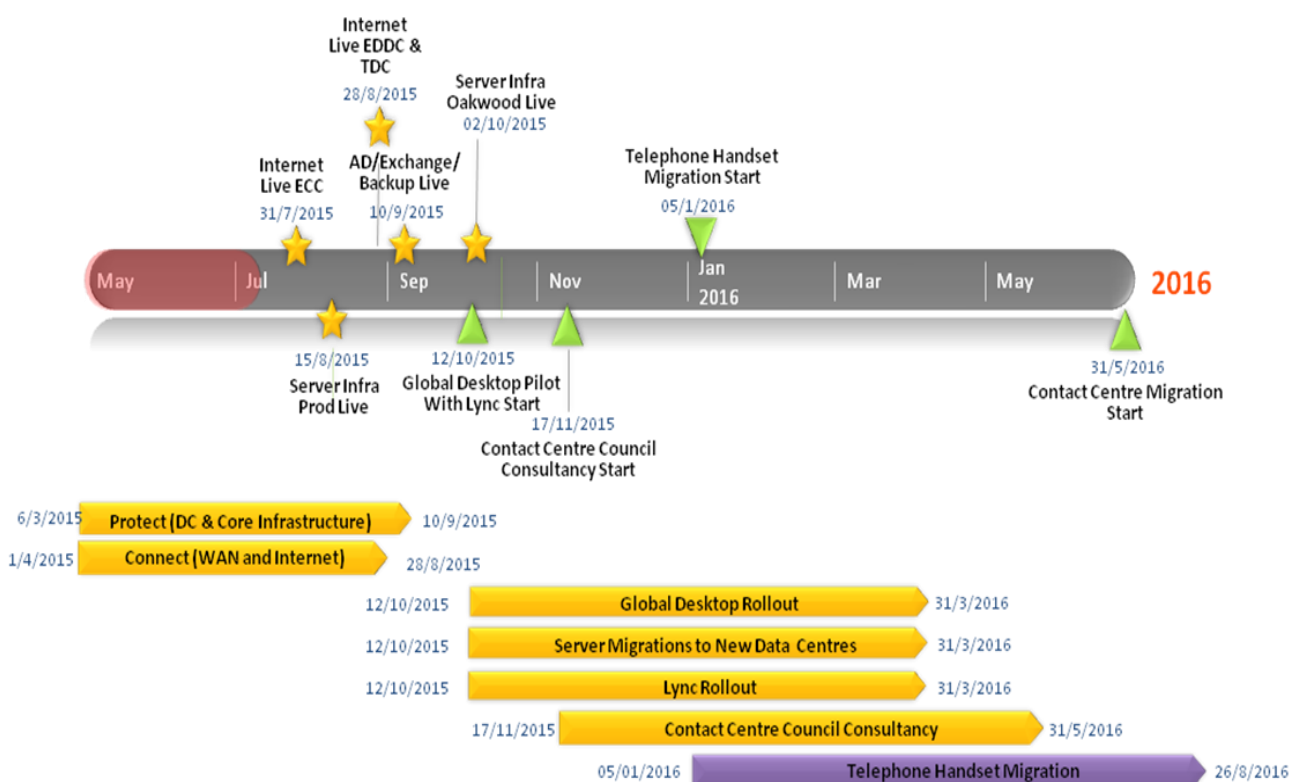
Server Infrastructure – phase 1 server build is complete. Phase 2, the VDI infrastructure, is on target and nearly complete (this is the Global desktop backend). Remaining tasks include designing the equipment ready for mobile working solutions.

Data Backup – new backup hardware is to be installed on 13th July. The Strata Security team have made good progress in designing the detailed backup processes with Implementation planned for mid August.

Server Migration – the application support team are gathering requirements for migration to the new servers. The ECC servers are planned to migrate in Oct to the new Domain, with the option at that point to start replicating to the Oakwood house site for resilience.

Project "Connect" – the joining of all the council's networks.

We have been testing the new 400mb internet link at the Civic Centre. There were some complications around the installation of firewalls but this issue has been resolved. However, we have just been informed by Virgin that there is a delay with delivery of some of their equipment which means that Strata will not be able to deliver the new internet link to East Devon or Teignbridge until September (although Exeter are still on target to connect in July).

Virgin have been reminded that if they miss the target date of Aug 11th date for installation penalties will be incurred.

The Strata Data centres and the existing ECC network have now been connected. This means it is now possible for Strata staff, using the ECC computers, to manage and configure the new Strata data centres.

Project "Global Desktop" – single user desktop platform

VDI desktop - our infrastructure team are fine tuning version 1 of the Global Desktop. On the 20th July Strata will be having an internal review of the desktop with all Strata staff. This is a chance to take stock of what has been designed so far to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Following this we expect about 2 months of further testing both within Strata and with our customers business.

Application Packaging – during this last period the speed at which software packages are now being completed, in one form or other, has increased significantly and we are nearly back on track.

Staff based at EDDC are involved in packaging ECC applications which are common to both councils and this has speeded up the process. . As of July 6th 167 applications had been completed with 34 left to go.

Willing customers are being used to test these packaged versions of their software made available for them to use on their own desktops. Feedback so far has been good.

Project "Unified Comms" – comprising a single email system, a single telephony solution and a single "contact centre" system.

Exchange – the first user service to be built on the new infrastructure. This is the email backend and is on target to start on 22nd July, elapsing over 6 weeks. Once complete, a plan will be created for migrating Members as simply as possible from their existing O365 onto the new O365 set up.

***Skype for Business* –**servers are on target to be built and tested by mid August with the supplier.

Telephony – a single supplier has been selected to deliver the telephony contract- Virgin Media Business. This will reduce the complexity of the support of the incoming phone lines and set up the foundations for migration to the digital phone system..

Contact Centre system – Strata will enter into consultation with customers for selection of the new system around Nov 2015.

7.2 Organisation

The planned redundancies have been processed. One person is being retained on contract until December to assist with the telecoms work. The target cost savings for this part of the Business Plan have been achieved.

Strata management with HR and union support are now working on job descriptions for all posts to enable Strata contracts to be offered to staff.

Many of the project and support processes have already been standardised enabling a common set of references and measures to be used. A common Information security Policy is in progress.

The first set of end of year financial accounts has been drafted.

7.3 Application Convergence and Contract Novation

Contract Novation – the transfer of contracts from councils to Strata has been slower than expected with some negotiations proving difficult due to not knowing, in many cases, if the products in question will be required for the future. Also, the timing of contract changes is tending to take place towards the end of 2015 and into 2016.

The latest successes have been a reduction of £23K a year for the finance system support and £10.5K for Civica products.

Application Convergence – changing to common applications was always going to be the hardest nut to crack.   Discussions are in progress in several areas where circumstances have prompted an early review of the applications in use across the three councils, including:
- Website design tool…a "free" product called Umbraco could be employed to deliver a common web design for the three partners (and potentially an intranet design)
- Potential for a common planning system is close to a decision
- In-cab technology for waste and recycling operations
- HR , payroll and Time and attendance systems.

8 DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION (CONFIRMATION OF DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL-IN)

The recommendation is to note the report and so there is no decision to call-in.