

STRATA - JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present:

Councillors Twiss (Chairman), Atkinson, Lyons, Nuttall, Pierce and Swain

Members Attendance:

Councillor Dewhirst

Apologies:

Councillors Clarence, Millar and Eleanor Rylance

Officers in Attendance:

Laurence Whitlock, Strata IT Director

David Hodgson, Strata Service Director

David Sercombe, Head of Business Systems & Business Intelligence

Robin Barlow, Head of Security & Compliance

Martin Millmow, Head of Document Centres

Paul Nicholls, Strata Board Director

Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer

12. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 May, 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

14. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER PROCEDURAL RULES

None.

15. QUESTION FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCILS UNDER PROCEDURE RULES

None.

16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED That, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for Minutes 19 -23 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

17. IT DIRECTORS REPORT- STRATA PERFORMANCE REPORT COVERING PERIOD MAY TO END JULY 2019

The Strata IT Director presented the report on the last four months of activity, the aim being to provide background to the core areas of specialisation within Strata and identifying key activities, successes and areas for improvement. 2019 was proving to be a very productive and successful time for Strata.

The successes include: a high level of end user satisfaction, Global Desktop and Global Comms platform having excellent levels of system availability; the migration of staff for Agile working at Exeter City Council is progressing well and initial feedback is very good; the Business Systems team are leading on the discovery phase / requirements gathering phase of the new Finance and Income Management system across the three authorities; the Service Desk team continue to provide an exemplary service; the Infrastructure team have been working with the Supplier Manager to look into the costs of mobile devices and networking. We have already been able to negotiate a £6k per annum saving from Vodafone; the Security and Compliance have deployed 'Mimecast' the new content and email filtering system; the dedicated IT trainer is proving invaluable in assisting Members with their migration to ipads, and is now leading on Climate Change as Strata's Champion; and Strata staff are excelling in supporting the ever growing IT demands and needs of the three authorities.

It was agreed that the Customer Services Plan and glossary of terms be circulated to the Committee.

RESOLVED - The report be received and noted.

18. FINANCE REPORT

The Strata Director (Finance) referred to the report circulated with the agenda and advised on the financial position of Strata at the end of the first quarter of 2019-20. Strata had a budget of £6.531 million to run the IT Services in 2019/20 along with funding for various capital projects. An account is also maintained for additional purchases (outside of the existing Strata contract) throughout the year. These are invoiced to each Council based on actual purchases made.

Strata is projected to deliver £812,900 of revenue savings in 2019-20, a projected shortfall currently of around £41,000. The key variations were set out in the report. Strata is working on further opportunities to deliver the extra £40,000, by renegotiating mobile phone contracts. The target for the Company is to deliver the additional shortfall by the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED - The report is noted.

19. COMMERCIALISATION

Consideration was given to the report circulated with the agenda in relation to commercial opportunities.

RECOMMENDED - The recommendation as detailed at page 14 of the report be approved.

20. PROJECT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Committee considered the report circulated with the agenda which detailed a framework to deliver successful Strata projects. Not all aspects of the framework would be applicable to all projects, and the level of governance would also vary between projects.

RECOMMENDED - The three authorities formally adopt the Strata Project Management framework as set out in the report, and that this framework is followed by the authorities and Strata for all future ICT projects.

21. PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The IT Director referred to the report circulated with the agenda, on the creation of a single Strata Project Management Office (PMO) to manage all projects, and to facilitate IT Training, Supplier Management and Customer Advocacy.

RECOMMENDED - The PMO be supported.

22. ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF STRATA FIRMSTEP RESOURCE TO SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF THE THREE AUTHORITIES

Consideration was given to the report circulated with the agenda which outlined options for the continuation of resources for the One Teignbridge Firmstep project.

RECOMMENDED Option B as detailed at page 12 of the report be agreed by all three authorities. Should no option be agreed, an alternative, acceptable option be prepared by each authority to instruct Strata how to proceed.

23. GOVERNANCE

The IT Director reported on proposals to streamline the Strata governance process, with the formation of an IT Steering Board, whilst maintaining the Executive and Scrutiny democratic process.

RECOMMENDED - The proposals be approved.

COUNCILLOR P TWISS
Chairman