

## **STRATA JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Monday 28 January 2019

### Present:-

Councillor Peter Edwards (Chair)  
Councillors Christophers and Thomas  
Managing Director Teignbridge District Council, Chief Executive Exeter City Council, and  
Chief Executive East Devon District Council

Councillor Clarence (in attendance for Minute 4).

### Also Present

Strata IT Director, Director with Responsibility for Finance, Strategic Lead Finance (East Devon District Council) Head of Security and Compliance, Head of Infrastructure and Support, Head of Business Systems and Democratic Services Officer (SLS)

### 1 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28 September 2018 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

### 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made.

### 3 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER PROCEDURAL RULES**

None.

### 4 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCILS UNDER PROCEDURAL RULES**

The following question was put by Councillor Clarence in relation to IT support.-

Following the Full Council at Teignbridge District Council meeting on 14 January, it was apparent that issuing all TDC Members with a tablet (Apple iPad) after the May 2019 elections was probably not the only IT solution that Members felt would enable them to perform their role as a Councillor. With that in mind do the TDC Executive still wish to pursue this idea or would it simply be better to allow members to function in a number of different ways with those, such as myself, using a laptop, receiving remote help by a member of Strata, with a Member's permission, with a Strata officer taking command of a members laptop remotely and showing him/her what to do? The rationale being a very cost effective way to receive the necessary IT help to function as a councillor.

Councillor Christophers thanked Councillor Clarence for the question, as colleagues at Teignbridge District Council had been working more closely with Strata and it was acknowledged that each of the District Authorities were all at different stages of their convergence journey.

A copy of the question and reply are appended to the Minutes.

## **STRATA IT DIRECTOR'S REPORT - OVERVIEW OF STRATA PERFORMANCE - PERIOD OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2018**

The Strata IT Director presented the report on the last five 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. The report covered Financial Management, Business Change Requests (BCR's) and Projects, Service Desk, Global Desktop Environment and main ongoing corporate projects. Key performance indicators were also provided covering incidents, service requirements, security, problems, and maintenance and business change requests.

He highlighted the following key areas:-

- they were on track to deliver the anticipated savings in excess of £382,000, overachieving against the target by approximately £110,000;
- Strata had nearly completed the City Council's Global Communications roll out to staff, at Exeter City Council and also East Devon District Councils. The project team would commence the roll out at Teignbridge District Council in March 2019;
- an investment in the global desktop had continued with a drive to look at user's email retention to improve the performance of the Outlook application;
- following a successful recruitment, a data analyst has been appointed, one task being to build a corporate dashboard for all three authorities;
- the East Devon new office fit out was on-target with over 200 staff already in place and were all connected to the IT. This had been a huge task and was the result of a phenomenal effort by all concerned;
- the One Teignbridge project had delivered real value with Teignbridge delivering a single sign-on solution to improve the resident's experience online with the authority;
- Modern.Gov was being rolled out to East Devon and Teignbridge Councillors and discussions were underway as to how best the application was delivered and accessed via Councillors whether via iPads or via existing Councillor owned devices;
- Strata was supporting the EX1 project through Environmental Health at Exeter;
- protecting the three authorities from the dangers from cyberattacks continued to be a high priority;
- the Public Services Network accreditation had been achieved for the next 12 months across all three authorities;
- the Annual Strata Conference had been held at the RAMM on 7 December 2018; and
- Strata had applied for Investors in People accreditation and they were currently awaiting the outcome of the process which had included staff interviews. He thanked Members of the Board for their support.

The Strata IT Director and Business Systems Team Lead also updated Members on progress with real time reporting on Business Change Requests (BCR) project status and real time reporting of incidents and problems. They would continue to work on the out of hour's strategy to ensure that any periods of down time were further minimised.

Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 14 January 2019 and its comments were reported.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

6

## URL STRATA@4 UPDATE

The Strata Director had been advised that Tim Gibson, an independent journalist, consultant and academic was invited to provide an independent view of the Strata story so far.

Members were encouraged to study Strata@4, to be found on the Strata web site at: <http://strata.solutions/strata@4/>.

7

## 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 during consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I, Schedule 12A of the Act.

8

## STRATA BUDGETING MONITORING QUARTER 3: 2018/19

The Director responsible for Finance reported that Strata had been given a total of £6,504,000 to run the IT Services in 2018/19 along with funding for various capital projects. The Strata budget was on track to deliver around £505,000 of revenue savings for the three Councils in 2018/19. After five months, the Board was projecting savings of £504,736 against the total original target of £381,960.

The report also set out variations in the capital budget.

Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 14 January 2019 and its comments were reported.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

9

## STRATA BUSINESS PLAN OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION

The Strata IT Director presented a draft of the new Strata Business Plan for 2019/20 and beyond, entitled 'The Agent for Change' which was currently being considered by client leads and Chief Executives/Managing Directors of each of the three authorities for review and comment. He sought Member's views and hoped that each of the authorities would be able to offer a complete or partial sign off. The new Business Plan was linked to Strata's overall aim of becoming more customer focused in 2019 to enable the partner authorities to define their Business and IT strategies, including the development of the transformational agenda for each authority and delivery of a cost effective, flexible and reliable modern IT platform with the infrastructure and resources to support these strategies. The Business Plan cycle also included a suggested governance model (subject to discussion) proposed adoption of a funding model and revised savings profile. Detail of the projected finance model had been supplied to the respective finance teams of each Authority. The Strata IT Director responded to a question from Councillor Thomas on the financial base used for savings over the next five years.

The Managing Director Teignbridge District Council indicated that the Authority wished to undergo a fundamental change in its infrastructure capability to enhance access across all services. He reiterated the need to ensure that the IT service met the future requirements of Teignbridge District Council during a significant period of change in its organisational arrangements. He confirmed that whilst they would continue on the convergence journey, he suggested it may be at a slightly different pace. Members agreed that there were many advantages to the convergence

approach with increased compatibility and ability to pick up and run a proper business within the three authorities. The Chief Executive Exeter City Council said that he understood the need to ensure that each authority carried out an exercise to satisfy themselves that the timeline of the convergence approach was appropriate for them. He added that the previous suggestion of a non-Executive Director, acting as a critical friend would be beneficial to the Board.

The Strata IT Director thanked Members for congratulating Strata for its excellent work, and achievements to deliver an innovative and quality service, within a price framework which met the requirements of the constituent Authorities.

Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 14 January 2019 and its comments were reported. Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee in principle supported the draft Business Plan including the capital requirements set out in the report and recommended that the Strata Joint Executive Committee approve the Plan for consideration by the three Councils.

It was agreed that the Leaders and Chief Executive of all three Authorities meet to discuss the convergence specification and timetable further as part of continual review.

10

#### **COUNCILLOR EDWARDS**

Members thanked Councillor Edwards for his service to the Strata Management Board, and wished him well in his forthcoming retirement as Leader and Member of Exeter City Council.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.45 pm)

Chair

## **QUESTION RECEIVED for Strata Executive Committee 28 January 2019**

### **Question Received from Councillor Chris Clarence Teignbridge District Council**

Following the Full Council at Teignbridge District Council meeting on 14 January, it was apparent that issuing all TDC members with a tablet after the May 2019 elections may not be the best IT solution to enable Members to function as a Councillor. With that in mind do the TDC Executive still wish to pursue this idea or would it simply be better to allow Members to function in a number of different ways with those, such as myself, using a laptop, receiving remote help by a member of Strata, with a members authority, with a Strata officer taking command of a members laptop remotely and showing him/her what to do? The rationale being a very cost effective way to receive the necessary IT help to function as a councillor.

The Strata Director also sent an email to Councillor Clarence with the detail set out below, and also provided a response at the meeting and in particular in relation to his query on receiving 'remote assistance'. The Head of Infrastructure and Support would investigate that further and seek the views of the team. A separate response would be made to the Councillor.

#### **Councillor IT Support**

As previously outlined at the Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting in September, Strata was able to support Councillor IT on a reasonable efforts basis. Any IT incident (an issue with an element of IT) needs to be raised via the Strata Service Desk (01626 215222). Once raised, an incident will be logged on the Service Desk system and an incident number allocated. The incident will then be passed to a specialist for investigation / resolution / guidance / etc.

There is in place a document entitled the Customer Service Plan, which provides details of the service, how to raise calls, how to escalate calls and how to raise a complaint. There are process flows to show how a call (incident) will be processed.

Strata handle approximately. 1600 calls / incidents / requests for service via the service desk per month at the current time.

There is also in place as part of the Strata Support Service, a 24/7/365 service which enables officers (and potentially councillors) to call Strata anytime night or day if an urgent / emergency situation should arise – with a member of Strata 1<sup>st</sup> line and 2<sup>nd</sup> line staff on call outside of normal office hours (including weekends and bank holidays).

#### **Councillor IT Training**

As discussed at the Joint Strategy Committee / Joint Strata Executive Committee in September 2018, Strata have proposed the introduction of an IT trainer to support both Officers and Councillors across the three partner authorities to boost IT training across all three authorities. A recruitment process is under way. The aim is to provide a multi-faceted approach to IT training, with classroom training, round table training, desk side training, workshops, top tips, 1 2 1's, etc. – it is expected that councillors will also be able to access the training which will be able to be booked via the Strata service desk.

The Strata team are exemplars of a high quality IT service, with highly dedicated staff working to meet the ever increasing demands of the three partner authorities. The IT

landscape is for ever changing and more and more council services are now delivered over IT. This is unlikely to decrease for the foreseeable future. The Strata team are always focussed on doing their best to keep IT systems functioning, whilst protecting the authorities from the ever present dangers of the modern cyber world.

An offer was also made for a 1-2-1 meeting to offer to answer Councillor Clarence any further questions he may have.

Councillor Clarence was also sent a copy of the Strata Customer Services Plan.