

STRATA - JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 13 JANUARY 2020

Present:

Councillors Twiss (Chairman), Clarence, Millar, Nuttall and Swain

Members in Attendance: Councillors Dewhurst

Apologies:

Councillors Atkinson, Lyons, Rylance, Sparkes

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Officers in Attendance:

Paul Nicholls, Strata Board Director

Simon Davey, Strata Board Director

David Hodgson, Strata Service Director

Laurence Whitlock, Strata IT Director

Robin Barlow, Head of Security & Compliance

Martin Millmow, Head of Document Centres

David Sercombe, Head of Business Systems & Business Intelligence

Adrian Smith, Head of Infrastructure & Support

Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September, 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER PROCEDURAL RULES

None.

4. QUESTION FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCILS UNDER PROCEDURE RULES

None.

5. STRATA IT DIRECTOR & MANAGER REPORT -1 AUGUST TO 31 DECEMBER 2019

The Strata IT Director referred to the report circulated with the agenda 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 had been a very productive and successful time for Strata, despite a challenging five year period to get to the current successful position.

The successes included: savings of £110,000 over the three authorities as a result of renegotiating the mobile phone contract; the replacement of the previous 20 year telephony platform with a new platform across the three authorities, enabling agile working and employees working anytime, anyplace, anywhere, and revolutionising the service to the end user; excellent support from the service desk; the dedicated IT trainer was proving invaluable meeting the proven need for IT training across the three authorities in assisting Members with ongoing iPad training, and training for employees; and the consolidation of Exeter staff into one building.

In relation to Climate Change the use of iPads by Councillors had significantly reduced print costs; corporate print paper costs had decreased by utilising a thinner print paper but which did not affect print quality; the replacement of handsets to headsets for skype for business have made a £2,500 energy saving.

Further project successes included: 50% of East Devon Councillors have been migrated to Microsoft O365 platform, providing more functionality on the assigned portable devices (iPads). Teignbridge Councillors have deferred the matter for a few months to consider the financial benefits; the re-certification to the annual PSN CoCo ahead of target for all three authorities.

Future projects included the roll out of cyber awareness training (DoJo) to officers and councillors and cyber accreditation (Cyber Essentials Plus); windows 10 migration rollout, to ensure all three authorities remain supported; and all three authorities collaboratively working more efficiently and effectively. Future challenges included the renegotiation of the Microsoft licence which had been factored into the Business Plan, although this is only an estimate of what the renewal costs might be.

Predicted savings were likely to be in the region of £830,000 by the end of the financial year, across the three authorities. £500,000 was returned to the councils at the beginning of the financial year – see finance report below.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

6. STRATA FINANCE REPORT

The Strata Director (Finance) referred to the budget monitoring November 2019/20 report circulated with the agenda. The Company had been given a total of £6.097 million to run the IT Services in 2019/20 along with funding for various capital projects. The Company also maintains an account for additional purchases throughout the year, which was invoiced to each Council based on actual purchases made.

Although savings of £310,000 were delivered, £210,000 was used for specific service improvements, as agreed by the three Councils.

The report detailed the projected £323,759 of revenue savings in 2019-20. The projected 2020-21 savings of £500,000 would be provided to the authorities at the beginning of the financial year, therefore Strata was on track to deliver the savings set out in the business plan. This was after taking into account the approved £50,000 expenditure on exploring commercialisation. The report also detailed key financial variations, the savings of £100,000 on renegotiating the mobile phone contract, and cost of additional equipment ordered by each authority.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

7. STRATA 2020 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

The Business Plan was being considered by all three authorities, and to be signed off by the Joint Executive. The plan is based around building on the 'solid foundations' that have been created over the last five years. With a flexible, stable and scalable IT environment, supported by skilled resource and sound processes, the authorities can now look to further exploit the environment for organisational benefit.

RESOLVED - the report be noted.

8. STRATA GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The Chairman referred to the report circulated with the agenda. Further to consideration of this matter at the last meeting, an updated version of the Governance paper was created and circulated. The paper would be discussed between the three Council Leaders, the Chief Executives of ECC and EDDC and the Managing Director of TDC. Any agreement to the proposed changes in the Strata Governance model, would be implemented from 1 April, 2020.

RESOLVED - the report be noted.

9. STRATA COMMERCIALISATION UPDATE

The Strata Director updated Members on the potential for the commercialisation of a number of Strata services. A consultant had been engaged to undertake the discovery phase, the scope of which was set out in the report. A further report would be presented to Members on the results of the discovery phase in due course.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

10. ENTERPRISE CONTENT MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Strata Director updated Members on the development of a single storage and retrieval of content (including documents, emails, spreadsheets, etc) for all three authorities, which were currently stored in multiple locations. It was envisaged that the findings of the investigatory work would be reported to Members in March 2020.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

11. LOCAL DIGITAL DECLARATION PROJECT

The Chairman referred to the report circulated with the agenda, which provided an update on the discovery phase which was being funded by £71,000 successful bid to MHCLG as part of the Governments Local Digital Declaration Initiative. The three authorities were working in partnership with Sedgemoor, Basildon and Brentwood on the discovery phase. The Government Digital Service GDS would consider the findings of the discovery phase in determining whether to award additional funding for the next phase of the project.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

CLLR P TWISS
Chairman