



Solutions for government

## STRATA - JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 19 July 2021

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: Rennes Room, Exeter City Council, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1JN

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business.

If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Team Leader [sarah.selway@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.selway@teignbridge.gov.uk).

### *Membership -*

Councillors Arnott, Dewhirst and Pearson

### *Non-Voting Members -*

K Hassan, P Shears, M Williams

## Agenda

### **Part I: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public present**

#### **1 Apologies for absence**

#### **2 Election of Chair 2021/2022**

Based on the existing annual rotational protocol for the position of Chair, the Chair will be the Exeter City Council representative.

Previous Chairs were Cllr Arnott - East Devon District Council 2020/21 and Cllr Dewhirst – Teignbridge District Council 2019/2020.

#### **3 Minutes**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021.

(Pages 3  
- 6)

#### **4 Declarations of Interest**

## 5 **Questions from the Public Under Procedural Rules**

A period of up to 15 minutes will be set aside to deal with questions to the Committee from members of the public.

Each individual will be restricted to speaking for a total of 3 minutes.

*Where a question does not relate to an agenda item details of questions should be notified to the Proper Officer of the Relevant Council at least two working days prior to the meeting.*

## 6 **Question from Members of the Councils under Procedure Rules**

To receive questions from Members of the Councils.

*Where a question does not relate to an agenda item details of questions should be notified to the Proper Officer of the Relevant Council at least two working days prior to the meeting.*

- |    |  |                   |
|----|--|-------------------|
| 7  | <b>Strata Performance Report - Strata IT Director</b>                                  | (Pages 7 - 44)    |
| 8  | <b>Strata Finance Report, budget monitoring at May 2021/22-Strata Finance Director</b> | (Pages 45 - 50)   |
| 9  | <b>Strata Finance Report budget monitoring outturn 2021/22 Strata Finance Director</b> | (Pages 51 - 84)   |
| 10 | <b>East Devon District Council and Exeter City Council IT Survey Feedback</b>          | (Pages 85 - 110)  |
| 11 | <b>Councillor IT User Group Discussion Document</b>                                    | (Pages 111 - 116) |

If you would like this information in another format, please telephone 01626 361101 or e-mail [info@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:info@teignbridge.gov.uk)

## **STRATA - JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY, 11 JANUARY 2021**

Present:

Councillors Atkinson (Chair), King, Twiss, Hookway, Sparkes, Oliver, Clarence and Nuttall

Members Attendance:

Councillors Wrigley, Dewhirst and Pearson

Apologies:

Councillor Orme

Officers in Attendance:

Laurence Whitlock, Strata IT Director

Paul Nicholls, Strata Board Director

Simon Davey, Strata Board Director

David Hodgson, Strata Finance Director

Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

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

### **1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2020 were approved as a correct record and authorised to be signed at the earliest convenience.

In regard to the last sentence of Minute 16, it was noted the matter was included in the *Strata Business Plan 2020/21 and Beyond*, agendas item 9.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

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

None.

### **4. IT DIRECTOR'S AND MANAGER'S REPORT AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2020**

The Strata IT Director referred to the report circulated with the agenda. Resources had continued to focus on ensuring a stable IT environment during the current

Covid situation for the delivery of the service, and support to officers and Members in an exemplary manner. Demand on the service had increased significantly since Covid and resources had focused on support for agile working.

Successes included: assisting the Council produce online forms through the Firmstep platform for the Business Support Grants, enabling expedient process and payment to those in need, training sessions for staff and Members; the continued reduction of printing volumes; Strata service savings in excess of £1m to be refunded to all three authorities, and Strata staffs' annual conference being held remotely with the contribution of staffs' own money to the Alzheimer's society, Honiton Food Bank, and Children's Hospice South West charities.

In addition project work, of which there were currently 49, included the *Strata Business Plan 20/21 and Beyond* progression; Windows 10 migration, agile working, stability of Global Desktop and Global Comms platforms, renewal of both the Microsoft and VMWare licence agreements, and partnership work with Exeter University on climate change. This would assess Strata's environment so that Strata could support the three authorities in meeting their Climate Change aspirations.

Challenges included the increased demand on the service as a result of Covid, and consequently not progressing planned projects as well as expected.

RESOLVED

The report be received and noted.

## 5. **FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT NOVEMBER 2020**

The committee referred to the Strata Budget Monitoring report which detailed the financial position as at 30 November 2020.

The Company has been given a total of £6.60 million to run the IT Services in 2020/21 along with funding for various capital projects. The Company also maintained an account for additional purchases throughout the year, which was invoiced to each Council based on actual purchases made.

Key variations from the revenue and capital budgets were detailed which resulted in savings of £500,000 and a further £320,000 and £282,000 identified to assist in the current Covid situation and the significant strain for all three authorities

This had been achieved with the addition of two service desk posts to address the increased demand on the service.

RESOLVED

The report be received and noted

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

**RECOMMENDED** 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 item on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

## **7. QUESTION FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCILS UNDER PROCEDURE RULES**

Councillor Clarence asked a question which was circulated to the Committee with the answer. The question and answer which is appended was noted.

The Chair concluded that the question submitted by Councillor Clarence had provided a worthwhile scrutiny exercise into Strata's value for money efficiency and effectiveness.

*At this juncture councillors Oliver and Twiss left the meeting.*

## **8. STRATA BUSINESS PLAN 2020/21 AND BEYOND**

The IT Director referred to the draft Business Plan as circulated with the agenda, and the Committee considered the recommendations at page 3 of the Plan.

The draft Plan recognised the challenging time since Covid, both for Strata and the three authorities in adapting to the change. The authorities needed Strata to support them in an 'agile' way, the community needed to be able to access council services on line, businesses unable to operate needed access to funds, democracy needed to be carried out in a virtual world and managers needed to ensure that authority services could continue to operate using widely dispersed resources.

Strata reacted confidently to the challenge proving that it could react and deal successfully to change, and has fared better than a large number of private and public organisations. Strata had and was continuing to prove the service was stronger, more adaptable, and more flexible. Along with this the resulting realisation that the authorities were probably more dependent on IT and the value it brings than previously.

The draft Plan set out the 'vision and plan' for the next 12 months, from 1 April 2021, in order to better support the needs of the three authorities. It was developed to deliver a more 'customer focussed' approach to Strata's work, yet still delivering against the original objectives of reduced risk, reduced cost and the creation of an environment to support change.

### **RECOMMENDED**

The recommendations set out at page 3 of the *Strata Business Plan 2020/21 and Beyond* be referred to Joint Strata Executive for approval, with the exception of the two recommendations relating to governance structure. It is recommended that these need further debate by the Joint Strata Executive and the Joint Scrutiny Committee and any changes should be delayed until a more detailed review is undertaken.

Strata - Joint Scrutiny Committee (11.1.2021)

The meeting started at 1600hrs and finished at 1845hrs

CLLR Y ATKINSON  
Chairman



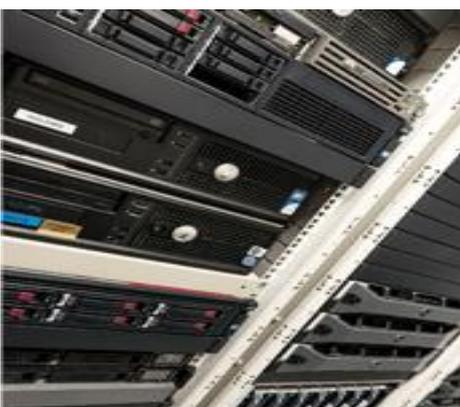
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# Strata Service Solutions Ltd.

## IT Directors Report

- Joint Scrutiny Committee – 12<sup>nd</sup> July 2021
- Joint Executive Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Date Issued: 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 v1.0



Building and delivering flexible, responsive and cost effective IT solutions and services for Local Government

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## IT Director Summary Report – *Laurence Whitlock*

With all Global Desktop users migrated onto the [Windows 10 platform](#), we are now able to commence work on optimising this new environment. Improvements will include the offloading of video for both Zoom and Teams and this should lead to a significant improvement in overall end user experience and a reduction in screen pixilation. In addition, we are deploying password synchronization, which will enable Councillors to manage their own passwords moving forward. Very much like the original Global Desktop project, the Windows 10 migration took a significant time to plan and execute, primarily as we needed

to keep the existing environment fully operational, whilst migrating users to the new environment. This was even achieved during a time of considerable challenge as a result of Covid, and therefore well done to all Strata staff involved and thanks to all officers across the three authorities for their support in making this critical project happen. It's interesting to note that as soon as we finished the Windows 10 migration, Microsoft announced that it would be being superseded by Windows 11 in 2025 !

During May 21, the support of elections impacted on the availability of Service Desk officers, however the elections from an IT perspective appeared to work well with the complex issues experienced with postal vote scanning resolved in advance of the elections.



Speaker lectern all setup and ready to go in Blackdown House

We are now seeing a return into the Council chambers of Councillors, which is as a result of a change in legislation and the need to be physically present to vote. Whilst neither ideal nor desirable, the Councillors, the authorities and Strata are working well in supporting this way of working, using technology to both physically and virtually support the meetings. At this stage we are unsure how long this way of working will continue, and we will need to remain flexible as legislation changes.

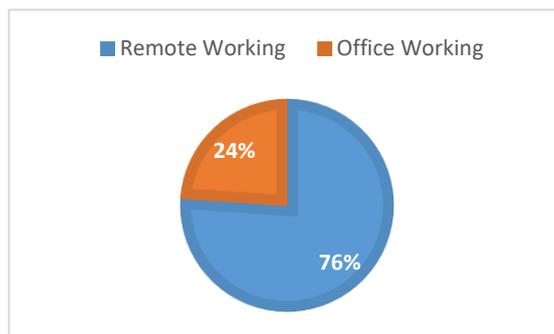
Work on the [roll out of O365](#) across the three authorities has commenced and is initially focussed on TDC. A 3<sup>rd</sup> party organisation 'Hable' have been selected to work with both TDC and Strata during this complex transformation programme. Workshops are now underway to scope the project and to identify how O365 can be used to best support the work of the authority moving forward. O365 is more than just an icon of the desktop it's a new way of working, offering, for example, far greater levels of collaboration and document management.

After months of increasing levels of demand across Strata services, we are now starting to finally see a downward trend, and the number of open Incidents and Service Requests is decreasing. This decrease is testament to the ongoing work of the Strata teams to stabilise the IT environment through what has been a period of considerable change. In addition, the completion of the Windows 10 project has freed up resource to return to Service Desk work. A corresponding rise in [Customer Satisfaction scores](#) has also occurred in May, again reflective of the additional resource that has been available to support the 'day to day' operation of the Service Desk and Support teams.

The programme to replace all [Windows 2008 servers](#) is nearly complete, this will enable us to gain PSN accreditation for a further 12 month period. This has been a long and extended piece of work primarily due to Covid

and resource constraints as a result of Strata specialists being required to work on authority priority projects, such as 'Agile', Leisure and Business Grants.

Core to the delivery of IT to the authorities is the Global Desktop and Global Comms platforms. In May, the [availability of these two platforms](#) was 100%. Remote working still appears the favoured way of working for Officers, with a high percentage of staff continuing to work from home, on average circa 75% across the three authorities. Moving forward we expect a slight rise in officers returning to the office, but unless government advice changes considerably we expect remote working patterns to remain for some time to come. Strata provide a weekly snapshot to the three client leads to show the percentage of users working remotely and in the office.



The world continues to face the harsh realities of cyber-attacks, but it is encouraging to see that in America, a large proportion of the ransom demand paid as a result of the [Colonial pipeline attack](#) has been recovered and a number of criminals are now facing prosecution. However, as we move towards the new hosted O365 platform, new cyber challenges will emerge as we all work to keep our staff and systems protected. Whilst there are obvious benefits of moving applications into the Cloud, the need for extra levels of security control are essential. We would also like to encourage all authority staff to undertake the [DoJo cyber awareness](#) training. This is an invaluable tool to raise Officers' and Councillors' awareness of the ever present Cyber threat and how to spot threats and mitigate risk.

[Print and post demand](#) remains low, but is in line with 2020 demand. The restructure of the document centre print function is enabling us to meet a slight increase in demand as a result of council agendas needing to be printed for Councillors returning to the respective Chambers. Given predicted demand, we have also entered into negotiations with Ricoh to enable a printer fleet reduction as part of a contract renegotiation.

We are currently looking at the [BCR queue](#) and working with the three authorities to prioritise work. Strata resources to deliver BCR's has been significantly reduced over the last 10 months as a result of the prioritisation of Covid related activities. Hence, as the level of Covid related work reduces, more focus can be directed towards clearing prioritised BCR's and [progressing projects](#).

[IT Training services](#) are being widely used by all three authorities and drop in sessions are proving very successful. Clive has also been assisting Councillors in accessing meetings as a result of a return to the Chambers.

The 20/21 Strata accounts have been successfully closed and signed off by Francis Clark and the Strata Board of Directors, which has confirmed the savings of approximately £1.05m for 20/21.

Should you have any questions about this report or the service that Strata delivers, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards

*L.W. Whitlock*

Laurence Whitlock

IT Director – 07583 014926

## Key Projects Completed 2021

Over the last six months we have completed a number of projects, these include:

Project Title	ECC	EDDC	TDC
Windows 10 migration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elections	Yes	Yes	Yes
TDC Leisure Website (Q4 2020)	No	No	Yes
Exeter Leisure brought in house (Q4 2020)	Yes	No	No
Website Accessibility (Q4 2020\ Q1 2021)	Yes	Yes	Yes
ECC Live Better & Liveable Exeter websites	Yes	No	No
Hybrid Mail	No	Yes	No
Return to Council Chamber for meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time and Attendance (awaiting signoff)	Yes	Already Live	Yes
Councillor IT Survey	Yes	Yes	No

## Strata Service Team Report

### Infrastructure & Support Team – Adrian Smith

With the main bulk of Windows 10 now complete and only the final remedial actions being undertaken or waiting on projects to complete, the service desk is switching focus to reducing the number of outstanding incidents.



Work has progressed on upgrading the VMware platform to support offloading in Microsoft teams; this will improve the call quality and video from within Teams. This is now in test in Strata. Strata have also pushed out the underlying Zoom plugin; this again offloads the video to improve the end user experience when attending calls.

We have also now enabled the password sync between the on premise setup and the O365, which brings user passwords in line and the same on the both platforms.

### Major Projects

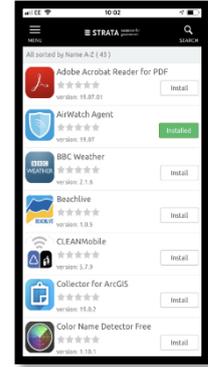
Authority	Project	Update	Status
Strata	Windows 10 upgrade for all desktops (Including Global)	Majority of Strata Staff now migrated to Windows 10	All strata staff now have access to Windows 10, nearly all scanning issues resolved, a few minor issues left to complete.
EDDC	Windows 10	Some staff have retained access to a legacy Windows 7 desktop pending application work specifically the Civica tech refresh.	Legacy Apps which still do not support Windows 10 – preventing final users migrating
ECC	Windows 10	Issue with use of M3, Wintime and legacy CCTV software on windows 10	Legacy Apps which still do not support Windows 10 – Legacy Apps which still do not support Windows 10 – Legacy Windows 7 machines will remain available.
TDC	Windows 10	Similar issues around scanning and legacy applications	Legacy Apps which still do not support Windows 10 – Legacy Windows 7 machines will remain available.
ECC	Exeter City Council – Bus Station\St Sidwells Point	Wifi equipment has been delivered and configured and will be delivered to site for installation this month. Internet circuit is waiting on ECC to complete the wayleave, Still waiting on an update on this.	
AI	Microsoft Teams	Strata are now testing the updated VMWare client, this enable audio and Video offload, this has flagged an issue in the current image with disposable disks. We are working with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party to reconfigure the base image to remove these. Once complete the updated client will be rolled out to all Staff, we will also release the full client to all staff.	
Strata	SIP Renewal	Winning Bidder now selected. This will be Gamma. Initial project call set early June to begin migration to new platform. Notice served to VMB.	
Strata	Storage review	The current Storage area network 'SAN' is end of life July 2022 having served 7 years. Strata are now starting initial work to scope its replacement. This is a capital project for this financial year. First Technical workshop undertaken with HP, similar being booked for Dell.	
Strata	MDM Replacement	The current Mobile device management 'MDM' product is linked into our VMware licensing, VMware are splitting this at the end of the year, and current proposed renewal would require an OJEU tender to run. Strata are now reviewing the options for a replacement solution.	
EDDC	ClIr IT	Strata have now completed the AD password sync. EDDC O365 ClIrs now have control of their own passwords; next step will be to migrate all ClIr to this platform as part of a wider review of ClIr IT.	
ECC	ClIr IT	Results have been presented to ECC, Strata are going to provide costings to replace a small subset of ipads as an interim measure.	Currently there is no assigned resource available to complete this project once a scope has been agreed.
TDC	ClIr IT	Meeting now taken place between Strata and TDC. Strata now looking to produce options and designs to be ratified and	Currently there is no assigned resource available to complete this project once a scope has been

		agreed with TDC. Strata have agreed to migrate a small number (5) of Cllrs to O365 as interim measure. Details of these Cllrs has not been provided yet.	agreed. Strata have proposed an August implementation.
All	Server 2008 Upgrade/Replacement	Great progress on these with all the PSN Server now complete.	Complete
All	Server 2012 Upgrade/Replacement	Currently we are addressing these ad-hoc as and when a need arises, there is no dedicated resource on this project	Currently there is no assigned resource available to complete this project once a scope
ECC	Exeter City Council – Entire Network replacement.	Hole now drilled after 18 months of waiting. DataPath scheduled to attend site to complete cabling. RAMM Museum switch swap scheduled.	Hole now drilled, work continuing
All	Broadband Estate Evaluation and possible replacement – Delayed	This project is on hold pending available resource.	On Hold
All	Leased Line & LAN Extension Evaluation –	This project is on hold pending available resource.	On Hold
All	Virtual Desktop – Disaster Recovery	No update this month - All legacy hosts have now been repurposed as DR hosts, giving us the potential to offer up to 600 desktops in a full DR scenario. Work is now being planned to configure the failover pod to enable seamless access.	
All	Civic Centre Relocation – On Hold	No update this month - Strata now have to consider the potential significant impact of Exeter City Council relocating from the Civic Centre location. This building currently houses the Strata Primary Datacentre. Strata are now reviewing all the options and implications this may have. It is also being factored into any future investment in the site.	
All	Cloud Evaluation	Review meeting now booked, for ANS & AWS to present feedback.	
All	Oakwood Datacentre – On hold	No update this month - Strata are again looking at the functionality and suitability of the Oakwood site as the secondary datacentre. Work is at an early stage with only preliminary discussion taking place. Strata are still keen to explore whether a suitable location at Forde House could be established.	
All	VMware Licensing Renewal	First meeting held with VMware and a separate meeting with UK Cloud to look at their VLS model. Work ongoing with both in advance of December renewal	
ALL	Virgin Media MPLS	No update this month - Strata have agreed a contract extension with VMB until the end of October 2021, this give us time to evaluate the requirements and procure a replacement. This extension was signed in December, also brings all 8 of our links to a single contract end date, whereby previously they were all staggered. We are now looking to agree a procurement method for its replacement with a tender due to start in April/May.	
ALL	Skype – Satellite Sites	This is now on hold due to resource availability – Two satellite offices are being picked up as part of larger office moves	On Hold
All	Microsoft FS Logic o365 Containers & App Masking	Work is now focusing on what is required to allow mailboxes to be migrated to Exchange	
All	SCCM Upgrade	No update this month Unfortunately a new update has been released to address and an issue in the last update, this upgrade is now being planned.	
ECC	MRF Office Refurb & Wi-Fi Upgrade	No update this month - The next phase of the project is to look at Wi-Fi coverage across the whole facility – awaiting site survey.	
ALL	PSN	PSN work will always be ongoing and patches and remediation is undertaken as required	
ECC	Hybrid Cllr Meetings	Following Government rulings and subsequent legal challenges meetings are to now take place in person, Strat are assisting all three authorities in their individual approaches to this. .	
ECC	Corn Exchange – Office Relocation	work still required to migrate legacy Centrex lines to SIP, this will happen once the new SIP contract is in place.	Strata are currently unable to meet the requested deadline of April 12 <sup>th</sup> to complete this work.
ECL	Exeter City Living	ECL have employed a dedicated resource for 6 months to establish their IT policy, and tender for a support partner going forward	
TDC	Sherborne House	New network connectivity installed, waiting no date for cabling contractor to be able to access the building site is currently used for Vaccinations so access is restricted.	

## New Mobile Apps

The below details the new applications we have added to the either be directly available via the catalogue or by request this month.

- No New apps this month



Should you have a request for a new application please raise this on the Strata Portal via the BCR form?

## RFO – Reason for Outages.

There were no RFO’s issued for the infrastructure in May 21. The Global Desktop uptime in May was 100% over a 24/7 period.

The table below shows the identified actions arising because of major incidents over the last 12 months. The vast majority of identified actions have now been closed.

RFO	Action	Update
VMware Virtual Centre Failure - 18th September 2019	As part of the VMware Horizon Windows 10 upgrades look at ways to provide High availability Virtual Centre	Ongoing – An overarching design has been agreed with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party, and this is being implemented in stages as part of the Windows 10 Roll out
	As part of the VDIDR upgrade provision VDI desktops from multiple datacentres to improve resiliency	Completed – The DR site is now capable of serving 600 desktops should the need arise and we invoke a disaster recovery scenario
VCenter Management Cluster failure – 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2019	Document correct HA settings to avoid this issue in Future.	Completed
	Continue towards upgrading the Oakwood datacentre	Ongoing – An overarching design has been agreed with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party, and this is being implemented in stages as part of the Windows 10 Roll out
Global Desktop login & apps failure -18th January 2020	Investigation into cause	Completed
	VCenter Resilience – Looking at options as part of upgrades for Windows 10.	Ongoing – an overarching design has been agreed with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party and this is being implemented in stages as part of the Windows 10 roll out

## Security and Compliance Team, SNN & GIS– Robin Barlow

Sometimes it is great to hear some good 'Cyber' news even if it is related to Cyber-attacks and criminality. Firstly, as reported here last month, the FBI have successfully recovered much of the ransom paid by



the US Colonial Pipeline company and have significantly disrupted the criminal organisation that provided a ransomware service to other criminals. There has also been the arrest of a number of individuals running a passwords trading marketplace and finally the Australians and FBI in particular, have created their own secure messaging phone 'app' ANOM and used this in a sting operation.



Sadly, we also got to hear of an \$11m ransom being paid by a Brazilian meat company, which shows the rewards possible and while ransoms continue to be paid, the risks of the odd arrest or recovery of ill-gotten gains is just a career risk for criminals. There is also a general assumption that we only hear about the larger (noticeable) attacks with the expectation that this is far more abundant.



The UK government advice remains clear that ransoms are not to be paid and even from the Colonial Pipelines event, the provision of the 'decryption' key is only the start of recovering the systems and Colonial have declared that many systems are still not operational and that the costs of the interruption has been very costly. The Irish Health Service Executive, also reported here last month, were reportedly gifted the recovery key by the attackers, but who are now using the increasingly common threat to release the private health records unless the ransom is paid. This two pronged attack both leaves a Health Service trying to recover their systems that are out of kilter which each other and also to manage the risk as best they can of stopping the publication of the personal details.

As Councils, we need to continue to review our defences especially with the major changes that Microsoft Office 365 is bringing but also prepare for the worst. Part of this defence is user awareness of the risks of which the 'Dojo' training system has been provided. We will also be running a Cyber event for the Councils in the autumn, using the NCSC's Exercise in a Box to better understand our joint response to Cyber-attacks.

### Street name & Numbering and GIS

The team had a workshop during the period where Robin provided an assessment from his observations and discussions so far for the team to discuss. The resounding issue was a lack of resource to maintain the accuracy of the Land and Property Gazetteers. The statutory work has increased however through staff attrition, the level of resource available to support the support has reduced.

The team also covers GIS (Graphical Information Systems, often seen on web pages like Google Maps) and we are now working towards a GIS Strategy as some of the tools in use by the Authorities, eMap and GISMO, along with the transition to a self-service need for the Councils to create their own GIS publications needs to be considered. The team are also about to release the initial draft SNN Policy, which will need to be ratified by the Councils, with a notional target of November 2021 to have these signed off, dependent on each Councils' processes.

### Data Protection

There still appears to be no clarity on when the UK data adequacy decisions will be granted by the European Data Protection Board (EDPB). As covered in last month's report, there was a further meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> May which voted to delay the agreement while key concerns were address. These vote is not binding on the EU

Commissioner and the 30<sup>th</sup> June 'Bridge date' is also something that the EU can choose to extend. It would seem that the lack of alarm regarding this position (last year MHCLG provided guidance) and the business and political fallout caused by the UK no longer considered 'adequate' would ensure that nothing dramatic happens.

### Business Continuity

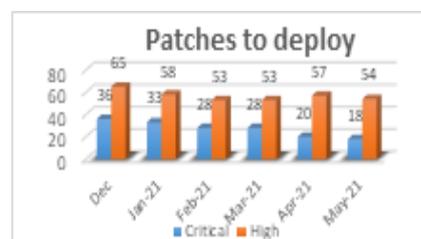
There has been no change in the Business Continuity with the backup processes operating smoothly. We continue to have a challenge in prioritising some documentation work for some of the specialist business IT systems, which has been discussed in the management team. The move to cloud systems, 'Office 365' in particular, where key data of the Councils will become unavailable from any failure in the connectivity to, or systems from, the suppliers now needs to be considered as a key risk with Council Business Continuity mitigation actions devised.

### PSN Code of connection (CoCo)

We now have a single upgrade to do to complete the final PSN and will have a completely clean submission to submit to the assessor.

### Security software patching (security vulnerability fixes)

Patching of security flaws is a key line of defence against many security attacks as these flaws are used by cyber criminals to both get a 'foot hold' and using other Cyber phrases then move 'laterally' through the network of devices and systems. The more of these they can get to, the more likelihood that they will find flaws that will then allow them to increase ('escalate') their access ('privileges'), and take more control and do much more harm.



There is a constant flow of vulnerabilities, primarily on a monthly basis from Microsoft, and we need to keep on top of these, which the graph shows and which the PSN CoCo IT HealthCheck has confirmed. There will always be some patches that cannot be resolved at a point in time and others that aren't that applicable in our systems.

### Cyber Training and awareness

The Cyber and data protection awareness training (DoJo) is still seeing little traction in two of the Councils. We have however renewed DoJo but changed the contract as originally this was supplied through a reseller which resulted in administration issues. We did look at alternatives however DoJo still shines above the others and is also very good value for money. There will be a push this month to support the other two councils, and tying into the leader article, with people being one of the defences and also weaknesses in security, we need them to have the best advice to keep the IT systems secure. Also from a common good perspective, all four (three Councils plus Strata) share the same connected IT systems, and Cyber threats only need one weaker link to undermine the good practices of others, and potentially impact everyone.

### Windows Server 2008 and SQL 2008 migration

All 2008 PSN servers have now been removed or upgraded and we are waiting on one finale SQL upgrade that is scheduled for mid-June.

### Systems availability

This period has been relatively quiet for incidents, EDDC 1, ECC 6, and TDC 1. 4 of the ECC incidents were related to network links and wifi issues at external sites. The TDC issue was related to the 2008 migration covered earlier. ECC had an issue with their EFins system and EDDC Academy. We also had two incidents relating to the Clearswift web gateway, which has been unstable after a required upgrade.

**Business Systems Unit– David Sercombe**

**BCR Trends**

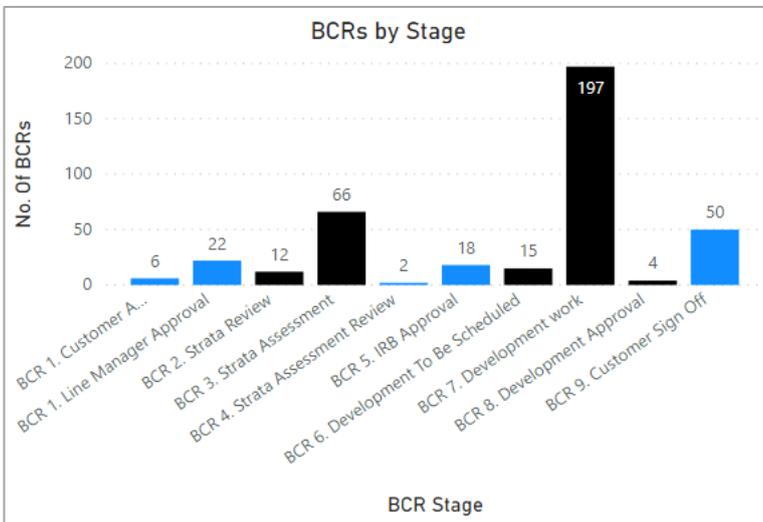
There are currently **392** (as of 7<sup>th</sup> June) open BCRs at various stages of Assessment, Development and Pending closure. The Current Breakdown by Authority is:



- East Devon – 126
- Teignbridge – 120
- Exeter – 127
- Strata – 19 (internal BCRs)

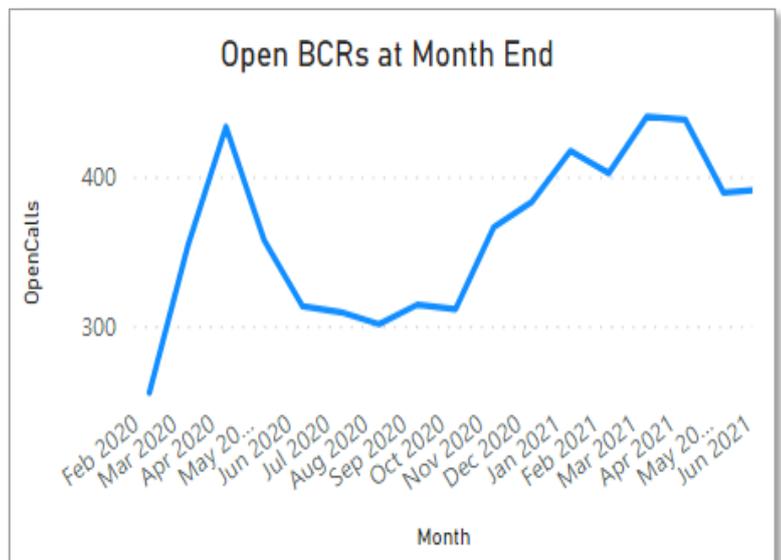
During May - **114** were completed and closed:

- East Devon – 35
- Teignbridge – 40
- Exeter – 38
- Strata – 4



There are 10 stages that a BCR goes through, from submission by a customer and approval by their manager (BCR stage 1.) to Customer sign off and closure (BCR stages 9 & 10.) The chart above shows the number currently at each stage. We have a large number (45) awaiting Customer sign off. These BCRs have been completed and require the customer to approve them via the vFire Portal so that they can be officially closed. Where no response is received after 15 days, the BCRs will be automatically closed.

The number of BCRs open at the end of each month has increased significantly, this is primarily as a result of numerous Covid-19 related forms which have taken significant resource to develop. (50% of the Business Systems analysts has dedicated time to these forms over this period). This has meant that the analysts have not been able to work through the non-Covid BCRs and projects that they had been scheduled to work on and is consequently creating a level of backlog. Covid related activities continued into May as predicted and we expect to see these conclude in early June.



If an officer requires more information on BCR status, there is an interactive Customer Facing BCR dashboard which allows officers to view the BCRs that have submitted across the 3 authorities.

There are 3 main pages to the report:

1. **BCR Overview** – numerous graphs and charts (including the one above) which show the data around BCRs across all three authorities. It shows the split of BCRs by Authority, Department and BCR trends over time.
2. **Search BCRs** – Search Open BCRs by Authority, Date Range, Department, Stage or Reference Number. This screen also shows any progress updates an analyst has provided for the BCR.
3. **BCR Captured Benefits** – This shows a summary of the benefits that have been submitted along with the BCR. These are taken directly from the information entered by the customer and are not adjusted by Strata.

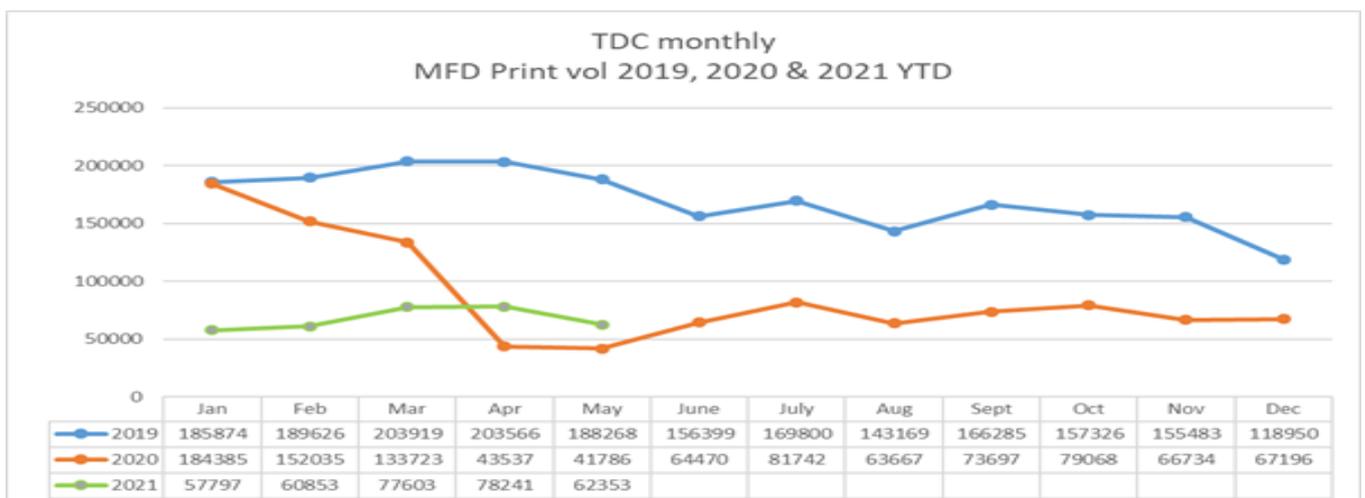
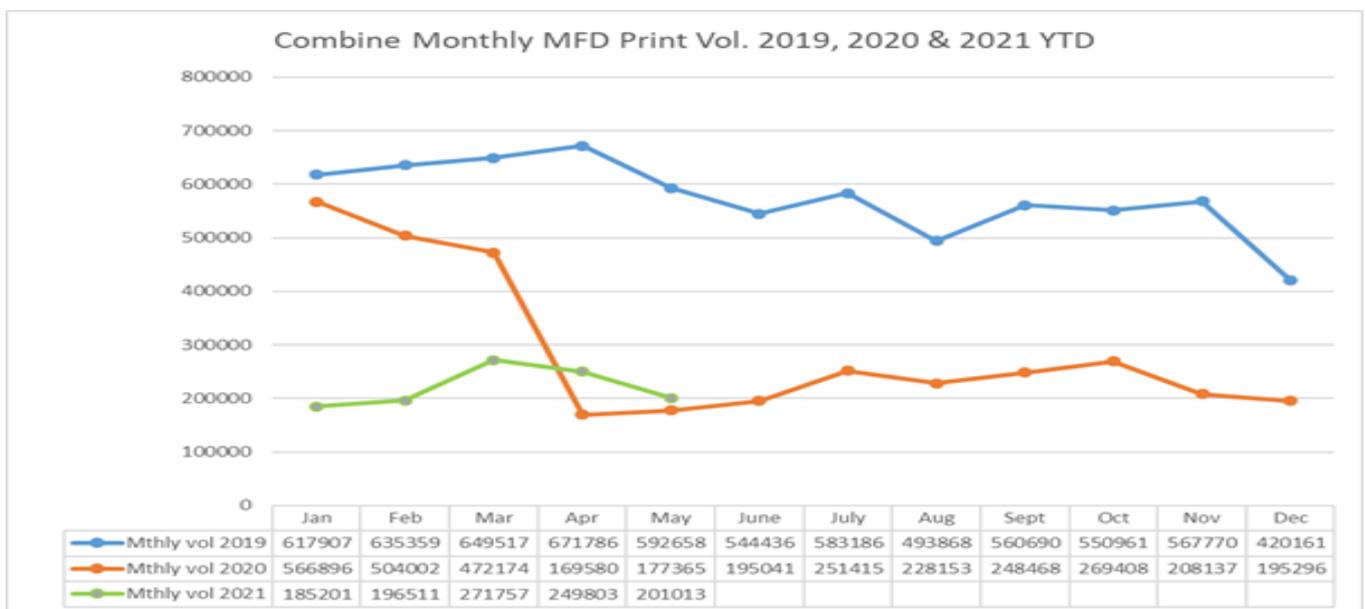
**Printing volumes and trends**

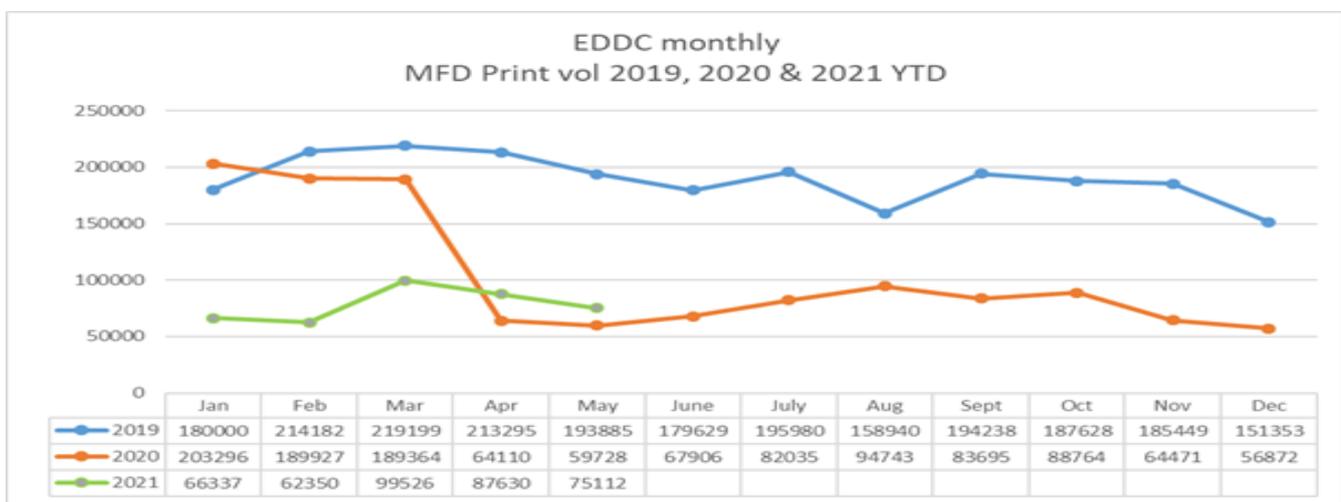
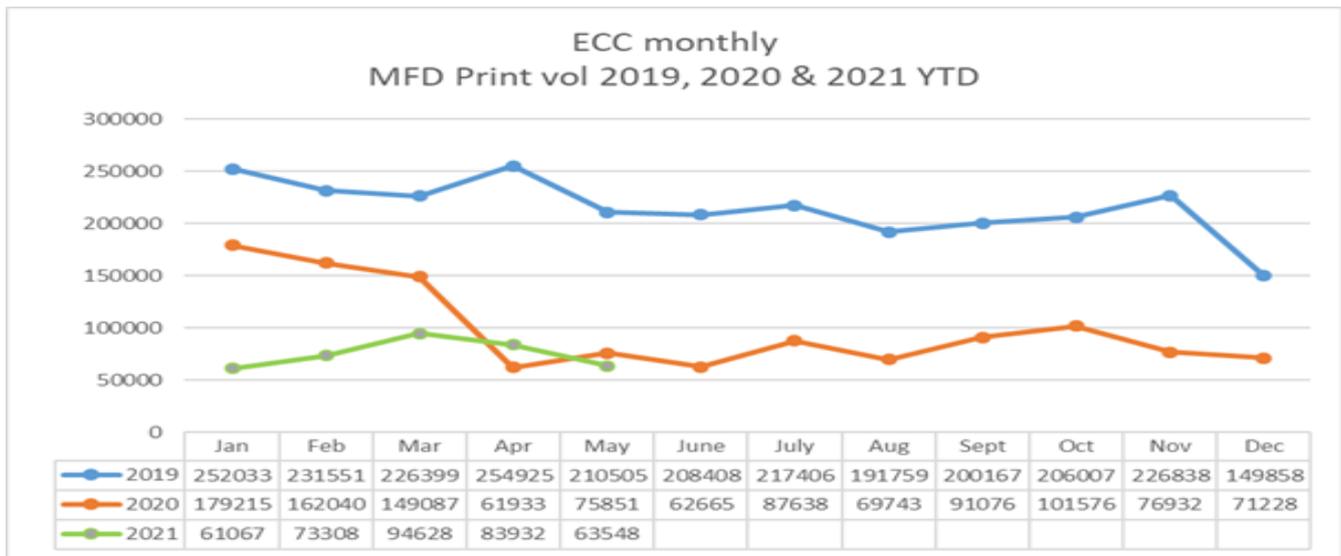
The trend of lower print volumes continues with the resulting cash savings being returned to the Councils through the normal channel.

The four charts below (including the combined figures) show the pattern for the 3 Councils. With the temporary increase in volume caused by the Election activity having come to an end, the figures have return to similar levels seen in 2020. This is encouraging because it increases the probability that these much lower figures will continue to be seen while office occupancy remains low. The monthly volume remains about 400k images less than those produced in the comparable month of 2019.



Both the original 2019 and 2020 figures are shown in this year’s reporting data as both sets provide good data comparison points for when the effect the economy opening begins to be seen on the 2021 working environment.





*(Please note that these figures do not include printing from Academy (revs and bens) at EDDC. Academy printing at EDDC does not go through the Equitrac printer server so the figures are not included. In previous reports these figures have been manually added to EDDCs figures and are usual around 70K-100K prints per month. Like for like printing at TDC and ECC is processed by Synertec our Hybrid Mail supplier, work is progressing to shift the EDDC academy printing across to Synertec as well.). The volumes for Exeter City Leisure, City Living and the Devon Building Control Partnership have been excluded as they are charged separately.*

### Central Printing facilities

There has been an increase in demand for print work from the Central Print facilities. This work has been a mix of Council Agendas, Leaflets and promotion materials – for example the THG in EDDC have opened a new exhibition which required a number of print jobs. We have also been advised that the TDC Local plan will be coming our way for printing in early June which will be the largest job printed in the past two years.

### Scanning

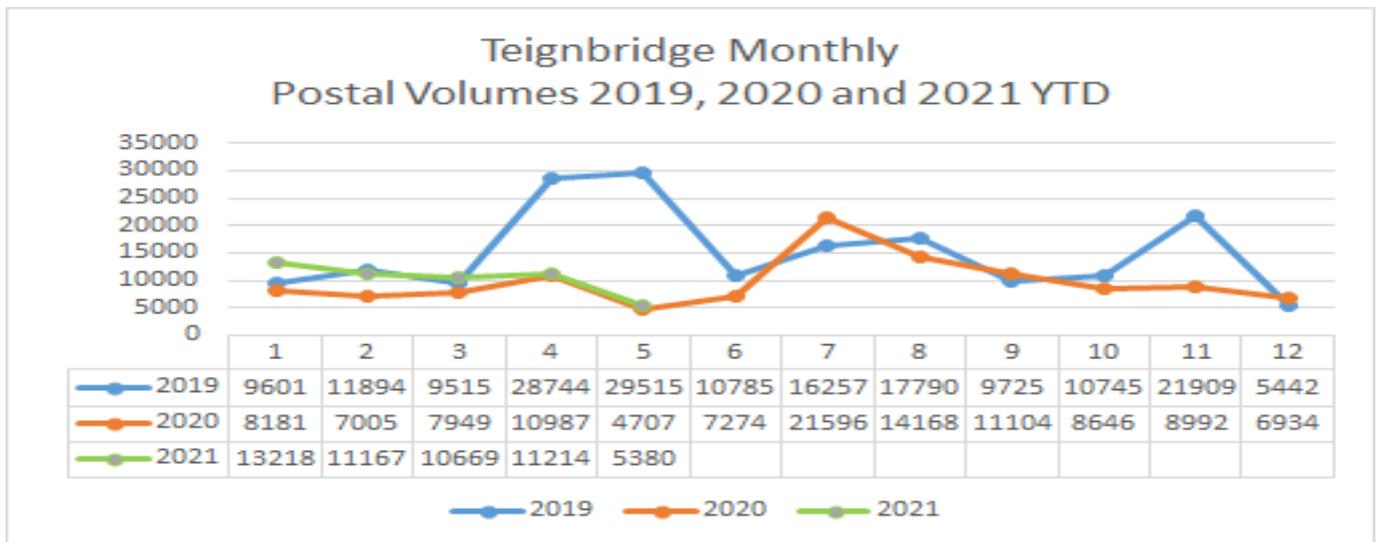
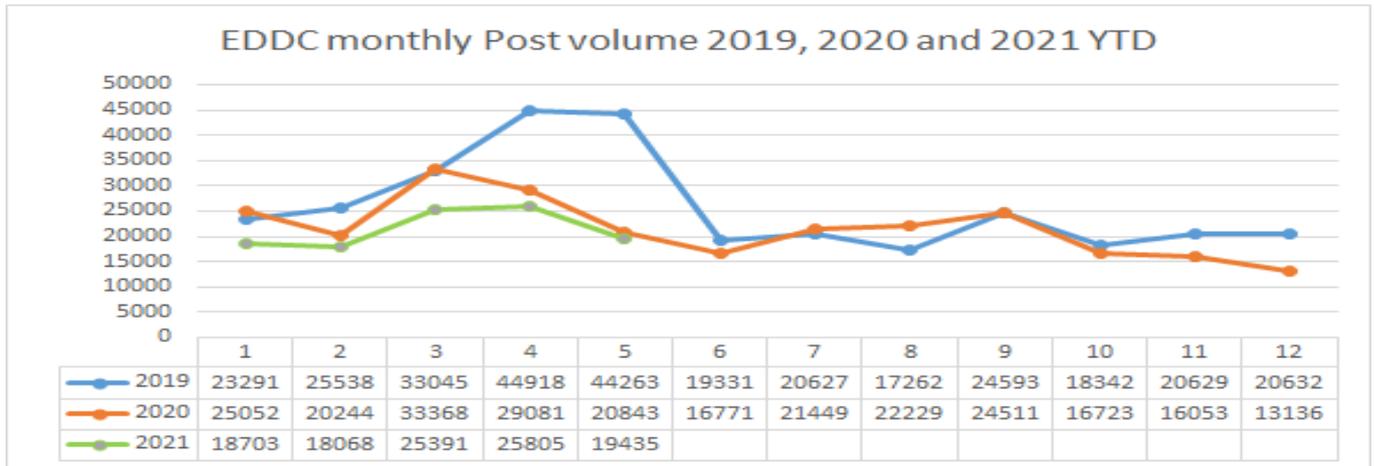
Scanning and digital document handling demand in support of Revs and Bens at both TDC and EDDC are running at normal levels. The scanning teams at EDDC and TDC continue to perform very well with staff rotating between working from the office and working from home.

**Printing and post service for officers working from home.**

We continue to support council staff by completing one off scanning tasks, ad-hoc printing and posting out on behalf of staff working from home at TDC, ECC and EDDC. Please contact [Martin.Millmow@strata.solutions](mailto:Martin.Millmow@strata.solutions) for more information on how to access this service.

**Postage figures**

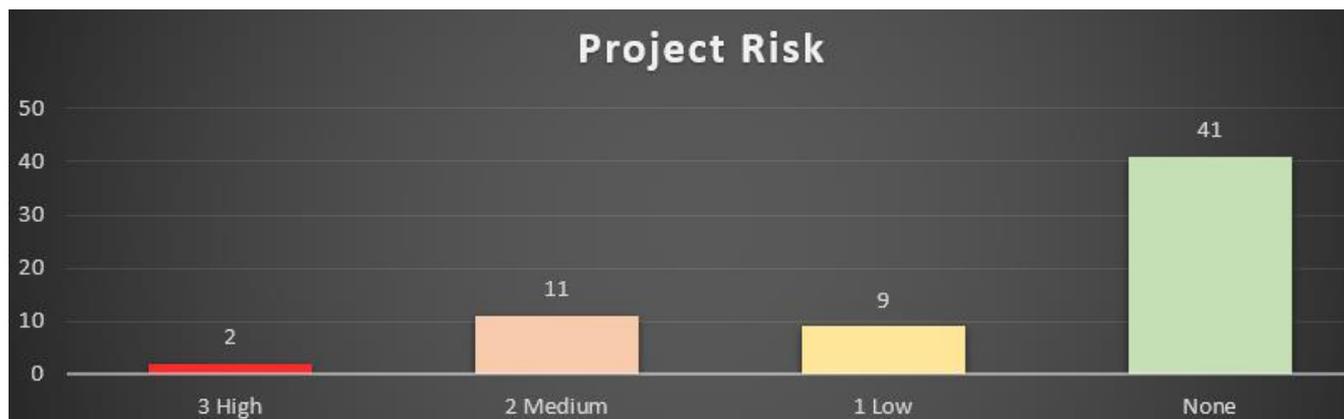
Postage volumes for early 2021 continue to track a similar pattern to those seen during 2020, but with EDDC producing about 21,000 less and TDC 13,000 more year on year for the first 4 months. Overall the combined volume for the first 5 months is slightly lower year on year - 159K (2021) vs 167K (2020) items mailed (excluding TDC Synertec volume).



## IT Solution Delivery – Pete Johns

As predicted in the last report, May was incredibly busy with a handful of major events, including another election and the return to Council offices for formal Council meetings. Despite this however, our projects have largely made good progress, including reaching the end of the Windows 10 migration that had tied up so much resource over such a long period of time.

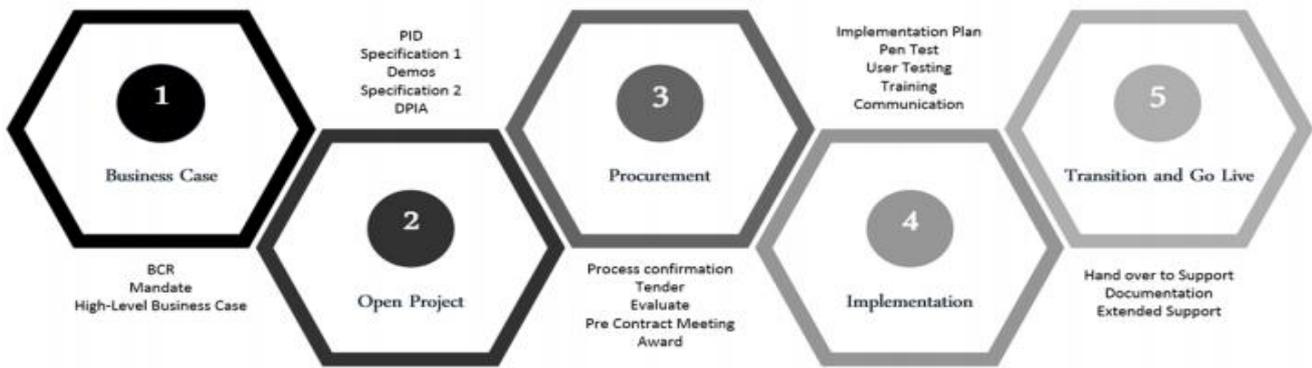
Our total number of projects has jumped up again this month, this time a combination of genuine new projects and bringing some of our own internal Infrastructure projects into the same reporting process. However (and hopefully without tempting fate) over the next two months we should start to see the number of live projects dropping as they approach their natural completion...assuming no new ones are raised, of course.



In terms of risk, we categorise our projects in four levels to enable us to prioritise our response to these. This covers Low, Medium and High. There is also a category of 'None' which does not mean that any project has 'no' risks, but that these are minor risks you would expect most projects to have.

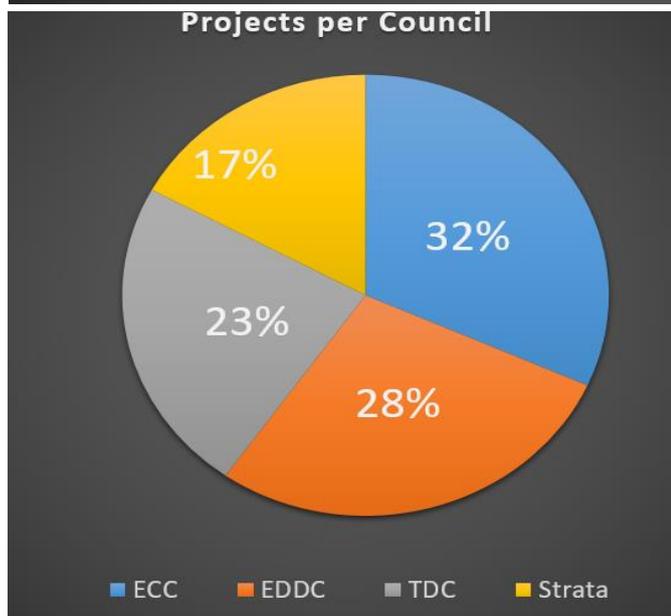
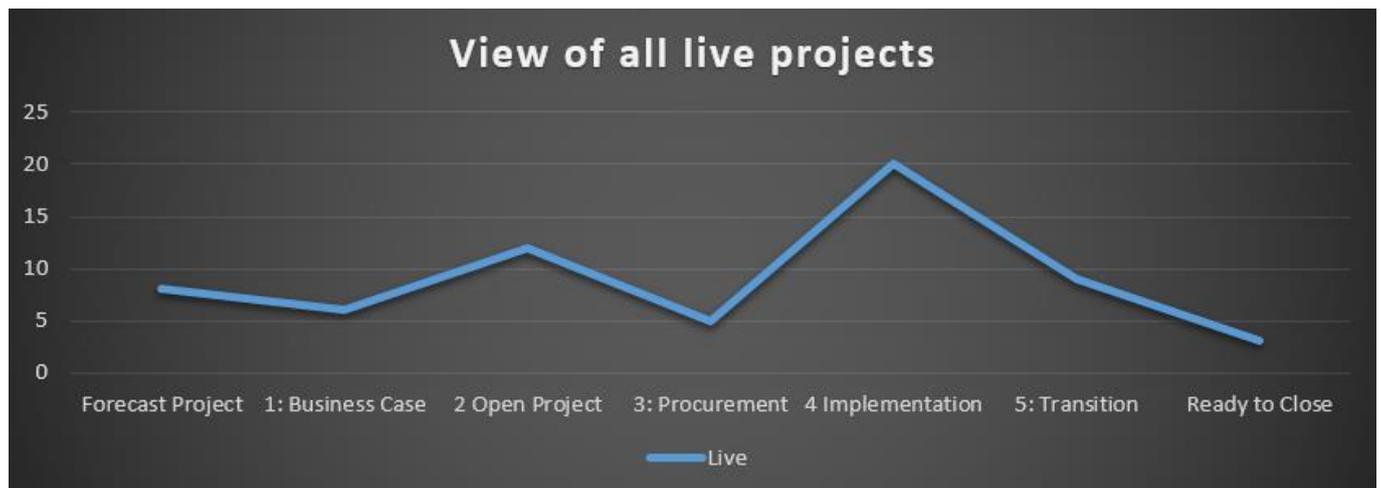
For several months we have had two projects at our highest level of risk, as detailed below:

Council	Project	Reason
Exeter	Cash & Income Management	A replacement project of Paris Payments to Civica Pay. This project has had a long history and has already been delayed multiple times. Unfortunately, the product still isn't up to satisfaction and is unlikely to make our June 21 <sup>st</sup> deadline. The risk was initially raised as the product wouldn't be ready in time for the card payment industry's new 3D Secure V2 implementation, which ECC's current payment system didn't support. This would mean ECC would be unable to take any card payments, including over the phone or via the web. Although this new requirement has recently been delayed until March '22, giving the project more breathing room, we believe the level of frustration on this project, and the knock-on impact to other projects, still warrants our highest level of risk.
Strata	Server 2008 replacement	Server 2008 has gone out of support and so we need to replace every server running on that version. At time of writing there is just one server remaining, with plans in place to remove, and so we expect this risk to be removed soon.



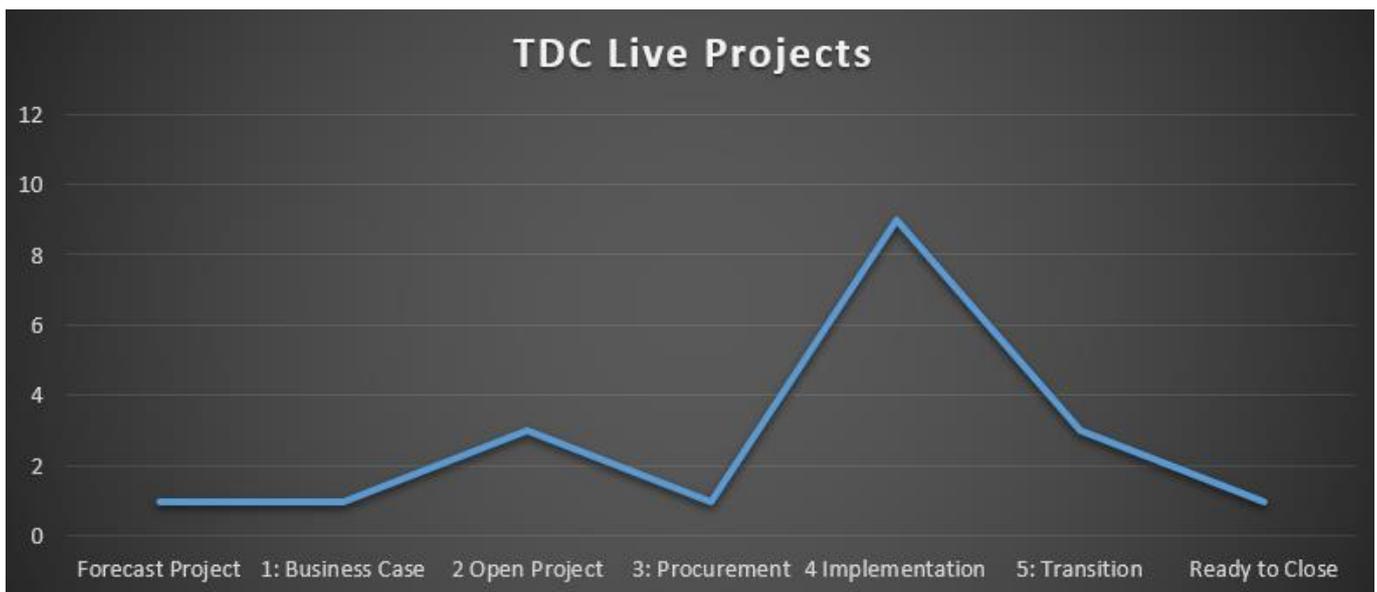
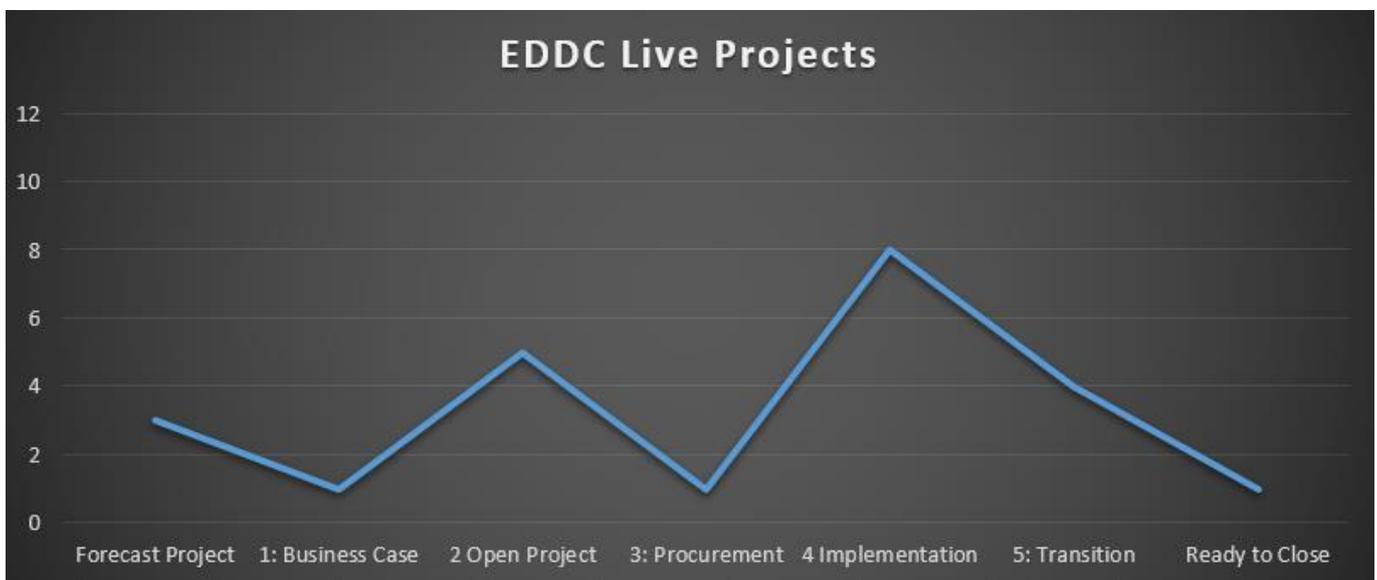
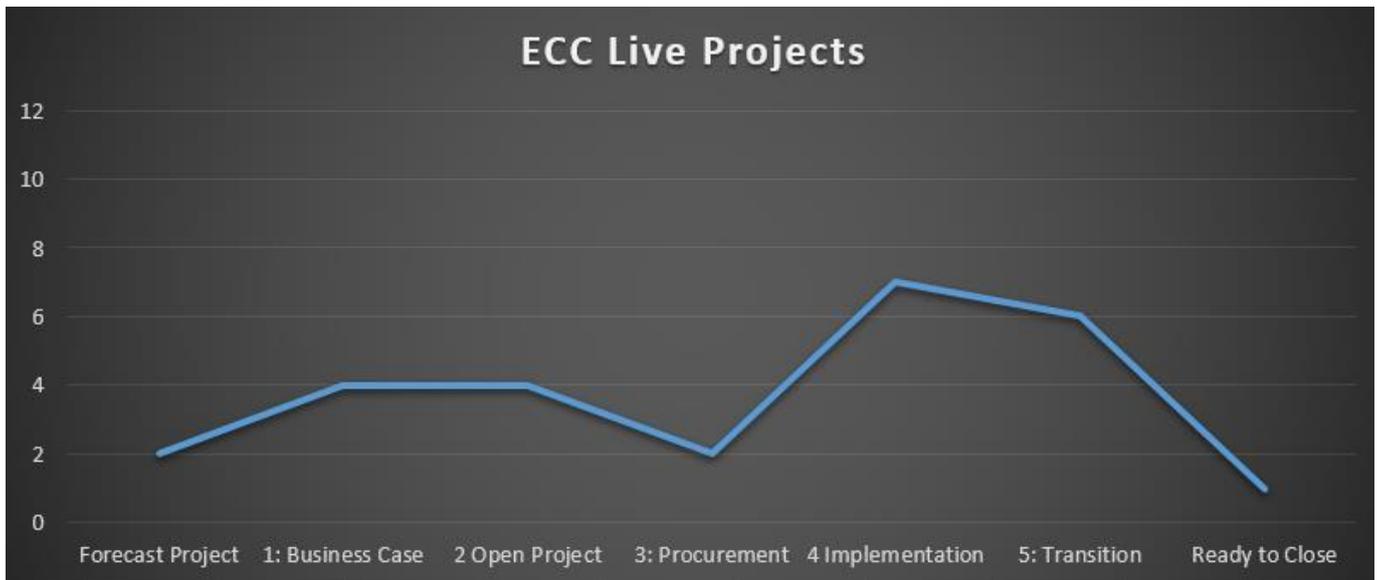
There are currently **63** live Projects (increase of 9), split into the following project gates:

0: Forecast	8 (increase of 3)
1: Business Case	6 (decrease of 4)
2: Open Project	12 (increase of 3)
3: Procurement	5 (increase of 4)
4: Implementation	20 (no change)
5: Transition to "Business as Usual"	9 (increase of 3)
Ready to Close	3 (no change)



- ECC: 26 (no change)**
- EDDC: 23 (no change)**
- TDC: 20 (decrease of 1)**
- Strata: 14 (increase of 7)**

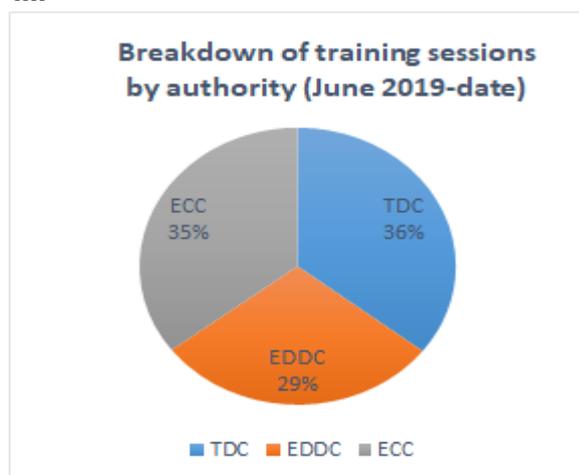
**Note:** a single project can be counted multiple times if it relates to multiple authorities. This is to aid reporting – for example, if a single convergence project covers all three authorities, it will be counted three times on this graph.



## IT Training – Clive Newton

Month	Contact time	Total session	Number of clients seen	TDC session	EDDC Session	ECC session
Jun-20	26:15	36	88	11	10	15
Jul-20	30:00	35	153	18	15	2
Aug-20	24:40	48	62	25	11	12
Sep-20	39:55	63	68	26	19	18
Oct-20	39:20	52	61	34	18	28
Nov-20	33:45	58	77	14	17	26
Dec-20	25:00	40	60	15	13	12
Jan-21	35:10	53	93	21	17	14
Feb-21	50:25	65	66	24	23	17
Mar-21	50:40	77	120	27	28	21
Apr - 21	45:55	60	250	23	20	22
May 21	40:50	58	82	13	19	26
<b>Last 12 months:</b>	<b>441:55</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>213</b>

OBJ



### Key training activities in May 21:

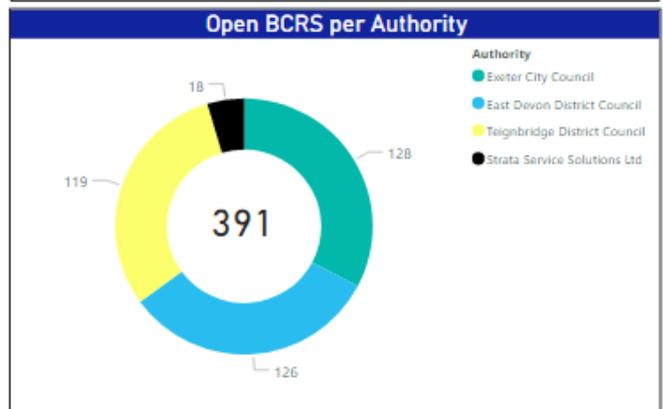
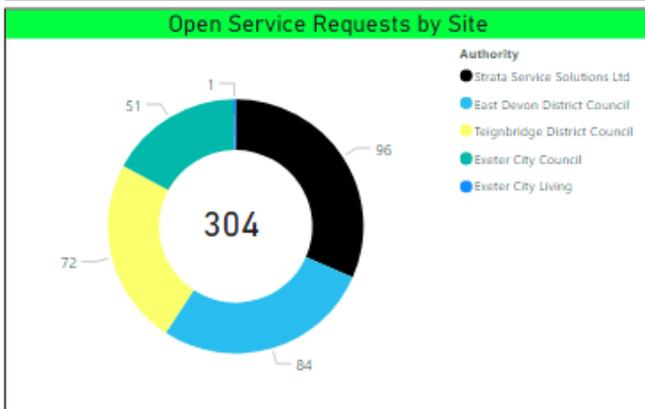
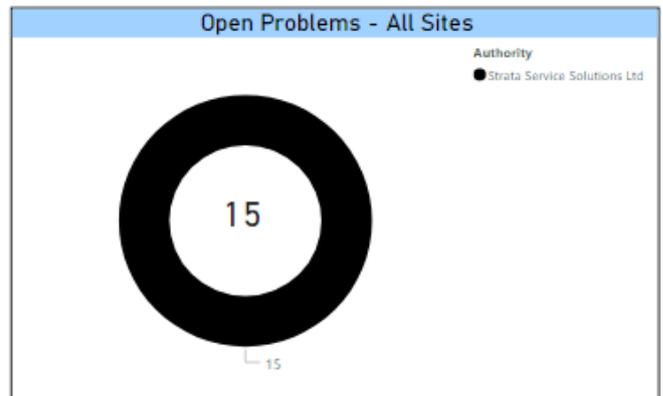
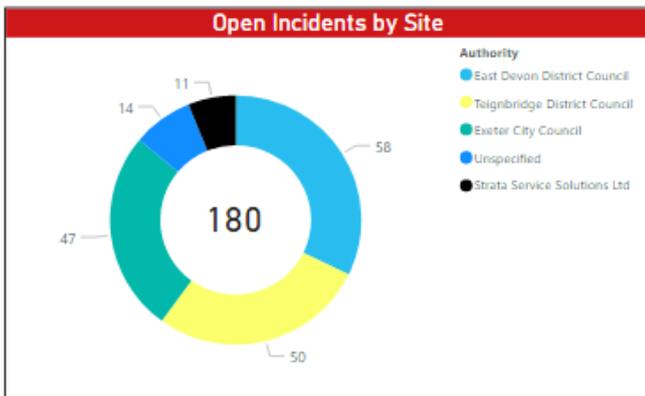
- 7 x staff inductions. A review is underway to refine inductions and to embed it within each authorities.
- Assisting the setting up of hybrid council meetings to meet the revised government legislation.
- New councillor inductions at ECC, and ongoing councillor support
- Skype at THG for EDDC

### Activities planned for June 21:

- IT Drop-In Sessions
- Teams training for Strata Staff
- Cleansing document properties sessions for TDC staff
- Councillor Community Fund training for TDC councillors
- Continued support of council hybrid meetings
- Various 1:1 session, including Excel, iPad and communication tools

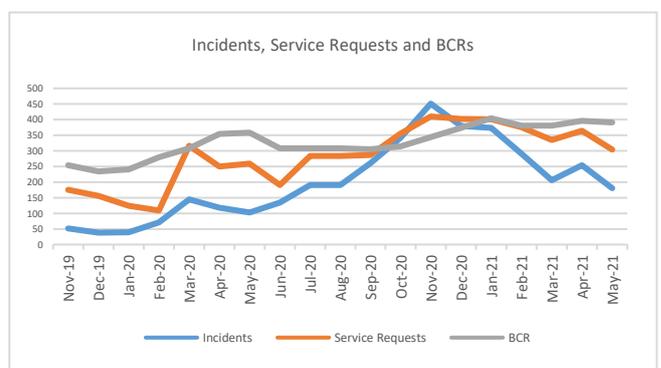
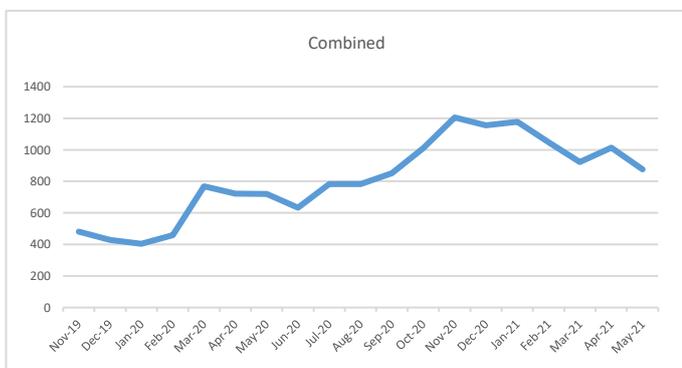
## High Level Real Time KPI Measures

Strata have redefined our KPI's, so as to show four primary KPI's on our wallboard. As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021, our wallboard of KPIs showed as follows:



Comparison to April 21 figures shows the following::

KPI	Increase or Decrease on Previous Month	Previous Month (Apr 21)	Level of Increase or Decrease on Previous Month
Incidents	Decrease of 74 Incidents	254	29% decrease
Problems	Increase of 3 Problems	12	25% increase
Service Requests	Decrease of 60 SR's	364	16% decrease
BCR's	Decrease of 5 BCR's	396	1% decrease



**Service Desk Performance Indicators Report**

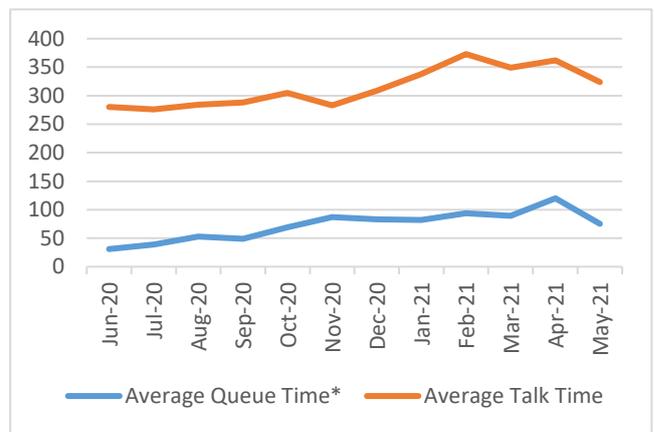
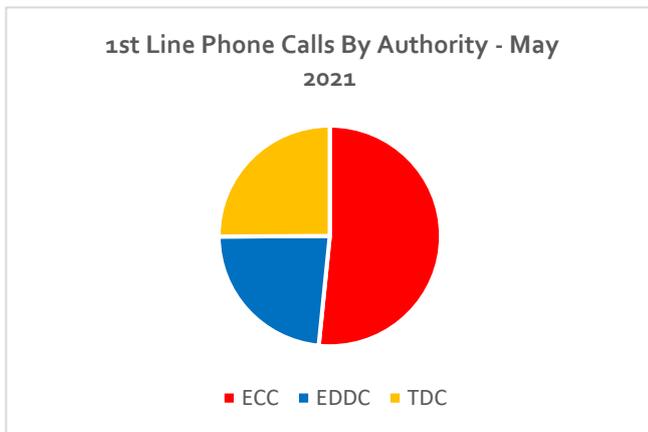
The table and graph below shows the total number of Phone Calls (excludes communication via the vFire portal) coming into the Strata 1<sup>st</sup> line team during the month of May and is broken down by reporting authority.

The Service Desk team is structured in three tiers:

Tier	Description
Tier 1	Handle all incoming Incident calls into Strata. Try to resolve first time
Tier 2	Site based, and deal with day to day site related incidents
Tier 3	Work remotely and deal with complex incidents and problems

**Total Number of 1<sup>st</sup> Line Phone Calls During Month – May 2021**

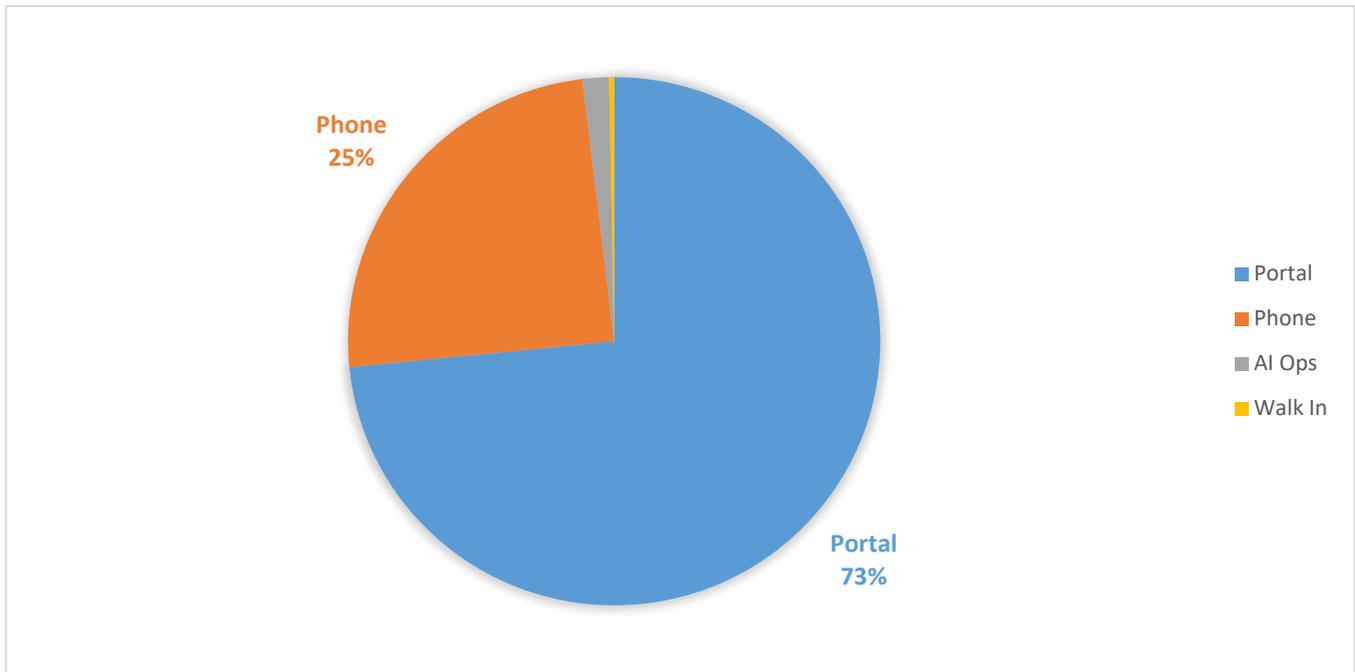
Site	May 2021 - 1 <sup>st</sup> Line contact	Percentage
ECC	438	52%
EDDC	198	23%
TDC	213	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>849</b>	



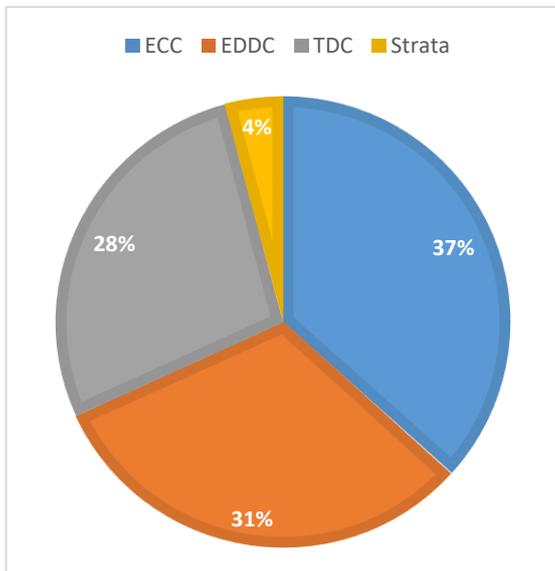
Queue Time	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Average Queue Time*	31	39	53	49	69	87	83	82	94	89	120	75
Average Talk Time	280	276	284	288	305	283	309	338	373	349	362	324

### Method of Incident Contact

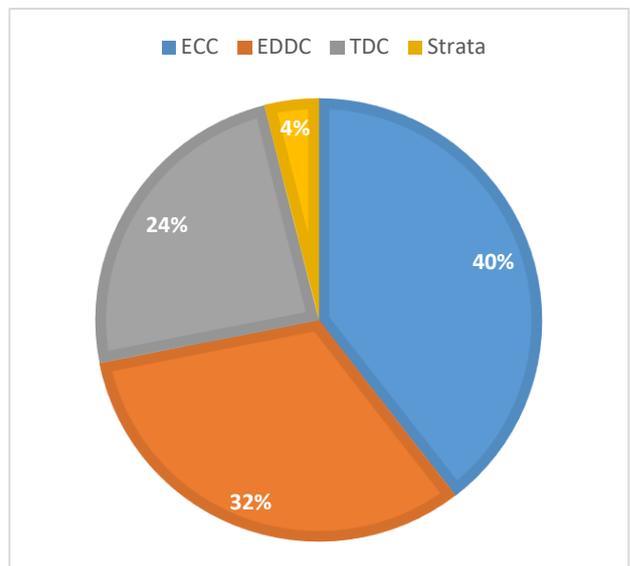
It is good to see that the investment in the portal has paid off and out of the **12244** incidents raised and closed over a sixteen month period, circa **73%** have been raised via the portal, this significantly reduces phone demand on the service desk, enabling officers to focus on fixing issues.



### Closed Incidents and Users per Authority



Closed Incidents by Authority

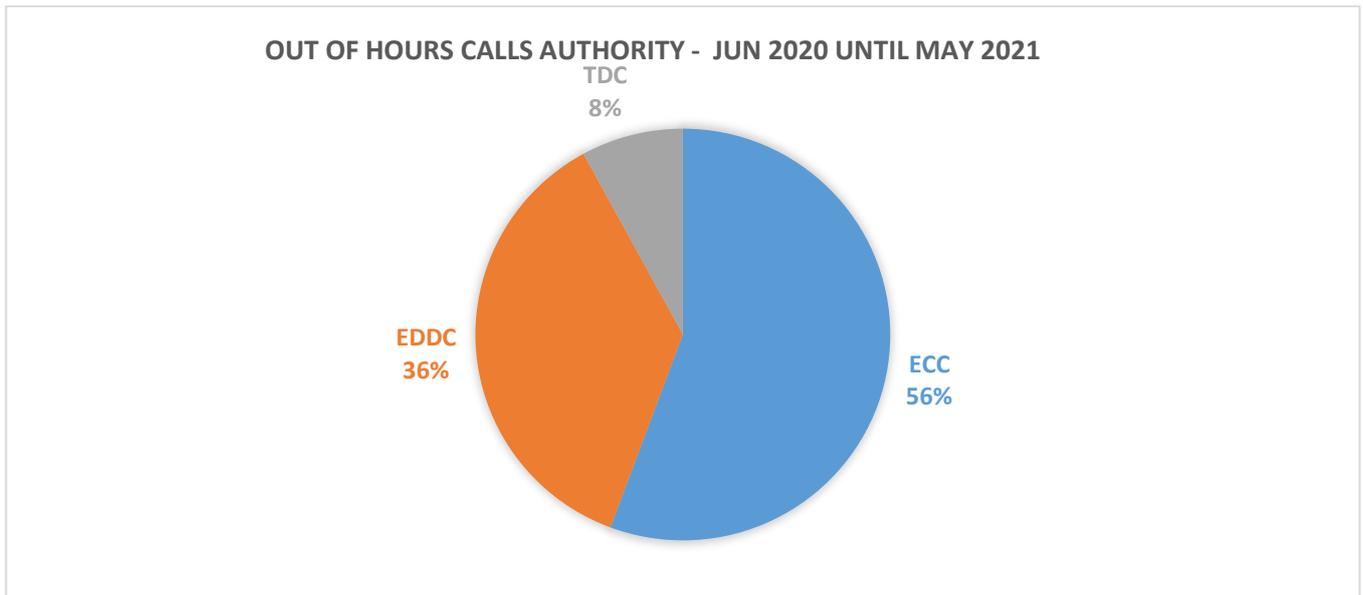
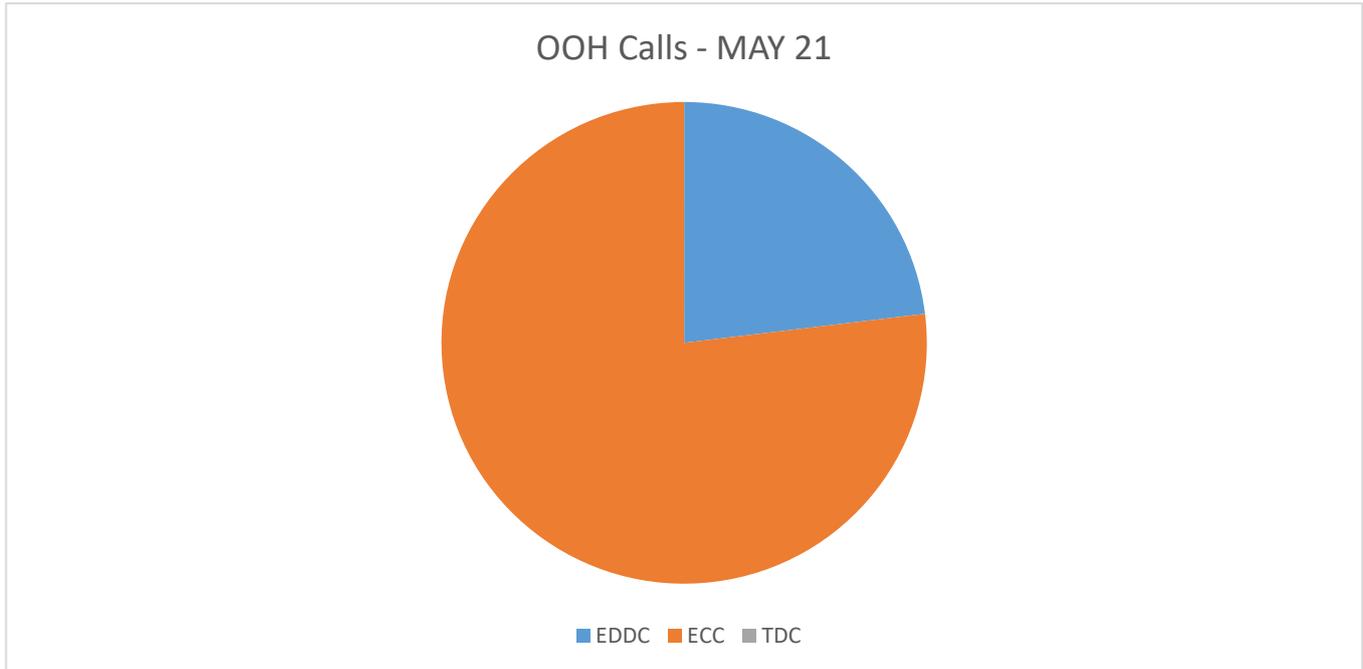


Users by Authority

**Strata Out of Hours Service**

The Out of Hours service continues to remain effective and offers 24/7 support to end users.

Site	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb-21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
ECC	6	2	0	1	1	2	2	5	10	6	4	10
EDDC	4	2	0	1	2	2	2	3	4	7	2	3
TDC	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>



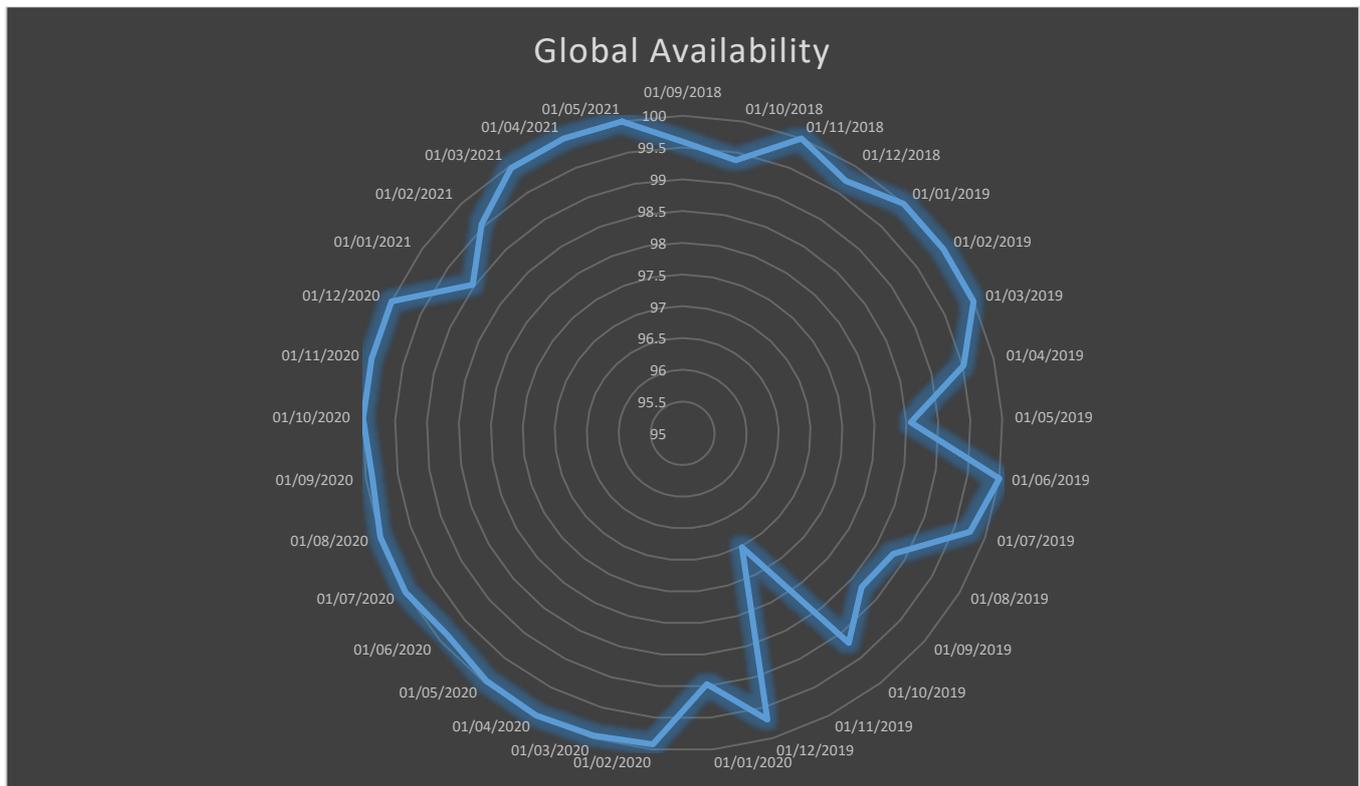
Please note: There have been 88 'Out of Hours' calls into the Strata 24/7 service over the last 12 months.

## Global Platform Uptime

With the introduction of the Global platform, Strata report on the percentage uptime of the Global environment which includes the Skype for Business and Anywhere 365 telephony applications.

Month / Metric	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb-21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
24/7	99.86%	100.00%	100.00%	99.90%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	99.03%	99.55%	99.96%	100.00%	100.00%

The below radar diagram shows 24/7 performance over a 34 month period. After a spate of network issues at the end of 2020 and into early 2021, remedial infrastructure work has resulted in a far improved SLA.



## Uptime Equivalents\*

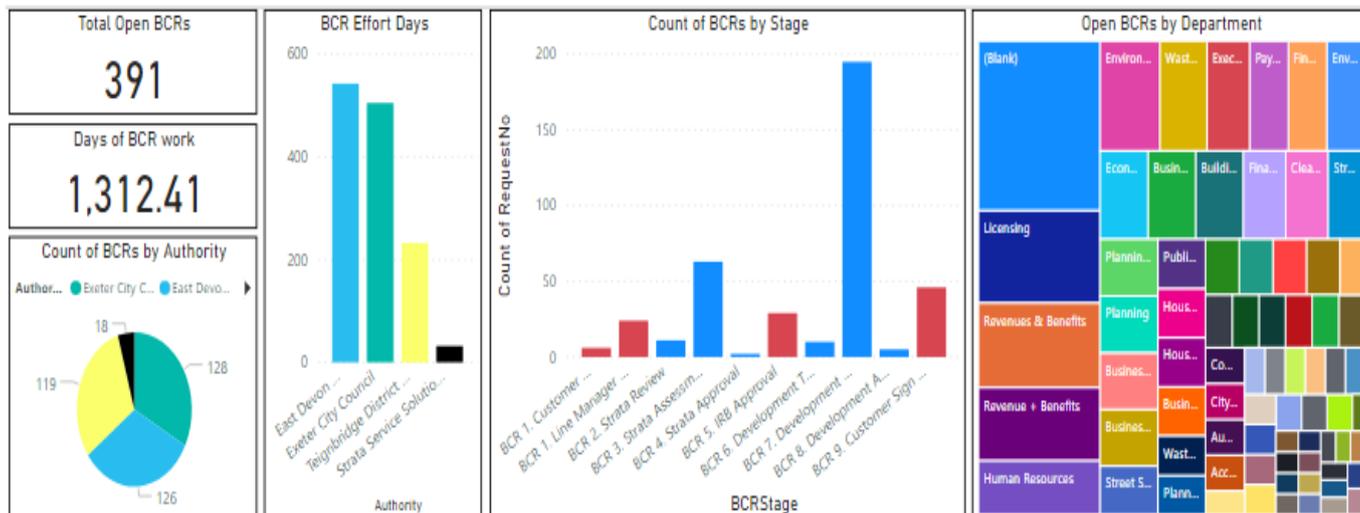
Percentage Uptime	Equivalent Daily Downtime	Equivalent Weekly Downtime	Equivalent Monthly Downtime
100.00%	0hrs 0mins 0secs	0hrs 0mins 0secs	0hrs 0mins 0secs
99.50%	7mins 12secs	50mins 24secs	3hrs 39mins 17secs
99.00%	14mins 24secs	1hr 40min 45secs	10hrs 57mins 26secs
98.50%	21mins 36secs	2hrs 31mins 12secs	14hrs 36mins 34secs
98.00%	28mins 48secs	3hrs 21mins 36secs	18hrs 15mins 43secs
97.50%	36mins 0secs	4hrs 12mins 0secs	21hrs 54mins 52secs

Our target is to achieve 99.5% Global availability based on a 24/7 measure over a monthly period.

\*based on the Uptime institute downtime equivalents measuring model over a 24 hour period.

## Strata Service Performance Indicators – Business Change Requests

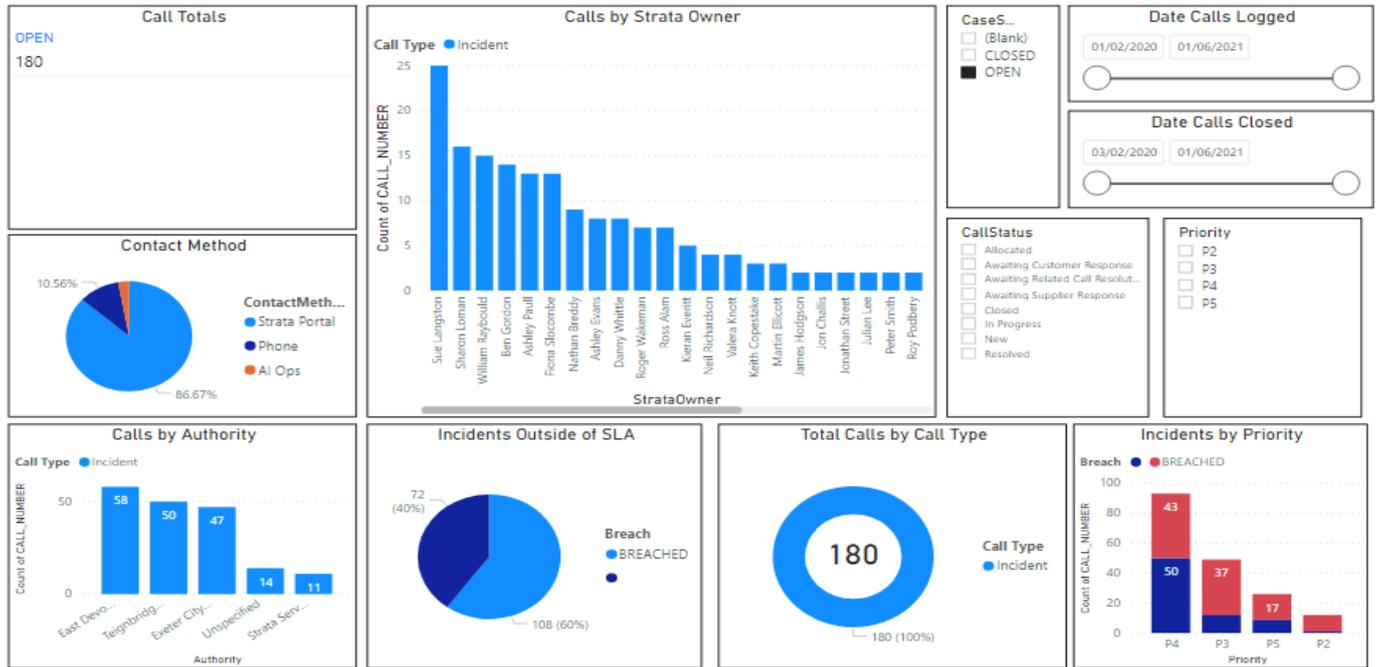
The following graphics shows the current BCR queue (as of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021):



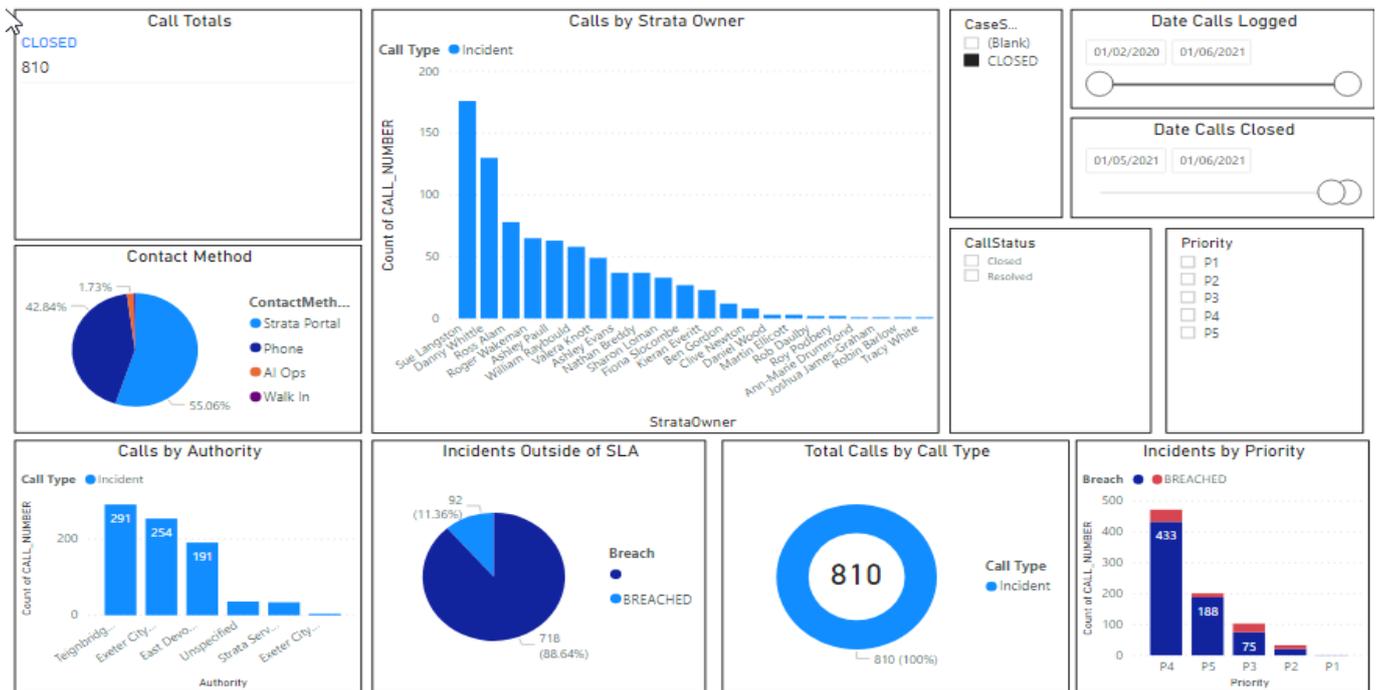
This graphic shows that there is currently 177 days of work in the Strata BCR queue. Our aim once Business Grants work is completed to focus on reducing this level of demand.

# Strata Service Performance Indicators – Incidents

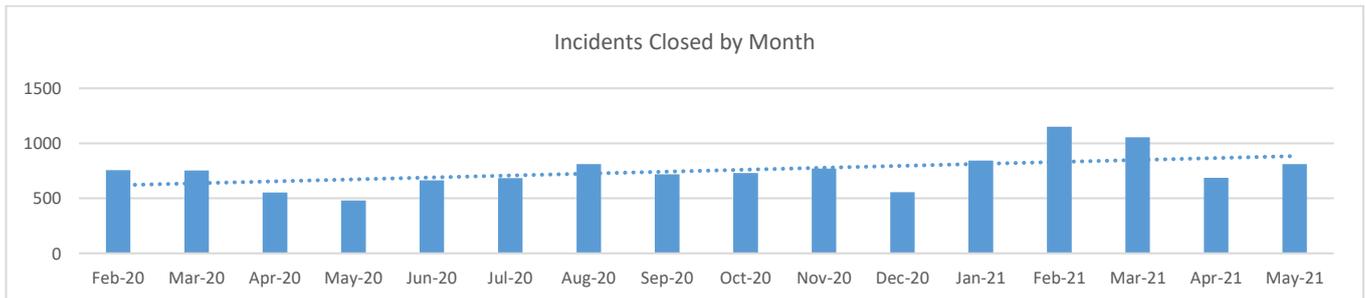
## OPEN INCIDENTS – End of May 2021



## CLOSED INCIDENTS – Closed in May 2021

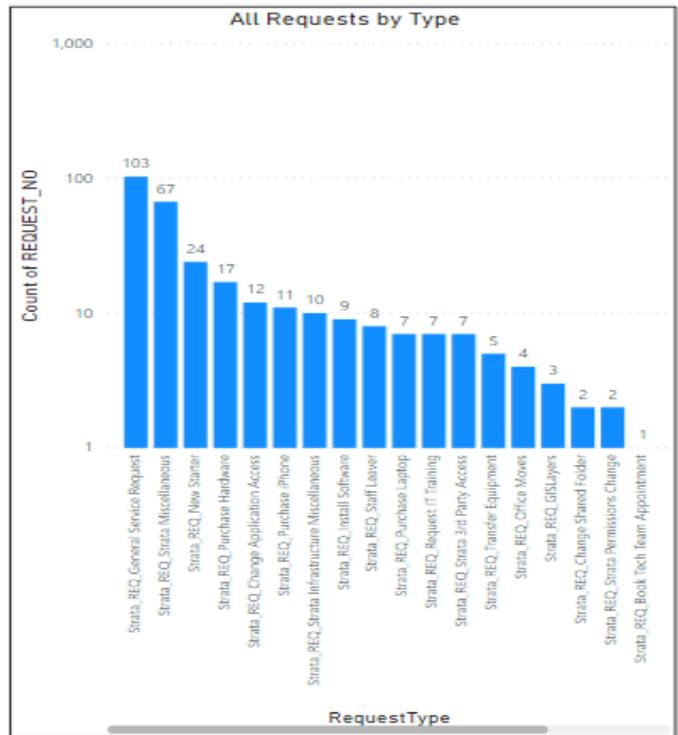


## INCIDENTS CLOSED BY MONTH

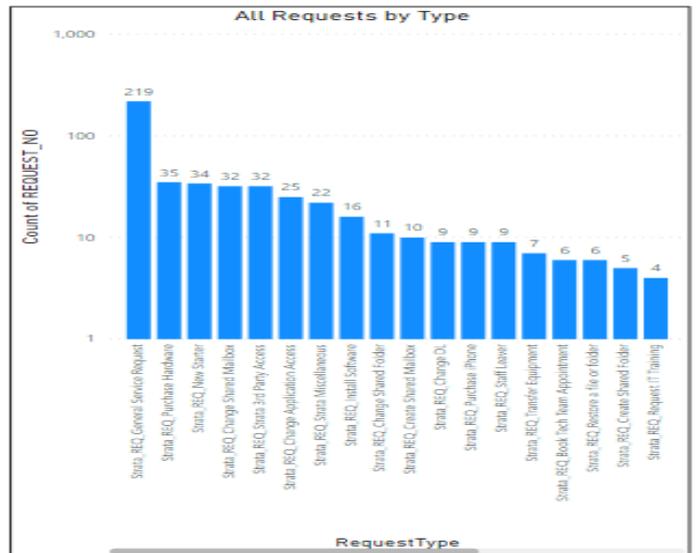


# Strata Service Performance Indicators – Service Requests

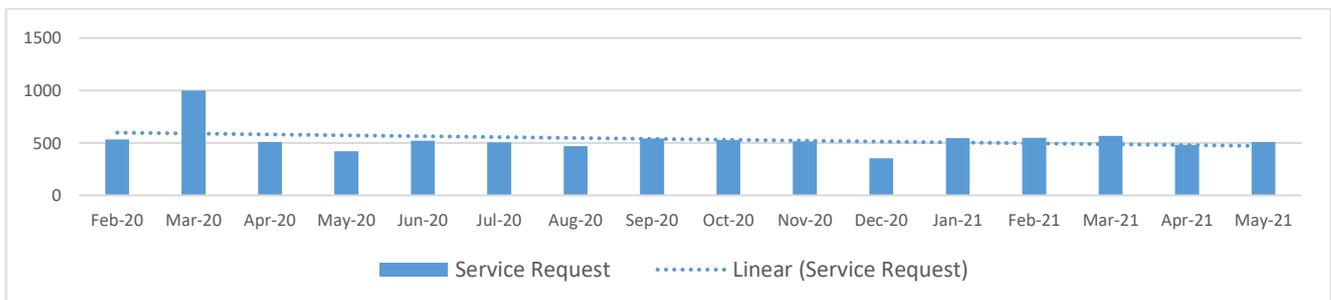
## OPEN SERVICE REQUESTS - End of May 2021



## CLOSED SERVICE REQUESTS - Closed in May 2021



## SERVICE REQUESTS CLOSED BY MONTH



## Customer Satisfaction

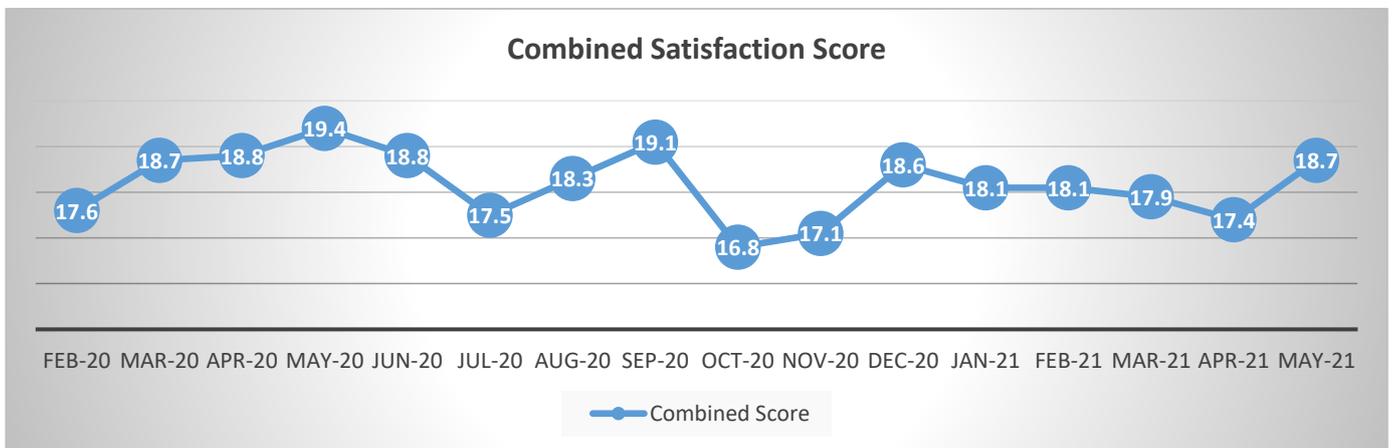
This measure is available from the Call Logging system by sending a customer satisfaction email when each job logged has been completed. We ask four primary questions and end users can score based on a scale of 0 to 5. In May 2021, we received 71 responses to the customer satisfaction survey.

	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received	4.7	4.3	4.6	4.8	4.2	4.3	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.7
How would you rate our communication with you through this process	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.1	4.2	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.6
How would you rate the level of knowledge and professionalism of our staff throughout this process	4.7	4.5	4.7	4.9	4.4	4.4	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.8
How satisfied were you with the call resolution timescale	4.7	4.3	4.4	4.6	4.1	4.2	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.6

The feedback received is reviewed and shared with Service Desk staff and the Strata Management team. Trends in Customer Satisfaction are closely monitored and in the event that satisfaction levels drop, remediation actions are discussed and actively pursued.

## Combined Feedback Scores

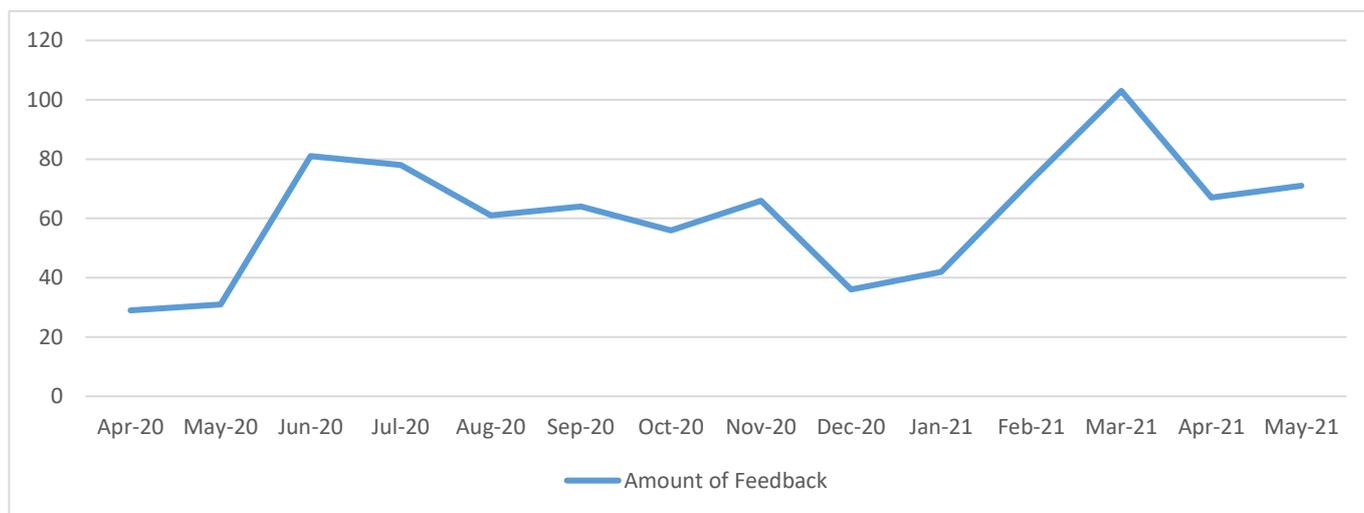
	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Combined Scores	18.8	17.5	18.3	19.1	16.8	17.1	18.6	18.1	18.1	17.9	17.4	18.7



Whilst Strata proactively manage customer satisfaction and investigate any negative comments received, our aim is to achieve a combined score of 17.5 or greater (out of a maximum of 20). Should the Customer Satisfaction score drop below 17.5 (or 87.5%) for two consecutive months, the IT Director undertakes a review of the primary reasons for the score and implements a corrective action plan working in conjunction with the Service Desk Manager and Head of Infrastructure and Support.

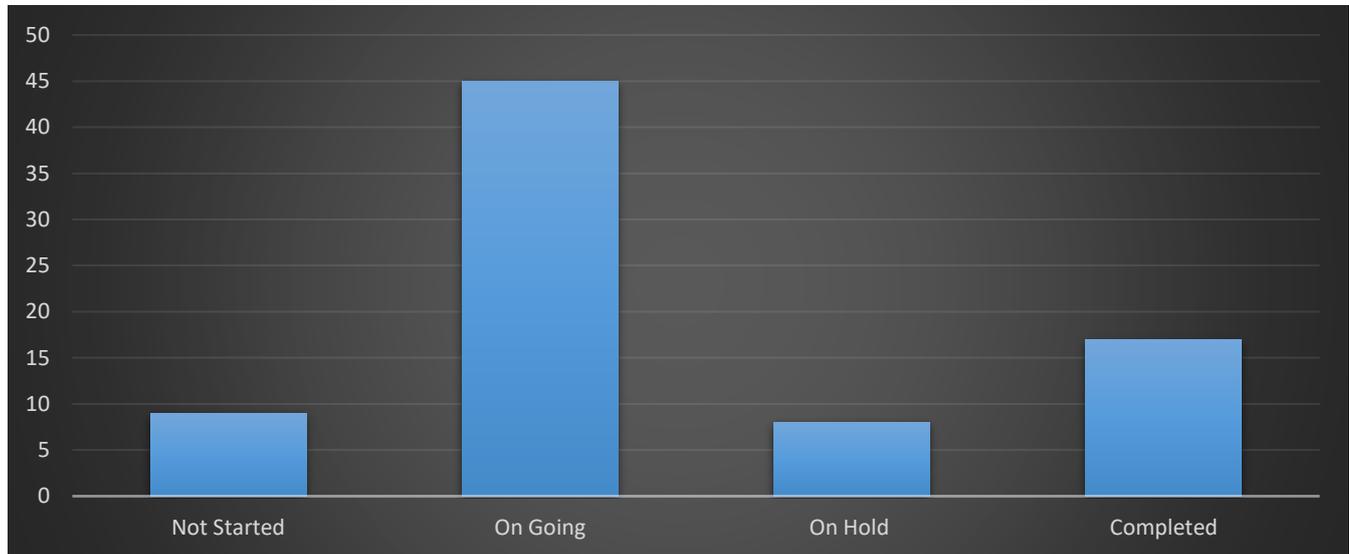
### Quantity of Feedback Received

	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Feedback Received	81	78	61	64	56	66	36	42	73	103	67	71



## Strata Business Plan Objectives 2021 / 22

In order for Strata to remain to be effective, it is important that a clear set of actions and objectives are identified in the Business Planning process and timescales associated with each action. These have been classified into Ongoing, On Hold, Completed and Not Started.



Strata All Team Objectives 21/22							
Action	Team	Required Outcome	Owner	Timeframe	Comments	Status	Status
Chat Bots/ Smart Speaker	Business Systems	Understand Business Requirements and anticipated Value that Chat Bots and Smart Speakers bring. Further Explore third party market place for solutions to understand potential costs Further investigate in-house development and use of Microsoft Azure Bot Service to implement home grown solution	David Sercombe	Mar-22	Some background research being done	1	Not Started
Agile Development/ Project Implementation	Business Systems	Work with Strata Solutions Delivery team and authorities to further develop the Strata project management framework to include Agile Development Options. Use Agile where appropriate to ensure timely delivery of in house developed solutions and reduce the risk of scope creep and time over runs	David Sercombe/ Pete Johns	Mar-22	Initial conversations have been held, but as yet no timeframes set	1	Not Started
Strata Business Plan	Core	Comprehensive 12 month plan for the Strata business	IT Director	Dec-21		1	Not Started
Investigate, plan and start move to Zero Trust approach	Security and Compliance	Deployment plan, 2022 costs and initial progress towards Zero Trust	Robin Barlow	October 2021 for budgetary costs, March 2022 initial approach		1	Not Started
Web Application Firewall	Security and Compliance	Using the now installed Kemp Load balancers enable the WAF functionality, configure and test	Robin Barlow	Summer 2021	This is being scheduled in by the Infrastructure team, but resource demands are impacting on the ability to progress this	1	Not Started

Move from the PSN	Security and Compliance	When the remaining government departments make their services available via the internet the dedicated PSN data network and some service costs will be dropped.	Robin Barlow	21/22 dependent on external events	Dependant on the Government, little influence Stata can have at this stage	1	Not Started
Configure and enable DLP (Data loss prevention)	Security and Compliance	Filtering in place to detect larger transfers of personal data, where the data has a defined marker	Robin Barlow	Jun 2022 for the email filtering, Nov 2022 for Web filtering		1	Not Started
Cyber Business Continuity test	Security and Compliance	Using an agreed scenario the three councils and Strata undertake a table top exercise to identify improvements	Robin Barlow	Summer 2021. This was originally planned for after the three councils own BCP tests but can be stand-alone		1	Not Started
Cyber Essentials Plus	Security and Compliance	Gain certification for Strata	Robin Barlow	Complete September 2021		1	Not Started
Introduce process that makes procurement of new non-standard systems and services much clearer and smoother	IT Solutions Delivery	Gives the authorities more flexibility to buy non-standard solutions that Strata can then support	Supplier Manager	May-21	Procurement of nonstandard product process to be reviewed and updated.	2	Ongoing
Expand and consolidate the use of Firmstep	Business Systems	Implement the following: SSO Middleware My Account in EDDC and ECC Centralised Customer change of details Asset and event booking Single view of the customer Social media integration Smart speaker / chatbot integration	David Sercombe	Mar-22	We are currently working on my Firmstep solutions such as booking, Single view of customers, Middleware, etc.	2	Ongoing
Dash boarding	Business Systems	Agree Priorities with Authorities Discuss resource requirements to develop 'data bucket' to enable end user reporting. Support end users to write their own reports	David Sercombe	Mar-22	Working with the authorities on further scoping of needs and data strategy.	2	Ongoing
Power Platform - End User development of Tools	Business Systems	Explore the Microsoft Power Platform including Forms, Apps and Flow to enable end users to rapidly create their own solutions. Work with the authorities to ensure sufficient governance in place to mitigate the negative effects of Shadow IT	David Sercombe	Mar-23	Conversations underway with Hable	2	Ongoing
Transparency	Business Systems	Further improve Transparency of the BCR and Project process for end users. Implement a mechanism to show the expect order of BCR work	David Sercombe	Mar-22	Dashboards improved, workflow improved, scheduling still being reviewed. Projects and BCR's now discussed as part of the IRB process	2	Ongoing

CMDB	Business Systems	Implement the new Strata CMDB in the vfire system. Review and update the data in the existing CMDB and transfer to vFire. Implement relationships between configuration items. Identify business system owners within the three authorities.	David Sercombe	Mar-22	We have now engaged Alemba and working on the elements of the phase 2 projects.	2	Ongoing
Development Standards	Business Systems	Ensure consistency in development practices by having comprehensive development standards documentation. Include in part of this specifics for end users if they are developing own apps.	Chris Frankum	Oct-21	Work has started on creating this standards document.	2	Ongoing
EDMS	Business Systems	Work already underway. Camino Tech Refresh in EDDC and TDC. Implementation of iDox DMS in TDC Planning. Wider collaboration project to introduce Teams, SharePoint and Office 365.			This is part of the O365 project.	2	Ongoing
Mobile Working App	Business Systems	Project already logged with Strata – will commence upon completion of Camino Tech Refresh in EDDC and TDC.		Q2 '21	Work has started.	2	Ongoing
Delivery of Savings forecast	Core	A signed off set of accounts identifying achievement of the savings forecast.	Strata Board	Mar-22	Strata are constantly monitoring all spend and managing in line with savings estimates.	2	Ongoing
Review of Governance	Core	Paper and associated actions to clarify Strata Governance.	Strata Board	Apr-21	Being discussed by the board.	2	Ongoing
Undertaking an annual staff survey	Core	Set of metrics measuring Strata staff wellbeing and job satisfaction.	IT Director	Dec-21	Survey developed to be released to staff in July 2021.	2	Ongoing
Review Strata 'value for money'	Core	Document identifying areas where Strata is delivering 'value for money'.	IT Director	Jun-21	Initial paper delivered to the authorities in early 2021, however more work is underway.	2	Ongoing
Benchmark Strata against other UK Public Sector organisations	Core	Creation of a benchmarking analysis to compare the services and costs of Strata against other Public Sector IT organisations.	IT Director	Jun-21	We have commenced the engagement with SOCITM and currently planning for the completion of the cost, estate and performance modules.	2	Ongoing
Review of Health and Safety procedures and Policies	Core	Spreadsheet to show all H&S procedures and Policies.	Office Manager	Mar-22		2	Ongoing
Identify the grey lines between Strata and the three authorities	Core	Review areas of cross over between Strata and the three authorities – work to agree where the area of responsibility should reside whether within Strata or within the authority.	IT Director	Sep-21	Responsibilities matrix has been created in draft. This is using a RACI methodology.	2	Ongoing
Post 2021/2022 printing setup and requirements.	Document Centre	Tender specification ready for issue Q1 2022.	Martin Millmow	Mar-22	Currently negotiating with Ricoh a new contract under a direct award, need to agree start dates with the authorities.	2	Ongoing
Expand Synertec use across the three councils.	Document Centre	Increased volume of letter output going through Synertec leading to a decrease in outgoing post.	Martin Millmow/Business system	Mar-22	Discussions ongoing with all three authorities. Currently waiting for EDDC to get through a 'hump' of work.	2	Ongoing

Continue to develop the Digital Mailroom operation to provide increased support to officers in the agile/WFH working environment.	Document Centre	In excess of 90% of post being scanned on receipt. More functions added to the services offered.	Martin Millmow	Mar-22	Digital mailroom rolled out at EDDC and TDC, ECC showing a degree of interest in the offering.	2	Ongoing
Analysing where print is being generated and challenging use.	Document Centre	Reduced print volumes and out-going postage volumes	Martin Millmow	Dec-21	Strata have challenged large print jobs, resulting in a decrease in some printing volumes.	2	Ongoing
Reduced carbon footprint	Document Centre	Increased use of recyclable consumables and include energy use considerations in the Printer tender documentation	Martin Millmow/Clive Newton	Mar-22	See above for negotiation with Ricoh details. Looking to extend existing contract rather than MFD's going off to landfill / recycling at the end of the existing lease. We are using recycled 70gsm paper. Sourcing environmentally friendly consumables where possible	2	Ongoing
Increased data collection around key volume areas. Scanning, digital document handling and post.	Document Centre	An increase in the number of monthly reporting areas.	Martin Millmow	Aug-21	Now collecting data around TDC Digital mailroom. Providing details of which departments are using the service the most. Print and post data is now shared as part of the Strata monthly reporting process.	2	Ongoing
Long Term Datacentre, Server & Desktop Strategy	Infrastructure and Support	We have now completed the original 5 year Hardware and software strategy relating to the Datacentres and Desktops, Analysis now required to look at the potential options, costs and impacts of various options, including but not limited to Renewal, Replacement and migration.	Head of Infrastructure & Support	End of Dec 2021	Strata have presented the EUC2030 vision.	2	Ongoing
Cloud Adoption	Infrastructure and Support	Migration to the cloud is heavily pushed by Vendors and Manufactures as being the most cost effective option in today's IT Environment, under previous analysis this was not the case however, we are now undertaking a further detailed review with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to again look at this model.	Infrastructure & Support	End of Dec 2021	Currently digesting and reviewing results of the AWS scoping / pricing work	2	Ongoing
MPLS Renewal or replacement	Infrastructure and Support	The current Strata Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network is due for renewal and or replacement	Infrastructure & Support	End of Feb 2022	Looking to go to tender at start of July 2021	2	Ongoing
SIP Renewal or Replacement	Infrastructure and Support	The current Strata Session Initiated Protocol (SIP) Trunk is due for renewal and or replacement	Infrastructure & Support	End of July 2021	Winner bidder (Gamma) selected. Now work is starting to migrate the service from VMB to Gamma	2	Ongoing
Strata Edge Network Resilience	Infrastructure and Support	As part of the continued commitment to make the network more resilient we will be looking at how we can achieve this, one key area already identified is to provide UPS backup to each network CAB to cover power surges, and small failures.	Infrastructure & Support	End of May 2021	Pretty much complete apart from TDC because of decarb project	2	Ongoing

Delivery of new Information Technology Service Management Tool	Infrastructure and Support	The new ITSM software Alemba vFire will need continued focus if we are to realise its full potential and value	Infrastructure & Support	End Dec 2021	Tool procured, further development planned	2	Ongoing
Review of Strata's current VMware License Model due for Renewal December 2020	Infrastructure and Support	The VMware Enterprise License agreement is renegotiated every year now, we will need to factor in any proposed changes to the business and infrastructure in this renewal	Infrastructure & Support	End of November 2021	Strata to work on the 12 month renewal.	2	Ongoing
Two Factor Authentication (2FA)	Infrastructure and Support	The three authorities now make significant use and investment in 2FA, the solution needs to be reviewed to make sure it is suitable for long term use.	Infrastructure & Support	End of March 2021	Have renewed for a further 12 months, to tie into O365 project	2	Ongoing
Hybrid Meetings	Infrastructure and Support	As part of the work Strata has been doing to support more agile council meetings, there may be a requirement to deploy a Hybrid infrastructure to allow members and officers to join meetings from home or large meetings rooms or any combination of the above	Infrastructure & Support	End of March 2021	Just BaU at the moment	2	Ongoing
Deploy Microsoft Teams	Infrastructure and Support	The deployment of Microsoft Teams will be a key part of the next 12 months, with all three authorities highlighting significant importance on its deployment, and its need to enable better collaborative working.	Infrastructure & Support	End of March 2022	This is now a project	2	Ongoing
Deploy o365 Applications	Infrastructure and Support	Following deployment of Teams we will look to leverage other SAAS based apps available to us as part of the new Microsoft agreement and Office 365 deployment.	Infrastructure & Support	End of March 2022	This is now a project	2	Ongoing
Review the use of Zoom	Infrastructure and Support	Following a deployment of Microsoft Teams a review will be undertaken as to whether there is a need to continue with the use of Zoom, currently Zoom cost the authorities £25000 per year.	Infrastructure & Support	End of May 2022	LWW meeting with Zoom Head of Public Sector in June 2021	2	Ongoing
SAN Replacement	Infrastructure and Support	The Current SAN is out of support and end of life in July 2022, this is a critical part of the infrastructure and its replacement will need to be scoped and procured well in advance to allow for migration.	Infrastructure & Support	End of Jul-22	Initial technology days with vendors have commenced	2	Ongoing
Setup a six monthly review of the IT Project Framework	IT Solutions Delivery	Six monthly reviews taking place in order to find continual improvements in our Project Management Framework, including lessons learned from closed projects	Head of IT Solutions Delivery	Initial review by end 2020	PJ is reviewing and streamlining the project framework process. PJ is working with TDC Programme Manager as art of this review.	2	Ongoing

Develop and maintain a comprehensive supplier and contract database	IT Solutions Delivery	A central database, preferably within Strata's vFire Platform, which staff can use to lookup supplier and contract information. For contract management we need alerts for when renewals are due, and also copies of the contracts themselves	Supplier Manager	Mar-21	Strata have developed a contract repository and this will be further enhanced as part of the vFire improvement programme	2	Ongoing
Produce a climate change report for Strata	IT Solutions Delivery	Work with Exeter University in producing report for Strata as a benchmark, along with recommendations on moving forwards	IT Trainer	Jan-21	Report produced and to be presented to the JSC / JEC during 2021	2	Ongoing
Increase visibility of all IT Projects	IT Solutions Delivery	Creation of a PowerBI Dashboard, accessible by key stakeholders, so they are able to review project progress at any time.	Head of IT Solutions Delivery	Mar-22	New project hub site completed. Dashboard being overlaid onto Project Hub for client use. IRB's are now presented too on a monthly basis and projects discussed. Project section now showing project stages presented in the monthly report	2	Ongoing
Work with each authority to produce an IT Training plan	IT Solutions Delivery	Ensures our training delivery is in line with the corporate objectives of our clients	IT Trainer	Apr-21	Strata have reached out to the councils, but as yet no training plan has been created.	2	Ongoing
Continue to develop training material that can be accessed by staff, including documentation, videos and wiki articles	IT Solutions Delivery	Ensure that training material is accessible via a number of mediums, including expanding current documentation, and exploring videos, wiki articles and webinars	IT Trainer	Dec-21	Quite a lot of training materials are now available, inc. videos and guides. Wiki's will be produced and made available later in the financial year	2	Ongoing
Setup workshops for demonstrating new technologies or product roadmaps from existing suppliers	IT Solutions Delivery	Gain greater clarity on what is possible with existing suppliers and services, allowing us to keep products for longer. Keep an eye on opportunities that may come from new concepts or technologies	Head of IT Solutions Delivery	Starting May 2021	No customer based ones yet, but we have done some O365 workshops.	2	Ongoing
Replace Clearswift Web filtering gateway	Security and Compliance	Formally procured Web filtering system that can support modern web sites / cloud systems	Robin Barlow	July 2021 for completion Sep 2021	Currently reviewing filtering systems prior to shortlisting of potential suppliers and to tune requirements.	2	Ongoing
Renewal of SIEM support	Security and Compliance	Continued use of the Logpoint SIEM after satisfactory contract renewal	Robin Barlow	Jan-22	Currently working with Logpoint on the commercials for a renewal	2	Ongoing
2021 PSN CoCo	Security and Compliance	Renewal of Council CoCo certificates before expiry of previous certificates	Robin Barlow	Dec-21	We are in the final stages of achieving PSN accreditation, one server remaining to be migrated.	2	Ongoing
Relocation of the Oakwood Datacentre	Infrastructure and Support	Initial suggestions looking to build a new fit for purpose facility in Teignbridge, leveraging the latest technology, this will support the councils agendas to minimise the carbon footprint and make it as green as is feasibly possible supporting the climate change emergency.	Infrastructure & Support	End of Dec 2021	Awaiting further information on the future of the Exeter Oakwood site.  This ties to the Cloud adoption work.	3	On Hold
Wifi Delivery Model Review	Infrastructure and Support	With an increasing demand and need for more agile working there is a need to review the current Wifi delivery model, to factor in resilience, capacity and performance and to future proof it for the years to come.	Infrastructure & Support	End of March 2021	On hold due to resource constraints	3	On Hold

Review the current delivery model for SQL Server	Infrastructure and Support	There is a requirement to review how we deliver, manage and support the need for SQL In Strata.	Infrastructure & Support	End of May 2021	On hold due to resource constraints	3	On Hold
Complete a review of Agile Working, Contracted Hours and Day for the I&S team	Infrastructure and Support	There is a requirement to carry out a review to look at how the team best meets the needs of the authorities and how we align ourselves to do this.	Infrastructure & Support	End of May 2021		3	On Hold
Skype for Business - Disaster Recovery Resilience	Infrastructure and Support	It has been identified that the current DR for this solution is not optimal so a project to improve this has been identified.	Infrastructure & Support	End of May 2021		3	On Hold
PSTN removal	Infrastructure and Support	The Legacy copper Openreach telephony network is being removed and replaced, this is due to be complete by 2025 however Exeter is scheduled early currently 2023 – Strata will need to have removed or migrated any legacy lines by this point	Infrastructure & Support	End of 2025	On hold due to resource constraints	3	On Hold
Skype Phase 2	Infrastructure and Support	In line with the above the next phases of the Skype project are to migrate Satellite sites to the Skype platform, this is to remove PSTN lines and save cost and also to bring these sites in line with main sites	Infrastructure & Support	End of 2021	On hold due to resource constraints	3	On Hold
Server 2012 removal	Infrastructure and Support	Currently Strata Has over 180 2012 Servers these will go out of support by the end of October 2023, we need to be replacing these at a rate of 1.2 per week to meet this crucial security deadline.	Infrastructure & Support	End of Oct-23	On hold due to resource constraints	3	On Hold
Payment Systems	Business Systems	Several BCRs already in place to handle these requirements such as contactless payments for donations – expected Q2/2 2021 Wider Financial Management project will review and introduce new online e-Commerce systems for selling items		Q2/3 2021	Solution implemented	4	Completed
Monthly Financial Analysis report	Core	Delivery of a detailed monthly financial analysis report on costs across all Strata service lines	IT Director	Monthly	A monthly spend analysis report is produced for the Strata managers and the Strata Board.	4	Completed
Six month Review of Mandatory training	Core	Spreadsheet to show all Strata staff and progress on completing all mandatory training	Office Manager	Sep-21	Mandatory training course completion is monitored and reviewed on a rolling six month basis	4	Completed
Review of Covid 19 measures	Core	Spreadsheet to show all Covid 19 related risks and mitigations	Office Manager	Apr-21	This is an ongoing exercise, but we constantly review Strata's Covid 19 measures	4	Completed

Consolidation of high volume operations into a single facility.	Document Centre	Single contact point for internal printing which is understood and accessible by all Officers. Use existing working practices such as the Strata portal to support access to services.	Martin Millmow	Jul-21	A restructure of the document centre has been completed and print is now centralised at EDDC and ECC with an aim to reduce to a single centre during the latter part of 2021 and into 2022.	4	Completed
Windows 10 Migration	Infrastructure and Support	All Desktops, Laptops and the Global desktop operating systems need to be migrated to a Windows 10 environment.	Infrastructure & Support	End of May 2021	The windows10 project is now complete and we have commenced optimisation of the Windows 10 estate to improve Zoom and MS team user experience	4	Completed
MIA Renewal or Replacement	Infrastructure and Support	The current Strata Managed Internet Access (MIA) network is due for renewal and or replacement	Infrastructure & Support	End of July 2023	New three year VMB contract agreed	4	Completed
Review of Strata's current Microsoft License Model due for Renewal May 2021	Infrastructure and Support	The Microsoft Enterprise License agreement is renegotiated every three years, we will need to factor in any proposed changes to the business and infrastructure in this renewal	Infrastructure & Support	End of March 2021	New three year contract entered into with Microsoft	4	Completed
Review the Strata Apprentice programme to see if it still fit for purpose	Infrastructure and Support	The apprentice program has been a great success, however increased completion for staff has led to a significant increase in costs to deliver the program, a review is required to see if this is still feasible and of value to deliver.	Infrastructure & Support	End of August 2021	Will review in Sept 2022	4	Completed
Review the current Backup solution Infrastructure	Infrastructure and Support	There is an ever increasing demand on the backup infrastructure and requirement to make it remains fit for purpose for the foreseeable future. There is a funded capital project already agreed for this work.	Infrastructure & Support	End of May 2021		4	Completed
Review the Exchange delivery model.	Infrastructure and Support	Currently Microsoft Exchange is one of the largest consumers of resources. A review is required to look at how best to deliver this and futureproof for the years ahead. Careful consideration needs to be given to integration and it is a key system for main other applications.	Infrastructure & Support	End of Dec 2021	Review completed, this will now be an ongoing migration to O365 and picked up as part of that project	4	Completed
Disaster Recovery VDI Capacity Improvement	Infrastructure and Support	Capital has already been agreed by all three authorities to increase capacity for VDI in a disaster recovery scenario. This will be increased to minimum of 600 users	Infrastructure & Support	End of March 2021	We now have circa 600 VDI desktops available in a BC scenario	4	Completed

Introduce virtual classroom technology to allow training of small groups	IT Solutions Delivery	Give better virtual training by being able to see all of the screens of delegates at the same time. This opens up the possibility of training more people at once, and providing more complicated training courses.	IT Trainer	Mar-21	We have explored this, but as yet no clear technology to deliver what is needed. We have been delivering virtual training to users in small groups.	4	Completed
Renew Veeam Backup solution	Security and Compliance	Procure renewal and consider optional elements including Veeam One and Veeam Recovery manager (SRM alternative)	Robin Barlow	Mar-21		4	Completed
Cyber awareness	Security and Compliance	Review Dojo against alternative Cyber awareness solutions and procure/ deploy	Robin Barlow	Jun-21	Renewed with Matobo	4	Completed
Identify and implement backup solution for Cloud systems	Security and Compliance	Backup solution to meet data recovery and business continuity for both on premises and cloud solutions	Robin Barlow	Dependent on when key unbacked up data is present on	Veeam selected as the chosen platform	4	Completed
Risk and issue management approach	Security and Compliance	A recording and management system that allows smaller risks and issues to be managed on an operational basis	Robin Barlow	Feb-21	Any threats are no raised in the incident log and managed on a weekly basis	4	Completed

**STRATA JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
STRATA JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**DATE OF MEETING:** 12 JULY 2021  
19 JULY 2021

**PUBLICATION DATE:** 2 JULY 2021

**REPORT OF:** STRATA FINANCE

**SUBJECT:** STRATA BUDGET MONITORING – MAY 2021/22

**1. PURPOSE**

1.1 This report advises on the financial position of Strata at the end of May 2021.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Company has been given a total of £6.60 million to run the IT Services in 2021/22 along with funding for various capital projects. The Company also maintains an account for additional purchases throughout the year, which is invoiced to each Council based on actual purchases made.

**3. MAIN IMPLICATIONS**

**Strata Budget Monitoring to 31 March 2021**

**3.1 Savings as per Business Plan**

The 2021-22 Business Plan has revised the savings profile set out in the original Business Case over the initial ten year period of the Company. The savings were split into cashable revenue savings and savings to the Councils from not having to implement specific capital projects individually. Although the Business Plan has not been fully agreed, the Joint Executive Committee approved the spending plans and budget therein.

A breakdown of the revised saving summary is set out below.

		<b>Projected Revenue Savings</b>	<b>Actual Revenue Savings</b>	<b>Variance</b>
2015-16	Year 1	(262,098)	(232,000)	<b>30,098</b>
2016-17	Year 2	(20,000)	(100,000)*	<b>(80,000)</b>
2017-18	Year 3	(252,836)	(565,000)	<b>(312,164)</b>
2018-19	Year 4	(381,961)	(620,000)	<b>(238,039)</b>
2019-20	Year 5	(853,888)	(1,074,000)**	<b>(219,641)</b>
2020-21	Year 6	(696,167)	(1,051,000)***	<b>(355,258)</b>
2021-22	Year 7	(747,804)		<b>747,804</b>
2022-23	Year 8	(785,670)		<b>785,670</b>
2023-24	Year 9	(851,074)		<b>851,074</b>
2024-25	Year 10	(905,398)		<b>905,398</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>(5,756,896)</b>	<b>(3,642,000)</b>	

\* Although savings of £310,000 were delivered, Strata asked for £210,000 to be used for specific service improvements. This was agreed by the three Councils.

\*\* Strata reduced the payments for the Councils by £500,000 at the start of the year.

\*\*\* In response to the challenges the Councils faced as a result of the restrictions imposed in response to Covid-19 Strata identified an additional c£340,000 of one off savings on top of the £696,167. The outturn position was broadly in line with that projection.

### **3.2 Key Variations from Revenue Budget**

Strata is projecting a small additional surplus, which will be used to support some projects that have been delayed by Covid. The key variations are set out below:

The key variations are set out below:

Expenditure Type	Actual Over / (Underspend) £	Detail
Employees	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On track</li> </ul>
Supplies & Services	100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific fund to prioritise projects delayed by Covid.</li> </ul>
Transport	(23,958)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significantly lower transport costs.</li> </ul>
Income - Revenue	(104,828)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional contract income being used to fund additional spend in supplies &amp; services</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Council Recharge Account

The Councils also request additional equipment for which they are subsequently invoiced. This account is brought to zero at the year end.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 That the Joint Scrutiny Committee and Joint Executive Committee note the contents of the report.

<b>Dave Hodgson</b> <b>Director (Finance Lead)</b>	<b>Contact details</b> <b>Tel: 01392 265292</b> <b>E-mail: david.hodgson@exeter.gov.uk</b>
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BUDGET MONITORING  
31 MAY 2021

**STRATA SERVICE SOLUTIONS - REVENUE BUDGET**

	<b>REVISED REVENUE BUDGET</b>	<b>ACTUAL &amp; COMMITMENTS</b>	<b>OUTTURN</b>	<b>VARIANCE</b>
	£	£	£	£
EMPLOYEES	2,996,394	411,575	2,996,769	375
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	3,407,978	1,716,793	3,507,978	100,000
TRANSPORT	29,250	592	5,292	(23,958)
SUPPORT SERVICES	60,000	60,000	60,000	0
TAX ON INTEREST	0	0	0	0
INCOME - REVENUE	(6,741,426)	(2,311,290)	(6,846,254)	(104,828)
INVESTMENT INTEREST	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>(247,804)</b>	<b>(122,330)</b>	<b>(276,214)</b>	<b>(28,410)</b>

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**STRATA JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
STRATA JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**DATE OF MEETING:** 12 JULY 2021  
19 JULY 2021

**PUBLICATION DATE:** 2 JULY 2021

**REPORT OF:** STRATA FINANCE

**SUBJECT:** STRATA BUDGET MONITORING OUTTURN - 2020/21

**1. PURPOSE**

1.1 This report advises on the financial position of Strata at the end of 2020-21.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Company has been given a total of £6.60 million to run the IT Services in 2020/21 along with funding for various capital projects. The Company also maintains an account for additional purchases throughout the year, which is invoiced to each Council based on actual purchases made.

**3. MAIN IMPLICATIONS**

**Strata Budget Monitoring to 31 March 2021**

**3.1 Savings as per Business Plan**

The 2018-19 Business Plan has revised the savings profile set out in the original Business Case over the initial ten year period of the Company. The savings were split into cashable revenue savings and savings to the Councils from not having to implement specific capital projects individually. Although the Business Plan has not been fully agreed, the Joint Executive Committee approved the spending plans and budget therein.

A breakdown of the revised saving summary is set out below.

		<b>Capital Expenditure Savings</b>	<b>Projected Revenue Savings</b>	<b>Actual Revenue Savings</b>	<b>Variance</b>
2015-16	Year 1	(443,932)	(262,098)	(232,000)	<b>30,098</b>
2016-17	Year 2	(312,522)	(20,000)	(100,000)*	<b>(80,000)</b>
2017-18	Year 3	(358,222)	(252,836)	(565,000)	<b>(312,164)</b>
2018-19	Year 4	(459,609)	(381,961)	(620,000)	<b>(238,039)</b>
2019-20	Year 5	(129,300)	(853,888)	(1,074,000)**	<b>(219,641)</b>
2020-21	Year 6	867,962	(696,167)	(1,051,425)***	<b>(355,258)</b>
2021-22	Year 7	(138,000)	(662,091)		<b>662,091</b>
2022-23	Year 8	(9,884)	(701,005)		<b>701,005</b>
2023-24	Year 9	(196,902)	(825,202)		<b>825,202</b>
2024-25	Year 10	(374,300)	(908,996)		<b>908,996</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>(1,554,709)</b>	<b>(5,564,244)</b>	<b>(2,591,000)</b>	

\* Although savings of £310,000 were delivered, Strata asked for £210,000 to be used for specific service improvements. This was agreed by the three Councils.

\*\* Strata reduced the payments for the Councils by £500,000 at the start of the year.

\*\*\* In response to the challenges the Councils faced as a result of the restrictions imposed in response to Covid-19 Strata identified an additional c£340,000 of one off savings on top of the £696,167. The outturn position was broadly in line with that projection.

### **3.2 Key Variations from Revenue Budget**

In order to support the Councils during this difficult year, Strata has identified a further £340,000 of in year reductions through temporarily keeping posts vacant, reduced travel and better contract management. The key variations are set out below:

The key variations are set out below:

Expenditure Type	Actual Over / (Underspend) £	Detail
Employees	(72,927)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional capacity brought in to support the Helpdesk;</li> <li>• Offset by lower overtime costs, holding vacancies and capitalisation of some staff;</li> </ul>
Supplies & Services	(37,365)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings in key contracts e.g. Broadband.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Transport	(11,251)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly lower transport costs.</li> </ul>
Income - Revenue	109,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced Document Centre recharges;</li> <li>• Income from capitalised staff not shown in revenue account.</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Council Recharge Account

The Councils also request additional equipment for which they are subsequently invoiced. This account is brought to zero at the year end.

### 3.4 Statement of Accounts

The Statement of Accounts are shown at Appendix B. These Statutory Accounts show the true financial position of the Company and are affected by items not included in the management accounts such as the Pension Fund deficit and depreciation. The Accounts were approved by the Board on 28 May 2021.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Joint Scrutiny Committee and Joint Executive Committee note the contents of the report.



Solutions for government

<b>Dave Hodgson</b> <b>Director (Finance Lead)</b>	<b>Contact details</b> Tel: 01392 265292 E-mail: <a href="mailto:david.hodgson@exeter.gov.uk">david.hodgson@exeter.gov.uk</a>
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BUDGET MONITORING  
31 MARCH 2021

STRATA SERVICE SOLUTIONS - REVENUE BUDGET				
	REVISED REVENUE BUDGET	ACTUAL & COMMITMENTS	OUTTURN	VARIANCE
	£	£	£	£
EMPLOYEES	3,020,815	2,973,742	2,947,888	(72,927)
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	3,133,439	3,096,074	3,096,074	(37,365)
TRANSPORT	16,000	4,749	4,749	(11,251)
SUPPORT SERVICES	60,000	60,000	60,000	0
TAX ON INTEREST	950	0	0	(950)
INCOME - REVENUE	(6,769,637)	(6,660,137)	(6,660,137)	109,500
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(5,000)	0	0	5,000
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>(543,433)</b>	<b>(525,571)</b>	<b>(551,425)</b>	<b>(7,992)</b>

		(551,000)
EDDC	36.69%	(202,172.92)
ECC	35.94%	(198,007.36)
TDC	27.37%	(150,819.72)

CAPITAL PROJECTS						
	CAPITAL BUDGET	ACTUAL & COMMITMENTS	OUTTURN	BUDGET REMAINING		
	£	£	£	£		
SC001/08	C	DATA CENTRE / DR - INFRASTRUCTURE including: WAN AD & EXCHANGE	553,023	1,026,823	1,026,823	473,800
SC060		VDI Infrastructure	150,000	159,400	159,400	9,400
SC002	C	DATA CENTRE - HARDWARE	113,200	240,987	240,987	127,787
SC003	C	DATA CENTRE - SOFTWARE	860,000	975,950	975,950	115,950
SC006	C	SERVICE DESK	7,000	30,524	30,524	23,524
SC007/24/32	C	Telecoms (incl contact centre)	268,623	254,837	254,837	(13,786)
SC009	C	SECURITY	87,150	56,850	56,850	(30,300)
SC066		Microsoft Office 365 Capital Funds	(2,038,996)	6,413	6,413	6,413
			<b>0</b>	<b>(2,945,210)</b>	<b>(2,945,210)</b>	<b>(906,214)</b>
				<b>(193,425)</b>	<b>(193,425)</b>	<b>(193,425)</b>
SC011		Voice Activated Directory	44,800	42,812	42,812	(1,988)
SC012	C	IDOX	170,687	238,501	238,501	67,814
SC013		Public-I TDC AV Equipment	124,750	104,424	104,424	(20,326)
SC014		BARTEC - TDC	77,175	77,175	77,175	0
SC015		Guildhall Wi-fi	17,000	15,005	15,005	(1,995)
SC020/21		E-Fin upgrade (ECC)	100,000	79,942	79,942	(20,058)
SC036		E-Fin upgrade (EDDC)	22,000	26,545	26,545	4,545
SC016		ECC - Firmstep	280,000	117,165	117,165	(162,835)
SC018	C	iTrent	186,000	185,027	185,027	(973)
SC022		EDDC Housing Management System	158,960	138,483	138,483	(20,477)
SC017		ECC Housing Management System	125,000	291,089	291,089	166,089
SC023		Revs & Bens - EDDC	10,913	24,955	24,955	14,042
SC025/31		ECC - Trade Waste System	69,850	70,445	70,445	595
SC037		TDC - Firmstep	64,043	300,651	300,651	236,608
SC029		EDDC - Member Chamber	43,448	43,448	43,448	0
SC028		EDDC - Tree Management System	14,657	14,657	14,657	0
SC030		TDC - vdi Servers (Adelante)	17,000	16,874	16,874	(126)
SC034/35		ECC - Smart Devices	130,000	91,299	91,299	(38,701)
SC026	C	LLPG	39,500	20,115	20,115	(19,385)
SC027		Revs & Bens - TDC	75,010	69,540	69,540	(5,470)
SC040		TDC - Oracle upgrade	12,000	12,000	12,000	0
SC041		ECC Electoral Reg- Mobile Canv	14,500	14,500	14,500	0
SC038/42	C	Car Park Convergence	10,000	73,988	73,988	63,988
SC043		TDC Modern Gov	16,850	16,823	16,823	(28)
SC045		ECC switch replacement	125,000	96,052	96,052	(28,948)
SC046		TDC Reception Management	10,000	9,293	9,293	(707)
SC047		TDC Mobile Working Project	18,500	18,205	18,205	(295)
SC049	C	Cemeteries convergence project	30,000	9,798	9,798	(20,202)
SC050	C	GIS systems convergence	5,000	2,618	2,618	(2,382)
SC051		EDDC Modern Gov	17,150	17,150	17,150	0
SC052		EDDC Firmstep	150,000	221,544	221,544	71,544
SC053		Finance Systems Convergence	1,000,000	91	91	(999,909)
SC054		ECC-Income Management System	58,550	22,205	22,205	(36,345)
SC055	C	IDOX - Env Health Convergence	60,000	50,075	50,075	(9,926)
SC056		ECC - Agile & Flexible working	300,000	268,927	268,927	(31,073)
SC057		Legal Claims Management convergence	68,000	71,051	71,051	3,051
SC061		TDC - TR DFR Civica		35,000	35,000	35,000
SC062		EDDC - TR DFR Civica		59,700	59,700	59,700
SC064		IDOX SYSTEM FOR PLANNING		21,960	21,960	21,960
SC065		LEGEND (ECC Z1370)		54,440	54,440	54,440
SC068		Idox Oracle Upgrades		27,360	27,360	27,360
SC070		IDOX-EDDC Env.Hlth convergence		10,943	10,943	10,943
SC073		TDC Planning Sys. Improvement		5,425	5,425	5,425
		Capital Funds	(2,162,715)	(2,750,742)	(2,750,742)	(588,027)
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>1,503,628</b>	<b>336,555</b>	<b>336,555</b>	<b>(1,167,073)</b>

## COUNCIL RECHARGE

	ACTUAL TO DATE
	£
EMPLOYEES	6,142
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	789,602
TRANSPORT	
INCOME	(795,744)
<b>TO BE RECHARGED TO COUNCILS</b>	<b>0</b>

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**Strata Service Solutions Limited**  
**Annual Report and Financial Statements**  
**Year Ended 31 March 2021**  
Registration number: 09041662

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

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# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Company Information

<b>Directors</b>	Mr S P I Davey Mr R D Hodgson Mr P Nicholls
<b>Registered office</b>	Civic Centre Paris Street Exeter Devon EX1 1JN
<b>Auditors</b>	PKF Francis Clark Statutory Auditor Centenary House Peninsula Park Rydon Lane Exeter Devon EX2 7XE

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Strategic Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

The directors present their strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2021.

### Principal activity

The principal activity of the company is the provision of information technology services to East Devon District Council, Teignbridge District Council and Exeter City Council.

### Fair review of the business

Turnover for the year amounted to £7,836,280 (2020: £7,341,744) with a loss before taxation for the year of £499,417 (2019: loss of £1,160,170). Net current assets are £1,186,838 (2020: £1,063,056) but the company has net liabilities totalling £9,788,218 (2020: £5,360,801) due to the defined pension liability. In spite of the loss and net liability position, the Directors are satisfied that the guarantee provided by the three owner Council's in respect of the Pension Fund liabilities means that the Company can continue to trade and invest in the infrastructure required to grow the Company.

The Company's mutual trading status means that it only conducts business with the three owner Councils.

Performance in the year exceeded the Business Plan expectations, and resulted in delivery of a £1 million benefit to the Owners. Half of this was delivered up front in the form of reduced payments. Additional savings were achieved through renegotiating a number of contracts, principally the main broadband contracts for the owners, and through holding vacant posts to support the Councils whose income was badly affected by Covid-19. Over the life of the Company, it has delivered refunds to the Councils totalling £3.642 million well in excess of the targets set out in the original Business Plan.

The Directors draw attention to the fact that the Balance Sheet of the Company would be positive, if it were not for the Defined Pension Liability. It is a requirement of the Owners to offer this to our employees and as such it is backed by a full guarantee.

In summary, the Company has again exceeded expectations from a financial perspective, whilst continuing to deliver the other objectives required by the owners.

### Principal risks and uncertainties

The Company is owned by three Local Authorities. Budgets are fixed and must therefore be managed tightly, to deliver the objectives set for the Company.

As the Country continues to respond to the pandemic, there continues to be a significant effect on the income generated within the three owner Councils. Government support is due to end in June 2021, and there is a risk that further reduction in expenditure will be required, if further support is not forthcoming from Central Government. At this stage the Councils have not indicated that they will be reducing their payments to the Company and it is not anticipated that this will happen. At worst the Councils may seek an additional refund and the Company is prepared for this and has identified options, which will not impact on the operational or financial performance of the Company.

As the owners are Local Authorities, they are subject to political change, which can affect the Company. If political change does take place in one of the owners, there is still a requirement to give 18 months' notice after the end of the three year period prior to leaving the Company, which should allow for a full assessment of the Company moving forward. In reality, however, as the three Councils have merged the infrastructure on which they run their respective businesses, it would be financially challenging for one of the Councils to serve notice. A Council would have to put in place alternate infrastructure and compensate the other authorities for the additional costs that they would incur going forward. Further details are given in the accounting policies under Going Concern.

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

Strategic Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

Approved by the Board on 28.05.21 and signed on its behalf by:



.....  
Mr R D Hodgson  
Director

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Directors' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

The directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

#### Directors of the company

The directors who held office during the year were as follows:

Mr S P I Davey

Mr R D Hodgson

Mr P Nicholls

#### Disclosure of information to the auditors

Each director has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. The directors confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditors are unaware.

Approved by the Board on 28-05-21 and signed on its behalf by:



.....  
Mr R D Hodgson  
Director

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Statement of Directors' Responsibilities

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Strata Service Solutions Limited

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Strata Service Solutions Limited (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2021, which comprise the Profit and Loss Account, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its loss for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the director's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

## **Strata Service Solutions Limited**

### **Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Strata Service Solutions Limited**

We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### **Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Strategic Report and Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Strategic Report and Directors' Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

#### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report and the Directors' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

#### **Responsibilities of directors**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities set out on page 5, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Strata Service Solutions Limited

As part of our audit planning we obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that is applicable to the company. We gained an understanding of the company and the industry in which the company operates as part of this assessment to identify the key laws and regulations affecting the company. As part of this, we reviewed the company's website for indication of any regulations and certification in place and discussed these with the relevant individuals responsible for compliance. The key regulations we identified were health and safety regulations, breaches of The General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") and achieving accreditation to the public services network. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and relevant tax legislation.

We discussed with management how the compliance with these laws and regulations is monitored and discussed policies and procedures in place. We also identified the individuals who have responsibility for ensuring that the company complies with laws and regulations and deals with reporting any issues if they arise. As part of our planning procedures, we assessed the risk of any non-compliance with laws and regulations on the company's ability to continue trading and the risk of material misstatement to the accounts.

We also evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements. The key incentive identified is to meet the targets set by the group and we determined that the principal risks were related to the overstatement of profit, either through overstating revenue, understating expenditure or management bias in accounting estimates.

Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures involved the following:

- Enquiries of management regarding their knowledge of any non-compliance with laws and regulations that could affect the financial statements. As part of these enquiries we also discussed with management whether there have been any known instances of fraud, of which there were none.
- Discussed with the health and safety officer if any incidents have been reported during the year under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 ("RIDDOR").
- Review of the GDPR policy and enquiries to the Data Protection Officer as to the occurrence and outcome of any reportable breaches.
- Reviewed the most recent certificate for accreditation to the public services network.
- Reviewed legal and professional costs to identify any possible non-compliance or legal costs in respect of non-compliance.
- Audited the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.
- Reviewed estimates and judgements made in the accounts for any indication of bias and challenged assumptions used by management in making the estimates.

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

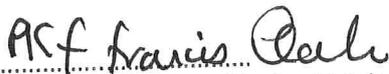
### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Strata Service Solutions Limited

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements. This risk increases the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements as we are less likely to be come aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Stephanie Henshaw (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
PKF Francis Clark, Statutory Auditor

Centenary House  
Peninsula Park  
Rydon Lane  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX2 7XE

Date: 7/6/21

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Profit and Loss Account

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Turnover	3	7,836,280	7,341,744
Cost of sales		<u>(3,405,661)</u>	<u>(3,551,672)</u>
Gross profit		4,430,619	3,790,072
Administrative expenses		(4,801,574)	(4,794,101)
Other operating income	4	<u>6,538</u>	<u>-</u>
Operating loss	5	(364,417)	(1,004,029)
Other interest receivable and similar income		-	10,859
Interest payable and similar charges	8	<u>(135,000)</u>	<u>(167,000)</u>
Loss before tax		(499,417)	(1,160,170)
Taxation	9	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,063)</u>
Loss for the financial year		<u><u>(499,417)</u></u>	<u><u>(1,162,233)</u></u>

The notes on pages 15 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.  
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## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Statement of Comprehensive Income

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Loss for the year		(499,417)	(1,162,233)
Remeasurement (loss)/gain on defined benefit pension schemes	15	<u>(3,928,000)</u>	<u>1,905,000</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year		<u><u>(4,427,417)</u></u>	<u><u>742,767</u></u>

The notes on pages 15 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.  
Page 11

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Balance Sheet

31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Intangible assets	10	1,475,407	1,428,986
Tangible assets	11	<u>457,630</u>	<u>722,837</u>
		<u>1,933,037</u>	<u>2,151,823</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stocks		9,775	9,219
Debtors	12	1,783,368	1,959,454
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>863,053</u>	<u>271,259</u>
		2,656,196	2,239,932
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	<u>(1,469,358)</u>	<u>(1,176,876)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>1,186,838</u>	<u>1,063,056</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		3,119,875	3,214,879
<b>Deferred income</b>	13	<u>(2,515,093)</u>	<u>(2,650,680)</u>
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>		604,782	564,199
Net pension liability	15	<u>(10,393,000)</u>	<u>(5,925,000)</u>
<b>Net liabilities</b>		<u>(9,788,218)</u>	<u>(5,360,801)</u>
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Called up share capital	16	3	3
Profit and loss account		<u>(9,788,221)</u>	<u>(5,360,804)</u>
<b>Total equity</b>		<u>(9,788,218)</u>	<u>(5,360,801)</u>

Approved and authorised by the Board on 28.05.21 and signed on its behalf by:



.....  
Mr R D Hodgson  
Director

Company Registration Number: 09041662

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Statement of Changes in Equity

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Share capital £	Profit and loss account £	Total £
At 1 April 2020	3	(5,360,804)	(5,360,801)
Loss for the year	-	(499,417)	(499,417)
Other comprehensive income	-	(3,928,000)	(3,928,000)
Total comprehensive income	-	(4,427,417)	(4,427,417)
At 31 March 2021	3	(9,788,221)	(9,788,218)

	Share capital £	Capital contribution reserve £	Profit and loss account £	Total £
At 1 April 2019	3	240,453	(6,344,024)	(6,103,568)
Loss for the period	-	-	(1,162,233)	(1,162,233)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	1,905,000	1,905,000
Total comprehensive income	-	-	742,767	742,767
Transfer to profit and loss reserve	-	(240,453)	240,453	-
At 31 March 2020	3	-	(5,360,804)	(5,360,801)

The notes on pages 15 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.  
Page 13

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Loss for the year		(499,417)	(1,162,233)
Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items			
Depreciation and amortisation	5	624,422	994,883
Loss on disposal of tangible assets		218,724	-
Finance income		-	(10,859)
Finance costs	8	135,000	167,000
Corporation tax	9	-	2,063
		<u>478,729</u>	<u>(9,146)</u>
Working capital adjustments			
Net pension movement	15	405,000	681,000
(Increase)/decrease in stocks		(556)	1,284
Decrease/(increase) in trade debtors	12	176,086	(215,856)
Increase/(decrease) in trade creditors	13	294,545	(805,908)
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income		<u>(135,587)</u>	<u>317,814</u>
Cash generated from operations		1,218,217	(30,812)
Corporation tax paid		<u>(2,063)</u>	<u>(1,538)</u>
Net cash flow from operating activities		<u>1,216,154</u>	<u>(32,350)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Interest received		-	10,859
Acquisitions of tangible assets		(187,123)	(404,144)
Acquisition of intangible assets		<u>(437,237)</u>	<u>(523,831)</u>
Net cash flows from investing activities		<u>(624,360)</u>	<u>(917,116)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		591,794	(949,466)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		<u>271,259</u>	<u>1,220,725</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		<u><u>863,053</u></u>	<u><u>271,259</u></u>

The notes on pages 15 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.  
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# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

### 1 General information

The company is a private company limited by share capital, incorporated in England and Wales.

The address of its principal place of business and registered office is:

Civic Centre  
Paris Street  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX1 1JN

### 2 Accounting policies

#### Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

#### Basis of accounting and statement of compliance

The company's financial statements have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102 - the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

There are no material departures from FRS 102.

The functional currency of Strata Service Solutions Limited is considered to be pounds sterling because that is the currency of the economic environment in which the company operates.

#### Going concern

Each year the Company produces a Business Plan, setting out projected financial returns for the following period (latest four years) based on the agreed funding mechanism. The latest Business Plan runs to 2024-25 and projects a positive financial position in each year. This is based on known cost pressures and income increases in line with inflation. As the Company is set up to deliver savings to the Owners there is a significant buffer of income in excess of £0.5 million in each year of the plan, which will protect the Company from risks to its going concern status.

The continuing impact of Covid 19 on the business has been considered. The company is continuing to trade as usual, subject to social distancing requirements, and this is expected to continue to be the case as the councils continue to operate and require support. Further, there has been no change to the support from the three councils as detailed above. Whilst the restrictions put in place continue to have a significant impact on the owners' income, the continuing provision of an effective IT support system is critical to Council's operational and strategic response. Whilst some additional reduction in costs may be required, the Directors and management team have identified a number of options which will not impact on the operational or financial performance of the Company. The directors therefore do not believe that Covid 19 will have an impact on the company's ability to continue trading.

On this basis, the directors have prepared the financial statements on a going concern basis.

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

### Key sources of estimation uncertainty

The directors have considered the judgements and estimation uncertainties included in these financial statements and the accounting policies applied and concluded that these do not have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements or lead to a risk of causing a material misstatement of the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year. Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an on-going basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects that period only, or in the period of revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The items in the financial statement where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

Due to advancements in technology the estimation of the useful economic life of intangible assets, which predominately are made up of software, is deemed to be a key estimate. The carrying amount is £1,475,407 (2020 - £1,428,986).

Due to advancements in technology the estimation of the useful economic life of tangible assets, which predominately are made up of computer equipment, is deemed to be a key estimate. The carrying amount is £457,630 (2020 - £722,837).

Defined benefit pension liability - assumptions surrounding the discount rate, future salary increases, inflation and future pension increased are considered key estimates. The carrying amount is £(10,393,000) (2020 - £(5,925,000)).

### Revenue recognition

Turnover comprises the fair value of the consideration received or receivable for the provision of information technology services to the relevant councils. Turnover is shown net of value added tax, returns, rebates and discounts. Fees are invoiced quarterly and recognised in the period to which they relate. Revenue is accrued or deferred as appropriate.

### Government grants

Government grants relating to fixed assets are treated as deferred income and released to the profit and loss account over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. Other grants are credited to the profit and loss account as the expenditure is incurred.

During the year the company recognised Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ("CJRS") grant income from the Government designed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The company has elected to account for such grants under the accruals model as permitted by FRS102. Grants of a revenue nature are recognised in "other income" within profit or loss in the same period as the related expenditure.

### Tax

Tax is recognised in profit or loss, except that a change attributable to an item of income or expense recognised as other comprehensive income is also recognised directly in other comprehensive income.

The current corporation tax charge is calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the reporting date in the countries where the company operates and generates taxable income.

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

### Tangible assets

Tangible assets are stated in the balance sheet at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

The cost of tangible assets includes directly attributable incremental costs incurred in their acquisition and installation.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is charged so as to write off the cost of assets, other than land and properties under construction over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

<b>Asset class</b>	<b>Depreciation method and rate</b>
Computer equipment	5-10 years straight line

### Intangible assets

Intangible assets are stated in the balance sheet at cost, less any subsequent accumulated amortisation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

### Amortisation

Amortisation is provided on intangible assets so as to write off the cost over their useful life as follows:

<b>Asset class</b>	<b>Amortisation method and rate</b>
Software	5 years straight line

### Stocks

Stocks represent consumable stock and are carried at cost less provision for impairment.

### Leases

Leases in which substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases are charged to profit or loss on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

### Defined benefit pension obligation

The liability recognised in the balance sheet in respect of defined benefit pension plans is the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the reporting date minus the fair value of plan assets. The defined benefit obligation is measured using the projected unit credit method. The present value of the defined benefit obligation is determined by discounting the estimated future payments by reference to market yields at the reporting date on high-quality corporate bonds that are denominated in the currency in which the benefits will be paid, and that have terms to maturity approximating to the terms of the related pension liability.

Actuarial gains and losses are charged or credited to other comprehensive income in the period in which they arise.

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

### Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument and derecognised when in the case of assets, the contractual rights to cash flows from the assets expire or substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are transferred to another party, or in the case of liabilities, when the company's obligations are discharged, expire or are cancelled.

The company holds the following basic financial instruments:

- Short term trade and other debtors and creditors

These instruments are initially measured at transaction price, including transaction costs, and are subsequently carried at the undiscounted amount of the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received, after taking account of impairment adjustments.

### 3 Revenue

The analysis of the company's revenue for the year from continuing operations, all of which is attributable to the United Kingdom, is as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Fee income	6,904,881	6,665,094
Grant income	931,399	676,650
	<u>7,836,280</u>	<u>7,341,744</u>

### 4 Other operating income

The analysis of the company's other operating income for the year is as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Miscellaneous other operating income	<u>6,538</u>	<u>-</u>

### 5 Operating loss

Arrived at after charging

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation expense	233,606	377,339
Amortisation expense	390,816	617,544
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	<u>218,724</u>	<u>-</u>

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### 6 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs (including directors' remuneration) were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	2,303,127	2,233,502
Social security costs	229,561	219,060
Pension costs, defined benefit scheme	810,000	1,034,000
	<u>3,342,688</u>	<u>3,486,562</u>

The average number of persons employed by the company (including directors) during the year, analysed by category was as follows:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
Administration and support	<u>74</u>	<u>76</u>

#### 7 Auditor's remuneration

	2021	2020
	£	£
Audit of the financial statements	<u>6,914</u>	<u>5,500</u>

#### 8 Interest payable and similar expenses

	2021	2020
	£	£
Net finance costs in respect of defined benefit pension scheme	<u>135,000</u>	<u>167,000</u>

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### 9 Taxation

Tax charged in the profit and loss account

	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Current taxation</b>		
UK corporation tax	<u>-</u>	<u>2,063</u>

The tax on profit before tax for the year is lower than the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK (2020 - lower than the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK) of 19% (2020 - 19%).

The differences are reconciled below:

	2021 £	2020 £
Loss before tax	<u>(499,417)</u>	<u>(1,160,170)</u>
Corporation tax at standard rate	(94,889)	(220,432)
Effect of expense not deductible in determining taxable profit (tax loss)	<u>94,889</u>	<u>222,495</u>
Total tax charge	<u>-</u>	<u>2,063</u>

By virtue of its members, the company has been set up as a mutual trading company and as such the tax charge for the year is only applied to its external investment income.

#### 10 Intangible assets

	Software £	Total £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>		
At 1 April 2020	4,558,582	4,558,582
Additions	<u>437,237</u>	<u>437,237</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>4,995,819</u>	<u>4,995,819</u>
<b>Amortisation</b>		
At 1 April 2020	3,129,596	3,129,596
Amortisation charge	<u>390,816</u>	<u>390,816</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>3,520,412</u>	<u>3,520,412</u>
<b>Carrying amount</b>		
At 31 March 2021	<u>1,475,407</u>	<u>1,475,407</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>1,428,986</u>	<u>1,428,986</u>

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### 11 Tangible assets

	Computer equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>		
At 1 April 2020	2,496,164	2,496,164
Additions	187,123	187,123
Disposals	<u>(675,531)</u>	<u>(675,531)</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>2,007,756</u>	<u>2,007,756</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2020	1,773,327	1,773,327
Charge for the year	233,606	233,606
Eliminated on disposal	<u>(456,807)</u>	<u>(456,807)</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>1,550,126</u>	<u>1,550,126</u>
<b>Carrying amount</b>		
At 31 March 2021	<u>457,630</u>	<u>457,630</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>722,837</u>	<u>722,837</u>

#### 12 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	129,196	357,453
Other debtors	10,656	11,511
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>1,643,516</u>	<u>1,590,490</u>
	<u>1,783,368</u>	<u>1,959,454</u>

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### 13 Creditors

	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Trade creditors	-	11,236
Corporation tax	-	2,063
Social security and other taxes	171,345	131,249
Other creditors	2,672	2,677
Accrued expenses	<u>1,295,341</u>	<u>1,029,651</u>
	<u>1,469,358</u>	<u>1,176,876</u>
<b>Deferred income</b>		
Government grants	<u>2,515,093</u>	<u>2,650,680</u>

#### 14 Obligations under leases and hire purchase contracts

##### Operating leases

The total of future minimum lease payments is as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Not later than one year	87,889	87,889
Later than one year and not later than five years	79,843	165,762
Later than five years	-	1,971
	<u>167,732</u>	<u>255,622</u>

Lease payments recognised as an expense in the year were £86,110 (2019: £51,270).

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

### 15 Pension and other schemes

#### Defined benefit pension schemes Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The assets and liabilities of the scheme were transferred to the company on 1 November 2014 when the employees, who are members of the scheme, were transferred to the company from East Devon District Council, Teignbridge District Council and Exeter City Council. As part of the arrangements for the transfer, the Councils have provided guarantees to meet their share of their respective liabilities to the scheme in the event of the insolvency of the company.

The date of the most recent comprehensive actuarial valuation was 31 March 2021. Contributions are set every three years as a result of the actuarial valuation of the Fund required by the Regulations. The next actuarial valuation of the Fund will be carried out as at 31 March 2022 and will set contributions for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. There are no minimum funding requirements in the LGPS but the contributions are generally set to target a funding level of 100% using the actuarial valuation assumptions.

The total cost relating to defined benefit schemes for the year recognised in profit or loss as an expense was £951,000 (2020 - £1,207,000).

#### **Reconciliation of scheme assets and liabilities to assets and liabilities recognised**

The amounts recognised in the statement of financial position are as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Fair value of scheme assets	10,395,000	7,882,000
Present value of defined benefit obligation	<u>(20,788,000)</u>	<u>(13,807,000)</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme deficit	<u>(10,393,000)</u>	<u>(5,925,000)</u>

#### **Defined benefit obligation**

Changes in the defined benefit obligation are as follows:

	2021 £
Present value at start of year	13,807,000
Current service cost	796,000
Past service cost	14,000
Interest cost	325,000
Benefits paid net of transfers in	(127,000)
Contributions by scheme participants	157,000
Change in demographic assumptions	(148,000)
Experience loss on defined benefit obligations	(128,000)
Change in financial assumptions	<u>6,092,000</u>
Present value at end of year	<u>20,788,000</u>

## Strata Service Solutions Limited

### Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

Past service costs relate to the estimate impact of the McCloud judgement.

#### *Fair value of scheme assets*

Changes in the fair value of scheme assets are as follows:

	2021 £
Fair value at start of year	7,882,000
Interest income	190,000
Return on plan assets, excluding amounts included in interest income/(expense)	1,888,000
Employer contributions	411,000
Contributions by scheme participants	157,000
Benefits paid	(127,000)
Administrative expenses	(6,000)
Fair value at end of year	<u>10,395,000</u>

#### *Analysis of assets*

The major categories of scheme assets are as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash and cash equivalents	107,000	92,000
Equity instruments	7,498,000	5,474,000
Debt instruments	820,000	748,000
Property	835,000	743,000
Other assets	<u>1,135,000</u>	<u>825,000</u>
	<u>10,395,000</u>	<u>7,882,000</u>

#### *Return on scheme assets*

	2021 £	2020 £
Return on scheme assets	<u>2,078,000</u>	<u>(680,000)</u>

The pension scheme has not invested in any of the company's own financial instruments or in properties or other assets used by the company.

The overall expected return on assets assumption is derived as the weighted average of the expected returns from each of the main asset classes.

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

### *Principal actuarial assumptions*

The principal actuarial assumptions at the statement of financial position date are as follows:

	2021	2020
	%	%
Discount rate	2.05	2.35
Future salary increases	3.85	2.80
Future pension increases	2.85	1.80
Inflation	<u>3.50</u>	<u>2.60</u>

### *Post retirement mortality assumptions*

	2021	2020
	Years	Years
Current UK pensioners at retirement age - male	23.00	23.00
Current UK pensioners at retirement age - female	24.00	24.00
Future UK pensioners at retirement age - male	24.00	24.00
Future UK pensioners at retirement age - female	<u>25.00</u>	<u>26.00</u>

## 16 Share capital

### Allotted, called up and fully paid shares

	No.	2021	No.	2020
		£		£
Ordinary shares of £1 each	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>

## 17 Commitments

### Capital commitments

The Company entered into one commitment at the year end relating to the replacement income management software.

The total amount contracted for but not provided in the financial statements was £Nil (2020 - £153,322).

# Strata Service Solutions Limited

## Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

### 18 Related party transactions

#### Key management personnel

The directors are not remunerated from this company, other key management remuneration is as follows:

#### Key management compensation

	2021 £	2020 £
Salaries and other short term employee benefits	85,521	83,232
Post-employment benefits	<u>14,282</u>	<u>12,235</u>
	<u>99,803</u>	<u>95,467</u>

#### Summary of transactions with other related parties

##### Entities with joint control over the company

The company recognised turnover of £7,594,179 (2020: £7,325,899) to the Councils which jointly control it. At the year end £129,196 (2020: £330,663) was owed to the company by the Councils.

##### Entities under common control

During the year an entity under common control received services from the company to the value of £12,105 (2020: £15,139). At the year end £nil (2020: £1,809) was owed to the company by the company under common control.



Solutions for  
government

# Strata Service Solutions Ltd.

## Councillor IT Requirements – Survey Results

8  
V1.0

Date Issued: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021



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Until 2022

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Building and delivering flexible, responsive and cost effective IT solutions and services for Local Government

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**Table of Contents** Document Information

<b>Applies To</b>	East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council, Teignbridge District Council, Strata Service Solutions Ltd
<b>Date of Approval</b>	

**Document Control**

<b>Title</b>	Councillor IT Survey Results
<b>Originator / Author</b>	Laurence Whitlock
<b>Reviewer</b>	John Street / Henry Gordon-Lennox
<b>Business Area</b>	Strata Service Solutions Ltd.

**Document History**

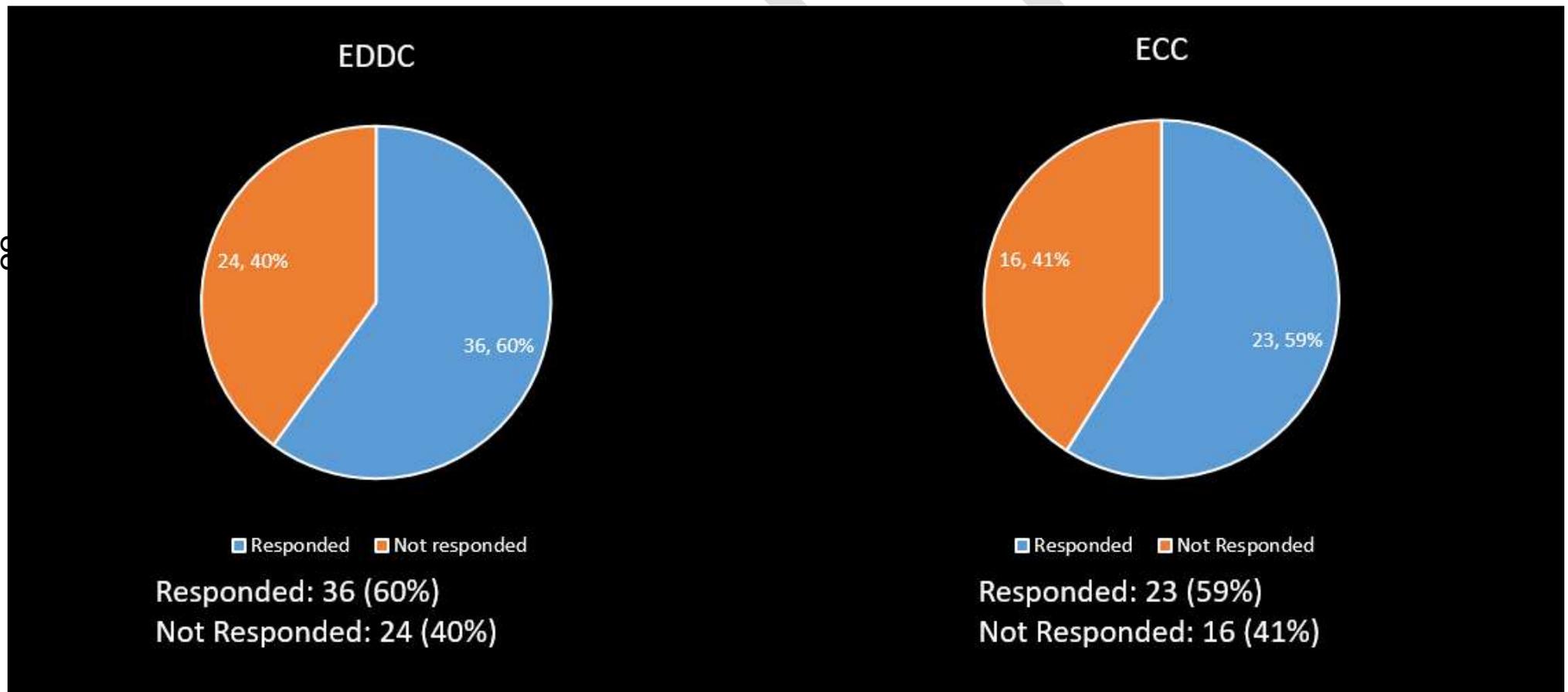
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Changes Made</b>	<b>Document status</b>
Vo.1	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Initial Draft	Superseded
Vo.2	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	First Review	Superseded
Vo.3	30 <sup>th</sup> Aril 2021	Visual improvements	Superseded
v.04	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	Formatting and Strata comments added	Live

## Background & Purpose

During late March and early April 2021, Strata and the Democratic Services Teams from EDDC and ECC undertook a survey of Councillors in relation to the current and future IT requirements. The outcomes of the survey will act to inform and guide a potential redesign of the IT solution that it delivered to Councillors to enable them to perform their important role in supporting the citizens of Devon.

This report works to present the findings of the survey and to enable a discussion to be entered into between Strata, the authorities and representative Councillors.

It was hoped that 60% of Councillors would complete the survey and it is very pleasing to report that the 60% completion level was achieved.



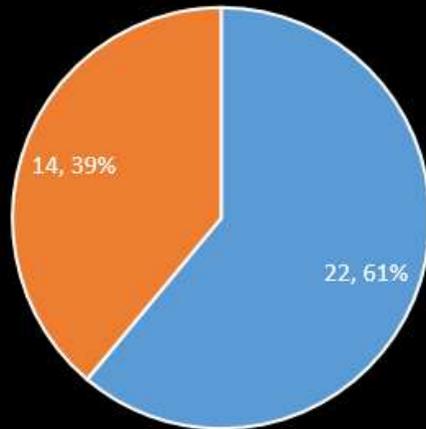
Surveys Results

Question: Is the current device provided for you by the authority suitable for your Councillor needs?

68

# Is the current device provided for you by the authority suitable for your Councillor needs?

EDDC

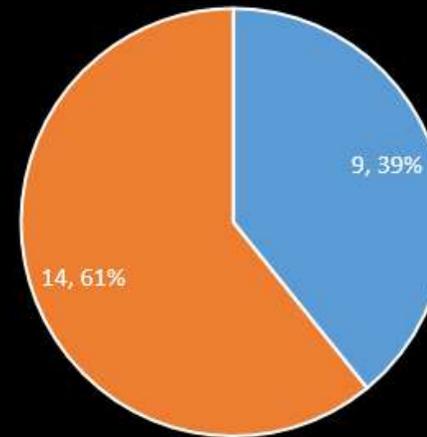


■ Yes ■ No

Yes: 22 (61%)

No: 14 (39%)

ECC

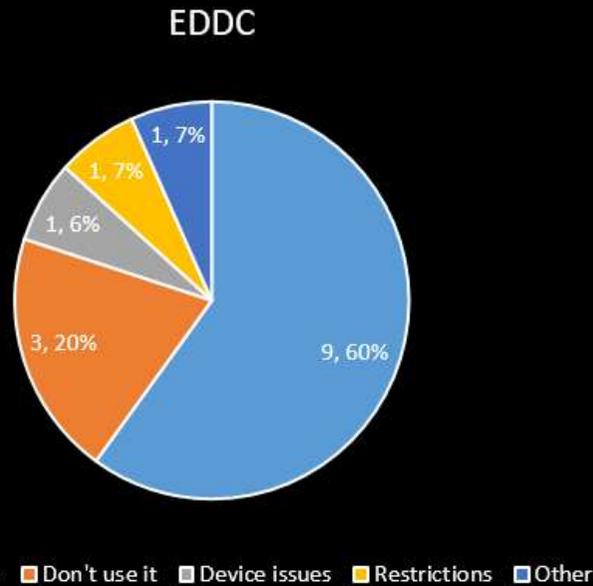


■ Yes ■ No

Yes: 9 (39%)

No: 14 (61%)

# Is the current device provided for you by the authority suitable for your Councillor needs?



Detailed Work: 9 (60%)  
Don't use it: 3 (20%)  
Device Issues: 1 (6%)  
Restrictions: 1 (7%)  
Other: 1 (7%)

“Too difficult to use filing facility. Too many Strata restrictions on machine”

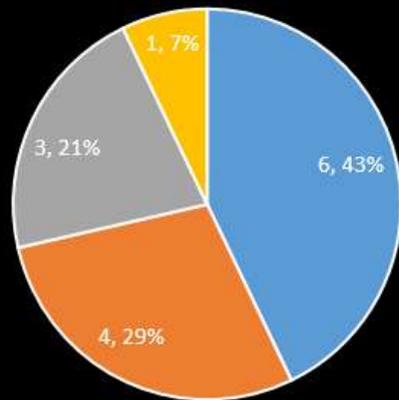
“very difficult to use for constructing short papers or other MSWord typed messages, and very difficult to read when looking at spreadsheets”

“Outlook software is very cut down version with limited functionality...consequence is that productivity is severely handicapped...cut and paste facility in Outlook. Apple keyboard is less comprehensive....elementary file handling...do not allow easy screen extensions”

“I would much rather have a decent laptop that has Microsoft Word, PowerPoint etc. The iPad has limited use”

# Is the current device provided for you by the authority suitable for your Councillor needs?

ECC



■ Age of device ■ Detailed work ■ Virtual Meetings ■ Device usability

Age of device: 6 (43%)

Detailed work: 4 (29%)

Virtual Meetings: 3 (21%)

Device usability: 1 (7%)

“Neither of my devices do Zoom or Teams”

“The iPad is old and tired and can’t access all apps, tends to be slow and difficult to work with”

“The iPad is great by limited. It provides a functional tool for email, reading documents and managing my diary but not for more detailed work – longer email responses, saving and storing documents and as a screen for virtual meetings”

“Most if not all of my Council related work is stored on Word & Excel. Neither of these platforms are available on my iPad”

“The iPad is end of life. They must be due a refresh!”

# More comments on the authority iPad

“The fact that I cannot save documents such as forms on the iPad and then complete them and email them. I find that I either have to use the laptop or visit the civic centre in order to complete such tasks”

“Neither Word or Excel available on iPad. No Copy and Paste facility. No facility to link iPad to printer. No access to Teams. iPad doesn't have access to Google to 'look up' things “

“the iPad email interface is awful and lacks the useful features that O365 offers. It limits the ability to find alternative tools better for the job....eg, Google Sheets are accessible but not editable on this device”

“cannot attach files from phone to any emails. Have to use external email to email myself and then forward on”

“No Microsoft Word for printing letters, which is still often the only way to deal with constituents. The Content function is clunky and slow. The iPad doesn't have Teams and also is unable to open the Electoral Register so has significant limitations. Wireless keyboards were not provided”

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## **Strata Comment:**

From East Devon we can see that over half appear satisfied with their device, and under half within Exeter. These figures are not entirely unexpected.

Many of comments from Exeter are quite clearly around the age of the device. This is not surprising, and was a known issue pre-pandemic. This became even more problematic when Virtual Council meetings were introduced and we faced new challenges, for example devices being so old they cannot run applications such as Zoom or Teams in the intended way. It is very clear that whatever the solution is going forward, all Councils need to ensure that provided devices are refreshed regularly enough to ensure they do not go end of life.

Virtual Council are also an issue for those Councillors with just one device. There were several comments about not being able to see meeting agendas\ papers at the same time as the virtual meeting. Again, this isn't entirely unexpected based on our work to help setup the virtual council meetings in 2020.

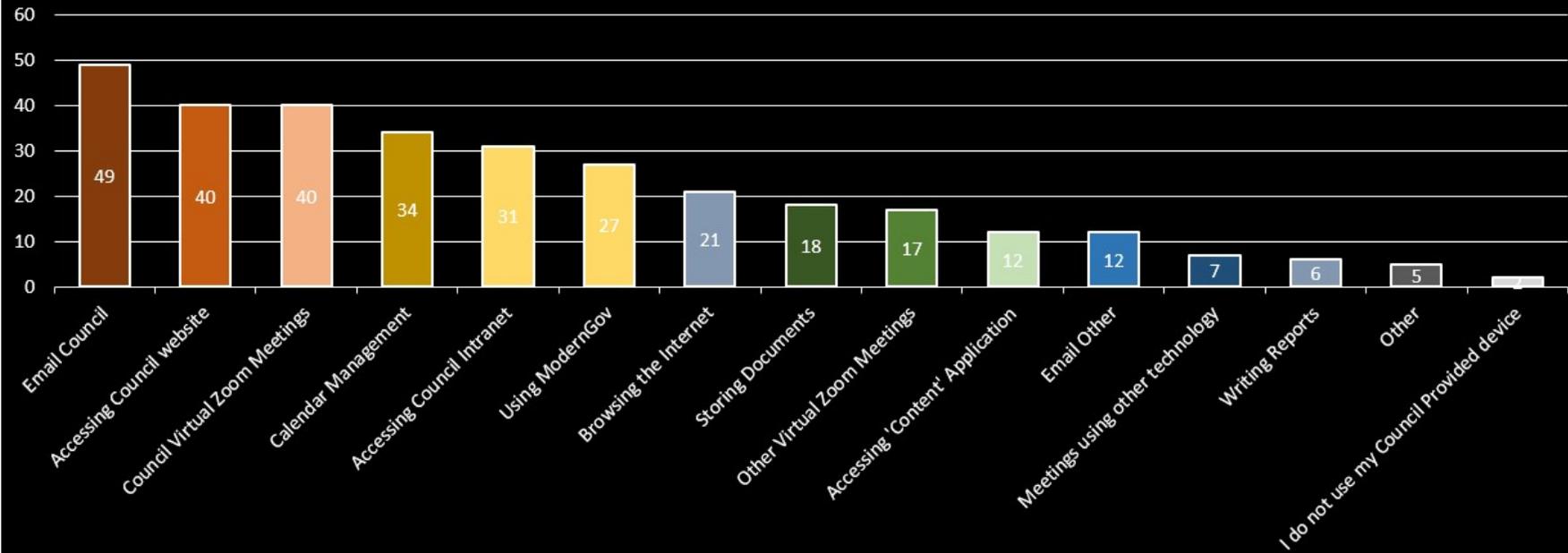
One of the other main subjects that were repeatedly raised was the use of an iPad for lengthy emails or reports, when either authoring or reading, as the small screen, awkward keyboard and limited controls was a source of frustration for many Councillors. These comments were often linked to a dislike of using the iPad device and preference to use a Windows or Android device instead, but it is worth mentioning that others actually preferred to use an iPad over these alternatives. There was also a comment around the inability to print, which is worth mentioning particularly as it related to sending letters to constituents.

Less commonly, but no less relevant, was a variety of comments around device restrictions. These ranged from trouble with email attachments (and having to send them to private accounts and then back again), the inability to access certain apps from the store, and trouble managing calendars alongside private or Devon County\ other calendars. These elements all add to the frustration of using the existing supplied devices.

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Question: What are you using your council provided IT device for?

# What are you using your Council provided IT device for?

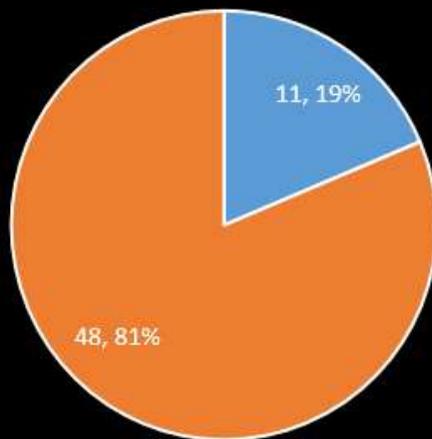


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Question: Do you often require support from others to help with your IT use?

# Do you often require support from others to help with your IT use?

EDDC + ECC

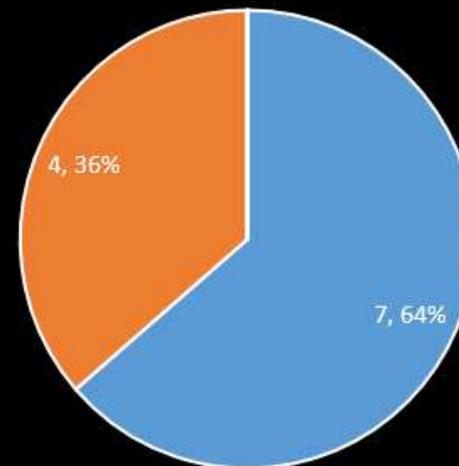


■ Yes ■ No

Yes: 11 (19%)

No: 48 (81%)

Service desk feedback



Very Satisfied: 7 (64%)

Somewhat satisfied: 4 (36%)

Neither satisfied or dissatisfied: 0 (0%)

Somewhat dissatisfied: 0 (0%)

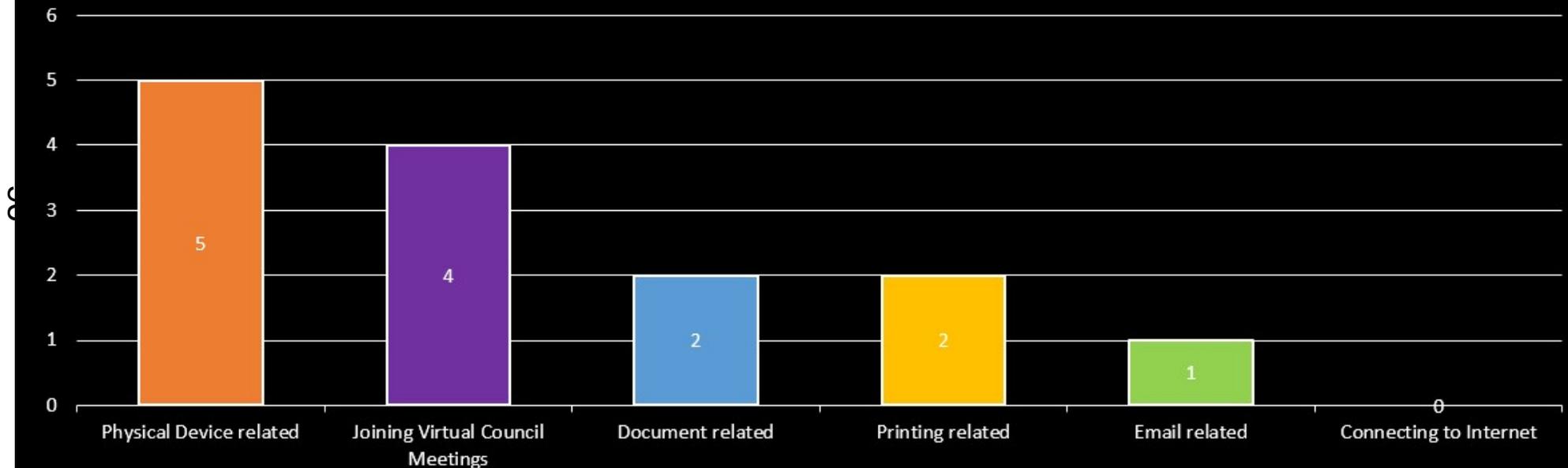
Very dissatisfied: 0 (0%)

I have never used the Strata Service Desk: 0 (0%)

Question: What type of issues you do usually need assistance with?

# Do you often require support from others to help with your IT use?

Types of issues

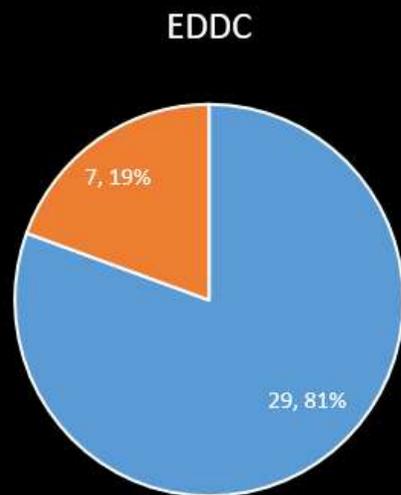


**Strata Comment:**

Very little support needed from Strata, and we are pleased to see that the feedback of the Strata service was positive when needed.

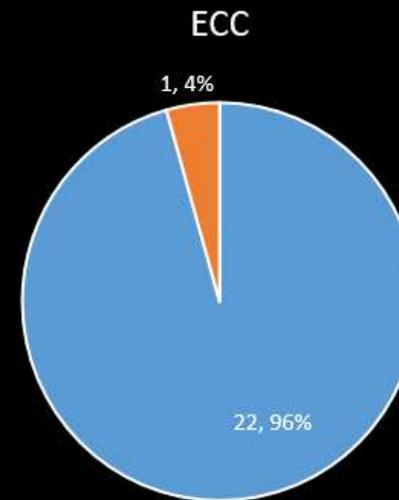
Question: Are you using your own personal IT equipment to perform or assist you in your role as a councillor?

## Are you using your own personal IT equipment to perform or assist you in your role as a Councillor?



■ Yes ■ No

Yes: 29 (81%)  
No: 7 (19%)



■ Yes ■ No

Yes: 22 (96%)  
No: 1 (4%)

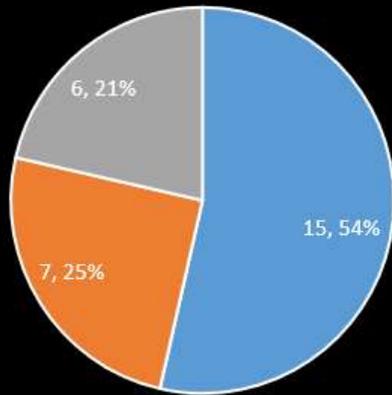
97

### Strata Comment:

The vast majority of Councillors are using a personal device to support their work. The majority simply preferred to use their personal devices when available. In addition these results further support the previous comments that an additional device is needed to manage a virtual council meeting or work with a lengthy report\ email.

# Do you use your personal device?

EDDC



■ Prefer using personal device ■ Detailed Work ■ Virtual Council Meetings ■

Prefer using personal device: 15 (54%)

Detailed Work: 7 (25%)

For Virtual Council Meetings: 6 (21%)

“It has the accessories that I like to use”

“One to read documents and the other to use Zoom”

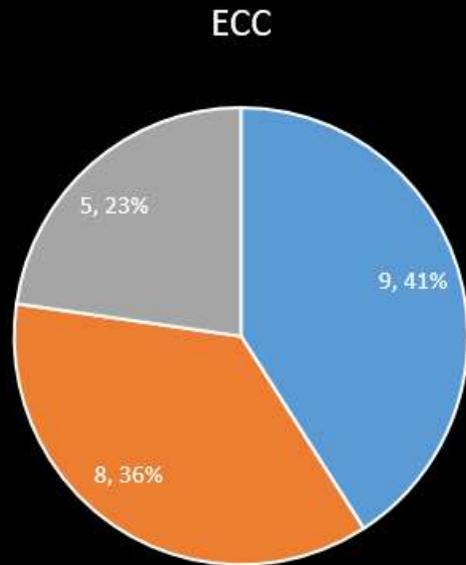
“Desktop is much easier for document and email classification and storage”

“One screen is not enough at meetings”

“Also use own laptop for Zoom meetings as easier to use reactions facilities and see more participants on the screen”

“My laptop offers more usable functionality, and my mobile phone allows me to see my emails when away from wifi which the iPad does not. I find the iPad very useful as a secondary/support device (particularly with remote and physical meetings) and for some specific tasks”

# Do you use your personal device?



Prefer using personal device: 9 (41%)  
Detailed Work: 8 (36%)  
For Virtual Council Meetings: 5 (23%)

“Virtual Council meetings require 2 screens”

“I have access to Global Desktop, much better and allows a better organisation of files and work”

“Executive Cllrs use a WhatsApp group for communication. Meetings arranged via Eventbrite require access to the app which is not available for download on the Cllr iPad”

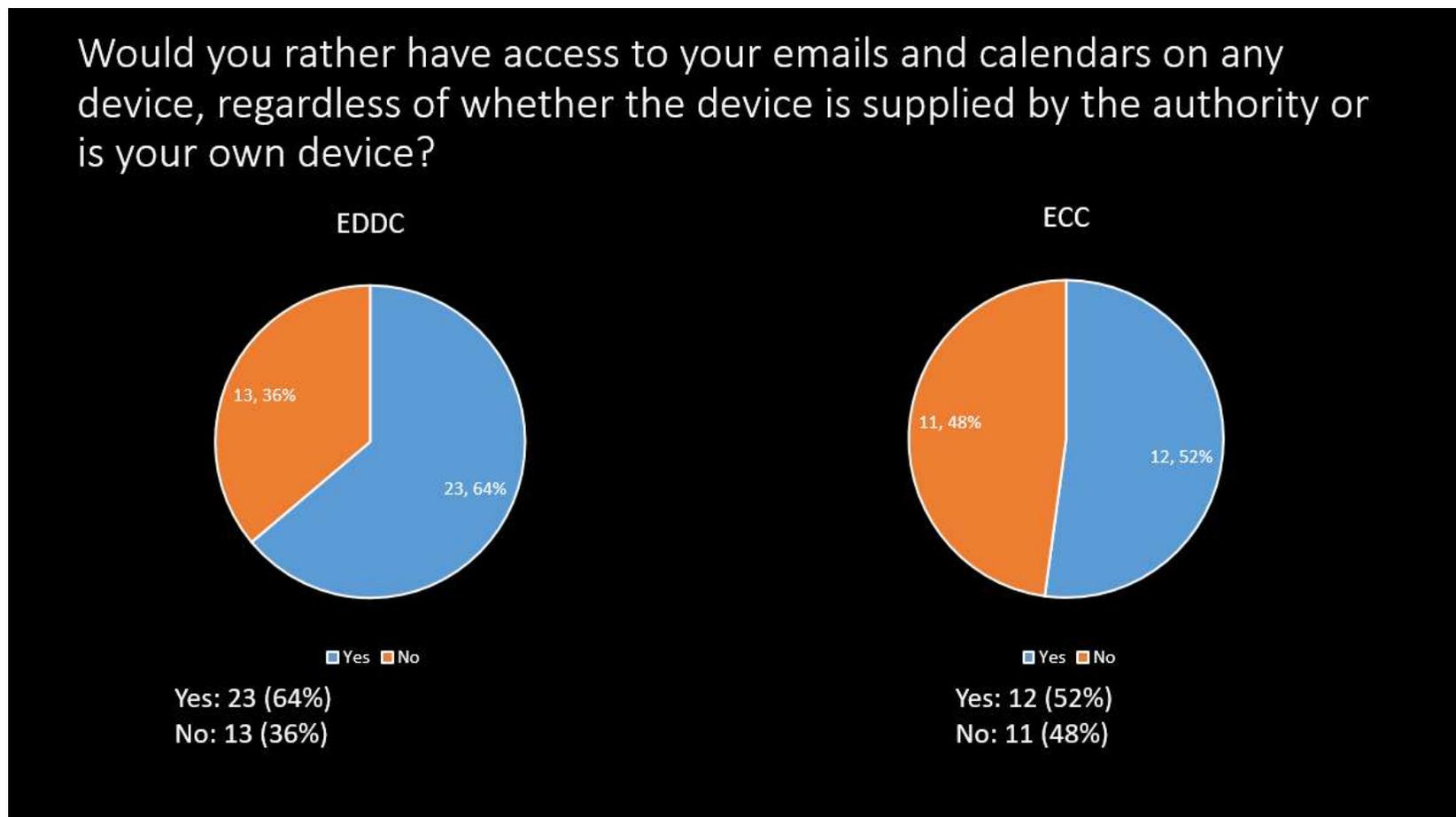
“I find my laptop better for lengthier document drafting, virtual meetings, MS Teams and research”

“I know how to use it and it postdates 2010”

“My desktop is much easier to use to search research read and write documents. I could not do my job as a Councillor effectively if I was reliant just on the ECC iPad”

Question: Would you rather have access to your emails and calendars on any device, regardless of whether the device is supplied by the authority or is your own device?

100

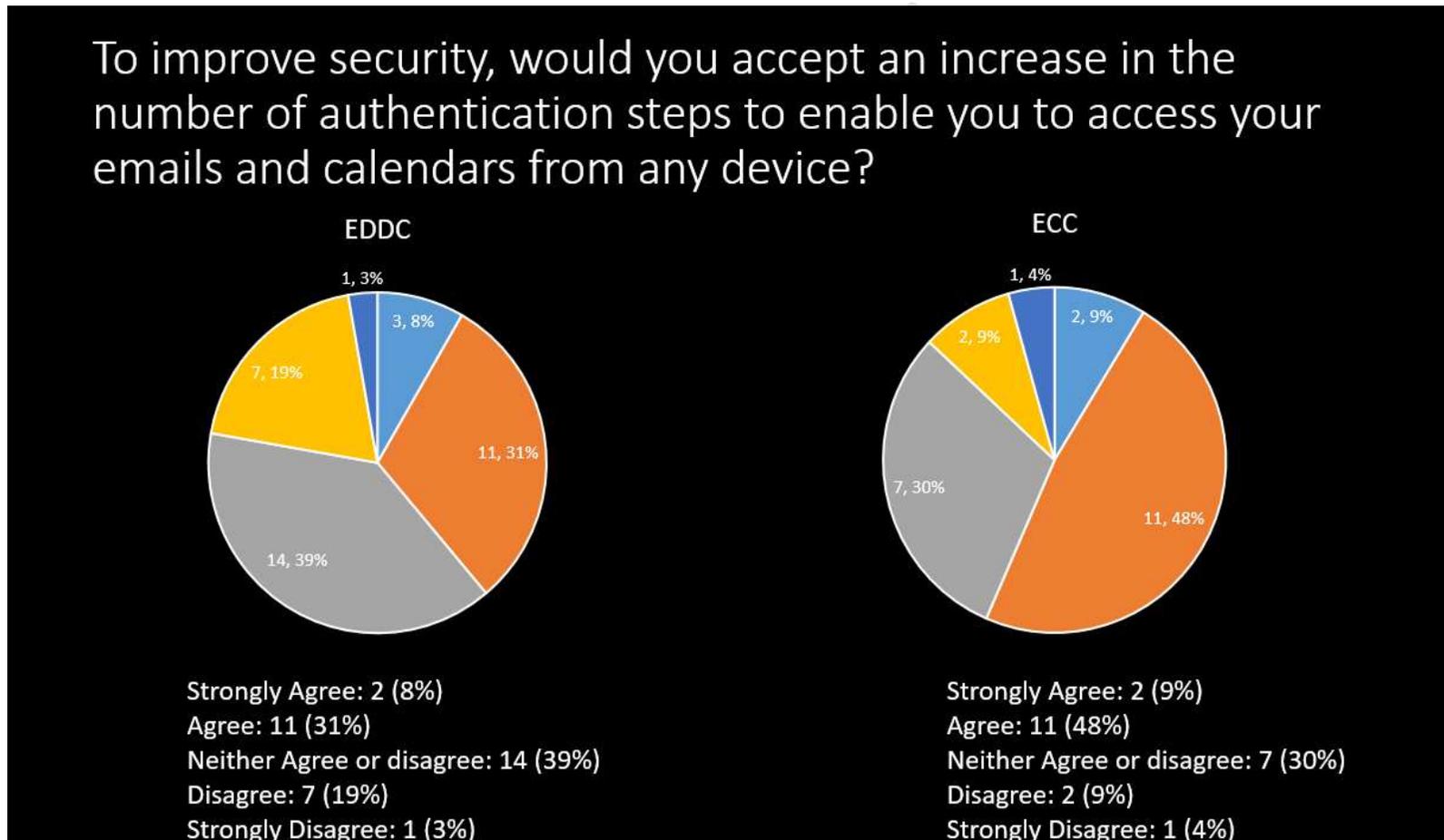


**Strata Comment:**

This is one of the more interesting responses and although it favours a “bring your own device” approach, the results aren’t hugely definitive, especially on Exeter’s side. Further on there were comments highlighting the need for separation of Council duties from personal devices to maintain a work\life balance, and other comments suggesting that having personal and councillor activities on one device would actually be beneficial. Other comments highlighted the importance of having access to emails when ‘out and about’, suggesting email access on smartphones or SIM-enabled tablets.

Question: To improve security, would you accept an increase in the number of authentication steps to enable you to access your emails and calendars from any device?

101

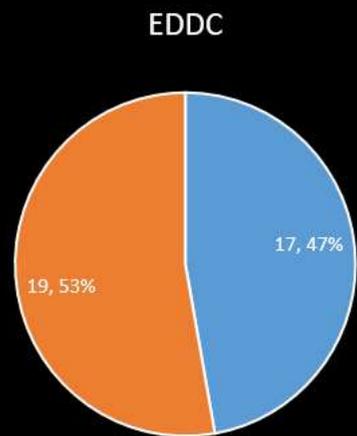


**Strata Comment:**

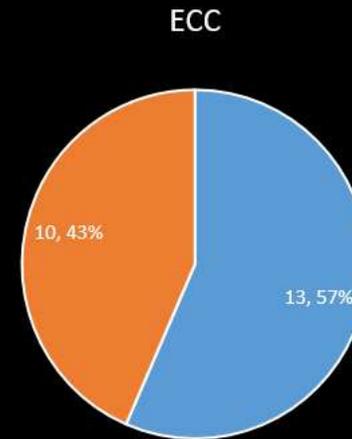
This was a very mixed response and there are a few reasons for this. Firstly, the implications of answering positively are not presented. Secondly, the question itself may not have been fully understood. Security of the devices and access to Council data will be reviewed as part of this exercise, and as ever the balance of security versus usability is difficult to get right.

Question: Do you prefer the use of a tablet (iPad device for example) device over a laptop?

## Do you prefer the use of a tablet device (for example an iPad) over a laptop?



■ Laptop ■ Tablet  
Laptop: 17 (47%)  
Tablet: 19 (53%)



■ Laptop ■ Tablet  
Laptop: 13 (57%)  
Tablet: 10 (43%)

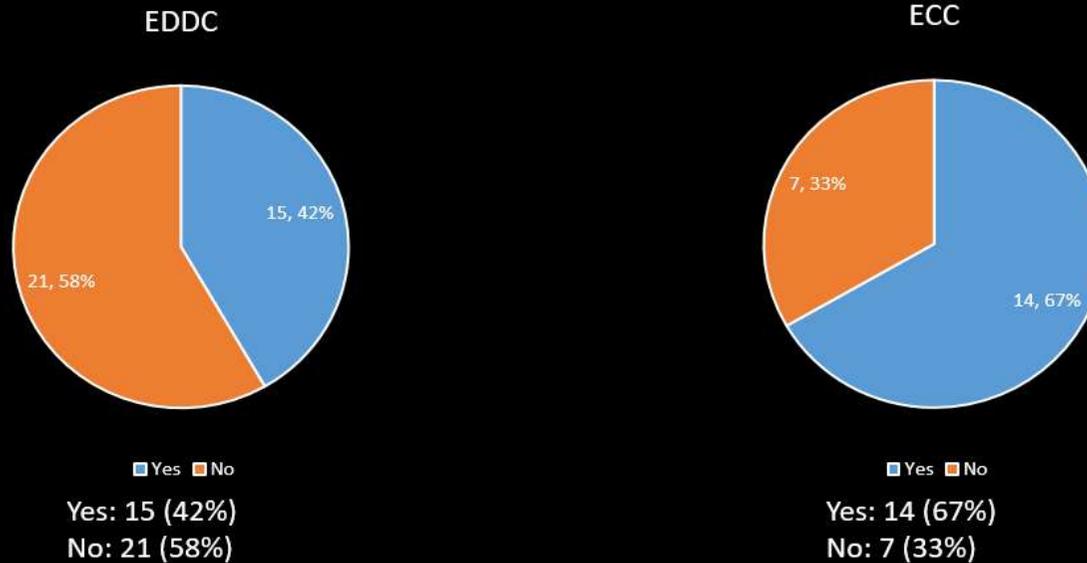
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### Strata Comment:

Not entirely convincing either way for either Council, however the question did not include an answer of "no preference", for which a handful of Councillors separately wrote asking us to discount their answer. However, this will be a cost decision for the Councils to make and also considerations will need to be made on whether or not we wish to provide the Councillors with an option of either.

Question: Would you prefer it if the Council provided you with both a tablet device (iPad) and a laptop?

Would you prefer it if the Council provided you with both a tablet device (iPad) and a laptop?



103

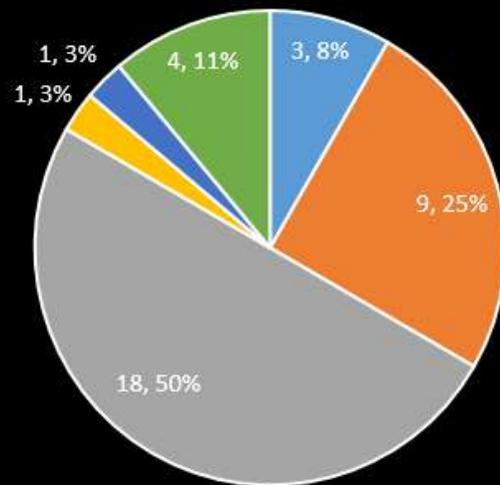
**Strata Comment:**

Different results for the two authorities. This would be a Council decision based on cost.

Question: How helpful do you find ModernGov?

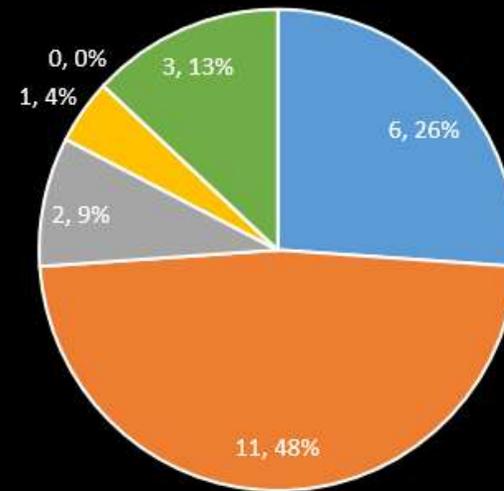
# How helpful do you find ModernGov?

EDDC



Very helpful: 3 (8%)  
Somewhat helpful: 9 (25%)  
Neither helpful or unhelpful: 18 (50%)  
Somewhat unhelpful: 1 (3%)  
Very unhelpful: 1 (3%)  
I have never used ModernGov: 4 (11%)

ECC

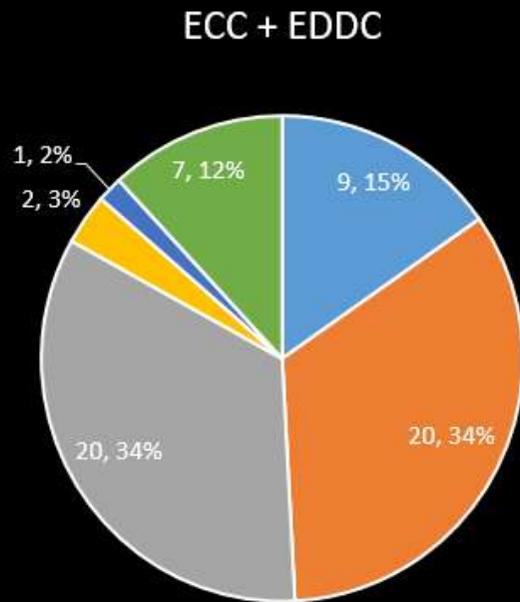


Very helpful: 6 (26%)  
Somewhat helpful: 11 (48%)  
Neither helpful nor unhelpful: 2 (9%)  
Somewhat unhelpful: 1 (4%)  
Very unhelpful: 0 (0%)  
I have never used ModernGov: 3 (13%)

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Question: Please can you advise what suggestions you would have to improve the ModernGov application?

# Feedback on ModernGov



Very helpful: 9 (15%)  
Somewhat helpful: 20 (34%)  
Neither helpful or unhelpful: 20 (34%)  
Somewhat unhelpful: 2 (3%)  
Very unhelpful: 1 (2%)  
I have never used ModernGov: 7 (12%)

“Accessing ModernGov has been one of my ongoing issues as it has never worked properly – if it does work it is impossible to close a page and move to something else”

“Navigation of documents is challenging where there are over 100 pages”

“The facility to edit documents and highlight sections as well as add in any comments is very useful”

“All I need seems to be in the many emails I get and can’t manage like I could in Outlook”

“I don’t have confidence in using it and being able to find work when I need it”

“It’s OK sometimes difficult to access and crashes”

# More comments on ModernGov

“Papers to scroll down and up, rather than side to side as present as I find this very irritating”

“Navigation of documents is challenging where there are over 100 pages. Ideally provide shortcut link to each agenda item”

“I can’t penetrate it. I haven’t sought help. I’m not sure what I’m missing. All I need seems to be in the many emails I get and can’t manage like I could in Outlook”

“When I first used it seemed to have some ability to annotate documents but now I can’t work out how to do it again and it’s not clear how it functions in terms of saving those documents. So I don’t have confidence in using it”

“it doesn’t give me access to all Committee Agendas, etc. eg, Planning Committee”

“I manage without it very well, not sure what I’m missing by not using it, or how it could be useful”

“It is just too clumsy and tedious. For good productivity, operations need to be more fluid or they don’t get used”

“Very rarely use”

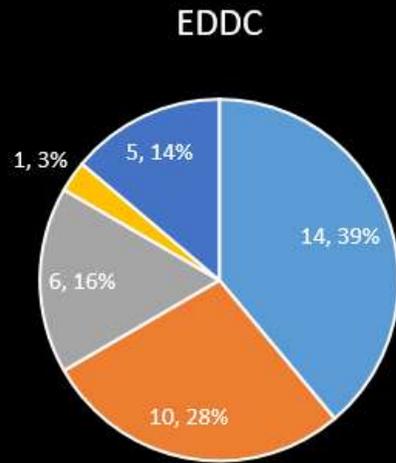
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## Strata Comment:

Very mixed from the authorities and it seems clear that the Councils are not getting the most of ModernGov, to the point some Councillors do not know how to use it, or even what it can do. A refresher exercise for the ModernGov system should be undertaken for all Councillors so the usage and understanding is consistent across the board.

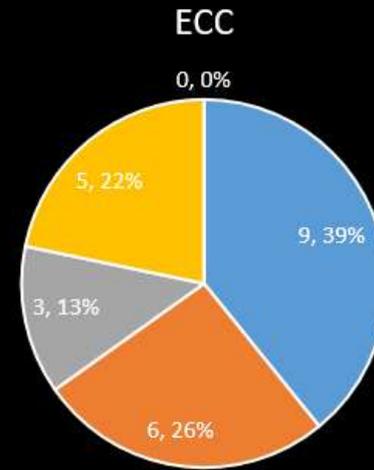
Question: Is your current authority provided device valuable for use in both physical and virtual council meetings?

## Is your current authority provided device valuable for use in both physical and virtual council meetings?



Extremely Valuable Very valuable Somewhat valuable  
Not so valuable Not at all valuable

Extremely valuable: 14 (39%)  
Very valuable: 10 (28%)  
Somewhat valuable: 6 (16%)  
Not so valuable: 1 (3%)  
Not at all valuable: 5 (14%)



Extremely valuable Very valuable Somewhat valuable  
Not so valuable Not at all valuable

Extremely valuable: 9 (39%)  
Very valuable: 6 (26%)  
Somewhat valuable: 3 (13%)  
Not so valuable: 5 (22%)  
Not at all valuable: 0 (0%)

### Strata Comment:

Mostly positive results in Exeter despite the complaints about the aging devices, and less positive in East Devon despite the more recent ones.

Question: What is holding you back in terms of IT provision when performing your role as a Councillor?

## More comments future solution

“I prefer an Android laptop [Lenovo]. Whatever is provided must be touch screen and allow you to scroll”

“I am not comfortable with Office software and android laptop software”

“I find it easier to use Microsoft apps”

“Having to use a personal device for Cllr work makes maintaining a work life balance much more difficult”

“I have my own IT equipment and do not want anymore devices”

“A SIM-enabled device would facilitate access to documents, emails, google maps, google search and other location-based tools while out in the field”

### **Strata Comment:**

Comments that highlight the range of solutions that would need to be implemented to satisfy everybody's needs.

## Summary & Recommendations

What have we learned from this exercise?

- 1) There is no single solution that will address all of the identified needs of the Councillors who responded
- 2) That having a single device/screen for Virtual Council meetings is very challenging
- 3) That devices need to be refreshed (replaced after a period of time) to ensure they do not go end of life, and budgets need to be set by the Councils to support this
- 4) EDDC and ECC are not maximising or realising the benefits of ModernGov and a refresher exercise is required for Councillors
- 5) Security restrictions need reviewing to improve usability, especially around calendar appointments, email attachments and application installs

Therefore as a next step, Strata will discuss the findings with the Client Leads and Democratic Service Leads of the two authorities and then look to identify potential solutions to the requirements.

These will then be presented back to Councillor representatives for consideration.

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Solutions for  
government

# Strata Service Solutions Ltd.

Councillor IT User Group  
Discussion Document v1.0

Date Issued: 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021



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Building and delivering flexible, responsive and cost effective IT solutions and services for Local  
Government

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## Document Information

<b>Applies To</b>	East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council, Teignbridge District Council, Strata Service Solutions Ltd
<b>Date of Approval</b>	

## Document Control

<b>Title</b>	Councillor IT User Group - Discussion Document
<b>Originator / Author</b>	Laurence Whitlock
<b>Reviewer</b>	Joint Scrutiny Committee
<b>Business Area</b>	Strata Service Solutions Ltd.

## Document History

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Changes Made</b>	<b>Document status</b>
1.0	21 <sup>st</sup> June 2021	Initial release to JSC	First Draft

## Background & Purpose

Following recent discussions, it is proposed that a Councillor IT User Group is setup to enable focussed discussions to be held into ongoing Councillor IT provision. The aim is to identify areas where improvements could be made, to identify Councillor IT training needs and to reflect on trends in the IT industry which may be relevant to the work of Local Government.

It is proposed that the Councillor IT User Group meets on a six monthly basis and each council identifies a Councillor who has responsibility for attending and reporting on that authorities Councillor IT provision. In addition, each authority will have a nominated individual from within the Democratic Services team to attend the User Group. It is also suggested that the Chair of the Joint Scrutiny committee and a Strata Board representative is invited to attend.

Strata will facilitate the User Group and provide resource to create and circulate the agenda and to minute each meeting.

It would be expected that a theme for each meeting will be agreed to ensure a specific User Group focus. This theme might include subjects such as Virtual Meetings, Security & Training.

The User Group can also choose to invite specific technology partners or service providers to a session, to help inform and guide the provision of IT, examples could be a representative from the Police to talk about Cyber Security.

A more engaged and informed Councillor community, enabling Councillors to provide feedback on their IT provision and to discuss potential future needs in terms of support and training.

## Example Councillor IT User Group Meeting Agenda

- Review of Previous Minutes
- Matters Arising
- Councillor IT Feedback
  - What's Working Well
  - What Isn't Working Well
- Councillor IT Support
  - What Issues Have Been Raised
  - Are There Any Trends That Have Been Identified
- Councillor IT training
  - What Training Has Been Delivered To Councillors
  - What Additional Training Needs Have Been Identified
- Focus Discussion Area – i.e. Cyber Security
- AOB
- Date of Next Meeting & Meeting Theme

## Suggested IT User Group Attendees

The suggested makeup of the Councillor IT User Group would be as laid out below, however, this structure needs to be flexible in order to gain a view of the needs of all Councillors. There should also be the opportunity for Councillors to submit questions to the user group of to attend if a focus is relevant or of particular interest.

