Business Plan 2025/2026

Author:

Strata Management Team

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1.0

In our business plan

1. Introduction

The business plan for 2025/26 is a vital framework, guiding both financial allocations and strategic initiatives essential to achieving our objectives which align with those set out by East Devon, Exeter City and Teignbridge Councils' in their ambitious plans detailed in their digital strategies which formed the bedrock of the 2024/25 plan.

The plan for 25/26 builds on the foundations put in place during 24/25 through the delivery of key enablers—Contact Centre, End User Computing, SharePoint Migration, Middleware and Cyber Security enhancements as part of the adoption of Microsoft E5 licensing. Continuing to develop these foundational elements are integral to our efforts all aimed at sustaining a strong and resilient ICT service as well as providing the underpinning technology to enable the transformation of our partner councils.

For 25/26 there is a critical focus on delivering essential operations and maintenance practices, which are vital to sustaining compliance and meeting audit standards. These aspects of our work are critical to ensuring ongoing system reliability, risk management and continuity of service within an increasingly complex and fast moving digital and technological environment.

Within this year's business plan, we have included an outline of projects that are currently under consideration by the Architecture Board but not yet reached formal approvable stage. Whilst this does not exclude the possibility of additional projects being commissioned in year, it is important to ensure that there is enough capacity within the service to operate effectively. Any new projects will be evaluated alongside existing requirements and the councils will be required to work together to agree priorities and any potential additional resources needed.

In addition to ongoing enablers, this plan prioritises several key operational projects to improve the service delivery/customer experience in particular operational areas. These are listed and have been included within the budget, however there will only be progressed once approved by Architecture Board.

A key area of work for 25/26 includes a strategic shift to the Azure Data Centre which will enable the transfer of data from physical servers to virtual (cloud based) storage. This is a vital strategic outcome required by all three councils and will

include an in-depth review of copper lines and dark fibre infrastructure and an evaluation of council storage (data/data lake and files/folders) alongside critical work to review disaster recovery and contingency planning to fortify resilience across core services.

Our strategy-led approach integrates the vision of all three councils and Strata, dividing priorities into three core areas: transformational (advancing enablers for transformation and growth) organisational (enhancing internal efficiencies) and operational (focusing on foundational service needs and maintenance).

In light of LGR, the four partners recognise that priorities may change in the coming months. Therefore, flexibility is built into the 25/26 plan. Councils can adjust priorities through the governance model and boards. Critical items from 24/25 such as Azure migration, telephony replacement, CRM, financial management system upgrade, laptop replacement, and middleware, will form next year's core programme, engaging most staff. Other projects will be reviewed by the Architecture Board for prioritisation and approval.

The business plan, once approved by the Joint Executive Committee will underpin the work of the Architecture Board which will scrutinise individual proposals to ensure they align with Council strategic goals.

2. Overview

This section provides an overview of all the key projects, those that are continuing from the 24/25 business plan and new ones agreed for inception during 25/26. The table below lists these graphically and the following narrative provides a brief description of each project. Further detail can be found in appendix 1.
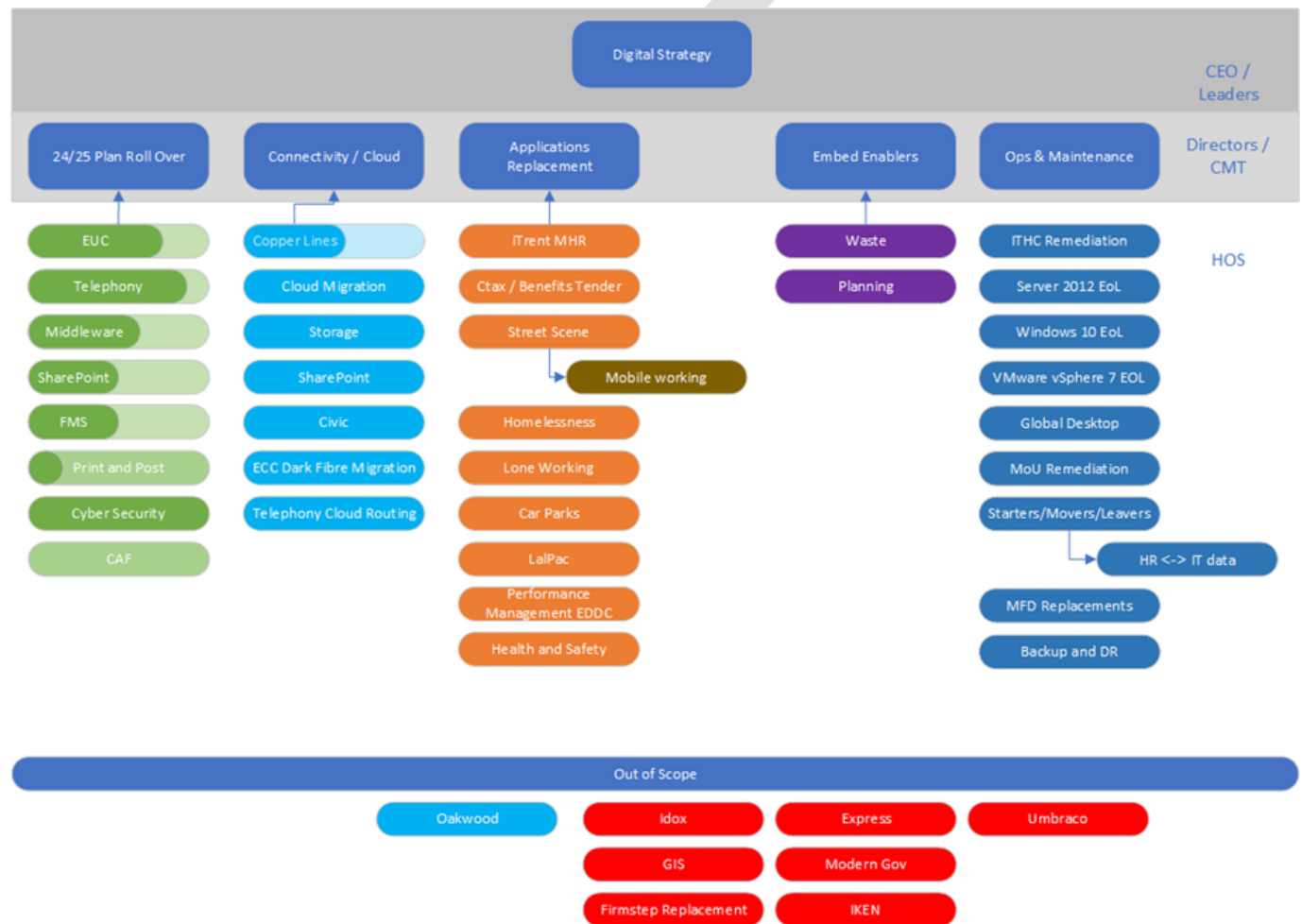
2.1 24/25 Plan Continuation Projects

End User Computing

The goal is to reduce reliance on Global Desktop and migrate user data to OneDrive for Business. A pilot rollout has been completed and full deployment is scheduled for 2025/2026. This transition will enhance user experience, improve data accessibility and support remote working for all councils.

Telephony and Contact Centre

This project involves transitioning from Skype to Teams telephony and developing a new contact centre. The procurement stage is completed and the rollout phase has begun. The new system will enhance communication capabilities, improve customer service and support remote working for all councils.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Forms

This project aims to capture all customer transaction data and activate MyAccount for EDDC and ECC. Significant progress has been made with over 50,000 transactions captured. The CRM system will enhance customer service, provide valuable insights and support digital transformation initiatives for EDDC and ECC.

Middleware

The project focuses on establishing an Enterprise Middleware Architecture (EMA) to manage application programming interfaces (API's) secure databases and automate service processes. The proof of concept is completed and the core parts of the test infrastructure are set up. This architecture will improve data integration, enhance security and support digital transformation for all councils.

Mobile App for Citizens linked to Notifications

The project aims to provide another channel for communication linked to the Notifications enabler. The mobile app will enhance citizen engagement, improve communication and support digital transformation for all councils.

Notifications

The Notifications system will enable end users to send templated notifications via various channels. The focus has been on EMA, scheduled to go live in Q4

2024/2025. This system will improve communication, enhance customer service, and support digital transformation for all councils.

SharePoint

The project involves implementing SharePoint for secure and efficient document management and retrieval. A detailed architecture and pilot are completed and learning from the initial pilots is currently being evaluated to support roll out in 2025. SharePoint will improve data management, enhance collaboration and support compliance for all councils.

Finance Management System - FMS

The project involves implementing a new Finance Management System. The new system will streamline financial processes, improve accuracy and support strategic financial planning for all councils.

Print and Post

The project will involve the implementation of advanced printing solutions and automated postal systems which will cut down on manual labour and ensure faster and more reliable service. Additionally, the project will explore the use of digital alternatives to traditional mail, such as electronic document delivery to further enhance efficiency and reduce environmental impact. This in turn will look at the operational model and possible reductions in service provision.

Cyber Security and Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) Readiness

This is a government led project supported by the Local Government Association (LGA) aimed at enabling councils to improve cyber security. Working with each Council, Strata has completed the nationally recommended CAF readiness actions and as a result each council has been provided with a grant to be used to further develop Cyber Security process and operations.

2.2 Connectivity/Cloud

Copper Lines and ECC Dark Fibre Migration

The project aims to migrate from analogue to digital services and replace the unsupported dark fibre network (underground cables connecting council buildings and servers). Significant progress has already been made with a goal to complete by December 2025. This migration will ensure reliable and modern connectivity, reducing maintenance costs and improving service continuity for ECC as the main dark fibre networks and servers are based in the city.

Cloud Migration to Azure

The goal is to move to cloud computing, reducing reliance on physical data centres. An "Azure landing zone" (a network area in the cloud) is set up and specialist skill development is ongoing to manage the new cloud technology. This transition will offer scalable, secure and cost-effective IT infrastructure, enhancing service delivery and reducing operational risks for all councils. A comprehensive project plan is under development with initial phases starting in Q1 2025/2026.

GMS system to Cloud

The project involves transitioning the Gazetteer Management Software (GMS) to a cloud version. The GMS enables Strata to manage the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) which the authorities are contractually obliged to maintain as part of the agreement with Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) as it feeds directly into the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). This national address gazetteer brings together address information from local authorities and Ordnance Survey to create a 'national address gazetteer database', providing one definitive source of accurate publicly owned spatial address data for the whole of the public sector. The NLPG underpins many council services alongside many nationally strategically important services such as Elections and the NHS. It is part of the ongoing programme to migrate away from on-premise hosted applications. This transition will improve data management, enhance accessibility and reduce maintenance costs for all councils.

Data Platform

The project involves implementing Microsoft Purview for data governance and management. This platform will ensure data accuracy, security and compliance, benefiting all councils by enabling better decision-making and operational efficiency.

SharePoint

The project aims to implement SharePoint for secure and efficient document management and retrieval across the councils. A detailed architecture and pilot have been completed and lessons learned are being evaluated to ensure a successful rollout. The project will improve data management, enhance collaboration and support compliance with legislative requirements.

Storage

The SharePoint project aims to utilise and manage the latest document data effectively including information "Meta Data" that can tell you what a document is to aid with searching and retention. To preserve historical data that currently resides in file shares, our strategy proposes using cloud storage solutions within the broader context of the Azure migration project. This approach ensures that legacy data is securely stored and accessible for future reference while transitioning to more advanced and scalable storage technologies.

Civic Centre Closure

Exeter City Council has commenced discussions and preparations to relocate from the Civic Centre to a new site. Strata is involved in the initial discussions providing support for communications and ICT equipment. A significant factor driving the move to Azure is the planned closure of the data centre located in Phase 1 of the Civic Centre.

Performance Management (EDDC only)

The project aims to enhance performance management capabilities with a Corporate Performance and Risk Management system for EDDC. Pre-project phases are underway with a kick-off meeting expected in December 2024. The new system will improve performance tracking, enhance risk management and support strategic planning for EDDC.

2.3 Applications replacement and rationalisation

Maximise Use of HR system – iTrent - ahead of move to the cloud

The project aims to ensure efficiencies in process and optimisation available in the iTrent MHR solution are utilised and is in the early discovery phase. This initiative will reduce administration, enhance HR processes, improve data management and support strategic workforce planning for all councils.

HR System Strategy - iTrent

The project involves migrating iTrent to a cloud or hosted environment. A health check and gap analysis are planned, subject to business case approval, with migration to iTrent Hosted in Q2 2025/2026. This transition will improve HR processes, enhance data security and support strategic workforce planning for all councils.

Council Tax

The councils spend a significant amount on Council tax systems (circa 600k) per annum, currently the councils are not on a single contract or supplier. The project aims to align all three councils on a common platform for Council Tax systems to leverage contract and efficiency savings. A procurement exercise is planned for Q3/4 2025/2026 in line with contract renewal dates. A unified system will streamline processes, reduce costs and improve service delivery for all councils.

StreetScene

The project aims to procure and implement a comprehensive StreetScene Environmental Management System for East Devon District Council (EDDC). This system will manage all StreetScene assets, streamline work programmes and enhance the monitoring, coordination, recording and management of StreetScene activities, ultimately improving service delivery and customer service standards. As the requirements for this project become clear and are considered by the Architecture Board this may be considered by ECC

Homelessness

Teignbridge have commenced a project to replace their incumbent Homelessness Management system. The new system aligns with the cloud- based system already in place in Exeter. The project is well underway and is expected to move into production in Q2 25/26.

Lone Working

The Lone Worker Software Project aims to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of high-risk lone workers at Teignbridge District Council (TDC) and East Devon District Council (EDDC). It involves procuring a 24/7 Lone Worker application that meets BS 8484 and ISO 9001 standards, providing a reliable solution to replace outdated systems. ECC already has a system in place.

Car Parks

East Devon District Council and Teignbridge District Council are exploring options to replace their existing parking management system due to substantial cost increases and support challenges with the current provider, Taranto. The new system aims to improve service control, enhance customer experience and provide better management information and reporting capabilities. ECC, who currently utilise an alternative system, are keen to be involved in the defining business requirements stage of the project to understand any potential benefits for Exeter

LalPAC (Licencing system)

East Devon District Council plans to migrate from the LalPAC Licensing system to Idox Uniform to improve data management and compliance. The project had previously stalled but is now being reconsidered to align with the systems already used by Exeter and Teignbridge

Health and Safety

This project focuses on procuring a comprehensive corporate health and safety management platform for East Devon and Teignbridge District Councils. The new system aims to enhance performance monitoring, improve resource allocation and support compliance with legislative requirements. ECC, who currently utilise an alternative system, are keen to be involved in the defining business requirements stage of the project to understand any potential benefits for Exeter

2.4 Embed Enablers

EDDC Waste Project

The project involves the provision of the Recycling and Waste service. It is a large project expected to commence in 2025, requiring significant resources. The new system will improve waste management, enhance service delivery and support environmental sustainability for EDDC.

ECC City Development Project

ECC are embarking on a project to improve their planning system and processes to improve the customer experience of the service and ensure the Uniform system is being used to its full capabilities. Many of the enablers already under development will be integral to the success of the project, such as EMA to ensure integrations are managed efficiently, bookings so that time with a planning officer can be booked automatically, chatbots and good website information to handle some of the more basic planning enquires and CRM integration to make more information accessible to Customer Service Agents, rather than taking up the time of professional planning officers.

Bookings

The project aims to develop a system to manage bookings using Microsoft Bookings, Exchange and in-house development. A proof of concept for Sports Pitch bookings is being designed and tested for Teignbridge. This system will streamline the booking process, reduce administrative overhead and improve user experience for residents and staff.

2.5 Operations and Maintenance

ITHC Remediation

IT Health Check (ITHC) remediation involves significant effort to address vulnerabilities and implement improvements following audits. This process includes responding to auditors, prioritising and resolving issues identified during health checks, and ensuring all systems meet compliance requirements. Effective coordination across teams and proactive planning are essential to minimise risks and maintain operational integrity.

Server 2012 Replacement

The decommissioning and replacement of legacy servers running Windows Server 2012 require substantial resources. Migration efforts can be complex, especially for services with intricate dependencies or outdated configurations. Proper planning, testing, and execution are critical to ensure seamless transitions. Server 2012 has reached EOL and if no forward plan exists to migrate, we run the risk of failing PSN Coco audit.

Windows 10 End of Life (EOL)

With the end of Windows 10 support approaching, contingency planning is essential to maintain desktop and user functionality. While End User Computing (EUC) is moving away from the Global Desktop (GD) service, potential alternatives such as a new Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) or an upgrade to Windows 11 are being evaluated. This requires detailed assessments of compatibility, resource requirements, and deployment strategies to ensure a smooth transition.

VMware vSphere

Managing the incumbent VMware vSphere platform requires ongoing effort to ensure stability, performance, and security. Although the migration to Azure will reduce these efforts over time, an element of vSphere management is expected to persist. This includes routine updates, monitoring, and system optimisation to support the infrastructure.

Global Desktop (GD)

Maintaining the Global Desktop service demands continuous attention to ensure reliability and user satisfaction. This includes resolving user issues, applying updates, and addressing integration challenges.

DWP MoU Remediation

Addressing issues identified involves substantial collaboration with councils and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This includes developing coordinated responses, addressing compliance gaps and ensuring that all commitments are fulfilled within the stipulated timelines.

Starters, Movers, and Leavers (SML)
Improving the processes for onboarding, transitioning, and offboarding staff is an area of focus. Investments in automation aim to reduce reliance on the Service Desk, streamline operations, and enhance the overall staff experience. These efforts are critical for improving efficiency and minimizing delays in role-related changes.

MFD Replacement
Replacing aging Multi-Function Devices (MFDs) with modern equipment and services requires effort to ensure minimal disruption to users.

Backup and Disaster Recovery (DR)
Strengthening backup and disaster recovery processes is essential to safeguard critical council systems. Regular testing, process refinement, and validation ensure that systems can be swiftly restored following an incident, minimising potential downtime and maintaining essential services.

2.6 Finance Summary

Together with other Council recharges the total budgeted Council payments to Strata for 2025/26 are £8.76m, an increase of 3.4% on the 2024/25 budget.

A full description can be found in Section 6

Contract Payment	Budget	Share by council	2026/27	2027/28
	2025/26	2025/26		
EDDC	£3,367,239	38.6%	£3,476,805	£3,563,725
ECC	£2,911,984	33.4%	£3,016,541	£3,091,955
TDC	£2,438,771	28.0%	£2,486,189	£2,548,344
Total	**£8,717,995**	**100.0%**	**£8,979,535**	**£9,204,023**
Document Centre Recharge	£16,000		£16,480	£16,892
Mobile Tariff Access Recharge	£28,800		£29,664	£30,406
Total Council Payments	**£8,762,795**		**£8,925,679**	**£9,048,821**

3 Organisational Review

Training and Development

Improving skills empowers staff to handle complex tasks and projects in-house, reducing the need to rely on third-party consultants and ensures staff feel supported and invested in. By developing expertise within Strata, we can address challenges more efficiently, maintain greater control over processes, and respond more quickly to changing needs. This shift minimises consultancy fees, freeing up resources to reinvest in further skill development, tools, and innovation. Over time, building internal capability strengthens our self-sufficiency and enhances overall productivity. Furthermore, we can align with natural staff turnover to maintain a workforce that supports our organisation's evolving demographic and future requirements. This not only helps optimise budgets but also positions us to meet challenges with a workforce tailored to our long-term goals.

Over the course of the last 12 months, staff have been encouraged through the annual appraisal process to undertake courses in the Microsoft M365 platform that complement their areas of expertise. Over the course of the next business plan, remaining staff will be required to undertake the foundation courses as a minimum, with others encouraged and supported to specialise and become qualified in more advanced areas of the Microsoft ecosystem.

Course	Description	Staff Trained
Microsoft Azure Fundamentals	The Microsoft Azure Fundamentals course introduces cloud concepts, core Azure services, security, compliance, and pricing.	8
Microsoft M365 Fundamentals	The Microsoft 365 Fundamentals course provides an overview of Microsoft 365 services, benefits, and features, including cloud concepts, productivity apps, collaboration tools, and security.	1
Microsoft Power Platform Fundamentals	The Microsoft Power Platform Fundamentals course introduces Power BI, Power Apps, Power Automate, and Power Virtual Agents. It covers core capabilities, use cases, and benefits of building apps, automating workflows, and analysing data.	2

SQL Server Database Administration	Database Administration training covers a variety of topics ranging from securables (database schemas, users and general access), backups, performance tuning and enhancements for troubleshooting problems.	1
Microsoft Azure Solutions Architect	It covers advanced topics like virtual networking, storage, compute, identity, security, and governance. Students learn to architect solutions for diverse workloads, optimise performance, and integrate Azure services effectively. Emphasizing cost management and best practices, the course includes practical scenarios to enhance skills.	1
Microsoft Security, Compliance, and Identity Fundamentals	The Microsoft Security, Compliance, and Identity Fundamentals course introduces core SCI concepts, including Zero Trust, identity protection, access management, and compliance. It explores Microsoft tools like Azure AD, Defender, and Sentinel.	1
Contract Management	Providing local Government managers with knowledge around all aspects of Contract management covering Stakeholder Management, Risk management, Procurement and mobilisation, Ongoing design and development, Contract Management & Supplier Performance and Exit and transition for high value or key contracts.	1

As part of the personal development plans, we have Identified areas of training for each department to support the business plan for 2025/26.

Our in-house Trainer has been involved in multiple activities throughout 2024 on behalf of the councils. This includes:

- Microsoft 365 Training courses delivered to large audiences
- SharePoint pilot training generated in preparation for a wider deployment
- Councillor support & training
- Staff drop-in sessions
- Content for new EUC laptop deployment including Windows 11 support
- A brand-new Strata Broadcast Team site for announcements and Training Hints & Tips
- A brand-new training SharePoint site split into three elements

- Strata training documentation – bespoke guidance written in-house for various technologies
- Microsoft Learning Pathways – Microsoft generated learning guidance for various Microsoft technologies
- Modern Digital Toolkit – a collaborative site with multiple guides on how best to use the right tools for the job

For 2025 the training schedule will follow the same plan with further courses being run to help staff get more out of their existing technologies. This is particularly the case with Microsoft 365 and its various collaboration tools, such as Microsoft Teams.

Activity

Across the organisation approximately 40% of time is spent delivering projects with the remaining 60% on delivering business as usual activities, including Incident management, administration and BAU requests. This presents flexibility in approach to financing transformation i.e. opportunity value of approximately 40%.

Strata Staff Survey 2024/25

In the 2024/25 Strata Business Plan we committed to undertake a staff survey of each of the partner authorities every year to understand their experience of Strata services. on Strata and the services,

This year we are asking the same questions as the previous year so that we can see how the changes we've made through the year have had an impact.

Highlights from the 2023 survey and how we responded are shown below:

You said	We did
The Strata Portal needs to Improve	We've revamped the Strata Portal, introducing new branding, an A to Z, improved search facilities and a service catalogue detailing the services we provide
Service desk opening times	From January 2024 we extended the opening times of the Service Desk to align with the council office times, opening from 08:00 to 17:00. We've also introduced a single, non-geographic Service Desk telephone number to call (020 38 33 2999)
Improve comms – provide better updates to call progress	We have introduced new branding of communication emails, a new Strata Broadcast Team, and new process for managing Major Faults to include WhatsApp and improved regularity of notifications.
Improve hardware and replace aging devices	We've introduced a hardware replacement programme which we're steadily working through. Laptops over 4 years old are being replaced with newer models, with improved performance, to work with the new End User Compute (EUC) model.
Audio visual equipment in meeting rooms needs improving	New Audio-Visual equipment has been installed throughout Blackdown House and Exeter Civic Centre, and the stability issues experienced in Teignbridge offices have been addressed
Improve Global Desktop	We're working hard to remove the need for Global Desktop altogether. The End User Computer model will replace Global Desktop with laptops that run applications natively – without the need to log onto Global. Roll-out of this new way of working began in November 2024 and will continue through 2025.

Improve prioritisation of requests	We've introduced a new work pipeline to manage Projects and Larger pieces of work in a different way to Business-as-Usual requests (BAU). This allows us to wrap an SLA around the BAU work whilst ensuring adequate controls are in place for larger work items.
Skype for Business and needs replacing	We recognise that Skype is old technology that is being de-supported by Microsoft in 2025; as such we've already begun moving officers away from Skype and onto Teams Telephony. This will continue through the early part of 2025

4. Carried Forward 2024-2025

4.1 Contact Centre and Telephony

The project is progressing steadily, completing the procurement stage in 2024 and is now at the rollout phase, with a focus on transitioning from Skype to Teams telephony by June 2025. A full procurement process was conducted, which included:

- Requirement Gathering:
- Supplier Evaluation:
- Tender Process:
- Budget and Costs.

Deliverables for 2025/2026 which will be managed by the project board :

- **Full Implementation of Contact Centre:** The full minimum viable product (MVP) of the Contact Centre should be delivered within a window between February and May 2025. **Enhanced Capabilities of Contact Centre:** Within the scope of this project delivery is to introduce additional modules within the Contact Centre. These modules are expected to bring efficiency gains to the services:
    - Interaction Analytics – enhanced reporting and insights
    - Enlighten Copilot – an Artificial Intelligence solution that provides additional insight and support to each agent
    - Personal Connection – an outbound campaign dialler
    - Each of these modules are within revenue budget but will require additional capital
- **Replacement handsets:** With Skype for Business being phased out we need to replace many handsets to Teams compatible ones. Anything replaced in the past 12 months are already to specification, but older ones will need a replacement. Of the current state that require replacing, there are 139 devices in scope.
- **Cloud Voice Routing:** Depending on how the contact centre final design is agreed, we are likely to have additional on-premises equipment that is critical to the telephony routing, even though the telephone platform is

within the cloud. An additional project will need to be undertaken to lift this part of the telephony routing out of the Strata datacentre and into the cloud.

Additional capital included in budget:
- Handset replacement - £20,850
- Cloud Voice Routing specialist help - £20,000
- Contact Centre agreed additional modules:
    - Interaction Analytics - £8000
    - Enlighten Copilot - £30,000
    - Personal Connection - £4000

Artificial Intelligence and the Customer Contact Centre
One of the above modules, called Enlighten Copilot, will bring additional efficiencies to the call handlers, including auto-summary of calls, real-time sentiment analysis. In addition, Strata has been running a discovery for an Artificial Intelligent Chat Bot with the aim to automate low-level enquiries from customers. This has been developed using Microsoft's Copilot Studios with an aim to discover how modern AI works with the council websites.

Through 2024 we have seen a phenomenal change in Artificial Intelligence from the likes of Open AI (ChatGPT), and whilst this shifting landscape has been exciting to witness it is challenging to pin-down what is achievable. Starting early 2025 we will be reforming our Chat Bot project with an aim to recapture Council requirements, and work with the authorities to reassess the content on their websites so they are usable for customers browsing the sites, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO – Google, etc) and how Artificial Intelligent products access the content.

A small-scale pilot in TDC on use of chatbot has been conducted the evaluation of the pilot will consider the long-term suitability of chatbot within the context of our agreed Microsoft default position. Pricing for Chatbots is incredibly difficult to estimate as there is no prior data to base it on. AI Chatbots are based on a per-interaction cost, including how many messages (or minutes) are included in each interaction. Therefore, pricing will increase the more popular the chatbots are.

High Level Project Timeline for Teams telephony:

Phase	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25
Discovery		■	■	■														
Licensing purchase and deploy	■	■	■															
Design document		■	■	■	■	■(red)			■(grey)									
Implementation				■	■	■	■											
Internal Testing						■	■											
Plan Strata							■											
Deploy Strata (minus SD)								■										
Deploy Strata Service Desk										■								
Plan Authority									■	■(yellow)								
Deploy Authorities										■	■(yellow)	■(yellow)	■(yellow)					
Handset replacement																■(grey)		
Decommission SfB																	■(grey)	■(grey)

High Level Project Timeline for new Contact Centre:

Phase	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25
Art of the possible	■	■																
Requirements Capturing		■	■	■														
Procurement Prep & Open					■	■	■											
Evaluation & Award								■	■	■								
Contract										■								
Implementation										■	■	■	■					
Go-Live														■	■	■		
Decommission A365																	■	

Note: The go-live for the Contact Centre is to-be determined at time of writing and so the above timeline is an estimate at this stage. The contract with the supplier is being signed around time of publication and thus full design work has yet to be determined.

The agreed roadmap with the authorities is to initially deploy a like-for-like solution – Telephony - and then move into the digital channels, and finally onto the advanced elements such as AI.

4.2   Middleware

The Enterprise Middleware Architecture (EMA) project has advanced well, with proof of concept completed and the core parts of the test infrastructure now set-up and running within our live Strata cloud platform. This includes key tools to manage interfaces (APIS), secure databases and automated service processes that support the broader concept.

Phase 1 to replace the existing key API listed in Business plan 24/25 has been completed, future API's to be agreed by demand in agreement with the authorities.

Deliverables for 2025/2026:
In 2025/2026, we aim to achieve the following:

- Completed development of the test platform
- Integration with CRM (Firmstep) and forms
- Available to Citizen developers, including training
- Public website integration
- Bookings system integration
- Mobile Working integration

Benefits of the Enterprise Middleware Architecture:
EMA aims to improve data integration, enhance security, and support digital transformation by managing application programming interfaces (APIs), securing databases, and automating service processes. The project has already completed its proof of concept and set up the core parts of the test infrastructure, including key tools to manage interfaces, secure databases, and automate service processes. This architecture will streamline communication across different parts of the system, protect sensitive information, and ensure that only authorised personnel can access critical data. Overall, the EMA project will lead to more efficient operations, better data management and improved service delivery for the councils.

4.3   End User Computing (EUC)

New laptops have been deployed to Strata staff to conduct a thorough technical assessment of the solution. The project has since evolved from a focus on reducing reliance on Global Desktop into a comprehensive replacement programme scheduled for completion by 2025/2026.

The EUC project will deliver fundamental change to how council staff work and heavily modifies the IT operations and support. These changes require leadership from the councils to support the transition and communications across all departments.

As part of this programme we are also taking the opportunity to migrate user data, including documents and H drive content to OneDrive (Cloud) for Business. This transition is designed to reduce dependency on local file servers providing users with greater flexibility and a seamless experience. It is a key strategic step in reducing reliance on local infrastructure, aligning with our Azure migration project, and optimising our investment in Microsoft 365 E5 licensing. Leveraging OneDrive for Business not only improves accessibility but also enhances data security, management and compliance.

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Through this plan we are addressing these challenges while reducing our reliance on legacy systems aiming for a modern digital workspace across all councils before the end of the 2025/2026 cycle.

Delivery Approach:

> In agreement with Council leadership we will be deploying laptops based on application availability organised by department phases throughout 2025. This approach is to be agreed with the councils.

High Level Proposed Project Timeline:

Phase	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25
Pilot	✓	✓	✓												
Strata Deployment			✓												
ECC ELT Deployment			✓	✓											
EDDC Digital Team Deployment			✓	✓											
Application Packaging		✓	✓												
Main Rollout – EDDC					P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	
Main Rollout – TDC					P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	
Main Rollout – ECC					P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	

Deliverables for 2025/2026:

In 2025/2026, we aim to achieve the following key deliverables as part of the EUC project.

- **Migration of Laptop Users:** Successfully migrate 90% of laptop-using staff away from the Global Desktop (GD) environment to the End User Computing (EUC) platform. This transition will enhance user experience, improve performance and provide greater flexibility for our staff.
- **Assessment of Thin Desktop Estate:** Conduct a comprehensive review of the current thin desktop estate, evaluating options for further migration away from the Global Desktop. This assessment will focus on identifying potential alternatives including a transition to Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) a product like global, to ensure all staff have access to a modern, efficient computing environment.
- **Data Migration to OneDrive for Business:** Continue the migration of user data including documents and H drive content to OneDrive for Business. This effort will not only reduce reliance on local file servers but also enhance data accessibility, security and compliance.
- **Implementation of Azure Virtual Desktop:** If the review of the thin desktop estate supports the move, initiate the implementation of Azure Virtual Desktop solutions where appropriate aligning with council objectives and data centre evacuation timelines.

- **User Training and Support:** Provide training sessions and resources for staff transitioning to the new EUC environment, ensuring a smooth changeover and empowering users to make the most of their new tools.

4.4 SharePoint

SharePoint was one of the key Enablers identified in the 2024/25 Strata Business Plan. It enables the secure and efficient management and retrieval of the vast number of documents the councils use. It meets many of the strategic objectives of the councils such as good data management, compliance with legislation such as the Data Protection Act (DPA) and obligations such as the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (a new security standard imposed to access their data). Properly implemented it will reduce the time of finding and retrieving important documents creating efficiencies across the organisations; manage Data Retention and ensure sensitive documents are handled appropriately.

To date the following has been achieved:
- A detailed Architecture for SharePoint which adheres to the Local Government Classification Scheme (LGCS) standard (a government standard for storing documents), resulting in a storage structure that is based around function not organisational structure. This will futureproof the implementation and avoid filing structures becoming out of date with inevitable organisational restructuring.
- A pilot involving the digital teams of the 3 authorities. This involved migrating the digital teams' data from the existing file servers to the LGCS based SharePoint structure and applying retention, sensitivity and metadata rules.
- Implemented a suite of tools to manage the migrations of data from EDDC and ECC's file servers and TDCs existing SharePoint implementation.

Lessons Learned from the pilot
Once the digital teams have had enough time to evaluate the pilot a detailed lessons learned document will be created. However enough is currently known about the SharePoint process to date, to allow for some high-level conclusions.

- To successfully implement SharePoint, beyond a simple 'Lift and Shift' approach will require more dedicated resource from the authorities than was available from the pilot. It is recommended that each authority has a project manager to oversee and coordinate the activities of the project and

a Business Analyst who can work with each service area to classify existing documents in preparation for Migration. The project will also require good communication about the significant change

- Strata will need a project manager to oversee the project from a technical perspective and an analyst who can administer the SharePoint environment.

Once users are onboarded with SharePoint it will be important to properly manage the environment, co-ordinate the rules surrounding document classifications, data retention and sensitivity and ensure the platform is being used correctly. SharePoint has the potential to radically improve the efficiency of the councils and their approach to managing documents and data compliance, but only if properly implemented and maintained.

4.5 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Forms

Significant progress has been achieved in 24/25 to date on the CRM and forms project. The requirements identified 3 key areas of development to maximise the benefits of CRM and the wider transformation project:

1. Capture all customer transaction data going through the CRM - This was achieved through the introduction of a Miscellaneous Transaction form for each function area the Customer Contact Centres deal with. The form was designed to quickly capture the Function area, Transaction Type and detailed Activity type the customer was contacting the council for, and other information such as more detailed notes, and value or failure demand to assist with future analysis. The forms have 2 main benefits:
   - o Allows for a detailed analysis of demand to help inform future process development to target and automate specific transaction types.
   - o Allows a comprehensive customer database to be built, with a rich history of customer contact to be associated with customers. This will enable future benefits such as data surfacing and enable customer service advisors to answer customer enquiries more quickly.

To date over 50,000 transactions have been captured against customers using the miscellaneous forms, this has already helped reduce demand, by identifying improvements that could be made to the automatic queuing, to divert calls that need to be managed by 3rd parties, away from the customer services.

This is critical to delivering the self-service vision set out in the digital strategies of each council.

2. Activate MyAccount for EDDC and ECC - MyAccount is a feature of the CRM (GovService) that enables customers to have a single digital account with the authority, this helps manage their interactions and services with the council. The 'self-service' nature of MyAccount enables 24/7 service provision and reduces demand.

3. Data Surfacing - A key driver of efficiency for customer services is to reduce the number of back-office systems the staff need to access to answer customer queries. Ideally, the information needed will be available to CSAs directly from the

Figure 1: Data Surfacing/ Service Summary screen shot

CRM system - Using the Unique Customer Reference Number (UCRN) that is generated when a customer account is set up, Strata will be able to link data from back-office systems to the customer record and pull it through to the CRM. Working with the supplier, Strata have added a new menu item to GovService called 'Service Summary' which presents information in a table format to the Customer Service Assistant (CSA) for relevant services. This reduces the number of back-office systems the CSA needs to open and search through to answer customer enquires. This is still in development. phase 1 is scheduled to be taken live in Q4 of 24/25 and includes waste and planning services. Further phases will be determined   by the councils, linked to the miscellaneous form feedback.

4.6 Bookings

A key enabler for the 25/26 business plan is to introduce a system to manage bookings. Whilst there are suppliers on the market that can deliver the majority of the business requirements for a booking system they are prohibitively expensive. For example, to deliver in general desk booking and sports pitch booking requirements from Booking Lab, a specialist supplier of booking systems, would be in the region of £150,000 per year, per authority. Strata has undertaken a discovery to deliver an in-house similar system utilising a combination of Microsoft Bookings, Microsoft Exchange and some in-house development to combine these together in a way that will deliver the desired outcomes.

Search for a Pitch

Choose the date range that you want to search between and select a pitch size.

From	To	Pitch Size
07/11/2024	14/11/2024	Full Pitch

🔍 Search

Thursday 07 November 2024

Pitch 1
Equipment: Football Equipment 1
Times   07:30AM - 09:00AM
✔ Reserve

Pitch 1
Equipment: Football Equipment 2
Times   07:30AM - 09:00AM
✔ Reserve

Friday 08 November 2024

This work is progressing well with a proof of concept for Sports Pitch bookings, the most complex requirement identified in the Business Requirements Document,

successfully working on a test system.

Work will continue this project throughout the early part of 2025

4.7 Notifications

Notifications system will enable end users to send templated notifications via numerous notification channels such as Email, SMS, WhatsApp and others, utilising existing services such as gov.uk Notify. To date work has been focused on the benefits described in the middleware section as this is needed to Underpin the sending of messages via the Notification Engine. EMA is scheduled to go live in Q4 24/25 after which the design for Notifications can be signed.

There is not anticipated to be any development costs of the solution.

4.8 Data Platform

The Strata Business Plan for 2024/25 underscores the critical role of a robust data platform in achieving the strategic goals of its partner councils. Central to this vision is the implementation of sound data governance practices facilitated by Microsoft Purview.

Microsoft Purview is a comprehensive data management suite designed to help organisations discover, catalogue and manage their data assets effectively. It provides a unified governance framework that supports the entire data lifecycle, from ingestion to archiving, ensuring that data is accurate, secure and accessible to authorised users.

Microsoft Purview offers a range of features that align with the strategic objectives outlined in the Strata Business Plan:

- Data Discovery and Cataloguing: Purview enables automatic scanning and cataloguing of data assets across the organisation, providing a single view of all data sources. This facilitates better data understanding and usage.
- Data Lineage: By tracking data flow across various systems, Purview helps in understanding data transformations and lineage, which is crucial for compliance and audit purposes.
- Data Classification: Purview supports the classification of data based on sensitivity, ensuring that data handling complies with organisational policies and regulatory requirements.
- Access Control: It offers robust access control mechanisms to ensure that only authorised users can access sensitive data, thereby enhancing data security.
- Policy Management: Purview allows organisations to define and enforce data governance policies across their data estate, ensuring consistent and compliant data usage.

Implementing Microsoft Purview – Initial Discovery
Preliminary work has been undertaken during the 24/25 to evaluate the use of Purview. Although light touch at this stage several conclusions can be made.

- Purview is a powerful tool for supporting data governance that when implemented properly will give the authorities great visibility and control over their data.
- Purview is vast covering many capabilities each of which will need to be configured.
- Benefits can be gained without having all capabilities in place. The use can then be widened as required.
- To leverage the benefits of Purview dedicated resource will be required to scan and classify the data repositories that the council have as well as those managed by Strata.
- Once the technical configuration has been completed, the use of Purview will become largely administrative.
- There will be a requirement for ongoing resource to own and manage Purview. Purview is Pay as you Go and is charged on 2 main factors: storage of metadata and charge per scan. This will need to be managed carefully so that costs don't increase in an uncontrolled manner. Further work is needed to determine costs to scan the whole estate, and further discussion will potentially be needed to target certain areas.

5 Cloud, SAAS and Connectivity

5.1 Migration to Azure

An initial Azure landing zone (a prepared cloud environment, a foundation for building and running applications securely and efficiently) has been successfully established to support the Enterprise Middleware Architecture (EMA) project. This foundational environment is a first step toward migrating services to the Azure platform.

To support the business plan for 25/26 the ICT staff are actively building up their knowledge, expertise and certifications on the Azure platform. This skill development will equip our team to manage the Azure environment effectively, supporting a smooth and strategic transition to the cloud. In addition, we have begun working with a potential professional services reseller to evaluate and access specialised migration and early life support. This engagement is intended

to provide us with additional resources and insights as we move forward with our Azure adoption plans. To support these objectives a comprehensive assessment of our existing IT estate has been updated helping us to identify priority areas for migration and future cloud optimisation. We have also established regular review meetings with both the reseller and Microsoft to track progress and align on our strategic roadmap.

Meanwhile, the End User Computing (EUC) project is gradually reducing our reliance on the Global Desktop environment. However, moving away entirely requires a move to Azure Virtual Desktop which is included in the scope of the Azure migration project. This shift supports our strategic goal of decreasing dependency on data centre infrastructure, aligning with our transition to the cloud and optimising our IT resources. Finally, it should be noted that the operations and maintenance effort overhead will be drastically reduced once the migration to Azure has been completed.

Several critical infrastructure milestones are on the horizon. The primary data centre for the councils are in Exeter and are likely to require moving in the near future which means we will need a robust migration strategy to maintain service continuity. Additionally, our storage area network (SAN) is nearing end-of-life by 2026/2027 prompting us to explore replacement options or alternative cloud-based storage solutions. The VMware hosts in Oakwood and Civic Centre are also approaching end-of-life and will require extended hardware support or full replacement to maintain functionality. Both options present significant capital costs compounded by recent increases in VMware licensing fees.

High Level Project Timeline:
The project timeline for the migration to Azure is still under development and has yet to be formally finalised. However, due to the likely closure of the Civic Centre there is a need to initiate the migration process soon. Subject to Architecture Board approval of the business case we anticipate that the early phases of the migration will need to begin in Q1 2025/2026. With these time constraints in mind the project is likely to follow an accelerated timeline. Our goal is to complete the migration by Q4 2025/2026 ensuring that all essential services are fully transitioned and operational well ahead of the data centre closure deadline. Starting in Q1 2025/2026 allows us to establish a phased approach allowing for

adjustments, testing and risk mitigation to ensure a stable and secure migration process.

The Timeline and costs will be presented to Architecture Board as part of a detailed business case for consideration.

Deliverables for 2025/2026:

- **Business Case Approval:** Completion and approval of a comprehensive business case to formalise the transition to Azure. This document will outline strategic benefits, anticipated costs and expected outcomes ensuring alignment with organisational goals and securing buy-in from stakeholders. Expected Q4 2024 with Architecture Board approval within the same month.
- **Optimisation:** A thorough review of the current Azure network design and configuration to confirm it meets security, compliance and scalability standards. This assessment will address any gaps and optimise our Azure environment to support smooth and secure service migration.
- **Project Plan and Migration Waves:** Development of a detailed project plan including defined service migration waves to structure the transition to Azure. This phased approach will prioritise key services, manage risk and ensure minimal disruption to ongoing operations.
- **75%-90% Migration Completion:** By calendar year-end we aim to achieve between 75% and 90% completion of the migration to Azure covering essential services and core infrastructure components. This progress will demonstrate significant momentum towards a full cloud migration and reduce our dependency on legacy data centre infrastructure.

5.2 Copper lines and Dark Fibre

Copper Lines

In August 2021 BT Openreach announced their 'copper switch-off'. As part of the UK government's goal of providing gigabit connectivity across the UK, the public switched telephone network (PTSN) and its copper system was due to be switched off by the end of 2025. In May 2024 the deadline for the switch off was extended to 31st January 2027.

The councils use many traditional copper telephone lines for several different purposes including:

- Telephone lines to smaller sites
- Intruder and fire alarms
- Lifts
- Telecare alarm services (Home safeguard and HomeCall)
- Broadband connectivity to many remote sites (ADSL / FTTC)

All these services, if they are still required, will need to be migrated to a digital alternative before the copper circuits are ceased to avoid any loss of connectivity.

Since August 2024 there has been dedicated resource allocated to this project (1FTE) which has enabled significant progress to be made and by end of the 2024/2025 period we expect the work to be over 50% complete. The intention is to aim to complete the transition from analogue to digital by the original deadline of 31st December 2025.

This project is generating savings in the revenue costs associated with telephony and network connectivity. This is in part because digital broadband connections are typically lower in cost than analogue broadband over a telephone line, but also due to the number of connections that have been ceased because they are no longer needed.

Capital funds have been allocated by the councils in recent years to enable the switch from analogue to digital services. No requirement for additional capital funding is anticipated to complete the migration to digital.

Component	2022/23 Allocation	2023/24 Allocation	2024/25 Allocation	Spend to date / (Remaining)
Exeter	£40,000	£30,000	£10,781	£39,976
				-£40,805
East Devon	-	£30,000	£11,008	£5,222
				-£35,786
Teignbridge	-	£15,000	£8,212	£4,664
				-£18,548

Deliverables from 2025/2026:

- To continue to look for opportunities to rationalise the number of copper services in use by ceasing any which are not required.
- To continue the programme of upgrades of analogue broadband circuits to digital where this is currently available. These should be full fibre (FTTP) connections at all sites which currently have fibre availability, but where fibre is not available, Openreach recommend a technology called 'single order generic ethernet access' or SoGEA. SoGEA provides fast broadband connectivity over the existing copper cable, but without any telephone service.
- Identify replacement solutions for the three remaining analogue telephone systems (PABXs) in use at the Belle Isle Depot in Exeter, and Manor Pavilion Theatre and Thelma Hulbert Gallery in East Devon.
- To continue to work with the property teams at each council to migrate intruder and fire alarms, lifts and any other systems that currently require a fixed copper telephone line to a digital alternative. In most costs, this is likely to involve installation of Digicom or Dualcom devices which use mobile 4G connectivity to replace the telephone line.

Migration away from Dark Fibre (Exeter City Council):

The Exeter City fibre network was installed around 20 years ago in partnership with Devon County Council, Exeter University and the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Healthcare Trust. This has provided the council with a high-speed reliable data network which was free from the monthly rental costs which are typically associated with fibre network connections.

The fibre network is currently unsupported with no service level agreement in place for maintenance or repair. The company that originally installed the network

no longer exists. In the event of any faults the only option available is to use a fibre contractor to investigate the fault on a best endeavours basis or provide an alternative connection. Such repairs/investigations typically cost around £750-£1,000 per day without any guarantee that the issues can be resolved.

In the past two years there have been two faults with the fibre network to the historic Guildhall which have led to extended periods with no network connectivity. There is a significant risk from continuing to use the dark fibre network associated with the possibility of extended outages impacting service delivery, in some cases at revenue generating sites.

Strata are recommending that in the 2025/2026 period sites which are currently connected via the dark fibre network be migrated to commercial full fibre connectivity where this is available. This will provide more reliable connectivity because the connections will be supported by the network provider with SLAs for repair and any faults will only impact a single site whereas a fault on the dark fibre network has the potential to take down multiple sites.

The cost of migrating the sites currently connected via the dark fibre is expected to be in the region of £18,000. This includes installation costs, hardware and line rental costs for the 2025/2026 period. The ongoing revenue cost of the new connections will be covered from savings arising from the wider analogue to digital migration project. There is expected to be a surplus of around £3,000 from the capital fund already allocated and within the core infrastructure budget, an additional £15,000 is required to cover the balance.

Component	Capital requirement for 2025/26
Exeter (SC090)	£15,000

Migration away from fixed point to point data circuits (Teignbridge):
Teignbridge have several sites which are served by fixed point to point data circuits (leased lines). These are typically larger sites which have not had any high-speed broadband services available. These leased lines differ from the dark fibre in Exeter because they are supported connections provided by commercial

providers, but they are much more expensive than a standard fibre broadband connection (typically around £300-£400 per month).

The leased lines are all connected back to Forde House creating a single point of failure. Any loss of connectivity to Forde House also results in a loss of connectivity at these sites.

Strata are recommending that in the 2025/2026 period, sites which are currently connected via leased lines to Forde House be migrated to commercial full fibre connectivity where this is available. This will significantly reduce the ongoing revenue costs as the monthly costs are between £35-£70 compared with £300-£400 per month and will also remove the single point of failure at Forde House.

The cost of migrating the sites currently connected via leased lines is expected to be in the region of £10,000. This includes installation costs, hardware and line rental costs for the 2025/2026 period. Annual revenue savings of around £12,000 per year will be generated from savings in line rentals.

Component	Capital requirement for 2025/26
Teignbridge (SC095)	£10,000

Copper line closure:

Strata have reduced the number of copper lines from 498 to a significantly lower count. Of these, 120 lines have been ceased entirely and 73 have been upgraded to modern alternatives. This initiative has streamlined our telecommunications infrastructure but has also reduced the associated core budget from £47,930 to £23,000. Throughout the next financial year the number of lines will be reduced further.

Action	# Lines
Total Lines	498
Lines upgraded	73
Lines ceased	120
Budget 2024/2025	Budget 2025/2026
£47,930	£23,000

5.3 Embed Enablers

Strata are dedicated to ensure the councils release the full potential of the enablers started in business plan in 24/25. Ensuring the technical enablers are delivered is only the first stage of the councils' transformation journey – effort will be required to support the councils to embed the organisational change as individual council plan mature.

It is therefore important that the councils share learning and processes where possible – leading to greater efficiency.

A Rapid Improvement Team Proof of Concept (PoC) contracted by Exeter for deployment January 2025 plans to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Waste and Parks and Open Spaces Services in Exeter, aiming to identify areas where service improvement and digitisation can reduce costs. 3rd party experts will conduct a rapid assessment of current processes, systems and performance benchmarking them against best practices and the Council's Digital Customer Strategy.

The initial findings will be shared across all three partners and is driven by the need to address significant technical debt and achieve significant cost reductions across operational services over the next two years. The PoC will deliver a detailed report that includes improvement opportunities, methodologies and cost-benefit analysis options for changes. This report will also propose scenarios for financial productivity and efficiency gains which will be crucial for rolling out similar projects across other council areas in 25/26.

5.4 Operations and Maintenance

Operations and Maintenance (O&M) is the cornerstone of a resilient and well-run ICT service. Consistent effort and resources are required to maintain high standards, ensure security and remain compliant with legislative requirements. A structured and proactive O&M approach minimises risks and enhances service reliability benefiting all areas of our organisation.

To uphold security and compliance Strata will develop an "Embedded Security" methodology that integrates with our operational processes. This approach will prioritise regular cycles of reporting, reviewing, coordinating, raising change requests (RFC), remediating vulnerabilities and repeating as necessary. By embedding security into everyday operations we will establish a proactive defence against emerging threats and evolving standards.
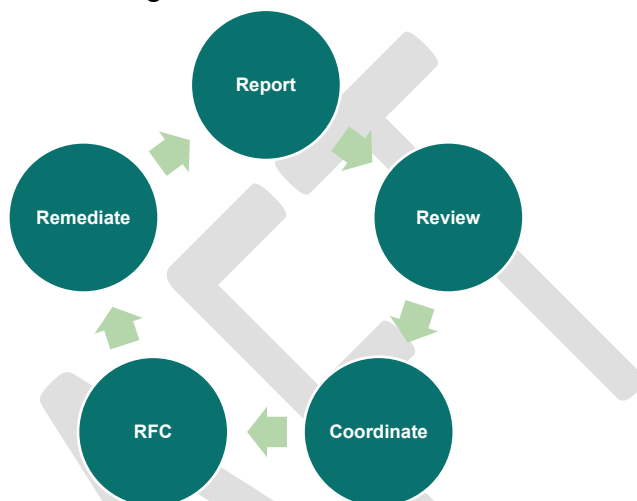
To support the Embedded Security methodology it is essential that network infrastructure remains in support as any 'end-of-life' equipment becomes vulnerable when security patches cease to be available and the risk of failure increases with age due to wear and tear on components. A proactive programme of replacement of equipment nearing end-of-life will be carried out to minimise risks associated with equipment failure.

To carry out regular backups of systems and user data hosted in both on-premise data centres and in the cloud. Reliable backups are essential to enable disaster recovery but also in the event of accidental deletion or data corruption. Backups are tested regularly to ensure the reliability of data recovery. Backups are stored securely offsite and retained for up to three lines in line with the data retention policy.

Deliverables for 2025/2026:
Strata will:
1. Leverage the recently approved DWP MOU Readiness Grant* to employ a full-time equivalent (FTE) within for a one-year period. This role will be

subject to review in the next business plan cycle. (*grant of £45K based on TDC/EDDC/ECC at 15K each).

2. Position the Embedded Security (SAS) work as an ongoing project, ensuring full dedication of FTE days as contributing to the resource allocation. This will avoid shock / reactive projects needing short and intense mitigation work historically needed to meet PSN CoCo submissions. (see table below).

3. Continue with the programme of proactive replacement of firewalls, routers and wireless access points.

4. Migrate off Mimecast, providing a saving to the authorities and removing some duplicated functionality provided by Microsoft E5.

Capital funds are allocated by the councils each year into a reserve referred to as the tri-payment which is used to fund Infrastructure replacements. The planned replacement of firewalls, routers and wireless access points will be funded from the tri-payment reserve.

5.6 Disaster Recovery

The last major review of our Disaster Recovery (DR) preparations took place in 2018. This, alongside planned and running changes of our ICT operations, it is imperative that we conduct a comprehensive review of our current DR position. This review will require a thorough assessment of our existing DR plans, identifying any gaps or areas for improvement and ensuring that our strategies are aligned with Council priorities. By doing so Strata aims to enhance Council resilience and preparedness in the face of potential disruptions. It is anticipated that this will take circa 138 FTE days during 25/26 to undertake.

Deliverables for 2025/2026:

1. **Updating Procedures and Processes:** To ensure the effectiveness DR plans, processes and procedures must be updated. This includes creating detailed recovery plans for each system, adding third-party contacts for critical systems and verifying recovery SLAs for critical third-party systems. Additionally, to define processes for accessing and sharing recovery data (passwords etc). These updates will help streamline our recovery efforts and ensure that all stakeholders are well-informed and prepared.

2. **Incorporating Regular DR Exercises:** Regular DR exercises are essential to validate the effectiveness of our plans and provide audit compliance evidence. We propose incorporating both table-top exercises and full-scale recovery exercises in liaison with council service owners. These exercises will simulate various disaster scenarios allowing us to test our response strategies, identify any weaknesses and make necessary adjustments. By engaging with council service owners we can ensure that our plans are comprehensive and consider the specific needs and requirements of each service area.

3. **Ensuring Plans are Fit for Purpose:** Our goal is to ensure that our DR plans are fit for purpose and capable of addressing our unique challenges and risks. This involves reviewing the logical running order of recovery, identifying critical missing information and updating the DR plan templates. Additionally, we need to reflect the IT DR actions plan and system-level recovery plans in the business plan and resource plans.

4. **Providing Audit Compliance Evidence** To demonstrate our commitment to audit compliance we will document the outcomes of our DR exercises

and maintain detailed records of our recovery plans and procedures. This includes creating a highly available repository for DR information, ensuring this information is reviewed frequently and raising awareness of ITDR plans and facilities.

6 Finances

Current financial status of the company

One of the key objectives originally set for Strata by the owners was to deliver cost savings as set out in the original business case and subsequently amended each year since 2017/18. The original ten-year Business Case met its objectives and saving profile therefore the 2024-25 Business Plan moved away from delivering a savings profile and shifted to a transformational focus.

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

	Actual revenue Savings	Projected revenue Savings	Actual variance to projected
2015/16	£232,000	£262,098	-£30,098
2016/17	£100,000	£20,000	£80,000
2017/18	£565,000	£252,836	£312,164
2018/19	£620,000	£381,961	£238,039
2019/20	£1,074,000	£853,888	£220,112
2020/21	£1,051,000	£696,167	£354,833
2021/22	£1,260,000	£747,804	£512,196
2022/23	£1,079,832	£702,415	£377,417
2023/24	£799,828	£754,254	£45,574
Total	**£6,781,660**	**£4,671,423**	**£2,110,237**

The forecast outturn for the 2024/25 core Budget is a net underspend of £305k.

	Revenue budget 2024/25	Projected 2024/25 outturn	Outturn variance to budget
Employees	£4,074,578	£4,106,869	£32,291
Supplies & services	£4,346,439	£4,030,341	-£316,098
Transport	£7,455	£6,838	-£617

Support services	£60,000	£60,000	£0
Tax on interest	£0	£11,036	£11,036
Income - revenue	-£8,476,323	-£8,470,373	£5,949
Investment interest	-£12,150	-£49,662	-£37,512
Net (Income)/Expense	**£0**	**-£304,952**	**-£304,952**
2023-24 Profit handback	**£197,746**	**£26,092**	**-£171,654**

The projected underspend of £305k against the core Budget is due to the following:

- **Employee costs** £32k Adverse variance due to redundancy costs from the reorganisation partially offset by cost reductions from later onboarding of staff for new posts created by the reorganisation than Budgeted.
- **Supplies & Services** £316k Favourable variance mainly driven by later delivery of Business Plan initiatives. Budget cost overvalued due to timings of large procurements being delivered in 2024-25
- **Income** £6k Adverse to Budget driven by lower forecast mobile recharge income than budgeted due to renegotiated tariffs, partially offset by higher income from recharges relating to General Election services provided by the Document Centre
- **Investment interest** £26k Favourable (net of Corporation Tax) due to continued high level of Base Rate, compared with more conservative Budget assumption

In the financial year 2024/25 £198k of profit distributed to the councils at the end of 2023/24 was handed back to Strata to continue to fund the programme of organisational change. £26k of these funds are forecast to be spent in 2024-25 leaving £172k which will continue into the financial year 2025/26. It is proposed that these funds along with any unspent funds distributed to the councils at the end of the 2024/25 financial year will be handed back to Strata to fund the additional expenditure expected to be incurred in 2025/26 whilst the onsite servers continue to be used and maintained during the transition to the Cloud (Azure) in 2025/26 as outlined in this business plan. The 2025-26 Budget set out in this Business Plan does not reflect the costs associated with the transition from onsite servers to the Cloud (Azure), this will be subjected to a separate business case.

The company's accounts

The Strata Board has employed PKF Francis Clark to deliver an independent external audit of the company's accounts. The external audit provides confidence to the Board and the councils that the financial performance reported, gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the company. Acting as a company under the terms and conditions of a local authority does however bring challenges.

The company's balance sheet is vulnerable to movements in interest rates due to the Local Government Pension Scheme, and there is no simple solution, whilst the pension scheme remains open to new entrants. The weakness is a risk insofar as it affects the credit rating of the company.

However, the guarantee provided by the three owners of the council enables the directors to assess the company as being able to continue trading despite the Balance Sheet position. The balance sheet value as of 31 March 2024 is £807K (net assets) and has been improved by a significant reduction in the liabilities of the pension scheme in the financial year to 31 March 2023 due to high interest rates however the scheme liabilities will increase as and when interest rates reduce in the future. The balance sheet value in the prior financial year had an overall net asset value of £366K as of 31 March 2023.

Internal audit

In addition, Strata uses Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) to provide an internal audit service. The latest assurance report from January 2024 confirmed an audit opinion of 'Reasonable Assurance' and stated:

> There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Each of the specific sections reviewed were assessed to have a Reasonable Assurance level of Assurance. In 2025/26 the following topics will be audited.

- Audit Planning and Reporting
- Service Design and Operational Efficiency – VFM elects as appropriate; and
- Cyber Security Event Support.

Summary of revenue budget

The basis of the business plan budget is a build-up of the expected income and costs of the business with an income from the three councils to cover the costs of the business net of any sundry income. The supplies and services cost forecast has been worked up in detail to aid budget monitoring. There is no contingency built into the cost base and therefore should any unexpected additional funding be required it will be requested on an exceptional basis.

The table below shows the cost and income calculations for the next three years.

		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Income	**Contract payment**	£8,717,995	£8,979,535	£9,204,023
	Document Centre recharges	£16,000	£16,480	£16,892
	Mobile telephony recharges	£28,800	£29,664	£30,406
	Interest income	£20,000	£20,600	£21,115

		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Total	**£8,782,795**	**£9,046,279**	**£9,272,436**
Staff costs		**-£3,965,500**	**-£4,084,465**	**-£4,186,576**
Transport		**-£7,499**	**-£7,724**	**-£7,917**
Supplies and services	**Core**	£147,541	£151,967	£155,766
	Infrastructure	£1,435,105	£1,478,158	£1,515,112
	Document Centre	£353,251	£363,848	£372,944
	Compliance and security	£112,662	£116,041	£118,943
	Business systems	£2,429,127	£2,502,001	£2,564,551
	WAN	£285,446	£294,009	£301,360
	Telephony	£20,520	£21,136	£21,664
	Product delivery	£10,000	£10,300	£10,558
	Service desk	£16,146	£16,630	£17,046
	Total	**-£4,809,797**	**-£4,954,091**	**-£5,077,943**
Net income		**£0**	**£0**	**£0**

Income

Strata's income comprises of contract payment from the councils and sundry income from interest income, mobile phone and Document Centre recharges. Remote access charges have also previously been recharged to the Councils however there are no longer additional costs being incurred in respect of this access so these recharges have been removed from the budgeted income (£60k Budget in 2024/25).

The total contract payment to be paid to Strata by the Councils in 2025/26 is £8,717,995. The contract payment has been calculated to cover the projected costs of the business net of any sundry income/recharges. A comparison of the forecast contract payment by council in each financial year can be seen in the table below:

Contract Payment	Budget	Share by council	2026/27	2027/28
	2025/26	2025/26		
EDDC	£3,367,239	38.6%	£3,476,805	£3,563,725
ECC	£2,911,984	33.4%	£3,016,541	£3,091,955

TDC	£2,438,771	28.0%	£2,486,189	£2,548,344
Total	**£8,717,995**	**100.0%**	**£8,979,535**	**£9,204,023**

The 2025/26 contract payment reflects a net increase on the 2024/25 payment due to:

- Inflationary increases in the existing contract estate less any contracts terminated and other operating expenditure
- Staff cost inflation, National Insurance increases and inflationary increases on sundry staff and insurance costs
- New additions net of any contract terminations to the contract estate proposed in this Business Plan; and
- New contracts acquired by the councils since the last Business Plan to date.

Since the original baseline Council Budgets were passed over to Strata on implementation in 2014/15, each Council's Contract Payment has increased accordingly for the above factors, resulting in a Contract Payment share in 2025/26 as set out in the table below:

Contract Payment	Cost share by Council 2014/15*		Net cost movement by Council 2014/15 – 2025/26	Contract Payment 2025/26	
EDDC*	37.3%	£1,792,920	£1,574,319	38.6%	£3,367,239
ECC	34.6%	£1,454,430	£1,457,554	33.4%	£2,911,984
TDC	28.1%	£1,933,864	£504,907	28.0%	£2,438,771
Total	**100.0%**	**£5,181,214**	**£3,536,781**	**100.0%**	**£8,717,995**

* Note: Due to significant differences in the Print, Post, Design and Scanning services at each Council at the outset that, although still included within Strata for cost savings reasons, the original shareholding for each Council was calculated with the budget for this service excluded.

The total income budgeted to be received by Strata from the Councils in 2025/26 of £8,762,795, as set out in the table below, in respect of the Contract Payment and recharges has increased by 3.4% overall on the 2024/25 Budget of £8,476,323.

Council Payments	Budget 2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Contract Payment	£8,717,995	£8,979,535	£9,204,023
Document Centre Recharge	£16,000	£16,480	£16,892
Mobile Tariff Access Recharge	£28,800	£29,664	£30,406
Total	£8,762,795	£8,925,679	£9,048,821

The contract payments have historically been split evenly over the four quarters of the financial year however this does not reflect the actual cash flow requirement of the business. A review of the cash movements over the last 12 months has indicated that c60% of the Contract Payment is spent in the first 6 months of the financial year, split evenly across the two quarters, with 40% spent in the later 6 months of the year, again split evening across the two quarters. Strata is therefore proposing that Contract Payments in 2025/26 are paid as follows:

- Quarter 1 – 30%
- Quarter 2 – 30%
- Quarter 3 – 20%
- Quarter 4 – 20%

In addition, other income is forecast to be received by Strata:

Other income	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Document Centre Recharge	£16,000	£16,480	£16,892
Mobile Tariff Access Recharge	£28,800	£29,664	£30,406
Interest income	£20,000	£20,600	£21,115

Document Centre recharges are projected based on expected costs in 2025/26 and have reduced on 2024/25 due to lower expected Election activity. Both recharges reflect inflation at 3.0% in 2026/27 and 2.5% in 2027/28.

Aside from the removal of Remote Access Charges as described at the beginning of this section, mobile phone tariffs have also reduced significantly following renegotiation of mobile contracts during 2024/25. The budget for mobile tariff access recharges has therefore fallen by £115k in total compared with the 2024-25 Budget of £144k.

The forecast for interest on bank deposits is estimated to be lower than the outturn forecast for 2024/25 due to uncertainty over interest rate reductions, following a prolonged period of high interest rates. A conservative estimate for interest income of £20K has been factored into the 2025/26 budget, net of Corporation Tax at 19%.

Staff costs

Staff costs are projected to reduce by c.£109K in 2025/26 due to efficiencies delivered by the organisational change in 2024/25.

The budgeted staff salaries reflect inflation of 3.5% (3.0% inflation + 0.5% for increment increases) for 2025/26 and on-costs (for example, NI employers and pension contributions) are applied and account for c31.5% of staff salary costs. This is an increase of c2.3% on 2024/25 on-costs per employee resulting from an increase in employers National Insurance contributions from 1 April 2025, estimated at £70k.

As in previous years the staff costs figures do not include the Business Systems team resource which is paid for and dedicated to an authority capital project. These resources are recharged to the relevant authority.

An inflation assumption of 3.0% has been applied to staff costs in 2026/27 and 2.5% in 2027/28.

Transport

An inflation assumption of 3.5% has been applied to the forecast 2025/26 costs to calculate the budgeted 2025/26 cost. An inflation assumption of 3.0% has been applied to transport costs in 2026/27 and 2.5% in 2027/28.

Supplies and services

Contract costs have been estimated for 2025/26 using an RPIX contract renewal inflation assumption of 3.5% that has been applied on renewal for existing contracts in 2025/26, except where a higher than inflation increase is expected, for example where an existing multi-year contract is to be renewed or a product upgrade is to be delivered, or the price is currently fixed by an existing multi-year contract. Other non-contract based operating expenditure has 3.5% inflation applied to the expected annual cost.

A significant addition to the Supplies & Services contract estate for 2025/26 is the new financial system, Cloud Financials, which replaces the incumbent eFinancials system for ECC and EDDC and the in-house system used by TDC.

An inflation assumption of 3.0% has been applied to the forecast 2025/26 cost in 2026/27 and 2.5% in 2027/28.

Summary of capital budget

The capital requirements of the business in 2025/26, as outlined in this business plan, are summarised on the next page.

The capital requirements are in addition to the annual £150k capital Tri-Payment for infrastructure requirements. At the end of 2024/25 there is forecast to be a £120k Tri-Payment reserve that will be carried forward into 2025/26. All Tri-Payment capital spend will be appropriated by the Architecture Board for infrastructure replacement and rectification needs.

As in previous years, any remaining 2024/25 approved capital budget not spent in the approved year is proposed to be carried forward into 2025/26. Earmarks will only be drawn down should projects be approved via Architecture Board and are to enable the councils' internal budgetary purposes.

	2025/26				2026/27*
	Total	Funded by EDDC	Funded by ECC	Funded by TDC	
Percentage split as per the original business plan		38.8%	33.6%	27.6%	
Project					
Car Parks	£250,000	£125,000	-	£125,000	-
LalPAC (Migration to Uniform)	£50,000	£50,000	-	-	-
SharePoint - wider rollout	£250,000	£91,730	£89,840	£68,430	-
Health and Safety	£75,000	£27,519	£26,952	£20,529	-
EDDC Waste in House	£300,000	£300,000	-	-	-
GMS move to Cloud Version	£15,000	£5,504	£5,390	£4,106	-
StreetScene	£200,000	£200,000	-	-	-
Revs and Bens		-	-	-	£500,000
EzyTreev	£10,000	-	£10,000	-	-
Mobile Working Replacement	£50,000	£18,346	£17,968	£13,686	-
iTrent On Prem to iTrent Hosted	£100,000	£36,692	£35,936	£27,372	-
Azure Migration Prof services	£150,000	£55,038	£53,904	£41,058	-
System upgrades	£100,000	£36,692	£35,936	£27,372	-
EUC	£247,668	£39,842	£53,000	£154,826	£250,000
Transformational Staffing costs	£220,000	£80,722	£79,059	£60,218	-
Telephony	£82,850	£30,399	£29,773	£22,678	-
Dark Fibre Migration	£15,000	-	£15,000	-	-
Fixed Circuit Migrations	£10,000	-	-	£10,000	-
Total capital Funding	**£2,122,518**	**£1,097,484**	**£452,758**	**£575,275**	**£750,000**

* Split by Council share as per the original Business Plan

Each project has been identified for its significant impact on council operations and its contribution to efficient service delivery, improved safety and enhanced public engagement.

7 Appendix 1 – Roadmap Applications and rationalisation.

The following applications have been identified by one or more of the councils or Strata for inclusion in the 25/26 Business Plan. Some must do projects are there as they are e tied to the end of existing contracts; others will be a choice for the authorities based on expected costs vs business benefit.

Strata has been incredibly successful in rationalising application across multiple councils and work is set to continue into 25/26.

Each project has had an indicative budget included which will be evaluated by the councils via Architecture Board. Each project will need to be the subject of detailed requirements, scoping, design and business case prior to procurement. Costs may change because of the above exercises. Similarly, project plans are indicative and are subject to change as scope and requirements are better defined.

7.6 HR System Strategy – iTrent

In early 2023 the 3 authorities undertook a Soft Market Test (SMT) of HR and Payroll systems ahead of the current supplier's contract renewal in September 2025. The SMT was well represented by the major suppliers on the market. It was concluded by the authorities that the functionality and cost of the MHR product vs the other suppliers, it didn't warrant the disruption to service provision that a system swap out would result in. Therefore, the decision was made to stay with MHR.

When the current iTrent contract expires in September 2025 MHR have stated that they will no longer accept new contracts with iTrent being used via an on-premise solution and therefore a move to a cloud or hosted environment will be required.

MHR can continue to host iTrent in their own data centres for the authorities and they also have a dedicated cloud solution called **People First.** This is a completely new system written from the ground up. However, at the time of writing the system is not sufficiently mature to meet the complex HR and Payroll requirements of the authorities. It is however under constant development with a roadmap to offer most, if not all, the functionality needed

by the councils before the end of the 2025. Therefore a staged approach is recommended to migrate to People First.

1. Health check of existing system by supplier to ensure authorities are making best use of system and the data is 'clean'. This is to ensure existing system is delivering efficiencies such as those identified by ECC HR programme.
2. Gap Analysis of iTrent and People First
3. Ensure any changes to iTrent have People First capabilities in mind.
4. Migration to iTrent Hosted est. Q2 2025/2026
5. Adoption of People First only when system meets the authorities' minimum acceptable use criteria
6. Project to move to People First Q2 2026/2027

7.7 Revenues and Benefits

- EDDC and ECC are on rolling annual contracts with Capita
- TDC – existing contract with Civica expires in June 2026.
- Agreed following procurement advice that TDC can issue a VEAT notice to extend their contract with Civica for an additional 2 years from June 2026 to June 2028 to allow for a full procurement exercise to be undertaken and allow sufficient time to replace the existing system if required.
- As per the authorities' mandate for Strata – the ambition will be to align all 3 council on a common platform. Should the authorities consider even closer working arrangements for the revs and bens service, a shared system could also be considered.
- It is recommended that the procurement exercise for a new Council Tax system for take place during Q3/4 25/26 allowing 2 years to align the councils on the same council tax systems.
- During the procurement, it is recommended that a business case to complete the 'Sedgemoor' system is also considered, alongside commercial providers.

7.8 Finance Management System - FMS

Implementation of FMS will be a big feature of the 25/26 Business Plan and will continue to utilise a significant portion of the Strata application team. 6 out of the 9 staff from this team are 80% committed to the project (with the remaining 20% allocated to BAU activities).

7.9   Carparks

East Devon District Council and Teignbridge District Council's currently have just over 12 months left to run with their existing parking management system provider, Taranto. The shared software package has caused numerous configuration and data access issues, including difficulties in implementing changes, and system inefficiencies.

Given the substantial increase in costs to continue with Taranto and the ongoing support challenges, the authorities are exploring options to replace the system. The proposed project will involve extensive data extraction, validation, and integration efforts, requiring dedicated resources from both councils and Strata.

The new system aims to improve service control, enhance customer experience, and provide better management information and reporting capabilities. It is designed to address the limitations of the current system and support the councils' strategic objectives. The implementation will include procurement support, project management, system configuration, user acceptance testing, and comprehensive training to ensure a smooth transition and effective use of the new system.

With the councils providing dedicated service resource it is anticipated that the project will take 4-6 months for the core system with an additional 2 months for deep integration to the GovService (formally Firmstep) CRM system and finance systems. Exeter have expressed an interest in participating in the requirements phase to explore potential strategic business benefits. Should Exeter then decide to participate in the procurement it is assumed that similar costs would be anticipated for Exeter as for TDC and EDDC

7.10   Performance Management

East Devon has procured a Corporate Performance and Risk Management system from InPhase Ltd. This initiative aims to modernize the management and oversight of corporate performance, projects and risks aligning with the recommendations from the Peer Challenge and the expressed needs of the Executive Leadership Team.

. This new system is expected to streamline the reporting process, making it more accessible and user-friendly for managers and staff. It will also enhance the active management of corporate and service risks, thereby supporting informed decision-making and fostering a culture of transparency and accountability within the council.

At the time of writing Strata is assisting East Devon with the pre-project phases ahead of the kick-off meeting with the supplier which is expected in December '24. It is anticipated that the majority of system configuration, data loading and report writing will be undertaken by EDDC with minimal input required from Strata. Should more involvement be required an assessment will be undertaken at the time as to the level of effort required, which will either be resourced from existing staffing levels or will need to be brought in and funded by East Devon.

7.11 Street Scene

East Devon have identified the need to procure and implement a StreetScene Environmental Management System. This software is anticipated to manage all StreetScene assets, streamline work programs, and enhance the monitoring, coordination, recording, and management of StreetScene activities.

The primary objective of this project is to improve service delivery across various aspects, including performance management, proactive work management, and customer service standards. The software aims to create efficiencies, ensure health and safety management, and promote transparency and accountability within EDDC's public service operations.

The successful implementation of the StreetScene management software is expected to address numerous challenges, such as outdated data, inefficient resource allocation and the inability to effectively manage and report on performance and service standards.

This project has the potential to replace numerous manual processes and smaller software systems such as those that currently manage, allotments, play area and beach huts (3 systems). This project also has the potential to replace the Strata written and maintained Mobile Worker app, which requires approximately ½ Strata FTE in ongoing support and development.

Whilst looking at potential systems consideration should be given to the system Exeter City Council use called Confirm which is a market leader in Local Government Asset management and Street Scene software.

7.12   Lone Worker

The Lone Worker Software Project aims to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of high-risk lone workers at Teignbridge and East Devon. The need for this project arose from significant operational limitations identified in the current MW App, such as poor battery performance, unreliable emergency activation responses, and lack of integration with existing systems.

The proposed solution involves procuring a 24/7 Lone Worker application that meets BS 8484 and ISO 9001 standards and can be utilised on any device, thereby eliminating the dependency on Strata-provided assets. This new system promises to improve health and safety, offer a more streamlined monitoring process, and provide a single, reliable solution to replace the outdated and disparate systems currently in use. It is proposed that the system will be fully managed by a specialist third party provider that will monitor the system 24/7. The chosen solution will be suitable for officers in higher risk, lone working scenarios provided via a 'key fob' push button solution, and passive monitoring for medium to lower risk filed based officers using a mobile app.

7.13   Health and Safety

The Health and Safety System project focuses on procuring a comprehensive corporate health and safety management platform for East Devon and Teignbridge with potential shared use by South Hams and West Devon. This initiative addresses a critical corporate risk due to the absence of an effective management system.

The proposed solution will be chosen for its robust features including integration capabilities with other platforms, strong security measures and alignment with the councils' data strategy. The project aims to deliver significant cost savings and operational benefits. The system will enable detailed performance monitoring, improve resource allocation and support compliance with legislative requirements thereby enhancing the overall health and safety standards within the councils.

 The final business requirements are awaiting to be signed off at the time of writing and costs may change as the design is finalised.

*

7.14   Mobile Worker App for Officers

One of the applications that Strata inherited in 2014 was the East Devon Mobile Worker App. This innovative mobile working application enabled the EDDC Street Scene service to complete scheduled and reactive jobs via a mobile phone whilst out in the field. It also provided other functionality such as Lone Worker support and Vehicle Checks. Over time this application has grown and has also been rolled out to Teignbridge District Council.

The application has now reached a scale where an assessment needs to be undertaken on the functionality the application provides, versus the cost of supporting it in house and the risk of doing so. It anticipated that a likely outcome of the review will be to replace the Mobile Worker Application with a Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) solution. As part of this assessment it is recommended that solutions that may be delivered as part of the EDDC Street Scene project (See 100 above) are considered in addition to stand alone solutions that are already available on the market. It is likely that Lone Working functionality (See 7.12) won't be included as part of a Mobile Working solution and will likely be part of a standalone, managed lone working solution.

7.15   Mobile App for Citizens linked to Notifications

East Devon has an App that is aimed at its residents and is extremely well used. The App has had 105,000 downloads since its launch in 2013 and has over 55,000 users signed up to receive notifications such as bin day reminders.

The App has a good range of functionality including the ability to remind users to place their bins out for collection, the ability to report issues in the district such as fly tipping and find information such as planning applications in the vicinity.

Conversations have taken place with both Teignbridge and Exeter who have shown interest in making the App available for their residents. A full review will be undertaken by TDC and ECC to ascertain if they wish to pursue the app.

Introducing this App will offer another channel for communication to tie into the Notifications enabler. (See Notifications section).

7.16   LalPAC to Uniform – EDDC

East Devon currently use LalPAC Licensing system for the production and management of the Council wide licensing functions. In 2019, a large project was undertaken between Licensing and Strata to migrate the LalPAC data and documents to Idox Uniform. This project was run in parallel with Exeter City Council who completed the migration from LalPAC to Uniform and M3 to Uniform for their Environmental Health suite of applications.

The East Devon project completed the configuration of the Uniform system in Uniform Test, data matching and achieved two full data loads into the Uniform Test system, however the project stalled in October 2020 following a second data load with the Manager citing staffing resources as a reason that the UAT (user acceptance testing) could not proceed towards the Live deadlines proposed in January/February 2021. There has been no impetus from the service to resume this project since that time.

Since Exeter City Council and Teignbridge Council have migrated to Uniform, East Devon are running LalPAC with no knowledgeable resource in Strata to support the LalPAC system. There are currently 3 officers within Strata with extensive knowledge of: -

- Idox Uniform suite of applications/upgrades/patches/maintenance
- Idox DMS – document management system
- Idox Enterprise – workflow and performance tool
- Idox Onsite Mobile apps – together with Idox DMS allowing officers to use the Idox apps to complete site visits and field work.
- Idox Data Management Tool for compliance with data retention and GDPR
- Idox Uniform suite of Public Access and Consultee access applications engaging and producing a consistent information platform for members of the public.

The migration to Uniform for EDDC Licensing also supports Strata's convergence program. The migration of LalPAC data to uniform also expands the use of Uniform within each of the three Authorities covered by Strata with use of Uniform in Planning, Building Control, Environmental Health, Estates (EDDC), Land Charges and Local Land and Property Gazetteer.

7.17   GMS system to Cloud

As part of the transition to cloud computing and the ongoing programme of steadily migrating away from on premises hosted software applications, one application that should be considered is the Gazetteer Management Software (GMS). The GMS enables Strata to manage the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) which the authorities are contractually obliged to maintain as part of the agreement with Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) as it feeds directly into the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) This national address gazetteer brings together address information from local authorities and Ordnance Survey to create a 'national address gazetteer database', providing one definitive source of accurate publicly-owned spatial address data for the whole of the public sector. The NLPG underpins many council services alongside many nationally strategically important services such as Elections and the NHS.

Summary Table included for indicative Budgetary purposes

Application	Purpose	Councils	Estimated Revenue	Estimated Capital (See Capital table page xx for split)	
HR System	Migrate iTrent from On-Premises to iTrent Hosted	EDDC, TDC	£105,000	£100,000	
Revs and Bens	Contract extension to Civica Revs and Bens	TDC		£100,000	
Financial Management System (FMS)	Implement a new Finance Management System.				
Car Parks	Replace existing parking management system to improve service control and customer experience.	EDDC, TDC	£70,000	£250,000	
Performance Management	Enhance performance management capabilities with a Corporate Performance and Risk Management system.	EDDC			Budgeted by EDC during 24/25 FY
Street Scene	Implement a StreetScene Environmental Management System to manage assets and activities.	EDDC	£75,000	£200,000	
Lone Worker	Enhance safety and operational efficiency of high-risk lone workers with a new application.	EDDC, TDC	£18,000	£0	
Health and Safety	Procure a comprehensive corporate health and safety management platform.	ECC, EDDC,TDC	£40,000	£75,000	

Application	Purpose	Councils	Estimated Revenue	Estimated Capital (See Capital table page xx for split)	
Mobile/ Field Worker App for Officers	Assess and potentially replace the Mobile Worker Application with a COTS solution.	ECC, EDDC, TDC	£25,000	£50,000	
Mobile App for Citizens	Provide an additional channel for communication linked to Notifications enabler.	ECC, TDC	£40,000		
Lalpac to Uniform	Migrate LalPAC data to Idox Uniform for better data management and compliance.	EDDC		£50,000	
Gazetteer Management System to Cloud	Transition Gazetteer Management Software to a cloud version.	ECC, EDDC, TDC	£25,000	£15,000	

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