	Joint Committee of the London Boroughs of Brent, Lewisham and Southwark 26 November 2024
	Report from the Managing Director of Shared Technology Services

Shared Technology Services Update

Wards Affected:	N/A
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Four Appendix 1: Briefing note for JC for CrowdStrike incident 2024-07-19 Appendix 2: Laptop Refresh Project – Procurement process review Appendix 3: STS Strategy 2024-26 Appendix 4: STS Cyber Strategy 2024-26
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Fabio Negro Managing Director of Shared Technology Services Email: Fabio.Negro@sharedtechnology.services

1   Purpose of the Report

1.1   This report provides an update on Shared Technology Services (STS).

2   Recommendation(s)

2.1   The Joint Committee is asked to:

- To note the progress taken across the various areas in the detail of the report.

- To note the Briefing note for JC for CrowdStrike incident 2024-07-19, attached as Appendix 1

- To note the Laptop Refresh Project – Procurement process review, attached as Appendix 2

- To approve the STS Strategy 2024-26, attached as Appendix 3

- To approve STS Cyber Strategy 2024-26, attached as Appendix 4

3   Summary

3.1   STS are preparing tender documentation for the Service Desk Telephone Support. The intention is to conduct an Open Tender procedure to maximise competition within the market. Market Engagement was completed in early October 2024 and concluded there are several different suppliers on multiple frameworks but not a unified framework. Therefore, to maximise the opportunity for best value and competition, the chosen route is Open Tender. The tender is estimated to go live 25 November 2024.

3.2   Brent, Lewisham and LGA have completed the migration from Vodaphone to O2 for the Mobile Voice and Data contract. The previous contract with Vodaphone has ceased.

3.3   STS have completed the Private Cloud Project all servers due to migrate from the old On-premise VMware environment has moved to the private cloud solution of Nutanix, providing the councils with a more robust and performance-rich infrastructure.

3.4   The Laptop Refresh contract has been awarded to CDW, LGA pilot underway, with Brent following. Southwark is in the process of approving the business case for phase 2 of the laptop refresh project. Lewisham's business case for the laptop refresh project is currently being drafted.

3.5   Microsoft Intune pilots are underway in the LGA, with Brent also following. The Intune Build will allow our laptop management to progress from old, outdated solutions to the modern Office 365 Intune environment, transferring all application deployments, the use of Autopilot which can support us to deploy laptops more efficiently and more importantly starting to move our laptops to Windows 11 to ensure we stay in supported levels.

3.6   STS have successfully completed the contract award for Managed XDR (Managed Security Operations Centre) – Cybersecurity Response Service via G-Cloud RM155.17 framework. This will give the councils further assurance that we have monitoring across the laptops in case of any cyber concerns. Essentially, we have procured a third party to respond on our behalf or assist STS in remediating if a cyber issue is to arise.

3.7   STS are preparing tender documentation for the Service Desk Telephone Support. The intention is to conduct an Open Tender procedure to maximise competition within the market. Market Engagement was completed in early October 2024, and it concluded there are several different suppliers on multiple frameworks but not a unified framework. Therefore, to maximise the opportunity for best value and competition, the chosen route is Open Tender. The tender is estimated to go live 25 November 2024.

4   Service Level Performance

4.1   For the purpose of this report, we have created a section reflecting on Service Levels and broken them down into each of the areas to allow us to provide a better narrative around our performance.

4.2   In this reporting period (July 2024 to October 2024), SLA performance for priority 3 (P3) issues and priority 4 (P4) request calls has dropped slightly compared with the previous reporting period. This is mainly due to a higher level of demand on operational services, such as the mass upgrading of servers (Windows 2012), the rollout of Office 365 applications across the councils, emergency planning, and resilience exercises.

4.3   The chart below shows the number of open calls currently in STS operational queues. We are committed to reducing this number. In October 2023, there were over 2,600 open calls. This figure now stands at around 2,100. There has been an increase in this reporting period, and this is mainly due to a higher level of demand in terms of tickets raised in the STS operational queues. There have been high levels of change across all three councils which has created change-related issues, leading to an increase in incident and request calls.
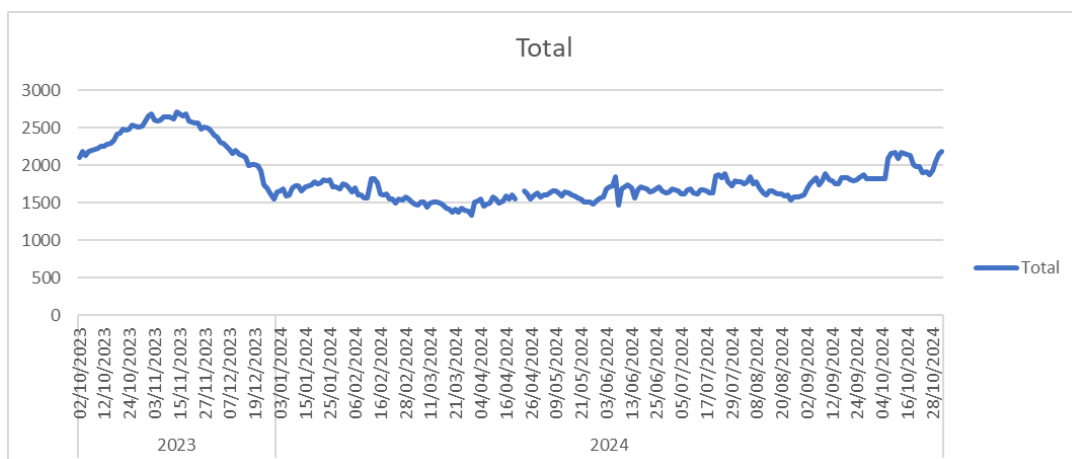
4.4   We continue our drive to close aged tickets in the STS operational queues. The total of open calls raised before 2024 in the operational queues stands at 20 (compared with 43 in the last report), and the chart below shows the date distribution of those calls. Most of the aged tickets from pre-2024 are project-related requests where upgrades are needed. These are reviewed every Friday at the STS Service Delivery Board.
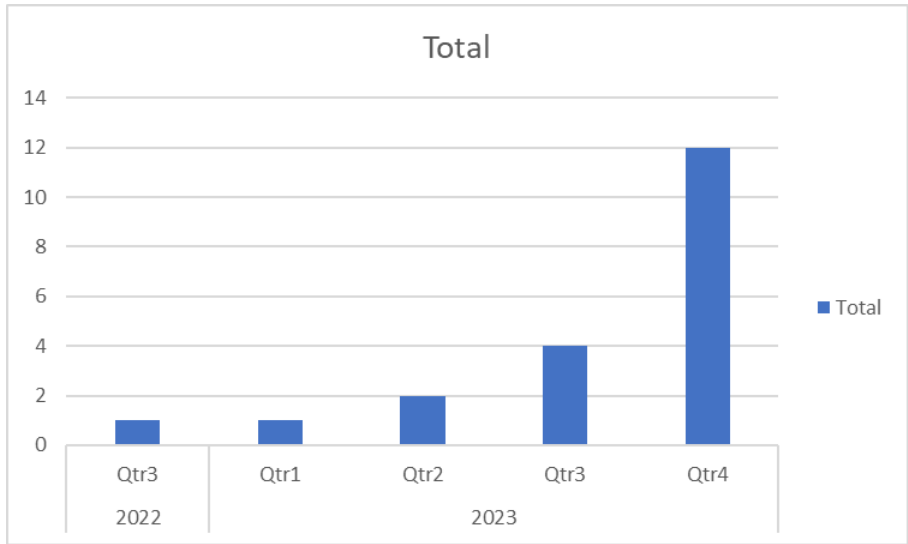
4.5   Since April of this year, we have seen a growing demand on our services with the number of tickets logged into STS queues increasing. Below you will see a graph which identifies the trends of logged tickets into STS queues over the last 3 years and into 2024. It is worth noting that the number of supported users has grown from 10,500 users in 2020 to 12,500 in 2024.

The trend shows that at the beginning of the year, although despite the 15% increase in the user base, we have had fewer calls logged than in previous years, but in the middle part of the year, this has grown in line with previous years. Our aim is to reduce this but it's likely to grow as we start to replace the laptops in the councils as this undoubtedly will raise requests to the service desk.
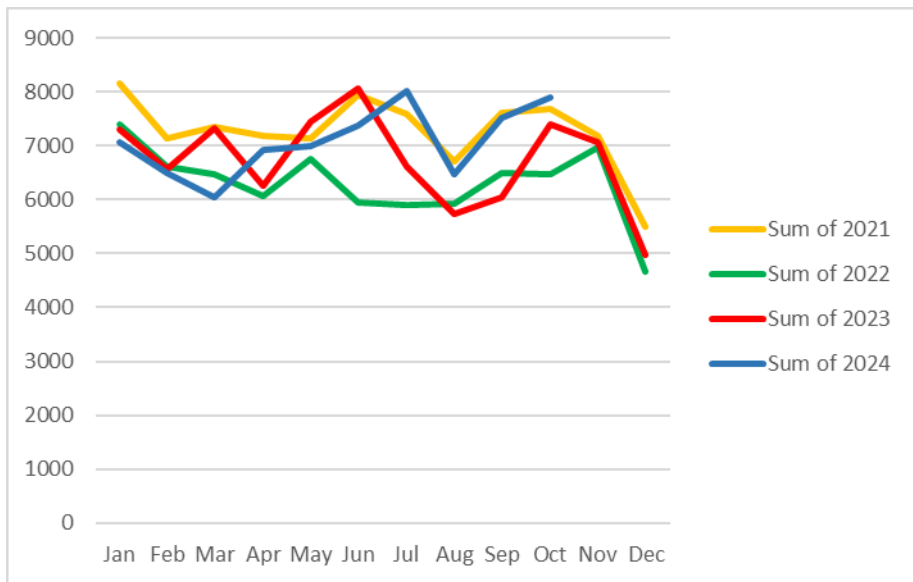

4.6   Priority 1 - Major Incidents

4.6.1 A Priority 1 is classed as a major incident and is defined as an incident that results in the unavailability of or significant degradation to an IT service used by an entire council or councils or the unavailability or significant degradation

of a service impacting upon a whole department, a significant number of users or an entire site or an unavailability or degradation of a critical (Tier 1) business application/service.

4.6.2   In this reporting period (July 2024 to October 2024, there were eight P1 incidents related to STS infrastructure, six of which were resolved within SLA. The below graph shows the number of STS infrastructure-related P1 incidents in the last 13 months.
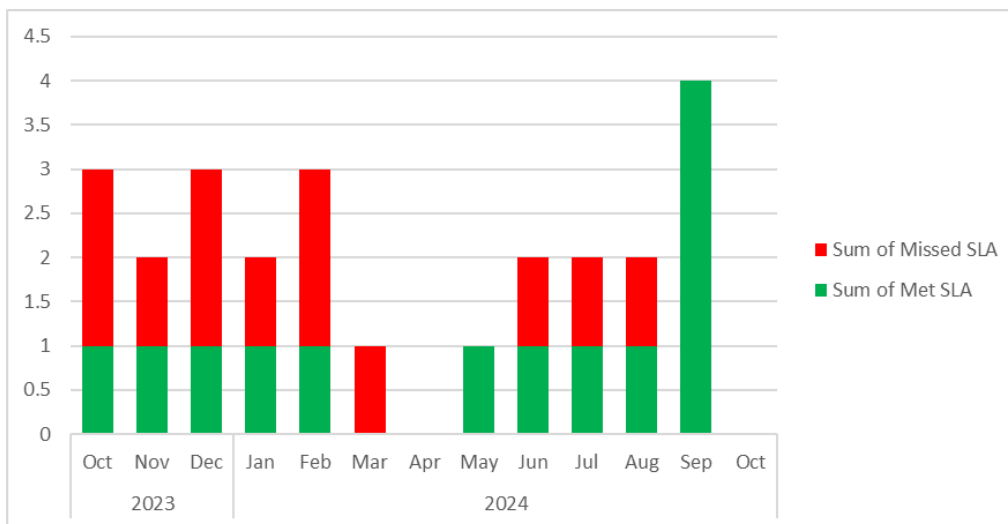
4.6.3   The SLA target for P1 incidents is three or fewer per month – in the last 12-month period, there were 22 STS infrastructure-related P1 incidents at an average of 1.8 per month, so overall well within the SLA target.

There has been a considerable amount of infrastructure change in that 12-month period, including:

- All three councils replaced the Wi-Fi in the head offices.
- Southwark replaced the network switch infrastructure in Tooley Street.
- New core firewalls have been introduced.
- Migration of mobile phone estate to O2. Brent and Lewisham migrated from Vodafone to O2 and additional controls have been placed around all three councils to avoid toll fraud.
- Due to a Cyber risk, we have replaced the remote access solution for all three councils (from an On-premise Ivanti system to cloud-based Azure App Proxy). The remote access solution is typically used by third parties that support our line of business applications and infrastructure.
- Migration of 4600 Southwark laptops from an old Microsoft solution to F5 VPN for remote connectivity (working away from council offices or when on Wi-Fi within council offices). This has improved the performance for remote working with connecting to the council network and data transfer times being significantly faster.
- Ongoing expansion of Azure cloud services usage.
- OneDrive migrations (Moving users' home folders from on-premise data storage into Microsoft 365 cloud storage).

- Upgrading server operating systems and, in some cases, upgrading applications that may be hosted on those servers.

4.6.4   With every major incident that occurs the shared service produces a comprehensive Major Incident Report detailing the impact, timelines, root cause analysis and lessons learned. These reports are distributed to the affected partners and review meetings are held when appropriate or requested.

4.6.5   In this reporting period (July 2024 to October 2024) there were also 6 application/supplier related P1 incidents.

4.7   Priority 2 - Serious Issues

4.7.1   A Priority 2 is a serious issue is defined as an incident that results in either unavailability or degradation of a service which, whilst material, does not meet the threshold for a P1 (Tier 2).

4.7.2   There were 30 P2 calls raised in STS Hornbill operational queues during this reporting period. The target SLA is 30 or less per month – our average for this period is 7.5 per month (compared with 11 for the previous reporting period. The chart below shows the service categories that the P2 incidents were logged against in this reporting period:
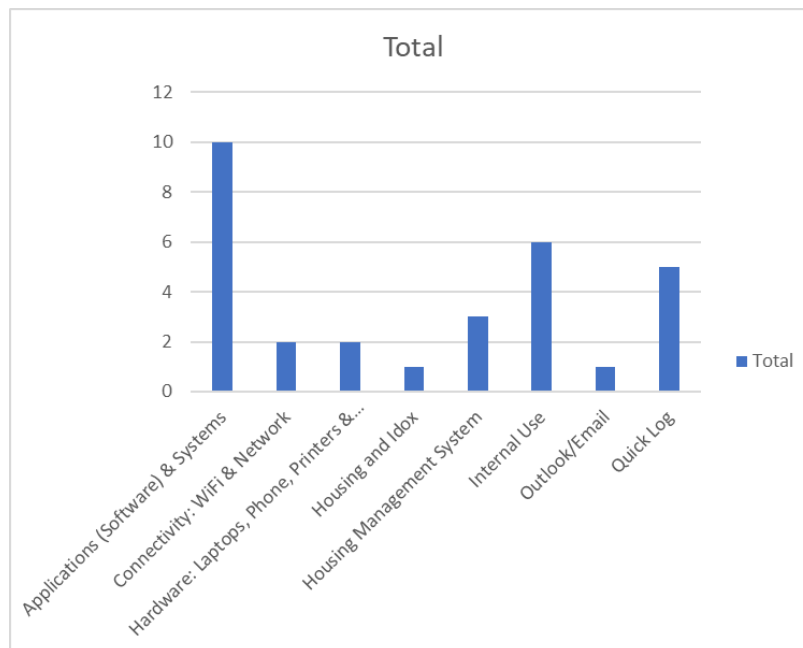
4.7.3   The downside is that having so few P2 incidents means that reaching the SLA resolution target of resolving 95% in 8 hours or less can be challenging as only one call failing to meet that 8-hour limit, means the entire monthly SLA fails.

To combat this, we have put in place a mechanism by which as soon as a P2 incident is logged in Hornbill, a notification email will be sent to the STS senior

leadership team members to ensure focus is centred on that incident in a timelier fashion.

4.8   Priority 3 – General Issues

4.8.1   A Priority 3 issue is defined as one that results in a partial loss of service or functionality with no or limited business impact and for which a workaround may be available.

4.8.2   P3 incidents are far and away the most common type of incident as these will generally relate to issues experienced by individual users. The target SLA is to resolve 90% of P3 incidents within two working days.

4.8.3   13,667 P3 incidents were logged into STS operational queues (14,193 overall into all STS queues) during this reporting period, with an overall SLA performance of 82% (compared with 87% in the previous reporting period). This has coincided with the increase in demand that we have seen in this reporting period. Overall STS has seen around 850 calls more per month logged than in the previous reporting period and the majority of these are P3 incidents. As previously noted, the high-level of infrastructure change is partly responsible for this, but also accompanied by an ageing laptop fleet with failure rates increasing.

4.8.4   The top call raised categories for Priority 3 calls logged in STS Hornbill operational queues during this reporting period are shown below in both chart and table formats:
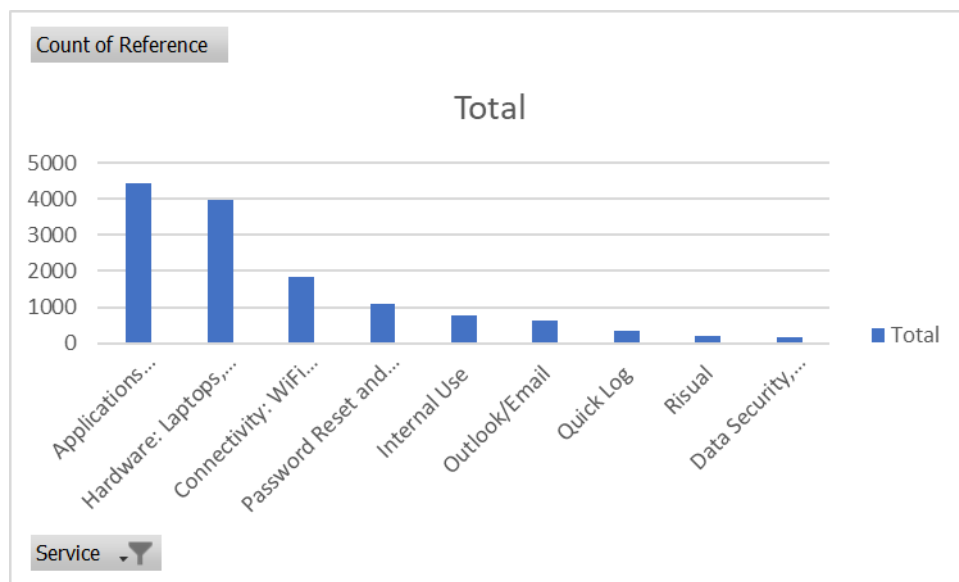
Call Category	Number of Calls
Applications (Software) & Systems	4416
Hardware: Laptops, Phone, Printers & Monitors	3971
Connectivity: WiFi & Network	1852
Password Reset and Access to Shared drives	1083
Internal Use	776
Outlook/Email	647
Quick Log	344
Risual	204
Data Security, Phishing, Lost/Stolen items	170

4.9   Priority 4 - Service Requests

4.9.1   A Priority 4 request is defined as a request for standard service or catalogue item. The standard SLA is to resolve 80% within 5 working days (although SLA can be negotiated with the user logging the call depending on the nature of the request e.g. a request for a new network link to a site to be installed – this can take several months).

4.9.2   More typical requests are for applications to be installed onto a laptop, or a request for new kit such as a mobile phone.

4.9.3   In this reporting period there were 10,137 P4 requests logged into STS operational queues (10,635 logged into all STS Queues), with an overall SLA performance of 90% compared with the previous reporting period figure of 93%. The SLA performance has dropped slightly, and this has been impacted by the increased number of P3 incidents as previously noted, with incidents having a higher priority level than requests. The chart and table below show the top call logging categories for STS operational P4 requests.
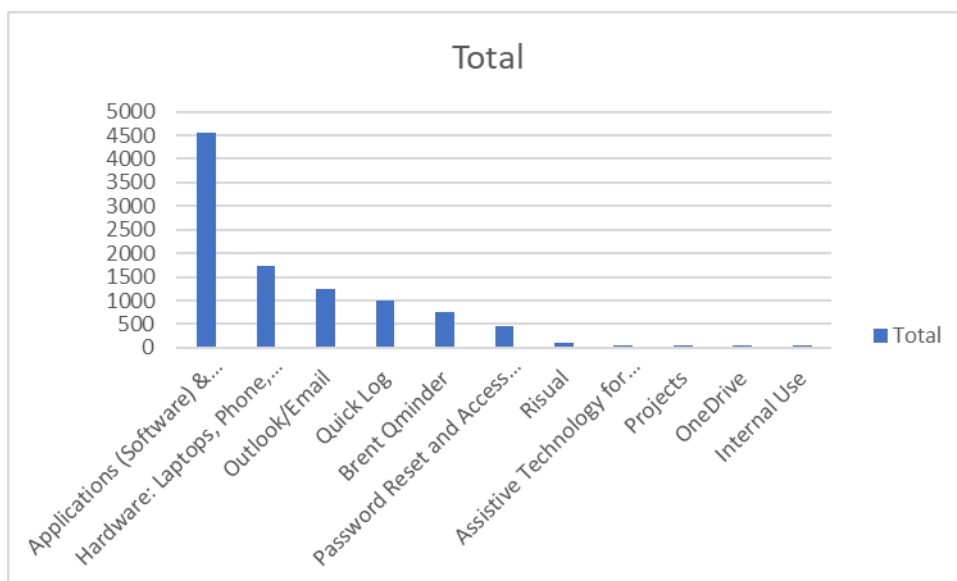
Call Category	Number of calls
Applications (Software) & Systems	4560
Hardware: Laptops, Phone, Printers & Monitors	1731
Outlook/Email	1249
Quick Log	1001
Brent Qminder	762
Password Reset and Access to Shared drives	467
Risual	108
Assistive Technology for Specific Accessibility Needs	56
Projects	56
OneDrive	43
Internal Use	38

4.10   Onsite support

4.10.1 The onsite teams across the three partner councils typically take care of three major functions:
- Local on-site support in the main partner offices (Brent Civic, Lewisham Laurence House and Southwark Tooley Street).
- Non-main office site support. Between them the three councils have around 230 office sites that STS manages network links to.
- Starters, Movers and Leavers (SMaL) acceptance and processing.

4.10.2 The on-site service for face-to-face visits by users is now covering standard BAU hours of 08:00 to 18:00 without any break as we strive to improve the user experience further. This service is provided at the Councils' main offices of Brent Civic Centre, Lewisham Laurence House and Southwark Tooley Street.

4.10.3 The QMinder system allows us to provide a controlled queueing and notification mechanism for those users needing face-to-face support. The statistics for this reporting period (July 2024 to October 2024) produced by QMinder show that across the three main partner locations:
- There were 6,382 visits (compared with 6,134 in the previous reporting period) – the graph below shows visitor distribution by location. This growth in demand is inline with that we have seen across the rest of the operational service. But we have been able to maintain service at similar levels to the last reporting period in terms of wait and service time. The table below shows the top reasons for onsite visits.

Issue	Visitors
Laptop/iPhone Hardware Repairs	2199
Laptop/iPhone Collect -Starter	829
Wi-Fi/Network Issues	823
Applications	787
New Starters/Leavers/Movers	392
IT Accessories	305
Password Reset	296
Laptop/iPhone Return - Leaver	124
Password/Account Locked issues	114
Hardware	72
Broken Laptop/ phone	39
Grand Total	**5980**

- Across all sites, an average wait time of 27 minutes (compared with 26 minutes in the previous reporting period).
- Across all sites, an average service time of 35 minutes (compared with 29 minutes in the previous reporting period).
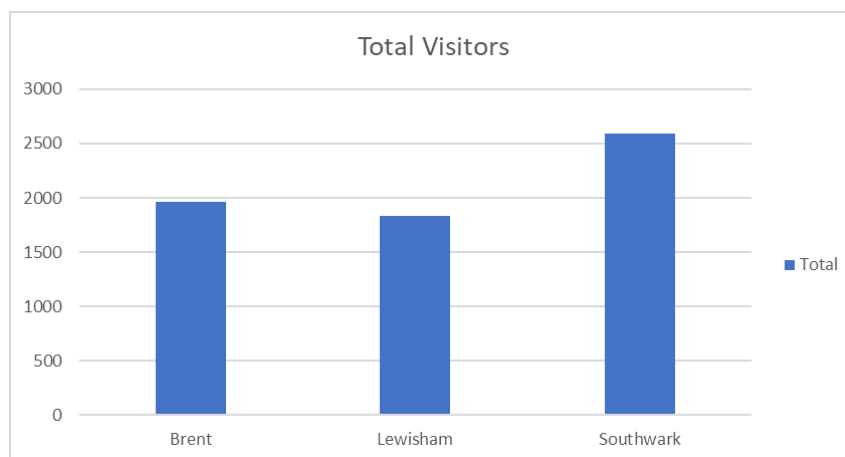
4.11   Telephony Support

4.11.1 Node4 (formerly Risual) are our telephone service provider for our IT Helpdesk. When staff ring the IT Service Desk number, it is answered by engineers from Node4, who act on behalf of the three councils. We have given them the access permissions to be able to resolve tickets on our behalf. We have also provided them with the scripts needed to understand our configuration although more work is needed to encourage higher first-time fix rates.

4.11.2 The contract with Node4 was renewed in April and part of that was to negotiate a formal SLA for telephone answering times to address concerns previously raised around call wait times. The SLA agreed is that 80% of calls should be answered within 5 minutes (penalties in the form of service credits will apply should this target not be met).

4.11.3   We have engaged with Node4 to add an integration that allows Node4 to carry on logging tickets into their Microsoft Dynamics ITSM tool, but this will then use an API to automatically log a ticket into our Hornbill system. This will allow us to have a clearer picture of how many calls are being logged and resolved by Node4. This integration was completed in this reporting period. The table below shows the volume of tickets logged by Node4.
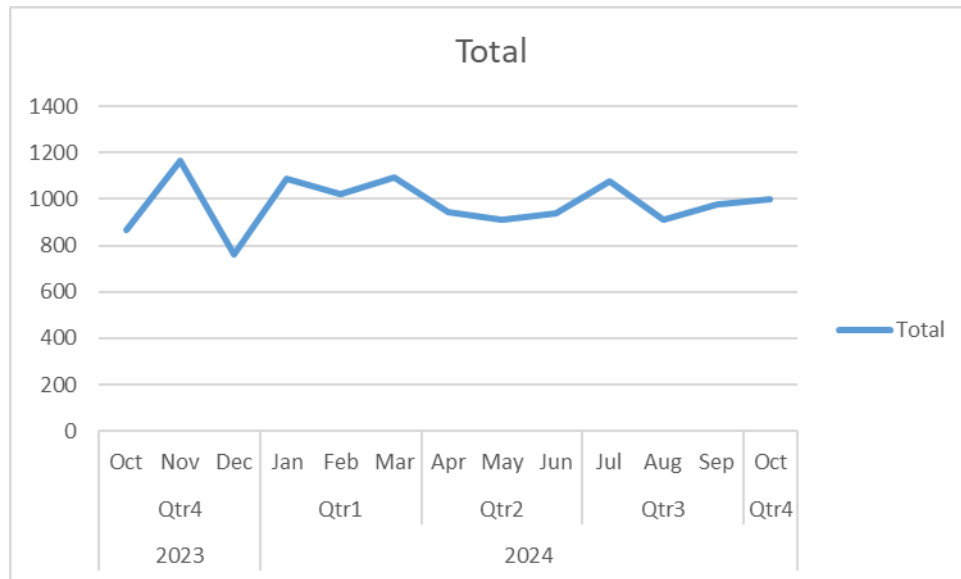
4.12   User Experience

4.12.1   Due to an issue with the NPS reporting mechanism we are unable to report on the Net Promotor Score (NPS) survey score for this reporting period. (When a Hornbill call is resolved, the user that logged the call has an opportunity to complete a brief survey about the call resolution experience – the overall NPS score is calculated from the results of the survey and reflects our colleagues' level of satisfaction with the service provided. Anything around 60% is regarded within the industry as excellent).

4.12.2   The Net Promoter Score measures are now seen as a measure of loyalty that customers have towards an organisation and its services, hence NPS surveys nearly always include a question that asks whether the customer would recommend the service to friends and family members. This approach is not appropriate any longer for STS as our colleagues have no choice in using our services. Instead, we are developing a survey using a customer satisfaction measurement (CSAT) instead. This should be released very shortly.

4.13   Overall Call Number Statistics

4.13.1   The shared service logged 57,889 tickets between July 2024 and October 2024 for all council application teams as well as the shared service (an average of 14,472 tickets per month) against 53,147 in the last reporting period, March 2024 to June 2024 (an average of 13,287 tickets per month). These tickets consisted of both incidents and service requests. This

total is broken down by (previous reporting period numbers in parentheses).

- Shared Technology Services – 29,965 - an average of 7,491 per month (previous reporting period March 2024 to June 2024 – 26,557 - an average of 6,639 per month).
- Brent Applications Teams – 18,208 - an average of 4,552 per month, previous reporting period March 2024 to June 2024 – 16,766 - an average of 4,192 per month).
- Lewisham Applications Teams – 4,427 - an average of 1,107 per month, previous reporting period March 2024 to June 2024 – 4,451 - an average of 1,113 per month).
- Southwark Application Teams – 5,127 - an average of 1,282 per month, (previous reporting period March 2024 to June 2024 – 5,177 - an average of 1,294 per month).
- LGA Internal support – 162 – an average of 41 per month (previous reporting period March 2024 to June 2024 – 90 – an average of 22.5 per month).

4.14   Service Improvements

4.14.1 While the last 12 months has seen an improvement in performance against key SLA KPIs, in addition, we are now looking at how we can improve the customer experience. Some of the key actions around this are:
- We are currently trialling (in one of the councils) a new on-site approach for visitors. We have removed the requirement for visitors to the on-site to log Hornbill calls prior to the visit. Our engineers will log calls on their behalf.
- We have introduced new signage in the form of a roller banner at the registration desk to guide users through the process of registering with the QMinder System
- We have also used the banner to publicise a QR Code/URL that users can access from their mobile devices to check how busy the onsite team is (how many visitors are in the queue) and what the average wait time is.
- We have also introduced a scripted welcome for our engineers to follow to provide a more welcoming and consistent experience for visitors.

We will be rolling this out to all partners in the very near future.

4.14.2 As well as the current improvements, we are also looking to the future and we will be introducing a reception/concierge service to greet colleagues when they visit the on-site team. This will provide a rapid triage service to ensure we understand the nature of the issue and so hopefully can resolve faster. It will also allow us to provide a very quick service for those visitors that have attended but do not need to see an engineer e.g. they may be there just to pick up something simple like a laptop bag or a spare set of headphones.

4.14.3 We will also be looking at how we can improve the induction process for new starters. One idea is to ensure this happens at the same time as an HR induction to provide a better and one-time experience for new staff members.

4.14.4 Our Service Desk Telephone Support Line Service contract is due for renewal on the 1 April 2025. One of the service-improvement options that will be in the tender will be for a comprehensive IVR system that will provide features such as:

- Customised messages in the event we need to notify callers of any major incident that may be affecting service.
- Self-help options for common issues such as using self-service password reset.
- Giving an expected wait time to be connected to an engineer and a position in the queue.

4.15 Hornbill Call Management

4.15.1 Hornbill call triage. We have also looked at improving our call triage times. Triaging a newly logged ticket involves:

- Ensuring the call has been logged under the correct type i.e. Incident or Request as this determines the automatically assigned priority which in turn defines the call resolution SLA.
- Checking sufficient information about the issue or request has been given and if not update the call asking the user to provide the necessary details.
- Assigning the call to the correct team for further investigation and resolution.

While there is no specifically defined call triage SLA or KPI, STS aims to assign calls to teams within 20 minutes of submission. Triaging has been improved dramatically by using workflows within Hornbill to assign calls automatically to the correct resolver team, where any further manual triaging can be carried out. This has also had a positive impact on our overall SLA performance.

4.15.2 Hornbill Call Escalation. We have refined the Hornbill call escalation process for users to be able contact us about the progress or management of a ticket they have raised with us. It should be noted that escalations should only be used if the call resolution time SLA has been, or is close to being breached, or if it is believed that a call has been given the wrong priority level. There are 4 stages of escalation:

1. Contact the engineers assigned to the call via the Hornbill portal or call the engineer directly.
2. Email the IT escalation mailbox. This mailbox is monitored by a team leader who will investigate and aim to resolve your incident, request or complaint.
3. Email the STS Service Desk Manager.
4. Email STS Head of Operations & Service Desk Manager

Complaints can also be directed to the STS Head of Operations. In addition, we also have a VIP category of users within Hornbill. This category is limited to those users who have critical functions within the council and may require calls to be expedited to avoid a negative impact on the business. The triage queue is monitored for VIP calls and then assigned immediately to an engineer who is also informed of the newly raised call.

5   Continuous Service Improvement

5.1   The team has focused improvement initiatives focusing on main streams such as User Experience, Assets, SMaL process. Below is a flavour of what they have worked on in the last 3 months, including:

- Ongoing Hornbill redesign, including updating the User Interface and improving the capture forms by making tickets easier and quicker to log, whilst capturing the correct information.
- Reporting Trends Database, including data going back to Jan '23. With this we can set baselines and analyse common trends.
- Dynamics – Hornbill integration, which removes the need for Risual/Node4 agents to double log and ensures we capture all reporting of First Time Fixes.
- InTune – Hornbill connection fully established with all orgs having mobile & tablet data within the Asset Management System.

5.2   Our short-medium term plan is focused on the areas below, but there are other areas such as the laptop refresh, the Telephony tender and SMaL processes across the orgs that will be supported by the Service Improvement Team. Long-term we will look at our ITSM and whether replacing it will be the optimal strategic plan.

5.3   We are close to finalising our restructuring of the STS teams, with the aim of increasing the members of staff on the frontline to accommodate each councils needs.

5.4   We have also commenced market research on IT Service Management solutions, initially to understand what the 'art of the possible'' is.

Item	Update	ETA
NPS/CSAT Improvement – Phase 1: New form and reporting	Setting up new CSAT form with better UX and reporting capabilities, with automated workflow	Dec-24
LBB Oracle – Hornbill integration	Soft launch to go live soon, with fully go live date in December	Dec-24
Hornbill 3.0 – Phase 1: UX	Continuously iterating and launching new flows, ongoing improvements	Jan-25
Automated Asset Power BI	Iteration on current Asset Database, using Power Automate to have daily updates – improve focus on data gaps	Feb-25
Hornbill 3.0 – Phase 2: Service Specific Support / Closure Codes	Improving customer journeys for all service areas / improving closure codes for incident logging to enable better Problem Management Process	Mar-25

NPS/CSAT Improvement – Phase 2: Close feedback loop	Send automated follow ups to responders and engage with them for specific feedback to ensure issues are addressed	Mar-25
Hornbill 3.0 – Phase 3: Knowledge Base / Automations	Establish use of new Knowledge Base feature for wider use / work on automated processes to reduce repetitive tasks for engineers	Jun-25
Hornbill AI possibility	Understand possibilities of initiating Hornbill AI features using locally hosted Azure servers	?

5.5   The entire service has been attending Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training, the training is being facilitated by an external specialist and has been received well, the schedule is due to complete this summer.

6   Risks

6.1   Our STS risk register is reviewed monthly by the Senior Leadership Team and uses Microsoft "Lists" so that it is available to all senior IT management in the partner Councils.

6.2   These are the Top risks identified for STS currently:

Category	Description	Current Probability	Current Impact	Current Risk	Target Risk
Security	Cyber Security (DDoS/virus/malware/hacking) resulting in complete loss of user access to all systems, or complete system failure, requiring manual operation to continue business	5	5	25	15
Financial	Uncontrolled spend on Azure services affecting budgets of partners	5	4	20	8
Security	There is a heightened risk of a Cyber attack from Russia due to the war in Ukraine and the subsequent UK response of sanctions and support. Other conflicts around the world are also a potential indirect threat.	4	5	20	16
Financial	Savings Targets for 2025-26 onwards may put at risk our ability to meet our service levels	5	3	15	0
Financial	Too much reliance on one vendor for a large part of our required services could result in lower ability to control costs	3	5	15	15
Security	Incomplete Inventory of Software Assets	5	3	15	6
Security	Increasing threat of data loss via our IT supply chain, including business applications.	5	3	15	10
Security	No Network based intrusion detection and / or prevention.	3	5	15	10
Security	Unauthorised External access to Council systems resulting in either denial of service and or loss/compromise of Council data that may prevent business operations form running and impact Citizens directly	3	5	15	10
Technical	Applications, Hardware and Systems becoming end of life or out of support creating security and operational.	5	3	15	9
HR	Unable to recruit/retain/afford sufficient skilled and qualified staff to run the service. Unable to deliver project work at rate required by the business Pressure to reallocate "business a usual" resource onto projects	3	4	12	8
Performance	No User Experience monitoring	4	3	12	12
Security	Ransomware Affects whole infrastructure including backups.	3	4	12	12

6.3   As part of STS's ongoing initiative to strengthen our partner's Cyber awareness, a number of Emergency planning Cyber Exercises Lessons have been held in the past year.

In Brent, following a successful exercise in March, a second exercise was conducted on July 23rd for Gold and Silver command-level participants, and a third exercise focused on Adult Social Care and Children and Young People services was completed on August 20th.

Three exercises have been successfully carried out in Lewisham over the past year, with the next exercise planned for January or February 2025.

Southwark's exercise on July 31st was well-received and underscored the need for business areas to enhance both business continuity and contingency plans.

Additionally, the Emergency Planning (EP) Cyber Exercises Lessons Learned workshop was conducted successfully. It was agreed that these workshops would be held quarterly, and a Teams channel has been established to facilitate efficient resource and outcome sharing among STS and partner organisations.

7   Audits

7.1   The last period has seen the following audits progress:

- Southwark Hardware Asset Management – Final report issued and a rating of "Moderate" for Control Design and "Limited" for Control Effectiveness. Three actions were recommended from this report, two of which have since been implemented with the final action progressing on schedule.
- Southwark Service Review - Final report issued and a rating of "Substantial" for Control Design and "Moderate" for Control Effectiveness. Two actions were recommended from this report, both have been implemented.
- Southwark Incident Management Review – Final report issued and a rating of "Substantial" achieved. No actions have resulted from this report.
- Southwark Cyber Security Review – Final report issued and a rating of "Moderate" for Control Design and "Limited" for Control Effectiveness. STS had three recommendations, two of which have since been implemented, with the third awaiting change approval before implementing. To progress all the recommendations in this report, a weekly meeting now takes place with Southwark and STS representatives to work through the action plan.
- Southwark Financial Management Review – awaiting the draft report.
- Brent Project Management Review – Terms of Reference have been agreed, and the audit is scheduled for January 2025.
- Brent Project Management Review – Terms of Reference have been agreed, and the audit is scheduled for January 2025.
- Brent IT Procurement Review – Terms of Reference have been agreed, and the audit is scheduled for November 2024.

7.2   The plan for FY24/25 audits was discussed on 18th March 2024 and is currently as follows:

#	Council	Proposed Audit Title	Outline description / reasoning	Proposed Timing	Circulated?	Status	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	Lewisham	IT Support (not completed 23/24)	Assurance rated work on effectiveness of IT support in resolving user-reported issues.	Q1	No report	Closed	■			
2	Southwark	Financial Management	Monthly reporting, accuracy, timelines	Q3		Underway			■	
3	Brent	Procurement	Review of procurement governance	Q3		Underway			■	
4	Southwark	Incident Management	Across LBS and shadow teams	Q3		Closed			■	
5	Southwark	Change Management	Across LBS and shadow teams	Q3		Underway			■	
6	Lewisham	IT Application Security		Q3		Underway			■	
7	Brent	Project Management	Focus on STS PM processes, controls and reporting	Q4		Underway				■
8	Southwark	Cyber 3rd Party Supply Chain	Including LBS Supply Chain	Q4		Planned				■
9	Brent	SLAM Process (not completed 23/24)	Following new Asset Management & Oracle development (Delayed), review of the SLAM processes and controls			To Schedule				
10	Brent	IT Application	Business line application (DB to propose)			To Schedule				
11	Brent	Performance and Availability monitoring	Scope to be confirmed with DB/MK/MG			To Schedule				
12	Lewisham	Starters and Leavers (not completed 23/24)	Wider LBL audit, with input from STS			To Schedule				

7.3   Recommendation Actions progress summary is below:

Open Audit Actions

Partner	High	Low	Medium	Total
⊟ **Brent**				
3rd Party Supply Chain			1	**1**
⊟ **Southwark**				
Cyber Security		1		**1**
IT Asset Management	1			**1**

7.4   Since the last report, 16 audit recommendations have been completed. In total, we currently have 3 recommendations where actions are underway:

Partner	Audit	Task Name	Priority
Brent	3rd Party Supply Chain	Ref 7 - <mark>Redacted</mark>	Medium
Southwark	IT Asset Management	Ref 1 - Disposal / Data Destruction process	High
Southwark	IT Cyber Security	Ref 8 - <mark>Redacted</mark>	Low

8   Technology Road Map 2026 and Forward Plan

8.1   Below is the next 6-month view of our Technology Roadmap Projects (planned and in-flight):

Roadmap Project	Project Manager	Progress	Next Business Case	Project Start	Expected End
Future Laptop Design	Amy Todd	85%	Aug-23	Oct-23	Dec-24
Windows Server Refresh	Ken Ring	70%	Jul-23	Aug-23	Mar-25
Redacted	Ciarán Weldon	10%	Sep-24	Oct-24	Feb-25
Laptops Replacement Brent	Amy Todd	10%	Jun-24	Sep-24	Aug-25
Laptops Replacement Southwark	Amy Todd	1%	Sep-24	Jan-25	Sep-25
SDWAN	Amy Todd	20%	Oct-23	Dec-23	Jul-25
Laptops Replacement Lewisham	Amy Todd	1%	Jan-25	Mar-25	Sep-25

8.2   We are now in the 4ᵗʰ year of our current 5-year investment plan with the majority of the infrastructure transformation having been delivered. Over the next calendar year, we will upgrade all laptops to Windows 11 or, if the laptops are end of their useful life, replace them.

8.3   A future IT Modernisation investment plan is now being formulated for 2026-2030. We are planning joint workshops with partner councils to develop the

strategy for this new plan. It is expected that the new plan will be presented to Joint Committee in the first half of next year.

9   Project Updates

9.1   Future Laptop Windows 11

Microsoft will end support for Windows 10 in October 2025. This project is part of STS transition strategy to ensure all systems and operations continue without interruptions or security risks linked to unsupported software and hardware.

9.1.1   The hardware tender for providing Lenovo devices to LGA and Brent has been awarded to CDW. We are currently in discussions with CDW to finalise the service agreement for managing repairs and delivering new laptops to staff, the ambition is to elevate the level of cover we have to ensure a better turn around for staff who have issues with the laptop.

9.1.2   We have tendered for the Microsoft Intune setup, and Softcat has been awarded the contract. "Make IT Happen," a subcontractor to Softcat, is responsible for its delivery. The LGA Microsoft Intune tenancy setup is currently undergoing testing during the laptop pilot phase. We will have started development on all three councils' environments.

9.2   Laptop Always On VPN

The council's remote working system, Microsoft Direct Access, was useful during the pandemic; however, it experienced speed and connection limitations. Additionally, Microsoft has announced that it will no longer develop this product. Consequently, a new solution, AlwaysOn VPN, has been introduced to provide seamless connectivity to all Microsoft services. This replacement addresses the existing limitations and aligns with Microsoft's future development direction, ensuring optimised performance and enhanced connectivity for the council's remote workforce.

9.2.1   Southwark's AlwaysOn VPN deployment was completed successfully in November 2023.

9.2.2   The deployment of AlwaysOn VPN is currently underway at LGA. At LGA, user acceptance testing is being conducted on new laptops that are part of the laptop refresh project pilot.

Brent has deployed AlwaysOn VPN to a small group of users for testing. Upon successful completion of the testing phase, the pilot will conclude and AlwaysOn will be rolled out to laptops as part of the laptop refresh project pilot.

9.2.3   AlwaysOn VPN has been deployed to a larger pilot group in Lewisham, who have indicated that they will maintain most of the existing laptop inventory when upgrading to Windows 11 as part of the laptop refresh project.

9.2.4   VPN is a module of a wider group of security tools, Southwark have expressed their interest in Zero Trust Security, which we are exploring collectively, we are currently reviewing the marketplace for suitability.

9.3   Network Upgrades

The proposed solution involves implementing SD-WAN technology to replace the current dedicated leased line site-to-site circuits. SD-WAN offers the advantage of utilising internet connections instead, providing significantly enhanced flexibility in routing network traffic. For instance, traffic related to Microsoft 365 applications such as MSTeams and email can be directed straight from the site to Microsoft servers, bypassing the need to route through the council data centres. This upgrade promises to optimise network efficiency and improve overall connectivity for the councils' operations.

9.3.1   Brent has 34 sites within the scope, and STS has completed surveys for 27 of these sites. Virgin Media has conducted 3 site surveys to date, with an additional 3 surveys scheduled.

9.3.2   Lewisham has confirmed that 33 sites are within the scope. To date, STS has completed surveys at 24 of these sites, and Virgin Media has completed surveys at 4 of them.

There remain a few stages to be completed before these 4 sites will be SDWAN ready.

9.3.3   As part of phase 1 of the Southwark rollout, 87 sites are now in flight. Of these 87 sites 18 can be completed with 15 ready for migration.

9.4   Windows 2012 Upgrades

All councils operate multiple Windows 2012 servers, with their support stated to end in October 2023. It is crucial that we prioritise upgrading these systems. Additionally, for services expected to continue beyond October 2023, we have procured additional licenses to ensure extended support. This is imperative to ensure that we continue to get updates to protect us from any cyber threats.

9.4.1   As of October 31, 2024, the Brent server estate originally comprising 218 servers running Windows Server 2012, has seen 198 servers either decommissioned or in the process of being decommissioned. Of the remaining 20 servers, all are currently undergoing this process, with the majority expected to be completed within the next few weeks. However, some servers hosting applications and services will require additional time for resolution. The Project Manager will submit a change request to seek approval for re-baselining the completion date, now anticipated to be by the end of 2024.

9.4.2   As of October 31, 2024, 204 servers were running Windows Server 2012 in the Lewisham server estate. Nine were out of scope. Of the remaining 195 servers, 172 had been or were being decommissioned. Remediation for the

final 23 servers is discussed in weekly status reviews. A change request will be raised to extend the completion date to January 2025.

9.4.3   Of the 87 Southwark Windows 2012 servers identified for STS migration, 30 were out of scope. By October 31, 2024, 51 had been decommissioned. Of the remaining 6 servers, 3 require third-party action, and the other 3 are awaiting signoff on replacement servers before decommissioning can proceed.

9.4.4   LGA had 40 servers in scope and as of 31st October 2024 39 had been completed. The final server is in the process of being decommissioned.

9.4.5   Lewisham Homes Windows 2012 servers that need to be is being treated as a separate project. 89 Servers have been identified with 44 being decommissioned.

9.5   Telephony and Contact Centre

9.5.1   For Brent and Lewisham, the Telephony the intention is to renew with 8x8 by compliant framework route. This is based on the rationale to avoid disruption to service and the cost of transition from an incumbent supplier to a new vendor. Southwark are intending to award to a new Vendor. The management of back-office telephony will be undertaken by STS as part of our infrastructure services. This system is designed to integrate seamlessly with any telephony products that the Council decides to implement. As all services are cloud-hosted, there will be no need for additional infrastructure changes related to back-office telephony.

10   Procurement Updates

10.1   STS has appointed a new Commercial Procurement and Contracts Manager, who has a wealth of experience started on the 16th of August 2024.

10.2   The tender for Microsoft Intune (Device Management) is completed and the contract has been awarded to Softcat.

10.3   The tender for provision of laptops has been completed for both Brent and LGA. The contract was awarded to CDW. In August 2024 for 4,500 Lenovo devices. These will be deployed across both organisations starting from November 2024.

10.4   The Procurement for Adobe Licences for Southwark is completed, and contract start date is the 6th of July 2024. The renewal for Brent is due March 2025, and Lewisham is due December 2024.

10.5   SDWAN - The network circuit requirements are sourced through contract with the London Grid for Learning (LGfL) for Brent and Lewisham. Contract was awarded to LGfL in January 2024 and the rollout of Virgin Media Circuits with an SDWAN overlay is underway in all three Boroughs.

10.6 STS have extended Ricoh UK Limited: Printing Services - extended by 12 months. Two further 12-month permissible extensions are available as part of the existing contract.

10.7 STS Service Desk Telephone Support – Market Engagement was completed during October 2024, there are a variety of suppliers in the market offering competitive pricing. STS are underway with drafting tender documents for open procedure based on the needs of all three Boroughs.

The tender will be under one Lot devised of two Options on a 'Bronze' and 'Silver' level of requirement. Bidders will be required to submit tender responses or both Options and provide additional bolt-on costs for information purposes. These bolt-ons will be included in the price schedules and can be added as additional requirements throughout the term of the contract independently by the Boroughs. The recommended route to market has been identified as most economically advantageous solution.

10.8 Microsoft Licences

Microsoft licenses for Brent, Lewisham and Southwark have been renewed. Southwark's new contract has commenced under preferential discounted pricing for UK Public Sector. All STS Microsoft contracts are renewed/awarded under Digital Transformation Arrangement21 (DTA21) which comes with 33% discount offer on all Microsoft products.

10.9 Telecoms Expense Management Service – The existing service with Nuvoli is part of a variation to the overarching Mobile Voice and Data Contract with VMO2. The service is due to end in December 2024, and negotiations with the supplier are underway to secure a saving.

10.10 We are also exploring with another billing monitoring supplier who are running a savings exercise free of charge to see if there are any more savings to be gained. This will provide Partners and STS an assurance that we are getting best value or provide us with options to make more savings in the future.

11   Council Updates

11.1 Brent Digital Update

11.1.1 Brent's digital programme began in 2017 when our first digital strategy was agreed. Cabinet agreed a refreshed Digital Strategy for 2022-26 in December 2021. As part of the delivery of the digital strategy for 2022-26 several projects of work have been delivered within 2024-25. This includes system upgrades, migrations to new software, digital inclusion support for residents and deployment of new apps for residents. Examples of projects delivery in 2024 include:

- Exceeded 2026 connectivity target of 62% (currently 71%)
- Updated My Account – improving residents experience and support channel shift with over 202,400 currently registered. This includes the

implementation of e-shot technology providing automation and real-time data synchronisation will lead to increased efficiency in managing all the email subscriptions. Additionally, First Wave Housing and I4B services were added to My Account, reducing telephone calls, improving resident experience and supporting revenue generation.

- At the end of Q4 for 23/24, calls were reduced from 677,173 in 2022 to 400,121 which is a reduction of 41% in calls.
- M365 has been rolled out across the organisation, providing improved collaboration and security.
- All home drives have been migrated to OneDrive, supporting improved use of M365 and opportunities for collaboration.
- Document storage review was completed consolidating various paper document storage contracts and digitising where appropriate.
- Updates and remediation have been made to Dynamics including housing block audits, tenancy audits, patch allocations and dashboards.
- Over 200 digital champions have been recruited to support residents with developing digital skills.
- Over 3,000 devices have been provided to digitally excluded residents via the Digital Support Fund for Children and Young People and Resident Digital Support Fund
- 33 processes have been automated with RPA (Robotic Process Automation) providing operational efficiency by automating repetitive tasks, reducing errors and freeing up staff time to focus on value-based activities within the business process. These RPAs have been deployed across customer access, council tax, debt recovery, adult social care and school admissions. An average of £30,000 has been realised with each automation
- Four chatbots have gone live reducing calls and supporting channel shift and improving customer experience. An average of 1200 enquires are resolved via the chatbot. This includes a library chatbot, enabling residents to find out information about local community groups and provisions
- Soft market testing and engagement with Children and Young People and Adult social care has identified Mosaic on Cloud as a the most appropriate case management solution.
- A trial of CoPilot took place to ensure security and infrastructure compliance. Use cases will be identified for further roll out of the pilot.
- 21 community buildings have been connected with full fibre to the premises via grant funding
- Mealia App which helps residents with their planning, shopping and cooking of their meals based on their budget, dietary requirements, kitchen equipment etc. has been deployed
- Temporary Accommodation calculator phase 2 was complete which includes additional functionality such as license agreements, task assignment to housing benefit officers, and docusign functionality.
- We have hosted a Brent Digital Day for all staff to promote existing technology across the council and commence a digital skills development programme

11.2   Lewisham Digital update

11.2.1 The Digital Product & Development team has outlined key objectives for 2024-25 focused on revenue growth, cost reduction, and improved satisfaction for residents and employees. They aim to enhance the user experience by tracking satisfaction through data sources like Hotjar, Microsoft Forms surveys, and Silktide Accessibility scores, as well as to increase the share of digital over telephone transactions. Security and service reliability remain priorities, with a commitment to prevent high-security incidents and maintain high uptime for digital services.

11.2.2 The Applications and IT Procurement team's 2024-25 strategy includes implementing the Orbus Infinity platform to align IT with business needs, establishing new Oracle support contracts, and migrating all applications from Windows 2012 servers. Other notable projects are the Single View of the Child program, a central support model for critical applications, and the launch of Redwood forms for Oracle Cloud. Phase 2 of Microsoft 365, featuring Purview, secure email, and Teams telephony, is underway, alongside the migration of Business Objects reports to Power BI for enhanced analytics.

11.2.3 Achievements this year include the launch of new registration services, the migration of Lewisham's public website to Azure, and the deployment of a new Housing Management System. Applications and IT Procurement rolled out ORC for schools' HR, Egress Prevent for secure communications and launched a new intranet. Data Science achievements include the "Living in Lewisham" interactive map, enhancements to the DMT report, and a successful Local EV Infrastructure Fund (LEVI) application to support electric vehicle charging. ICT accomplishments include the migration of mobile services to O2 and live support for the Housing Management System.

11.2.4 Upcoming ICT Initiatives will focus on enhancing infrastructure reliability, improving service efficiency, and fostering innovation across departments, further supporting Lewisham's commitment to effective digital transformation and resident-focused services.

11.3   Southwark Digital Update

11.3.1 In October 2024, Southwark successfully launched the new council website, marking a significant milestone in its digital transformation journey. This was closely followed by the introduction of the new Cyber Security Training platform, aimed at enhancing the organisation's resilience against cyber threats.

Southwark's Modern Data Platform dashboards have been rolled out, providing advanced analytics and insights to drive data-driven decision-making across departments. Additionally, the Digital Skills Hub was launched, a dedicated platform to upskill the workforce and bridge the digital skills gap.

The technical evaluation for the new ERP (HR and Finance System) replacement has been completed, ensuring that the future system will meet

the evolving needs of the organisation. Furthermore, the WiFi infrastructure in office locations and libraries has been upgraded, enhancing connectivity and productivity for staff and visitors.

In terms of software procurement, Southwark has successfully reprocured Microsoft Licensing, which now includes 300 CoPilot licenses for the pilot of GenAI. This initiative is complemented by the Magic Notes Gen AI pilot in Social Care, which aims to leverage artificial intelligence to improve service delivery.

The new Project Management Office (PMO) has been implemented, supported by project management software (Monday.com), to streamline project oversight and execution. The Power Platform Centre of Excellence has also been established, fostering innovation and efficiency through the use of low-code solutions.

Lastly, Southwark has introduced UI Path RPA capability and capacity to the organisation, with four automations already developed and a robust pipeline for future opportunities. This initiative is set to significantly enhance operational efficiency and service delivery.

11.3.2 Expected Benefits

These initiatives are expected to bring numerous benefits to Southwark. The new council website and upgraded WiFi infrastructure will improve user experience and accessibility for both staff and visitors. The Cyber Security Training platform will bolster the organisation's defences against cyber threats, ensuring data security and compliance.

The Modern Data Platform dashboards will enable data-driven decision-making, leading to more informed and effective strategies. The Digital Skills Hub will empower employees with the necessary skills to thrive in a digital environment, fostering a culture of continuous learning and development.

The new ERP system will streamline HR and finance processes, increasing efficiency and reducing administrative burdens. The inclusion of 300 CoPilot licenses for the GenAI pilot and the Magic Notes Gen AI pilot in Social Care will harness the power of artificial intelligence to enhance service delivery and operational efficiency.

The implementation of the new PMO and the Power Platform Centre of Excellence will improve project management and innovation capabilities, ensuring that projects are delivered on time and within budget. Lastly, the introduction of UI Path RPA will automate repetitive tasks, freeing up staff to focus on more strategic activities and improving overall productivity.

11.3.3 Data

We're in year 3 of the data strategy. So far we have built a data platform that ingests multiple datasets visualising this data through a number of dashboards.

With this platform now in place and firmly established we are working with various departments to provide them with meaningful data in a way that offers them insight to improve and develop the services they deliver.

- The Modern Data Platform (MDP) holds information covering datasets from multiple back-office systems including:
  - 8x8 telephone contact centre system,
  - iCasework complaints system,
  - Universal Credit,
  - Mosaic Adults and Children's system,
  - Synergy Adults and Children's Case system,
  - Adult Learning,
  - Capita Youth Justice
  - 16 17 Not in Employment or Education or Training,
  - School Census
  - SAP financials,
  - ONS deprivation,
  - Gazetteer,
  - Meter Point,
  - Connect Repairs,
  - NEC Housing system
  - NEC Revs and Bens system

We are currently applying to work with the DofE and 12 other councils. The initiative aims to support up to 12 local authorities in developing an implementation plan for a single digital view of children and families. This involves effective multi-agency information sharing and joined-up working to safeguard children.

11.3.4 Single Digital View

This concept brings together information from various multi-agency case management systems into a unified view. It includes developing a data lake, implementing a match and merge management function, and visualising the information through

The resident account feature of "My Southwark" provides a limited single view of the customer by bringing together residents personal information and linking with Housing through an integration with NEC, Council Tax and the Blue Badge scheme. This helps the resident access disparate systems without the need for alternative logins

11.3.5 Digital Academy

The Southwark Digital Academy is currently offering several programs to help employees upskill and address digital challenges. One of the key programs is

the 'AI for Business Value' program, which covers AI fundamentals, AI ethics, business analysis skills, and how to embed AI into the organization. This program offers a government-recognised qualification (L4 Business Analysis). Additionally, there are fully funded Data/Business Transformation apprenticeships available.

We are training people in both formal qualifications as above and training to meet the organisation's needs. The Digital Academy runs training in how to collaborate effectively using Teams and OneDrive.

11.3.6 Social Value

Social Value remains a key priority for Southwark contracts and offers an opportunity for companies to work and contribute directly to residents and community organisations across Southwark. As part of their social value commitments, Infosys launched the Springboard platform at Canada Water Theatre this month. The launch was attended by Southwark residents, digital champions who volunteer and support residents with their digital skills, and members of the Libraries Teams.

The event was also an opportunity to express our thanks to the volunteer community who are the foundation of our digital inclusion skills sessions, offering their time, resources and patience to hundreds of residents every year. Springboard has over 1000 free courses available to residents to upskill and expand their digital and life skills and will be part of our digital inclusion offering going forward, supplementing the Digital Unite and Learn My Way platforms.

12 Inter Authority Agreement

12.1 Some revisions have been proposed to the IAA and these are to be presented to the Joint Management Board in January 2025.

12.2 We have been working with LOTI on benchmarking the IT service costs against other London Boroughs, to ensure that the shared service is providing value for money compared to the traditional model of an in-house IT team.

13 Strategy Update

13.1 Our existing SICTS Strategy was presented to the Joint Committee in January 2020.

14 Financial Considerations

14.1 The total budget of £18.12M for FY 2024/25 is made up of a combination of non-controllable expenditure of £9M and controllable expenditure (staffing and consultancy) of £9.12M.

14.2   The YTD spend (April 24 and October 24) for FY 2024/25 is £11.86M against a full-year budget of £18.12M. The forecast outturn for FY 2024/25 is ~ £18.1M, with a net underspend of ~ £30k.

14.3   The YTD Spend for the year excludes recharges which are made up of bulk stock orders, project costs that are covered by different funding pots and rechargeable consumables.

14.4   For FY25/26, we are committed to agreed savings targets through negotiations at contract renewals or replacement of contracts with those that provide better value. Our target for savings totals £900k.

14.5   We are currently waiting for the results from the value for money review, the London Office of Technology and Innovation are concluding a benchmarking exercise in which all three councils participated along side the shared service.

15   Legal Considerations

15.1   This report is for noting. Therefore, no specific legal implications arise from the report at this stage.

15.2   Brent Council hosts the Shared Technology Service, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 2000, the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

15.3   These provisions allow one council to delegate one of its functions to another council as well as allowing two or more councils to discharge their functions jointly with the option of establishing a joint committee.

15.4   Joint Committees can in turn delegate functions to one or more officers of the councils concerned.

15.5   Decisions of Joint Committees are binding on the participating councils. However, subject to the terms of the arrangement, the council retains the ability to discharge that function itself.

16   Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

16.1   Please not as referenced in 5.3 all STS staff are undergoing EDI training.

17   Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

17.1   There are none.

18   Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

18.1   There are none.

19   Human Resources/Property Implications

19.1 There are none.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel
Corporate Director Finance &
Resources (Brent Council)