



SRS

COO Annual Update



Mission

To use shared technology platforms to consolidate the demand and broker the supply of all types of services to the Public Sector.



Vision

To be more efficient through the use of technology.



Values

When people are sharing their practice, they add value to the common purpose of the SRS.



Strategic Aim #1

INNOVATING WITH EXPERTS:
improve services to provide a solid foundation upon which partner organisations can operate.



Strategic Aim #2

MODERNISING THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE:
ensure the investment in technology is focused on delivery of the corporate priorities of the partner organisations.



Strategic Aim #3

POWERING UP THE CLOUD:
provide a collaborative platform for public sector organisations to share common ground.



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Audience	List of partners: Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Gwent, Gwent Police, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport City Council and Torfaen County Borough Council.
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Key Documents	List of key documents associated with this annual update
Name	Comment
Strategy	Managed through the SRS Strategic Board.
MTFP	Managed through the Finance and Governance Group and used to agree annual budgets.
Risk Register	Managed by the SRS after each Strategic Board, Finance and Governance Group and business and Collaboration Group meeting.
SLA	The Service Level Agreement document is agreed by the strategic Board in July each year.

Version	Date	Name	Comment
1.0	April 21	M Lewis	2020-21 Update
2.0	July 22	M Lewis	2021-22 Update



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1. COO FOREWORD



The Shared Resource Service (SRS) continues to be a unique and successful collaboration in South Wales that provides technology services to the public sector.



The Shared Resource Service (SRS) is proud to work with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Gwent, Gwent Police, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport City Council and Torfaen County Borough Council.



The SRS operates a collaborative service through a single organisational structure and delivery model and the power of that model continues to show itself to be of huge value to all partners. The lessons learned from working with each partner are applied to the other which has allowed for the rapid implementation of numerous solutions to deliver the flexibility, pace and scale of change required by partners throughout these challenging times.



In addition to this and in the interests of benefit to the wider Public Sector and citizens of Wales, the SRS has taken its partner specific hat off at times and played a role in national issue resolution, delivery and support.





2. PERFORMANCE SECTION



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2021-22 whole year scorecard

Finance	BGCBC	OPCC	MCC	NCC	TCBC
Budget	●	●	●	●	●
SRS Savings			●		
Capital	●	●	●	●	●
Cashflow			●		
Debt			●		
Partner Savings	●	●	●	●	●

Internal	BGCBC	OPCC	MCC	NCC	TCBC
SLA Category P1	●	●	●	●	●
SLA Category P2	●	●	●	●	●
SLA Category P3	●	●	●	●	●
SLA Category P4	●	●	●	●	●
PSN Task Completion	●	●	●	●	●
Audit Task Completion	●	●	●	●	●
Project Measure	●	●	●	●	●
Strategic Project Progress			●		

Customer	BGCBC	OPCC	MCC	NCC	TCBC
SLA Overall	●	●	●	●	●
Network Availability	●	●	●	●	●
FPOC Fix	●	●	●	●	●
Time To Resolution	●	●	●	●	●
Customer Satisfaction	●	●	●	●	●

Learning & Growth	SRS
Staff retention	●
Staff sickness rate	●
Staff Survey	●
Training Hours	●

SRS Dashboard
April 21- March 22





3. Financial Quarter

Budget

The following key messages were presented in the final outturn paper at the Finance and Governance Board in May for the financial year 2021-22.

- There was a substantial staff underspend, mainly as a result of vacant posts amounting to £399,000 offset by the 2% vacancy factor of £179,000. We have struggled to recruit into many posts due to the current climate, a paper has been discussed at Strategic Board for support on pay and recruitment related matters that need to be addressed.
- The overall in year saving for the SRS amounted to £268,000 and £67,000 was utilised from reserves.
- The SRS reserve to be carried forward is £495,000.
- We continue to hold a debtor provision of £138,000 for the potential NWIS claim.

This year has seen our most efficient and prompt close down of accounts at year end. The SRS has successfully negotiated and had approved the budget for 2022-23 working with the Finance and Governance Board. The planning process is now embedded and working well with Annette Drew meeting with each organisation individually and ensuring that the finance position is well known.

Savings

The SRS has successfully delivered on all of its savings targets for 2021-22 and there are additional surpluses that have been communicated to each partner organisation as per the below presented sat the Finance and Governance Board in May.



- All partners costs were less than budget, generating savings of £423,000
- All partners hold a reserve going into 2022-23 financial year, a total of £1,306,000.

MTFP

The SRS has delivered, supported by Torfaen, the first Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) it has ever had. The document will be kept up to date each year and used to check off against the in year capital refresh plans described below.

Capital Planning

This year we have successfully presented and taken through each organisations formal process, the complete capital refresh plan for five years of all infrastructure items. The pilot was Blaenau Gwent and we then worked through the other four. This has been very well received and for the first time ever we have all capital replacement needs for the data centre and the infrastructure in place.

Supply of Equipment

The team built robust processes to ensure the flow of equipment for SRS and Partners as we faced a worldwide shortage. They were proactive in understanding requirements and ordering upfront to manage the significant lead times and sourcing alternatives. There was minimal disruption to service experienced by partners.



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4. Customer Quarter

The following sections use heat maps and uses the principle that the darker the green gets, the better the service to our customers. Amber and / or red do not necessarily mean we have not met a target, it just means that across the year they are the lesser performing months.

SLA Overall

Below shows the overall SLA measures by month across the whole year of April 2021 to March 2022 for each partner. As can be seen here, the progression through the year shows a darker green. This means that we are delivering better services as the year goes on.

Calls Resolved Against SLA	Apr-	May-	Jun-	Jul-	Aug-	Sep-	Oct-	Nov-	Dec-	Jan-	Feb-	Mar-
BGCBC Overall	94	95	96	96	93	92	94	96	97	96	97	97
OPCC Overall	94	94	95	94	96	93	94	98	97	94	96	96
MCC Overall	93	91	89	91	92	86	88	96	94	96	98	95
NCC Overall	94	94	95	95	93	92	92	96	98	97	98	96
TCBC Overall	92	92	94	92	93	89	93	94	96	95	93	95



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First point of contact (FPOC)

An important measure defined by all of our customers is the percentage of calls fixed at the first point of contact (FPOC). This means that the first person spoken to can resolve the call rather than it having to be passed off to another person or having to wait for a call back. It takes a lot of time and effort for our staff on the Service Desk to learn the common calls for five partners and to be able to respond to them effectively, even more so with the high level of turnover in that area. Below shows that turnover well, the results have generally stayed the same, probably more consistent that at the start of the year with some dips throughout. The majority of months the target is met and where it is not, it is due to higher volumes of new starters in the Service Desk and that learning process.

% Resolved at 1st POC	Current Month	Ap-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
BGCBC	82	70%	69%	66%	73%	71%	77%	78%	78%	78%	80%	77%	82%
OPCC	75	71%	72%	77%	77%	80%	74%	75%	75%	77%	71%	76%	75%
MCC	73	80%	72%	73%	66%	79%	74%	69%	67%	68%	73%	69%	73%
NCC	76	81%	70%	78%	76%	74%	77%	75%	72%	75%	78%	82%	76%
TCBC	74	81%	76%	78%	80%	75%	76%	76%	74%	69%	74%	72%	74%



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Customer Satisfaction

Each time a call is closed the customer has an opportunity to complete a survey which comes back to us at the SRS. Those surveys are collated each month and presented back to each individual delivery group to show them the view that their own staff have of our service. The return rate of surveys is usually low compared to the number of calls per month simply because people tend not to have time to fill a survey out. With that in mind we have made the surveys far quicker and simpler to fill out over the last six months with a view to increase the level of feedback and to ensure our services can improve further. We feel that the below really highlights how well the customer service training has gone and how much better our staff are at dealing with calls. Through a very challenging year the SRS has managed to improve the level of customer satisfaction and we seek to improve further on those figures in 2022-23.

Customer Satisfaction	Current Month	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
BGCBC	84.00	58.40%	70.88%	68.70%	60.38%	77.89%	63.21%	69.00%	82.00%	76.00%	60.00%	77.00%	84.00%
OPCC	96.00	72.92%	67.93%	72.30%	73.29%	67.29%	61.03%	66.00%	76.00%	95.00%	90.00%	95.00%	96.00%
MCC	95.00	58.93%	67.54%	65.02%	46.50%	68.45%	57.51%	63.00%	76.00%	78.00%	86.00%	83.00%	95.00%
NCC	93.00	66.26%	71.65%	67.18%	66.35%	61.27%	63.82%	60.00%	75.00%	67.00%	90.00%	82.00%	93.00%
TCBC	94.00	69.11%	68.75%	67.99%	70.88%	66.33%	68.09%	67.00%	74.00%	92.00%	87.00%	82.00%	94.00%



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5. Internal Quarter

The below statistics are broken down by category for the full year from April 21 to March 22.

Calls Resolved Against SLA	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
BGCBC Overall	94	95	96	96	93	92	94	96	97	96	97	97
BGCBC Platinum	77	85	91	82	67	77	78	100	84	86	92	84
BGCBC Gold	93	92	89	93	83	81	69	92	90	90	96	85
BGCBC Silver	95	100	96	100	100	98	100	99	98	97	100	100
BGCBC Bronze	96	96	97	99	95	94	97	96	98	97	97	98
OPCC Overall	94	94	95	94	96	93	94	98	97	94	96	96
OPCC Platinum	87	91	91	90	88	88	88	95	95	88	90	94
OPCC Gold	88	75	89	77	97	83	85	98	84	87	94	98
OPCC Silver	95	98	97	95	92	89	93	96	88	95	94	91
OPCC Bronze	97	97	98	96	99	96	97	98	100	96	99	98
MCC Overall	93	91	89	91	92	86	88	96	94	96	98	95
MCC Platinum	80	84	68	70	76	67	73	77	79	87	93	87
MCC Gold	84	76	72	94	91	75	86	86	93	95	94	93
MCC Silver	95	98	88	89	84	92	88	94	96	91	100	98
MCC Bronze	96	93	96	95	96	91	93	98	98	98	100	98
NCC Overall	94	94	95	95	93	92	92	96	98	97	98	96
NCC Platinum	90	89	89	90	88	85	82	92	92	93	97	92
NCC Gold	72	85	95	97	86	92	87	89	96	98	94	94
NCC Silver	100	96	98	96	96	98	96	96	100	98	98	96
NCC Bronze	96	96	96	96	94	94	95	96	99	99	99	99
TCBC Overall	92	92	94	92	93	89	93	94	96	95	93	95
TCBC Platinum	86	84	85	85	90	83	89	90	85	88	79	87
TCBC Gold	85	80	89	94	88	86	90	87	95	94	89	97
TCBC Silver	96	88	92	93	96	93	89	95	95	100	97	97
TCBC Bronze	97	94	96	94	94	91	95	95	99	97	99	97



Audit Position

The Audit plan was fully completed despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. There was agreed fluidity in the audit plan which meant we were able to flex schedules to ensure the audits which was really helpful when dealing with issues emerging during the year.

The audit opinion was 'Generally satisfactory, some improvement required'. There were 9 audits generating 1 moderate, 4 substantial and 4 full audit opinions. The overall opinion recognises continued consolidation of improvement again this year.

PSN Position

All partners have got their PSN compliance, which is an excellent achievement, the Information Security team have a robust process in place for ensuring the vulnerabilities identified during the annual health checks are assessed and planned into the monthly work planning process.

The team have also developed the specification for the SOC (Security Operations Centre) – SIEM (security, information, event, management) solution and commenced implementation across all local authority partners. The aim to meet the needs of our partner organisations in more prevention measures as opposed to reactive measures when it comes to information security. We are currently reviewing the need to potentially expand the team to accommodate increased demand.

Project Measures

The SRS uses a project health measure indicator and these will regularly change as projects are progressed and extended by partners due to reprioritisation of priorities on a monthly basis. The measure has evolved into a health check by partners at each monthly delivery group



meeting. The current health status is amber across all partners with actions in place for all to provide assurance.

Strategic Project Progress

The key strategic projects that are in progression are the Data Centre, Teams Telephony and Office 365 (Sharepoint Online) projects. All are running well and have delivered considerable benefits.

- Partner Infrastructure refresh plans

After many years of running with older equipment , SRS engineers alongside Senior Management costed, planned, ordered, and begun implementing an entire Network equipment refresh across all SRS Partners. WIFI refreshes have now been completed across TCBC and MCC, with switching infrastructure on order and awaiting delivery. As equipment is delivered, we will then continue with the rollout plans, which are now in place, not just for 2022, but on a rolling basis to ensure we keep up to date with the latest, supportable infrastructure moving forward.

- Migration of all local authority Partners to the single instance of SCCM

SCCM is a tool for building and rolling out Windows devices. All local authority partners have been migrated to a single SCCM solution removing the need and complexities of have multiple instances per partner organisation and allows us to utilise the same base build. Through doing so it has broken down barriers in terms of technological complexities when rolling out patches for software and now provides a central solution for builds packages and patching which is of benefit to the local authority partners.



- Creation of the One Wales SQL Database cluster at Vantage data and the ongoing successful migration of partner applications

The implementation of the new One Wales SQL cluster at Vantage data ties in with the ongoing migration work taking place to move partner organisations from their pre-existing data centres to the new provision in Newport. This will, for the first time in SRS history, place all partners onto the database environment reducing licensing costs.

- Migration of TCBC/MCC and NCC Citrix to a OneWales platform

The removal of 100+ servers from TCBC/MCC/NCC corporate infrastructures (physical and virtual machines) in both Blaenavon and Newport datacentre, huge reduction in licensing costs, and an implementation of a single platform Citrix Farm providing access to multiple domain centric applications from a single supportable platform. Servers have been decommissioned from the data halls and disposed of helping to massively reduce the footprint of servers required at the new Vantage Data Centre moving forward.

- Software Asset Management

There were many discussions throughout 2021-22 around the implementation of Software Asset Management within the SRS. With agreement from all partners and the appointment of a Licence Officer we are now in a good position to start our Licence Management journey in 2022-23. By August 16th 2022 we will have the license management tools available to us to drive efficiencies from our current Microsoft contract as an example.



6. Learning and Growth Quarter

Retention

The SRS has had a challenging year in the area of resources. The “Talent Drain” paper presented to all five Chiefs in April is presented to the wider Board at the Strategic Board meeting on July 19th 2022. The paper confirms the widening gap between roles externally to the SRS and SRS roles. With an ever-reducing pool of people to fish from, with salaries in all other sectors increasing above the rate of Local Government and with all other differentiators being removed it is difficult to fill roles. The update to the Talent Drain paper provides context and additional activities the SRS will undertake to combat these issues.

Sickness

The SRS is below target for sickness rate and the main areas of sickness have been either COVID or mental health and wellbeing issues. We are working on a number of areas to support people from a mental health and wellbeing perspective.

Survey

The staff survey responses average scores calculated across the 114 responses. This is a very high response rate and every single averaged question response was above average which is a very positive place to start. Staff have worked together to put some recommendations together to improve further.

Training

Funding has been set aside to support the SRS strategic aim of being a learning organisation and to provide opportunities for staff. This is in addition to the budget held by Service Managers for service specific



training and is available to all permanent SRS staff. Its purpose is for academic courses, i.e. further education, university degrees, masters etc

There are a number of staff completing courses through the Open University, Institute of Learning and Management as well as a number of technical qualifications for service specific skills such as Microsoft, Cisco and other technologies to ensure training and qualifications are available to support continuous development in each job (example BCM, Finance, Information Security, Desktops, Server, Applications Networks and Projects). We have a number of staff who have completed their courses and achieved very good results as a result of the CPD scheme.

Service Desk - Staff Training and Career Progression

As the entry point for staff joining the SRS, we have seen a high turnover of staff this year. We have welcomed ten new staff members and with our new training plans in place this resource shift has not been detrimental to our customers and the SLA has not suffered. We have seen ten members of the team develop and grow and have moved onto other job roles within the SRS. This retention of staff within our organisation is a key to our success and we will continue to review the onboarding process to ensure it gives our staff the very best start with the SRS.

We have also seen five members of the team, work through the 3P's process. They have all made significant progress, developed their portfolios over the year and were successful in their progression via the panel.



7. Risks

The SRS manages risks through the Finance and Governance Board and through the Business and Collaboration Board as agreed with those Boards. The split of risks across the Boards is documented below:

F&G Board

Legal / Statutory Obligations
Reputational
Assets and Property
Financial

B&C Board

Technology and Innovation
Improvement and Performance
Emergency Management
Major Projects

Each Board takes a decision at each meeting as to whether any risks require escalating to the Strategic Board at each quarterly meeting.

The risks consistently escalated to the Strategic Board have been:

- Global supply chain.
- Websafe Internet filtering.
- Cyber Security load and awareness.
- Recruitment, reward and retention.



8. STRATEGY SECTION

By 2026 the SRS will be transformed into a cloud delivery partner that delivers value for money, digital services to any organisation in any sector.

What progress has been made towards delivery of the strategy?

Data Centre

Move partners to an alternate physical data centre and decommission the current Blaenavon data centre by the end of 2022 and saving approximately £4M based on NPV calculations.

- An incredible effort to get Vantage procured and installed by the end of December 2021 and all equipment commissioned and live by January 2022
- Blaenau Gwent migration started at the end of January 2022
- TCBC / MCC started March 2022
- Truly shared environments and infrastructure

Office 365

Move the remaining partners (LA, Police and Edu) to Office 365 by the end of 2020 and maximizing the use of their Enterprise Agreement investments.

- Office 365 rolled out for all partners by March 2020 and the project continues to exploit further capabilities
- Egress replacement and savings for some partners (secure file sharing)
- VPN replacement to always on VPN and savings for some partners



Cloud Telephony

Migrate all partners (LA, Police and Edu) to cloud telephony, cloud contact centres and cloud switchboards by the end of 2023, reducing the overall cost by replacing the need for capital investment with a lesser ongoing revenue cost.

- Torfaen over 60% rolled out for Teams telephony to individual users
- MCC rolled out around 10%
- Contact centre decision to implement separately rather than a single instance and possible shared contact centre

Cloud Storage

Migrate all partners (LA, Police and Edu) to Sharepoint Online by 2021 and remove the need for on premise storage therefore reducing cost.

- Sharepoint online (Newport Intranet / MCC Hub / OPCC Sharepoint) and savings for each partner
- EDRMS work ongoing and taking longer in partner than expected due to partner resource issues
- Joint working between MCC and TCBC in place

Net Zero contribution of the SRS

Data Centre Footprint - the extensive work involved in moving from multiple provisions across all Local Government partners into one footprint in the new Vantage data centre has reduced the environmental impact of four separate implementations into one single environment.

Data Centre Energy - the four separate provisions all used energy in different ways and it is fair to say that the Blaenau Gwent and Newport computer rooms were energy inefficient. Even the well specified Blaenavon facility is less efficient than the new Vantage provision due to



improvements in technology. When the migrations are complete towards the end of 2022, the SRS will be able to compare the previous energy usage to the total consumption in the new location and provide an estimate of the energy reduction impact. In addition to this, the Vantage data centre uses 100% certified renewable energy.

Moving to Sharepoint Online for MCC / NCC / OPCC - by moving large amounts of on premise Sharepoint functionality into Office 365, the SRS has been able to remove large amounts of infrastructure across the organisations. This reduces energy consumption and physical footprint.

Disposals contract – We embedded a new disposals policy which reduces our carbon footprint and saves money, devices are now recycled instead of being destroyed and still meets all security requirements.

Accommodation Strategy

We have developed an accommodation strategy for the SRS and is progressing well, offering diverse working spaces and moving forward to generate savings identified in the Data Centre Business Case. We have also identified and developed all required risk assessments to ensure health, safety and well-being of SRS Staff.



9. PARTNER SPECIFIC SECTION

Education

There are four major updates for Education:

1. Device rollout as part of EdTech
 2. SLA sign ups for three years across all partners
 3. Websafe
 4. Data Centre Migration
- The SRS has rolled out over 5,500 devices across the four Authorities in the financial year 2021-22. The full breakdown is shown below and this has been based on putting schools needs at the heart of the work. The numbers are representative of the size of the Authority, the schools and therefore the funding granted by WG as part of this wave of funding.

	<u>NCC</u>	<u>BGCBC</u>	<u>MCC</u>	<u>TCBC</u>
Laptop	111	172	249	128
Desktop	122	294	61	50
Monitors	110	4	3	50
Chromebooks	1823	112	395	64
iPads	334	287	384	121
Macbook Pro	14			
MacMini	15	28		
Charging Trolley	86	38	25	
Projectors	129			6
Screens	105			345
	2849	935	1117	764

- The SLA has been a contentious issue in all LA's for a number of years. We moved to a one year SLA prior to COVID as schools were considering stepping away from the service. There has been a dramatic turnaround driven by our willingness to develop a



Partnership Strategy with schools which puts their needs at the heart of the service. As a result of this we now have all schools signed into three year SLA's and we also have had some schools return to the service that were out of SLA when their Authority joined the SRS.

- Websafe is the Internet filtering solution for schools and it is provided by WG and delivered through a BT contract nationally. The SRS migrated schools to Smoothwall over a period of 24 months from mid 2019 to mid 2021. It is fair to say that performance was never stable and this culminated in a national failure in October 2021 which consumed much of our Education resource and a lot of management time. As COO I became involved in a national Exec Board who were tasked with managing the resolution of the issues as BT had failed to resolve the major incident and we all continued to see sporadic performance.

This continued for a five month period to February / March when we started to see some better performance and into the new financial year when the SRS took a more direct approach and started removing restrictions itself. This resulted in far better performance for schools and now the national provision has caught up with those changes.

- The Education provision is also migrating to the new data centre in Vantage. The difference here is that Education are not having new equipment which means we have to reuse everything from Blaenavon and take it to Vantage in Newport. Whilst not in this financial year the work will take place between July 23rd and August 5th. The work was originally planned for the end of the 21-22 financial year but due to the Websafe issues and the mass disruption to schools we consulted with Headteachers and we agreed to move the work to the summer term.



Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Over the past 12 months, we have implemented many projects and improvements to Blaenau Gwent systems. The highlights have been:

- Planning for the decommission of the Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale

The planning to ensure that all SRS services could be removed from Civic Centre down to the Vantage Data Centre. The scope including the technical planning involved to empty the racks of equipment and turned off the power to all those racks. This means planning for alternative networks, wifi, servers and switching.

- Relocation of democratic services hub to the General Offices

To enable this project, there was a huge programme of work to ensure the connectivity was fit for purpose for the increased demand and so that hybrid working could be supported. This included the provision of an upgraded PSBA link and reconfiguration of switches. In addition the network wifi access points were replaced. The planning of this was particularly challenging due to the General Offices being used as part of the mass vaccine centres and the need to ensure this critical infrastructure was available during working hours.

- Microsoft 365 implementation & Always on VPN, enabling the Councils new operating model.

The use of the M365 apps and tools will support and sustain the future of the new operating model. This is an ongoing programme of work, however much of the planning and development has happened over the last year. The SRS has developed the Always on VPN capability and have migrated approximately 20% of the workforce away from Pulse and onto AOVN. The initiation of the development of OneDrive was completed, which will enable agile working by supporting data access across devices. The planning for OneNote



being set to follow after OneDrive is implemented and there are ideation projects around Sharepoint websites and Teams telephony.

- Migrated to a new content management system for the website.

This was an essential piece of work to support the PSN accreditation and ensure that BGCBC's website is updated and patched as part of the compliance programme. It also enables users to have a richer set of features from the Content Management System to improve the services that can be offered via the website.

Gwent Police / Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Gwent

Over the past 12 months, we have implemented many projects and improvements to Gwent OPCC systems. The highlights have been:

- New Police HQ

Initial move of staff into new Police HQ. Implementation of networking and other IT solutions in the new HQ for Gwent Police. Successfully deploying a new Core network, multiple firewalls, ground up network connectivity to all floors and offices, wireless technology and implemented new Audio and Visual solutions across the site. Although there is still work to do, the significant step of staff occupying the office and using all the new facilities from January 2022.

- Global Data Store (Phase 1)

A review of issues with the Gwent Police Global Data Store resulted in work by a small team to resolve these to support Gwent Police performance management. At the same time, changes were made to the underlying systems to improve fault diagnosis and ongoing support for this important repository of information.



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- NDQIS

Implementation of a fully coupled service that supports data quality improvement with the Home Office utilising Artificial Intelligence. Initial use of this system has been for a specific set of information but will be gradually extended to include other datasets.

- Cloud-hosted systems and services

Supported the introduction of a number of cloud-hosted systems and services in Gwent Police including SimplyDo, eSafety and Poppulo.

Monmouthshire County Council

Over the past 12 months, we have implemented many projects and improvements to Monmouthshire systems. The highlights have been:

- Windows 7 replacement / 20H2 Upgrade / AOVPN

To date approx. 1500 devices have been upgraded or replaced. The key objectives of the Windows 7 and Windows 10 upgrade project:

- Identify out of support devices using a traffic light system to mark the urgency for replacing the device
- Replacing devices that were out of/coming up to end of support
- Ensuring devices had AOVPN so that the upgrade could take place and be in position to receive automated and scheduled upgrades
- A replace programme for those devices unable to be upgraded

TCBC commenced their AOVPN and 20H2 upgrades in advance of MCC, hence MCC were able to take advantage of the proven processes and avoid some of the technical issues which had been exposed in the TCBC rollout. Even though there have been significant challenges, especially around supply chain difficulties with new



laptops as a result of COVID, there has been excellent teamwork across the SRS technical teams (especially desktops), good collaboration with the TCBC and MCC SRS project managers, and incredible support from the MCC Digital Programme Office which has made the project an overall success.

- Migration of MCC Intranet Sharepoint on-Prem to Sharepoint on-line

The MCC Intranet was previously built on older technology (SharePoint on-premises) and resided on a number of SharePoint 2013 servers. In order for the infrastructure to be supported a programme for upgrading Microsoft Windows, Sharepoint, and the underlying infrastructure was required. Due to the aging version of SharePoint a number of issues started to present themselves especially following Microsoft security updates.

Due to the heavy reliance on SharePoint as an organisational tool for MCC's Intranet and document storage there became an urgent need to decide how to move forward. The options were to either remain with SharePoint as an on-prem solution and proceed to upgrade the infrastructure, operating system and Sharepoint, or move to SharePoint On-line which was already on MCC's Digital roadmap. A decision was taken to expedite the move to SharePoint On-line for MCC's Intranet and document storage.

A focused effort was made with MCC Digital Programme Office and SRS to build and a new SharePoint Online front-end for the Intranet and migrate key content across. The build, new intranet front-end and data migration commenced January 2022 and went live in March 2022. A commendable effort by SRS technical teams and MCC Digital Programme Office to get a robust, resilient and fully operational Intranet up and running in a very short period of time. The lessons learned from this project have been shared with other partners, plus MCC is now in a good position to progress with using SharePoint On-line for the Electronic Document Management System and the collaborative work with TCBC and Blaenau Gwent.



- Teams telephony

MCC originally prioritised a project for an integrated switchboard which included a review of MCC staff telephony requirements whether they needed a mobile, landline, both or had no telephony requirements. As COVID hit it highlighted that most staff could potentially rely on other methods of telephony rather than having a fixed handset. It was perfect timing for MCC to look at TEAMS Direct Routing as a way of reducing the CISCO handset estate, reducing the need for a mobile phones and possibly reducing overall costs of telephony.

A project was prioritised to look to move MCC Corporate staff from CISCO to TEAMS Direct Routing. As TCBC had already commenced with their TEAMS Telephony migration, the template to collate the telephony requirements and lessons learned was shared with MCC helping to expedite the project. The project is still on-going, however it highlights the good work being undertaken across the SRS Technical Teams (especially networks), superb collaboration between the SRS Project Managers by sharing experiences, plus outstanding support has been shown by MCC Digital Programme Office and Data Design teams.

Newport City Council

Over the past 12 months, we have implemented many projects and improvements to Newport systems. The highlights have been:

- Migration to Windows 10

In 2019 NCC embarked on the task of upgrading all desktop PC's and laptops to Windows 10. The project began before the pandemic and came to a halt during first part of the Covid outbreak while business practices re-aligned, and the office bound workforce became mobile enabled. The project re-established towards the end of 2020 and continued until completion in autumn 2021. This was a massive task



that entailed the rollout of Windows 10 laptops and upgrades of the remaining desktop estate. There were many challenges associated with remote working. The difficulties were compounded by the fact that during this time laptops became very difficult to procure. The desktop team persevered, and the final laptop rollout occurred during the autumn of 2021 at the same time as switch off and decommissioning of the old desktop estate.

- Replacement of Egress with Microsoft OME

Egress was the email message encryption used at NCC for some considerable time. During 2021 NCC trialled 'Microsoft Office Message Encryption' (OME) and OneDrive for business with a Proof-of-Concept group. The trials revealed a number of issues but this small test group didn't necessarily reflect the full extent of business uses. A further 3 test groups were setup and transferred to OME to run real time testing. A great resource and technical challenge to the change to OME was the transfer of all users to the Azure platform and Onedrive. By Autumn 2021 all accounts had been migrated and OME replaced Egress. The client software and servers were removed and decommissioned.

- Switch to Microsoft AOVPN

Netmotion has been used for many years, to securely access the corporate network at Newport. In 2021 Newport took the decision to move to Microsoft 'Always on VPN' (AOVPN). The project took a thorough approach investigating the security aspects of both the 'user tunnel' and the 'device tunnel' approach. Tests and trials were conducted to ascertain the best resolution for Newport's business. After extensive analysis, the device tunnel approach was given the go-ahead. The switch from Netmotion to AOVPN began early 2022. Newport benefitted greatly from the expertise and experience of the SRS Technical Team who had already implemented this at the partner authorities. User guides and communications were the key to successful take-up by the organisation. By April 2022 all users had switched to AO and all residual issues were resolved.



Torfaen County Borough Council

Over the past 12 months, we have implemented many projects and improvements to Torfaen systems. The highlights have been:

- Windows 20H2 & AOVPN

With Microsoft ending the support for Windows 7 it was a massive task to get the whole organization to Windows 10. This would future proof the estate and also allow SRS to upgrade devices in the future utilising the methods created during this project. At the same time rolling out Always On Virtual Private Network (AOVPN) to enable users to complete their upgrades over the air from home. The key objectives were:

- Identifying out of support devices and grading them using a traffic light system
 - Replacing devices that were out of/coming up to end of support
 - Ensuring devices had AOVPN so that the upgrade could take place
 - Pushing out the new in place upgrade to “upgradable” machines
- Teams Telephony

First prioritised in February 2021 this has been an enormous project to date. TCBC intended to move from the current Cisco VoIP system onto Teams Telephony Direct Routing. The work being completed by the project manager and the SRS Network team on this has been excellent. The template created from this project is now being used in other authorities with them to ensure the shared learning. The aims of this project were:



COO Annual Update

- Enable Teams Telephony for those corporate staff identified as requiring telephony
 - Recreate shared team lines as call queues
 - Recreate auto attendant services
 - Install common area handsets in those areas identified as requiring a desk phone (not complete)
-
- Cashless Catering – The key objectives here were:
 - Secondary Schools – Upgrade the current on-premises system to the latest version. Support installation of new system at Croesyceiliog School (in house catering service not managed by Torfaen catering team)
 - Primary Schools – Migrate schools currently using Cashless to the latest version. Expand provision of Cashless Catering across all Torfaen CBC primary schools. Migrate primary schools to the cloud solution when this becomes available.
 - Pay – The cashless migration will align with the separate TCBC Pay migration project
 - Historical Data – Provide a method for catering staff to report on key historical data held in the database



10. Key Challenges

Recruitment, reward and retention

This issue is well covered by the Talent Drain paper as part of the July 19th wider agenda. There are a number of recommendations included in the agenda for July 19th Strategic Board to improve this situation.

The continuing impact of COVID-19 and the Russia / Ukraine conflict

2021-22 has been another year beset with COVID 19 challenges and in addition challenges around the Russia / Ukraine conflict. Whilst SRS staff have continued to deliver throughout the period the concerns around access to equipment have grown through the year. This risk is highlighted at all Boards and our Business Management team have excelled at getting hold of things when we need them. There are exceptions to that, particularly Cisco network equipment is becoming increasingly challenging to source, taking up to six months to arrive at times.

The Audit Wales findings

The Audit Wales final report highlights some of the collaboration challenges that we face and have been well documented in the past. One of those items is particularly relevant for collaboration, there a growing number of areas that partners could collaborate on.



11. Recommendations for 2022-23

Doing what we say

The SRS has developed into an organisation that delivers on its commitments. In the 2020 strategy we asked to be given the permission to progress the areas within our control and we have done that. We have built an environment ripe for further organisation collaboration where services can easily be reused, repurposed and shared between you all as partners of the SRS. In many cases the time, effort and capability required for the business change work you have to progress internally is the bulk of the effort required compared to the technical work due to the readiness state of the environment we have built.

Future organisation

Finding our way through the recruitment, retention and reward issues by building an organisation that people want to come and work for and stay for. We feel we have taken major strides towards that and have been hit by a set of circumstances beyond anyone's control and only we can find our way through that. It will take a lot of support and understanding from partners if we want to realise a sustainable position moving forward.

Becoming the organisation in the strategy

As some of the major Strategic Board recommendation projects are coming to completion we will have the potential to replace them with the development time, the research time and the learning time to move us into the next phase of SRS delivery. We are ambitious about the areas we can move into such as automation and we see that as the evolution of the SRS through our annual plans towards the strategy.



12.2021-22 Summary

In summary, 2021-22 has been a very positive year for the SRS, delivering on all of our commitments whilst laying the foundations, with a unique proposition in OneWales, for future collaboration wherever it may come from. We have once again shown that successful collaboration within the SRS allows us to deliver to a level that is greater than the sum of our parts.

As the COO, I am extremely proud of what the SRS has achieved in 2021-22 against a backdrop of different challenges from the previous year. The SRS has transformed many of the issues it previously had and we are now being used as an exemplar organisation locally, regionally and nationally for multiple areas of service delivery.

We cannot however take our foot off the gas. The key for sustainability moving forward is to ensure that the SRS always remains on the front foot of collaboration, is always seeking to keep pace with its operating models, is embedded into national programs and progress and pushing the boundaries of our governance model to ensure that we can continue to deliver to the level we have the last few years.

It just remains for me to say thank you to the Strategic Board for its support throughout 2021-22 and we look forward to working with you in 2022-23 and beyond.