

Oracle Implementation Update

Audit Committee Sub-Group

16 January 2026

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Programme delivery principles

Oracle is currently being implemented based on a phased roll out of functionality as follows:

- Phase 1 EPM (Enterprise Performance Management) – further split into multiple small roll outs. c. 125 staff affected
- Phase 2 Finance (with dependant HR processes), Procurement, Recruitment and Helpdesk modules. c. 1,500 staff affected
- Phase 3 Payroll and all remaining HR processes. c. 10,000 staff affected

And to take an 'adopt not adapt' approach

Phase 1 – EPM

- The EPM (Workforce Planning and Revenue Monitoring) phase only affects c. 125 users, contained largely within the Finance team. The first module successfully went live in September 2024.
- Since then, all other modules for EPM in ESCC are now live, and have been well received by the finance team such as revenue monitoring, capital monitoring, budgeting and virements.
- Lessons learned from Phase 1 were fed into Phase 2.

Phase 2

- Phase 2 (Finance, Procurement, Helpdesk and Recruitment) successfully went live as planned on 17 April 2025.
- Now moved into business as usual (BAU) with ownership of the system residing within the support model team and the service teams
- Activity still continues, such as:
 - Managing quarterly update cycles and keeping documentation up to date
 - Rationalisation of Oracle licences
 - Feeding lessons learned into phase 3
 - Considering how to get the best use out of the system such as through the use of its inbuilt AI and roll out a Supplier Portal
 - Programme governance and internal/external audit activity remains in place e.g. Grant Thornton have undertaken a systems audit – report is due shortly
 - Planning to close and prepare the 2025/26 accounts, for the first time on Oracle

Phase 3

- Scope of Phase 3 includes:
 - Payroll
 - Employee self-service
 - Manager self-service

Phase 3 Principles

- Same principles will apply as the most cost-effective approach:
 - Adopt not Adapt where possible.
 - Targeting the earliest achievable date – dates are currently being considered for autumn 2026 but will need to bear in mind the organisational context, including LGR, and school term times
 - Focusing on activity critical to go-live with non-critical activity being deferred until after go-live.
 - Delivery elements - Technical implementation; Organisational readiness; Support model; Governance/internal audit. Building out from complementary Phase 2 activity.
 - Feeding in lessons learned from Phases 1 and 2.

Phase 3

- Phase 3 is harder than phase 2 from a technical build perspective, needs to be very accurate (to the nearest £1) and has a higher reputational impact if there are issues.
- More challenging, higher stakes, more people affected (i.e. all staff) in a more sensitive area (people's pay). Higher risk, more public, more chance of reputational impact.
- Impact on users beyond the HR team is less complex – limited to claiming/approving expenses, claiming/approving overtime and keeping personal information and working hours etc up to date
- Whilst the four core delivery elements of i) technical delivery ii) organisational readiness iii) governance and iv) support model remain, the weighting of programme activity is therefore more on technical delivery
- iii) and iv) are already in place and are to be carried forward from phase 2 and built upon where required

Phase 3 – Technical Delivery

- Since the last Audit Committee Oracle Sub-group meeting Phase 3 has now entered User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with a planned exit of mid March. It is also in the process of a Data Migration (DM) run.
- The ability of the programme to exit UAT will be based on the level of confidence in the quality of the system build (undertaken by Infosys, the Council's implementation partner), and in the quality of the data migrated.
- If quality is at a sufficient threshold to exit UAT in the planned timeframe, an autumn go-live for phase 3 (as the earliest possible) would be feasible.
- Given sensitivities around pay and the number of staff affected, sufficient quality is absolutely critical.
- Following UAT it will then be necessary to complete a further DM run, as well as Parallel Payroll Runs (PPR) before moving to cut over and go-live, followed by a period of hypercare.
- PPR – comparison of SAP vs Oracle payroll calculations (minimum 2 monthly payroll comparison, likely to be 3)

Phase 3 – Organisational Readiness

- Since the last Audit Committee Oracle Sub-group meeting work on organisational readiness has increased and includes:
 - Feeding in lessons learned from Phase 2
 - Change Impact Assessments and a matrix of which teams/cohorts of staff will need to understand which changes in process
 - Extensive engagement with Departmental Management Teams on likely changes in working practices
 - Extending the content in Oracle Guided Learning
 - Documentation of support materials
 - Re-engagement with Oracle Advocates
- Unlikely to be traditional training but instead focused on specific processes tailored to each persona, and delivered in bitesize learnings e.g. a video showing how to claim expenses
- Adoption and take up of new processes is also dependant on third party (schools) engagement that the Council can influence but not control.

Phase 3 – Governance, Audit and Support

- Programme governance remains in place such as regular workstream board meetings, programme board meetings, sponsor meetings, internal audit, CMT updates (including the re-establishment of fortnightly exception reports) and audit committee updates.
- Given that the programme is now moving towards UAT exit, it is proposed to increase the frequency of the Audit Committee Oracle Sub-group meetings to monthly
- The scope of internal audit activity for Phase 3 has been planned and includes a review of DM11 and supporting go live readiness quality criteria.
- The Oracle Support Model team remains in place from Phase 2, but will be adapted in due course to reflect the capabilities required for Phase 3 support

Phase 3 - Risks

Risks to hitting go live:

- Sufficient programme resource being available due to the conflict between working on BAU and working on the programme and due to risk of single points of failure being absent
- Organisational capacity and readiness at a time where there are significant other organisational priorities and pressures
- Organisational resistance to change causing delay
- Change requests causing technical scope creep and delay
- Poor quality of system build or data migrated
- Potential for technical issues to arise ('unknown unknowns')