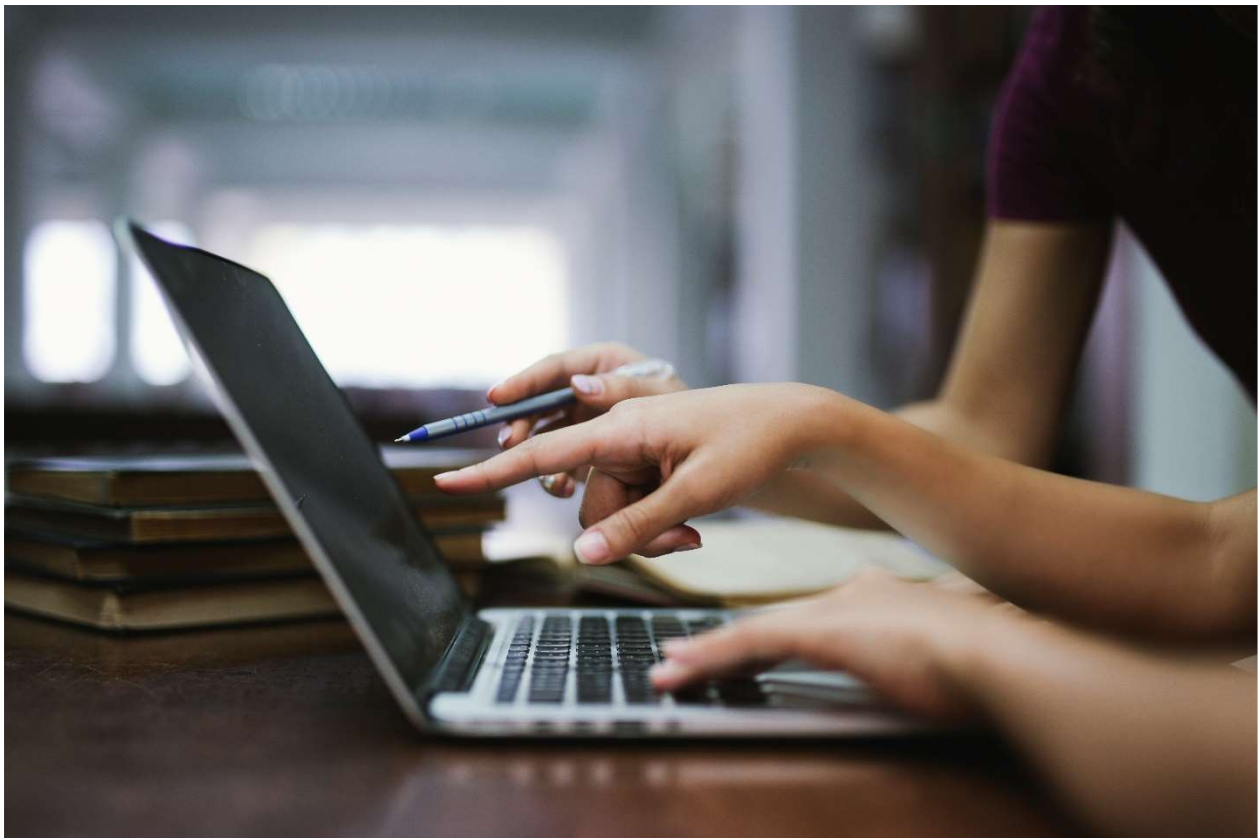


# Central Coast Council Digital Strategy

December 2022





## Acknowledgement of Country

The Central Coast Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, community, sea, and waters where we live and work.

In recognition of the deep history and culture of our community, the Central Coast community, we acknowledge the First Nations Peoples as the original custodians of this land.

Our community acknowledges respectfully the Punnilerpanner tribe of the Northern Country of Tasmania and their continuing relationship to this land and their ongoing living culture.

We recognise that we have much to learn from the First Nations Peoples who represent the world's oldest continuing culture, as we pay our genuine respects to Elders past and present and to all First Nations Peoples living in and around the Central Coast Community.

We would like to acknowledge First Nations artist, Annie Hay, for the use of her artwork.

# CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

## DIGITAL STRATEGY

### OUR VISION

Delivery of best practice digital services to achieve positive and sustainable benefits for the community and our organisation.

### OUR MISSION

The Council will deliver digital services that enhance the experience of our customers, and continually improves the way we do things to drive operational efficiencies.

### CURRENT STATE

- Core business application (Open Office) out of date and components at various release levels
- Software applications not utilised to full capacity
- Limited mobility
- Limited governance controls
- Minimal policies and procedures
- Majority of applications hosted 'on-premises'
- Limited expertise in systems
- Limited integrations between systems
- Minimal automation of processes and forms
- Limited website self-service functionality

### FUTURE STATE

- Cloud-first based hosting strategy
- Adoption of SaaS and IaaS
- Full utilisation of O365 tools
- Highly mobile workforce supported by core business applications at all working locations
- Highly integrated systems
- Digital-first delivery and automation of forms
- Website self-service portal for doing business with the Council
- Clear ICT policies, procedures and knowledge base framework
- Strong governance oversight
- Help Desk operation
- Highly ICT savvy staff

## What is covered by our Digital Strategy?

In delivering our Digital Strategy, we will be using digital technology to deliver improved services to the community, be more responsive to the needs of residents, reduce the time taken to deal with the Council and better utilise our available resources.

The Digital Strategy covers anything that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically or in a digital form, including:

- Portable hardware (laptops, desktops)
- Software (SaaS, IaaS, PaaS)
- Website
- Mobile devices (phones, tablets)
- Printers
- Telephone systems
- Video conferencing systems
- Internet of Things (IoT) devices
- Security systems
- Point of sale/EFTPOS systems
- Smart Cities technology (future state if applicable, eg. parking sensors).

Our objectives to be successful in the Digital Strategy implementation are to:



Equip our people with the skills necessary to utilise and deliver digital services.



Adopt better ways of working that bring people together quickly and efficiently and reduce risk (SharePoint, Teams, mobility apps).



Partner with expert businesses to deliver the best outcomes.



Collaborate with other councils, Government, the business sector, community organisations and education facilities.



Deliver value for the community by managing costs and risks.

## What do we mean by 'digital' and why are we going on this journey?

'Digital' means using online technologies to improve services for residents and business. It also means using data and technology to redesign and improve how the Council works. We will use data and available technologies to rethink how we deliver value, how we deliver our services and how we strengthen our organisation and its culture.

Through the digital transformation, the Council will be:



### Easier to deal with

- Simple, intuitive and convenient online services.
- Seamless integrated services to reduce duplication of effort.
- Digital identity for easy and secure access, and the ability to manage and track interactions with us.
- Customer focused design to ensure services are accessible, available, and inclusive of all residents, regardless of ability and environment.
- Frontline staff have access to the information to better assist the community.

### Better informed and more connected

- Smart services that adapt to, and evolve with the data shared with us.
- Greater insights for better services, service delivery and allocation of Council resources.
- Ensuring trust and transparency is maintained.

### Digital capability

- Expanding our digital capability (updated website to support “digital first” mantra)
- Embracing mobility.

- Developing and investing in modern infrastructure and adopting a “cloud first” strategy.
- Ensuring accountability through best practice security of information and systems.

## “Digital First”

Services that apply to transition to our digital first mantra will include:

### Improved easy access to enable self-service enquiries – through a more intuitive website or communications apps

- Waste collection information
- Resource Recovery Centre information
- Current work activities
- Road closures

### CRM logging of requests and issues online (Merit currently and already available online)

- Waste collection
- Fire and other hazards
- Dog complaints and nuisance animals
- Tree issues
- Litter
- Parks, roads, footpath and other asset maintenance issues
- Graffiti and vandalism
- Noise complaints
- Food hygiene issues
- Other

### Online Booking systems (currently Priava)

- View and book community facilities
  - Halls
  - Recreation grounds
  - Recreation centres
  - Park facilities
- Booking/registration for community events
- Direct link to invoicing and payments

### Rates

- Payment of rates
- Check payment history and current balances
- Apply for and set up rate payment plans
- Change and update contact details

### Animals

- Lodge and track new animal and renewal of registrations
- Lodge updates to dog ownership status (death, sold, moved etc)

### Building/Planning

- Lodge and track building/planning applications

### Regulatory

- Lodge and track Health permit applications

### Engineering

- Lodge and track crossover and stormwater applications
- Lodge and track road permit applications

## Guiding Principles

Regardless of any system we utilise, or where the system is hosted, our Guiding Principles will remain the same.

Our Long-term Financial Plan operational and capital plans should provide sufficient funding which is aligned in support of the IT Strategic Plan. Any actions we undertake in delivering and maintaining our Digital Strategy should align to one or more of the below guiding principles.





### Enhanced digital customer service outcomes

Our strategies always maintain and support customer/community focus.

Essential elements covered by this principle include:

- Our customers/community will choose to interact with us digitally – “digital first” to those that can and are able to choose to.
- Customers and staff will find it easier to do business with us.
- Customers have fewer touchpoints when doing business with us (automation of forms, or single point of interaction when dealing with a Customer Service Officer).
- Secure and stable digital services.
- Information/intelligence is shared and used for community benefit.

### Good governance and oversight

The management and guidance of our digital services delivery ensures we achieve the maximum value from our ICT investments, by developing and maintaining a Digital Governance Framework that is integrated into the overall governance program of the Council to provide appropriate controls to mitigate ICT-related business risks and provides a framework for ICT decision making. This includes the Senior Leadership Team sponsorship and oversight of the Digital Strategy.

Essential elements covered by this principle include:

- Digital Strategy and planning
- Risk management
- Appropriate Policies, processes and procedures
- Performance measurement
- ICT resource management
- Monitoring and compliance of Strategy roadmap and timelines for delivery
- Good project management (initiation, planning, execution, reporting, monitoring and close out)
- ICT sourcing models.

### Use knowledge acquired from data to support and improve the functions of the Council

Information we collect is treated and valued as an asset that is made available to support improved strategic decision making, improvements to service delivery, allocation of budget resources and used to identify opportunities for innovation.

Establishment of a consistent information management standard for the collection and management of data in a centralised location ensures that at all times our data management processes remain in compliance with legislative and community expectations.

Essential elements covered by this principle include:

- Information governance standards
- Data management standards including data quality and integrity
- Data analytics
- Business intelligence



### **Business systems and applications are integrated and always fit for purpose**

We continually measure and monitor the performance of our systems and services, and having the agility and flexibility to be innovative and respond to new challenges and changes in need.

By simplifying, standardising and consolidating systems as much as possible, and using automation to streamline and enhance processes and services, we ensure our networks and systems are robust, flexible and secure, and evolve with the rapidly changing market. This includes modernising legacy solutions and applications and optimising the use of the cloud and utilising software maintenance and management agreements with key providers to support knowledge gaps.

Essential elements covered by this principle include:

- Software acquisition, design and development
- Software maintenance and management
- Business process analysis
- Integrations and orchestrations
- Software scoping and requirements definition
- Testing and implementation
- Change management
- Version control.

### **Invest in appropriate infrastructure and technology**

Our ICT infrastructure supports the systems and operations of the Council to improve and enhance productivity and efficiency. This includes transitioning to cloud services and investing in software and hardware solutions that enable access to the systems.

In every step, we look for opportunities to share infrastructure and services with other councils where cost and operational efficiencies can be achieved.

Infrastructure will be simple, well architected, fit for purpose, reliable and have a 'cloud first' approach. We look to consolidate our footprint and move to Software as a Service (SaaS), and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) models to reduce capital investment and improve performance.

Mobility is a key element. We will equip our staff with mobile devices to enhance productivity and efficiency.

Essential elements covered by this principle include:

- Infrastructure and architecture
- Virtualisation
- Capacity management
- Communications and network management
- Data storage
- IT asset management
- Systems acquisition
- Systems design and development.

### **Anticipating and adopting emerging trends and technologies**

We continually look at new technologies that can help deliver new services and functions to improve and enhance our customer service delivery. It is imperative our staff are continually trained to be able to use any of our systems, data and networks in the most efficient and productive way.

Essential elements covered by this principle include:

- Communication and collaboration apps
- Social media
- Smart phones and devices
- Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD)
- Cloud computing
- Online services
- Open data.

### **Ensure security to protect information systems**

We ensure our data and systems are kept current to protect personal and confidential information at all times. We will implement and adopt the Essential 8 maturity model and other mitigation strategies and security controls as preventative measures.

Having a well-educated workforce is our best form of security and provides us the greatest return on investment in relation to cyber protection. Maintaining mitigations through software are critical, but unskilled, untrained or disengaged employees will be our weakest link.

Elements covered by this principle include:

- Access management
- Authentication (multi-factor authentication)
- Auditing of system logs
- Remote access protection
- Incident management, reporting and response processes
- Physical and environmental security
- Network and communications security.

### **Adopt best practice ICT business continuity processes**

We adopt best practice disaster recovery and business continuity processes to ensure we can maintain our customer service levels at all times.

Elements covered by this principle include:

- Disaster recovery
- Contingency planning
- Backups
- Replication
- Redundancy
- Data recovery
- Emergency response.

## Goals

A review of our current digital landscape identified strategic gaps, including:

### Infrastructure

Infrastructure currently does not fully support a cloud transition. Existing internet connection to Administration Centre and Wi-Fi link to Works Depot not sufficient.

### Software & Systems

A lot of systems and process knowledge was lost with a recent staff retirement, highlighting lack of systems and policy documentation. Current software suite is predominantly on-premise including the Enterprise Resource Planning system (Open Office). Current service agreements are structured around a managed services on-premise model.

### Finance

The current budget is not linked to an IT Strategy and is focused on maintaining the current state.

### Forward Planning

Previous IT structure was focused on maintaining business as usual services and largely reactive in approach, and not for exploring new opportunities and improvements. New structure balances maintaining services (IT Support Officer) with systems development and improvement (Business Systems Analyst).

### Knowledge

Current staff possess a skillset for operating in an on-premise environment and may not currently possess the skills required for the new environment and will require additional training.

The Digital Strategy will address these gaps through the following goals:



# 1.

## Transform and Simplify

**Transform the way we do things and the ways we deliver our services. Improve access to Council information and processes. We will invest in, and improve our website to be a key point to interact and conduct business with the Council.**

- Digital services should start with customer needs both internal and external – the community, ratepayers, businesses, and visitors.
- We will encourage, foster and develop a culture that supports customer focus, innovation and effective change management. We will improve the customer digital experience through community, ratepayer and customer portals, accessible via an updated website.
- We will use digital technologies to constantly engage and communicate with our community to monitor and measure our performance in providing effective, efficient and transparent services.
- Implement electronic forms capability into the website and internal processes to digitise and automate form completion and authorisation.
- Look at improving/replacing our existing intranet platform to see how we can better communicate and provide digital services to our own staff.
- We will overhaul our existing intranet and communication/ collaboration tools to improve how we work and interact with the community. We will use digital technologies to constantly engage and communicate with our community to monitor and measure our performance.

# 2.

## Modern and secure IT

**We will invest in equipment, services and software applications that ensure the integrity, availability, security and confidentiality of Council information and data.**

- Our current network is a mix of technologies and vendors built up over a number of years to address specific needs at the time. Our infrastructure at some locations is better than at others which impacts the ability of staff to effectively do their work.
- We need to ensure our network infrastructure is robust, secure and flexible to meet current and future needs.
- Microsoft Office 365 is our preferred tool for office applications and collaboration software.
- We will adopt a Cloud Strategy.

- We will develop strategic asset management plans for ICT assets ensuring adequate replacement programs are in place.
- Utilisation of Software as a Service (Saas) and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) which will reduce capital investment and transition to operating expenditure. We will look to bring in efficiencies in operations to offset this additional cost.

### 3.

Accessible  
anywhere,  
anytime  
mobility

**Improved infrastructure that is flexible and responsive, to support and improve the way Councillors and staff work and interact. Giving our staff and Councillors the appropriate mobile devices and software that supports working out of the office and enhances productivity, efficiency and communication.**

- We will embrace mobility wherever possible, to enable our people to access the tools and information they need to effectively undertake their jobs wherever they may be, to support improved productivity and effectiveness.
- Our systems need to be simple and fast, to enable us to get things done through any channel.
- Utilising updated and more flexible telecommunication networks to better support mobility (Teams calling).
- Support in-field worker safety and operational issues through deployment of technical solutions.

### 4.

Existing  
systems,  
better

**Ensure we are getting maximum benefit from existing systems in preparation for moving to where we want it to be. Bring in efficiencies to achieve fullest potential. Utilising our existing software investments to extract their full capacity and potential.**

- Review and consolidation of our core business systems and transitioning to cloud-based platforms.
- Ensuring all our systems are up to date and integrated as much as possible. Bring in efficiencies such as integrations and orchestrations to automate data transfers and avoid duplicated effort.
- Improved capabilities for online Bookings and forms submission for Council-owned facilities and events.
- Delivery of ICT training and support through face to face and digital learning platforms, to ensure our staff are able to utilise systems in the most efficient and productive way.
- Digital services require digital savvy employees administering and supporting automated back-office systems. We will invest in

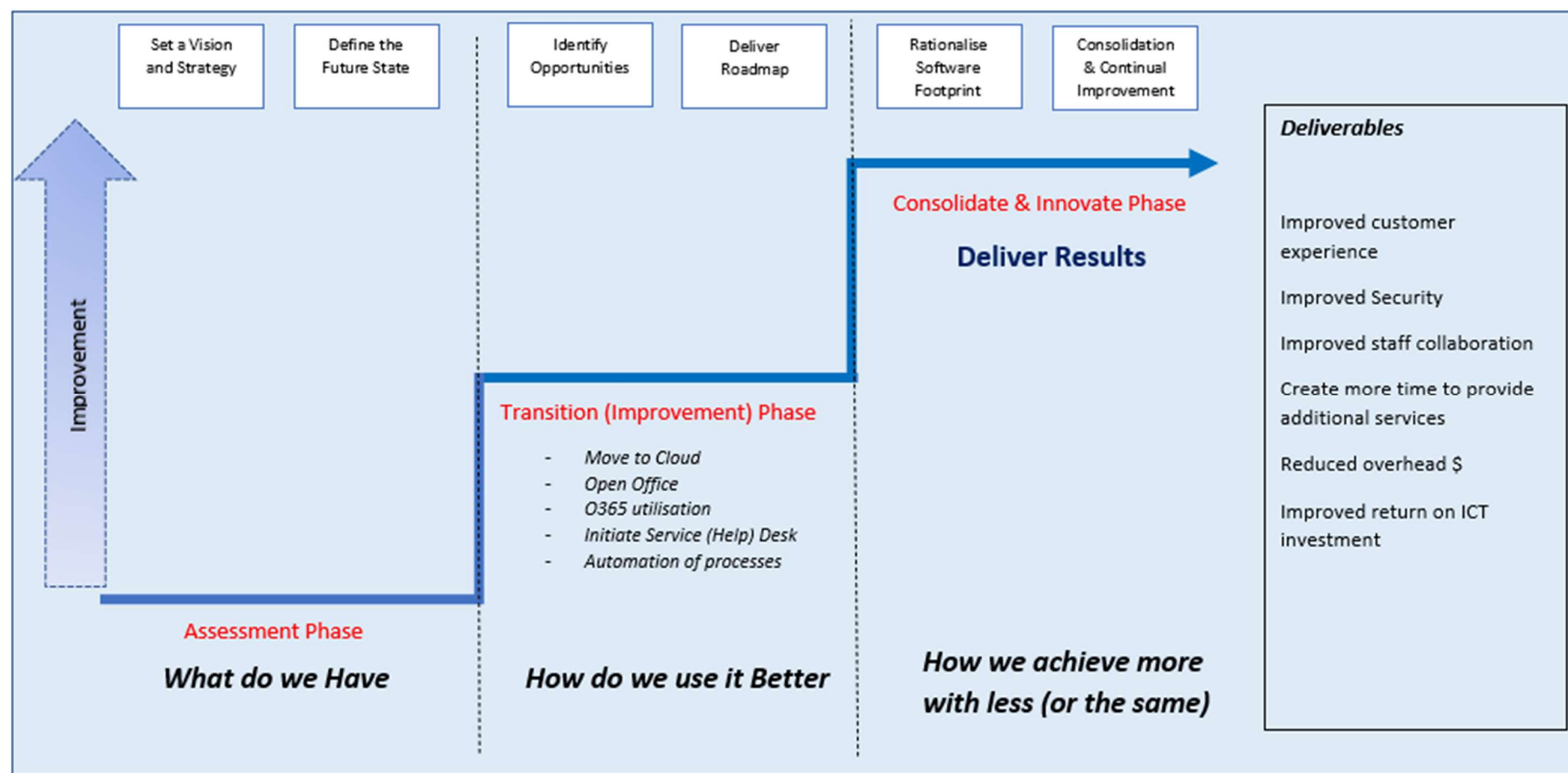
training and supporting our people through our digital transformation.

**5.**

Improved  
information  
management

**Gather and manage good quality data that is accessible to improve decision making, that is underpinned with good governance principles to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.**

- Our systems will be underpinned by a strong foundation of security of data and privacy of customer information held.
- We will review our records management approach to improve the way we store and access the information we need to manage our operations and support our community.
- Utilising Power BI (MS365) and visual dashboards to support oversight and decision making.
- Working with other councils and organisations to share key learnings and benchmark performance for mutual benefit.





## Cloud Services

