

Information and communication technology

Policy, procedure, protocol	Policy
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Related documents	Information Services Strategic Plan Council's Strategic and Operational Plan GIS Strategic Plan Information Management Strategy Information Management Policy Social Media Policy
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Linkage to Our Community Plan	5 Our Leadership
Objective	5.2 We will have an effective and efficient organisation
Strategy	5.2.9 Ensure Council operations are supported by the most effective internal service provision and governance structures

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1. Purpose

This policy is intended as a guide to assist Council with future information and communications technology investment decisions, and improve organisation efficiency.

2. Definitions

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

GIS – Geographic Information System. Council has MapInfo and Exponare as its corporate GIS systems.

3. Background/legislative requirements

ICT has radically changed many aspects of society over the past 40 years. It is now an integral part of everyday life. We are more connected, more often and from more locations. Vast amounts of information and diverse opinions are literally at our fingertips. People rely on a range of technologies to communicate, interact, inform decisions, and to provide and receive services and products.

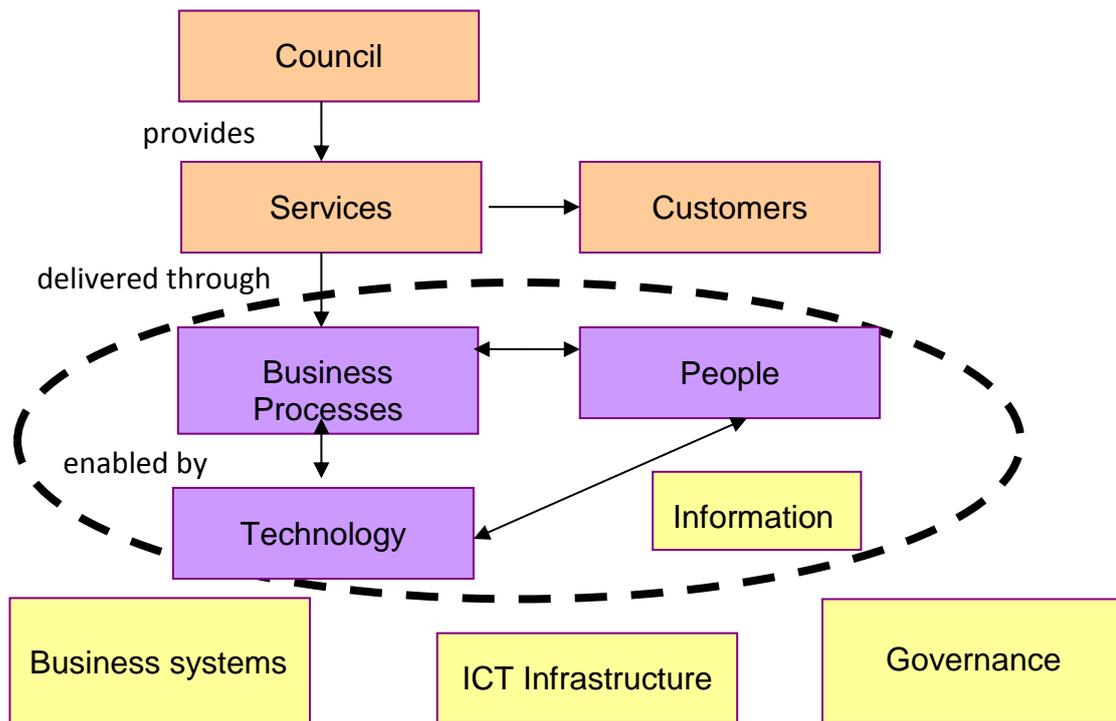
Ongoing and rapid changes in technology include increasing business use of technology originally developed for personal use. Other developments include the unparalleled spread and influence of social media and the increased use of mobile services, broadband and cloud computing.

Clarence Valley Council has invested heavily in ICT to streamline business processes, enable communication, and enhance the delivery of services to customers.

Role of ICT

The role of Information and Communications Technology in Council is:

“To manage the information, business systems and ICT infrastructure, required to support the business with their delivery of services to our customers”.



This diagram illustrates the “people, process, technology” framework, which suggests business performance is a result of the people, the way they work together (process) and the technology that enables their peak performance. Collectively, people, processes, and technologies create an asset, which provides value to an organisation. Unlike physical assets which depreciate, the “people, process, technology” asset appreciates in value, through continuous improvement.

4. Policy statement

This policy is developed around three principles which are aimed at improving the way Council transacts and communicates with its customers, by leveraging off our investment in technology.

1. Deliver better services

The aim is to improve productivity and streamline our services by utilising technology and corporate systems to their full potential. We need to ensure that our systems are easy-to-use and focused on our customer’s needs.

2. Improve efficiency through technology

The aim is to be more innovative. We need to ensure we are achieving value for our customers through strategic use of technology. Our strategies need to focus on technology-enabled opportunities.

3. Openly engage with our stakeholders

The aim is to ensure more active involvement of key stakeholders when developing ICT solutions. Communication and stakeholder involvement will result in solutions that are more attuned to our customer's needs.

5. Procedures

Deliver Better Services

Training

We will develop, implement and review our training plan to ensure it is aligned with business needs. We will ensure that staff obtain and maintain a sound understanding of the corporate applications they use and corporate systems are utilised to their full potential.

Skilled Staff

Council requires access to ICT resources that are trained and skilled in the equipment, applications and systems that we use. Access to these ICT resources externally is limited and therefore there is a focus on up-skilling ICT staff to perform work in-house. We will continue to provide professional training to our ICT staff. This is a low cost and high availability solution.

Integration

Integration between systems ensures that data is only entered or captured once and is available in other systems as required. We will ensure our corporate systems are well integrated. This will reduce duplication and allow more confidence in our data through improved accuracy.

Continuous Improvement

Our procedures and policies are constantly evaluated and improved, with a focus on efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility. As technology develops and opportunities present themselves, we will continue to reassess and adjust our procedures, policies, projects and solutions as required to maximise return on investment.

Improve efficiency through technology

Hardware & Infrastructure

Council has a significant investment in its hardware and network infrastructure. The equipment is of a high standard. We have selected cost effective solutions and offer support and maintenance programs that will allow Council to maintain its infrastructure, and leverage off its investment. We will continue to ensure our hardware and infrastructure is of a suitable standard to support our business processes and requirements.

Corporate Applications

Council maintains a number of corporate software applications that are required to support business activities. We will continue to review our corporate applications and ensure that they are supported, maintained and are up to date and that the most appropriate solutions are selected.

Web Sites

The Web Site is Council's face to the world. We will ensure that our website accurately represents Council services, activities and goals in a manner that is easy, and enjoyable, for the public to access. Electronic commerce is becoming an integral part of business today, and Local Government is no exception. The ability to access information and transact with Council over the Internet is becoming more and more popular, as more businesses use the service and as security measures improve.

GIS Mapping

Council has a well-developed spatial mapping system that allows staff and the public access to Geographic information. We will continue to review and implement our mapping system as per our 3 year strategic plan which has been developed to ensure that our investment in mapping technology meets our business requirements in the short, medium and long term.

Corporate Systems

Council has a significant investment in corporate systems. These systems allow for business activity such as Financials, Property, Records Management, Mapping, Request Management, Library Management solutions, Care Management, Asset Management systems as well as many others. We will continue to review, support and develop our corporate systems to ensure we get the most out of them for our staff and our customers.

Openly engage with our stakeholders**Community Consultation**

Council's Community engagement policy outlines our approach to engaging with our community.

The Community Engagement Policy, alongside the Community Engagement Strategy and Community Engagement Guide provides the framework to enable the Clarence Valley Community to be actively involved in Council strategy, decision making and activities and to provide a consistent and transparent approach to consultation.

We will continue to foster innovation through the use of technology. Community engagement plays an important role in our decision making process. We will continue to seek community feedback through web sites, email and other e-services in an effort to improve communication complement other consultation processes.

Knowledge Management

Information is everywhere, some structured, but a vast amount is unstructured. The ability to extract meaningful intelligence from the vast amount of available information is a challenge of the future as is managing this increasing volume of information.

Council will continue to analyse its vast volumes of structured data and take necessary steps to reduce unstructured and non-corporate data.

Privacy and Data Integrity

We will continue to promote open, accountable, fair and effective government in NSW. Our customers have a right to access government information. This right is restricted only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosing the particular information.

Social media

Social media is the modern way businesses engage with customers. Facebook and Twitter are two popular technologies enabling businesses to engage with customers, and vice versa. Interfaces with customers will increasingly become more social and mobile. We will continue to evaluate and utilise Social Media as detailed in Council's Social Media Policy.