

DRAFT Digital Services Strategy 2025–2029



Bega Valley Shire Council acknowledges and pays our respects to the traditional custodians of the lands, waterways and airspace of the shire.

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Contents

Digital Transformation 3

Digital Government.....	3
Digital Transformation	3
Digital Services Strategy	3
How does digital transformation enable Council Services?	3
Recognising our Current State.....	4

Our Digital Vision and Investment 6

Outcomes	6
Guiding our investment	6
Critical Enablers.....	7

Digital Motivators and Drivers.... 8

Bega Valley Shire Council	8
Our Staff	8
Strategic Alignment.....	8
Our Community	9
Digital Government Trends	11
The Data and Digital Government Strategy	11
NSW Digital Strategy	12

Continuing our Digital Transformation Journey 13

Our delivery approach	13
Initiatives.....	14
Cyber Security: Securing our Services	14
Data as an Asset: Informing our Services	14
Customer Experience and Engagement: Tailoring our Services.....	14
Continuous Improvement and Innovation: Improving our Services...	15
Action Plan	16
Measuring our Success	17

Digital Transformation

Digital Government

Digital Government focuses on the adoption of digital data and technology to create, optimise, and transform government services. It enables service delivery digitally, wherever feasible, to ensure sustainability and efficiency in government operations.

“Australians increasingly take up technology to do everything from banking to accessing support payments to seeing a doctor. It is clear that the Australian Government has the opportunity to use data and digital technologies to improve our service delivery and decision-making, with a goal of better outcomes for all people and business.”

Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Finance, Minister for Women, Minister for the Public Service.

Digital Transformation

The Digital Transformation Agency (DTA), Australia’s Federal Agency for Digital Transformation, defines digital transformation as the process of using digital technologies to create new or modify existing business processes, culture, and customer experiences to meet changing business and market requirements. This reimagining of business in the digital age is driven by the need to improve efficiency, agility, and the overall value delivered to customers.

Following the direction and momentum set by both Federal and State Government bodies, Council embraces the opportunity to adopt a Digital Government approach.

Digital Services Strategy

Our Digital Services Strategy provides strategic guidance and direction for digital, data and technology investment, ensuring resources are used in support of our organisation goals and objectives.

Our Digital Services Strategy and its supporting Initiatives:

1. Sets clear direction for digital investments
2. Enables efficiency and accessibility of service improvements
3. Fosters innovation
4. Improves community engagement
5. Ensures resilience and responsiveness in a changing digital landscape.

How does digital transformation enable Council Services?

Council, like many modern organisations, increasingly depends on advanced digital resource management to support the critical activities required to deliver services. In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, Council is prioritising investments in innovative information technology infrastructure including cloud-based corporate information systems, integrated web services, sophisticated data management and storage solutions, and advanced technology assets. This infrastructure provides a robust foundation for digital transformation, ensuring service continuity and supporting staff safety in challenging operating environments.

In the context of 2025 and beyond, mobilising our workforce is just one of the many opportunities presented by digital transformation. Ongoing investment in digital initiatives will enable Council to stay ahead of

technological advancements and meet the dynamic needs of our community. Embracing trends such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, digital twins, and enhanced cybersecurity measures will be essential in creating a more resilient and responsive digital government framework. By leveraging these technologies, Council aims to enhance operational efficiencies, improve service delivery, and foster greater community engagement.

Recognising our Current State

The Digital Services Strategy builds upon the solid foundations we established in the 2022 Digital Strategy. Whilst we had hoped to be in a more advanced position in terms of our digital transformation, we have gained some important and invaluable experience, following the adoption of our first Digital Strategy (2022-25).

Our 2022 – 25 Digital Strategy outlined 4 commitments, and we have delivered against these.

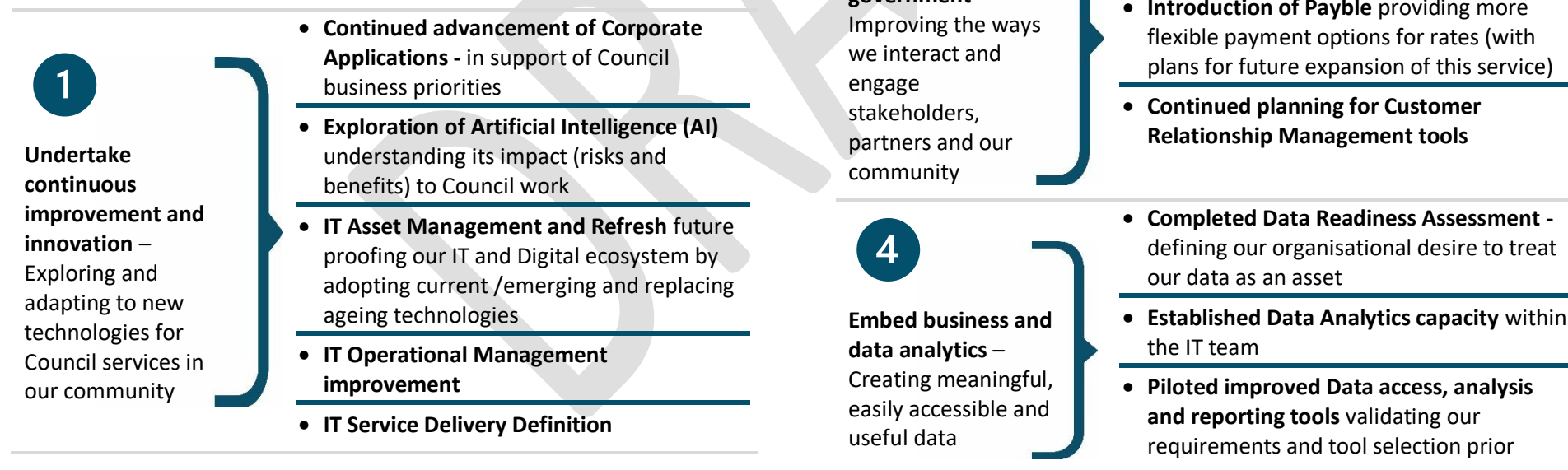


Figure 1 - Overview of 2022 - 25 Digital Strategy Achievements

Reflecting on our progress in 2025, it is clear that the importance of planning and a strong technology foundation were underplayed in the 2022 vision and action plan.

Learning from this, the 2025 Digital Services Strategy focuses on internal improvements which accelerate Council capacity to enable improved customer experiences. To achieve customer success, we must first improve the experience and capability available to our staff.

Our journey so far has reiterated that digital transformation must focus on

- People
- Technology
- Process

Underpinning all of this is the data which people use, technology holds and processes manage.

The Digital Services Strategy recognises the significance of data to delivering on our digital objectives and represents a deliberate shift in our focus to accelerate achieving simplified, secured and connected digital services for our community.

Our Digital Vision and Investment

VISION

By 2029, Council will be offering simplified, secure and connected services as a Digital Government entity, for the benefit of Council staff and customers for a sustainable future.

To improve access to data, technology and digital services for the betterment of Council services and our community

Our vision is to harness the power of digital capabilities to elevate service delivery, enhance customer satisfaction, and ensure sustainable operations. By investing in future proofed technology and innovative digital solutions, we aim to create a resilient and responsive organisation that supports our staff and community.

Outcomes

Our commitment to digital transformation will enable us to:

- Leverage advanced digital capabilities: Embrace innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence, to drive operational efficiencies and improve service delivery.
- Enhance customer satisfaction: Provide seamless, easy-to-navigate digital services that enhance the accessibility, usability, and integrity of Council information for our community.
- Ensure service sustainability: Foster a robust and secure digital infrastructure that supports the ongoing needs of our organisation and community, ensuring service continuity and adaptability in an ever-evolving digital landscape.

Guiding our investment

Through targeted investments in our people, processes, data, digital, and technology solutions, we will empower our workforce, better connect with our community, and deliver improved services that meet the dynamic and evolving needs of our community. We want to create a more efficient, resilient, and digitally enabled Council that thrives on innovation and sustainability.

To achieve this, we need more financial investment, capacity, and capabilities than is currently allocated. Prioritising our digital transformation, competes with other budget demands equally as important. Striking the right balance in digital investment funding will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis as actions within this strategy are delivered. We currently invest \$700,000 annually in Digital Transformation, with an estimated need closer to \$1.3m annually. This level of resourcing will continue to impact our ability to fully deliver this strategy. Where possible we will seek external expertise for capability enhancement.

Critical Enablers

To achieve success under this strategy we must acknowledge the importance of the following enabling influences.

People capability – linking with our Workforce Management Plan



People capability is crucial for enabling digital transformation and enhancing digital government, as a skilled workforce is essential to effectively leverage technology to meet evolving needs.

People capability will also extend to ensuring we invest in developing the capability of our community as we provide greater digital services and engagement opportunities.

Cyber Security – linking in with our Cyber Security Strategy and objectives



Cyber security is paramount in ensuring the protection of sensitive information, fostering trust, and enabling the successful implementation of digital government and digital transformation initiatives.

Governance and guidance – linking with our organisational governance priority project



Governance is crucial in delivering digital transformation and enabling digital government service delivery. By establishing clear policies, ensuring compliance, and fostering accountability and transparency, ensures investments translate to value.



Investment – linking with our Long-Term Financial Plan

Investment in digital transformation beyond the existing IT resourcing is essential to drive innovation, improve service delivery, and keep pace with the rapidly evolving technological landscape.

Figure 2 - Digital Services Strategy Enablers

Digital Motivators and Drivers

In developing this strategy and planning for the future, Council has considered what is driving transformation, change and innovation internally to Council, externally in our community and in government sectors across Australia. This strategy outlines the drivers and plans to ensure Council strives for continued improvement and alignment with relevant and beneficial trends.

Bega Valley Shire Council

Our Staff

Recognising data sits at the core of all transformation and business process improvement, Council undertook a *Data Readiness Assessment* exercise in 2024. This exercise included representatives from across Council functions, considering a broad range of opinions and experiences. There were a number of trends which emerged.

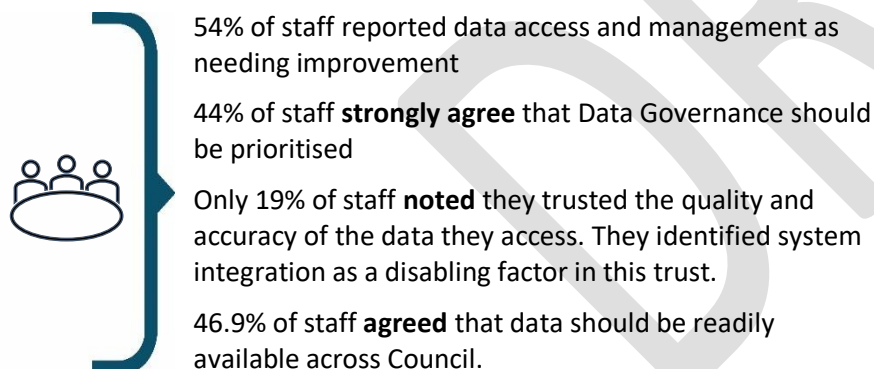


Figure 3 - 2024 council data readiness assessment results

In the context of our Digital Services Strategy, we have taken this feedback as **our staff want:**

- Greater access to and confidence in their ability to collect, manage and report on data (capability)
- Greater guidance on how to manage data (governance)
- Great visibility and transparency of data sources and flows (foundations - enterprise architecture)
- Greater connectivity of data and alignment with business processes (system integration).

Strategic Alignment

Council has adopted a focus on *Enabling Resilience* in the past few years.

Under this, a Change Program has been established to direct organisational priority projects collaboratively identified in October 2024. The broader culture change we are striving for through the implementation of this program is focused on Council becoming a more considerate, responsive and resilient organisation. This involves encouraging increased competency and capability, improving our relationship with the community, and enhancing consistency and proactive risk management—the key objectives of the Change Program.

Digital government and transformation play a crucial role in supporting this change program. By leveraging digital tools and technologies, we can enhance our ability to manage and analyse complex risks, support a systems thinking approach, and encourage collective comprehension to develop relevant solutions.

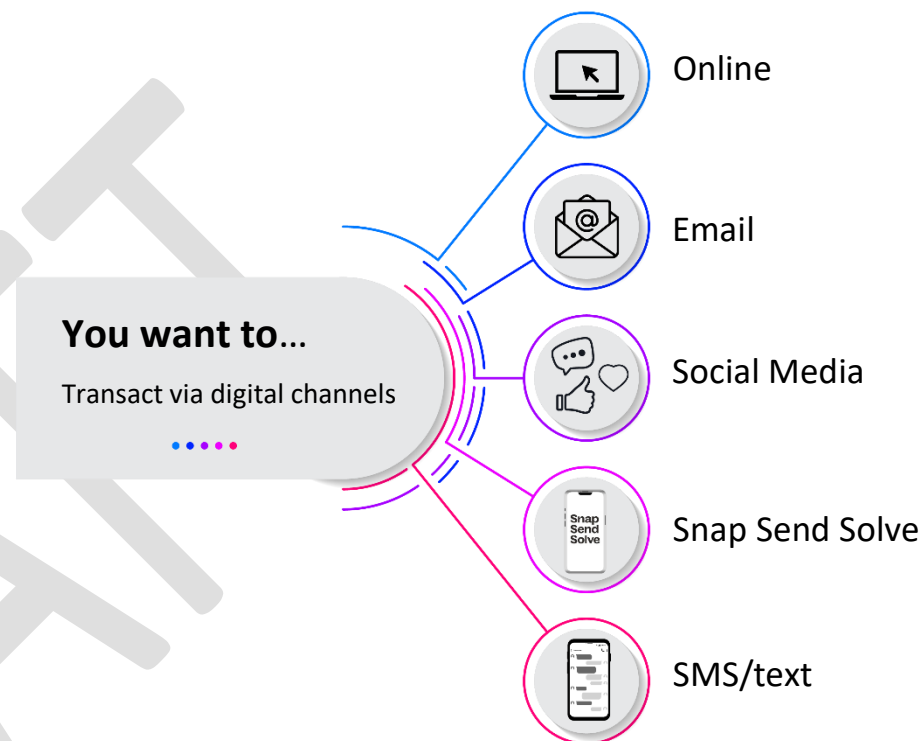
At the core of the Change Program is a focus on governance, record keeping and customer service. These priority projects centre on

fundamental improvements that will be key in enabling further improvements to support resilience. By leveraging digital transformation and digital government services, we can upskill or refresh staff where needed, reinforce expected behaviours across the organisation, and establish a durable foundation for making evidence-based decisions transparently and consistently. Digital tools and technologies will play a crucial role in achieving an acceptable level of understanding, allowing us to foster a culture of accountability through monitoring and reporting.

Our Community

The 2024 Community Satisfaction Survey reviewed Council's performance in service delivery.

In the context of Digital Services, the results informed us:



- 59% of respondents identified digital mediums as their preferred way of dealing with Council.
- Respondents want to be able to make payments and lodge forms online.
- The 2024 results demonstrated a 10% decline in preference for paper-based communications and a subsequent increase of 38% and 32% for internet and social media, since the 2016 survey.

Figure 4 - 2024 customer satisfaction survey results: digital channels



Digital transformation will play a pivotal role in enabling these improvements by:

- Enhancing transparency of organisation processes and decision making through easy access to information via digital platforms.
- Improving communication and engagement with the community through interactive websites, and other online channels.
- Streamlining financial management with online payment systems and digital record-keeping.

- 54% of respondents identified the above areas as the top priorities.

Figure 5 - 2024 customer satisfaction survey results: effectiveness priorities

Digital Government Trends

Recognising the global trend of increased Digital Government and Service delivery and acknowledging the Australian Government Digital Government Agendas, our Digital Services Strategy aligns and compliments the transformational work at both the federal and state levels.

The Data and Digital Government Strategy

The Australian Government will deliver simple, secure and connected public services for all people and business, through world class data and digital capabilities. (Australian Government, 2025)

[The Data and Digital Government Strategy](#) sets out five (5) missions to realise the 2030 vision of simple, secure and connected public services, for all people and business, through world class data and digital capabilities.



Delivering for all people and business

By 2030, the Australian Government will use data and digital technologies to deliver connected, accessible services which are centred around the needs of people and business.



Simple and seamless services

By 2030, the Australian Public Service will work as a single, unified enterprise. It will use technology, data and analytics to deliver simple, accessible services for people and business.



Government for the future

By 2030, the Australian Government will use data and digital technologies in innovative ways.



Trusted and secure

By 2030, the Australian Government will partner with people and business to make decisions and deliver services which are trusted, transparent and ethical, and support people's choices when engaging with public services.



Data and digital foundations

By 2030, the Australian Public Service will adopt the right capabilities, practices, standards and culture and make effective use of data and digital technologies to operate as a seamless government.

Figure 6 - Adapted from the Australian Government Data and Digital Government Strategy (2025)

The Data and Digital Government Strategy sets an expectation that all Australian government entities will align their individual strategies to these missions.

NSW Digital Strategy

Building upon the Australian Government Data and Digital Strategy, the [NSW Digital Strategy](#) aims to use digital technology to improve service delivery, connect regional areas and support frontline staff.

The strategy is underpinned by five (5) missions focused on accessibility, inclusivity, security and connectivity of digital services, which bring benefit to all NSW residents.

Mission 1	Make digital services accessible, inclusive and connected for everyone in NSW
Mission 2	Use digital to improve service delivery, support the local economy and drive productivity
Mission 3	Underpin trust in government through reliable, stable digital services and sustainable digital infrastructure
Mission 4	Keep NSW safe and resilient during emergencies online and in person
Mission 5	Uplift digital capability in the public sector workforce

Figure 7 - Adapted from NSW Digital Strategy Missions

Continuing our Digital Transformation Journey

Our delivery approach

Building upon the foundations set by our 2022-25 Digital Strategy we will continue to make targeted investment in Digital transformation.

An annual Digital Transformation Program aligned with budget allocations will be established. It will be reviewed quarterly to ensure we are continuing to progress against our vision and outcomes.

Similar to the 2022 – 25 Digital Strategy, the delivery of this strategy will be the responsibility of the Information Technology team.

The program will commence with a governance exercise identifying key stakeholders, governance structures, available resources and proposed deliverables.

All deliverables must align or support at least one of the four core initiatives:

- **Cyber Security:** Securing our Services – *Securing our people, community, data, technology and digital services*
- **Data as an Asset:** Informing our services– *Informing our people, community, decision making and service delivery*
- **Customer Experience and Engagement:** Tailoring our Services – *connecting with our community to inform service access and delivery*
- **Continuous Improvement and Innovation:** Improving our services– *enabling continuous service improvement informed by industry trends and best practice, our data, and the evolving needs of our people and our community*

To enable this process all Ideas will follow the below process.

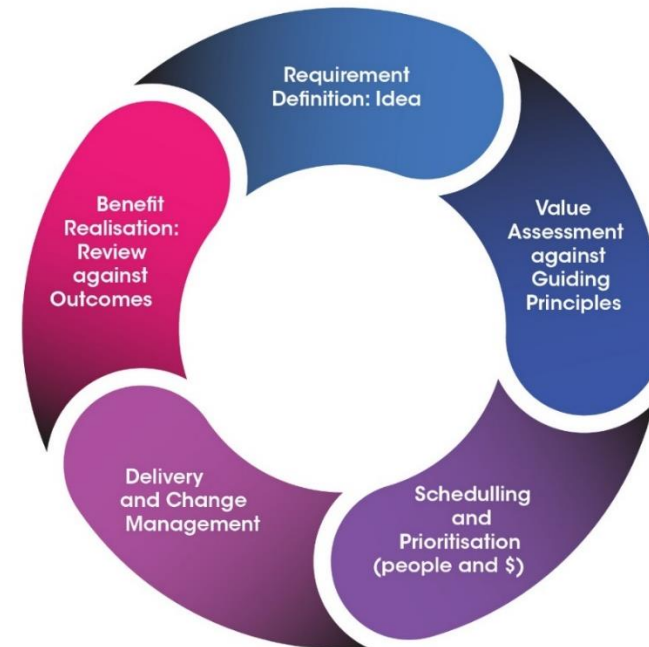


Figure 8 - Digital Services Strategy Delivery process

Initiatives

The projects identified below will form the basis of the Digital Transformation Program. The ideas listed will be further explored and if validated as enabling our digital vision will be included in future years programs.

Cyber Security: Securing our Services

Initiative Objective: Provide increased assurance and control over Councils systems, networks and data protecting the confidentiality, integrity and availability of Council services and technology and data assets.

Proposed Projects:

1. Cyber Security Strategy implementation (direction and guidance)
2. Cyber Security Governance (policies and procedures)
3. Cyber Security Controls (action and tools)
4. Cyber Security Compliance and Assessment (assurance)

Ideas

- Annual Essential8 compliance audits and reporting
- Increased Cyber training and completion auditing and reporting
- Cyber capability and capacity increases
- Authentication for external services
- Standardised access and CCTV solutions

Data as an Asset: Informing our Services

Initiative Objective: Provide increased assurance and control over Councils data protecting the integrity of decision making and availability of Council data assets.

Proposed Projects:

- Data source identification and architecture (understanding our data)
- Data - Business process – System mapping (understanding our data)
- Data Governance Framework (policies, procedures, and assurance)
- Tools Proof of Concept – validating if the Microsoft tool set meets organisation needs (technology).

Ideas:

- Data Management Strategy
- Establishment of system integration program of work and function
- Business process automation program of work
- Education program for staff

Customer Experience and Engagement: Tailoring our Services

Initiative Objective: Provide increased serviceability leveraging digital capability to deliver Council staff and customers improved engagement experiences.

Proposed Projects:

- Contact centre upgrade (technology and process)
- Community engagement experience improvement - Customer Portal (technology and process)

Ideas:

- Business process automation
- Bookings solution
- Self-service mapping products (service access and descriptions)

Continuous Improvement and Innovation: Improving our Services

Initiative Objective: Dedicated focus / resourcing for continued improvement and advancement of technology discovery and adoption.

Proposed Projects:

- IT service management and governance uplift
- IT operations and assets modernisation
- AI Pilot and discovery with Copilot
- Continual application improvement and enhancement
- Modern communications
- Support for organisational projects and objectives

Ideas:

- AI in support of business functions
- Microsoft utilisation
- Smart city sensors and reporting

Action Plan

The projects included below are groups as per the initiative they are supporting, some projects from above have been grouped to allow multi-year delivery and to be utilise resources available.

As referenced under [Guiding our investment](#) the budget required to deliver the vision and outcomes targeted within this Strategy is not guaranteed or achievable under current long term financial modelling. For transparency projects have been categorised as:

A priority under current allocated and planned resources



At risk of not being achieved based on current allocated and planned resources



Un-prioritised based on current allocated and planned resources



Figure 9 - Digital Services Strategy Action Plan priorities key

We will deliver...	In the ... delivery year			
	One 25/26	Two 26/27	Three 27/28	Four 28/29
Cyber Security <i>Securing our people, community, data, technology and digital services</i>				
Strategy roadmap development	✓			✓
Cyber Security Roadmap delivery	✓	✓	✓	
Cyber Security Governance and Assurance		✓	✓	✓

We will deliver...	In the ... delivery year			
	One 25/26	Two 26/27	Three 27/28	Four 28/29
Data as an Asset <i>Informing our people, community, decision making and service delivery</i>				
Data and Information Governance Framework and Roadmap development	✓			✓
Integration Strategy development	✓			
Integration Roadmap delivery		✓		
Reporting Strategy development and delivery	✓			
Reporting Roadmap delivery		✓		
AI discovery	✓			
Data Governance Assurance		✓	✓	✓
Customer Experience and Engagement <i>connecting with our community to inform service access and delivery</i>				
Business Process Review	✓			
Business Process Automation and Technology Alignment	✓			
Customer Relationship Management solutions review		✓		

We will deliver...	In the ... delivery year			
	One 25/26	Two 26/27	Three 27/28	Four 28/29
Customer Portal			✓	
Continually Improving and Innovating <i>enabling continuous service improvement informed by industry trends and best practice, our data, and the evolving needs of our people and our community</i>				
IT Service management and delivery processes (IT Operations focus)	✓			
IT Service Delivery Framework (customer service delivery focus)	✓			
IT Policies + Guidelines + Templates	✓	✓		
IT Training Program (staff education)			✓	
IT Operations and Asset Modernisation	✓		✓	
Application enhancement program	✓	✓	✓	✓
Modern communications upgrade project	✓	✓		
Contact Centre replacement project	✓	✓		
Supporting organisational priorities	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 1 - Digital Services Strategy Action Plan

Measuring our Success

To measure our success, we will use our initiatives to guide our assessment.



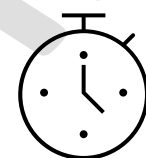
Trending improvement in baseline maturity assessments for Cyber and Data

We will aim to see improved maturity scores for both Cyber Security and Data Governance against available Government tools. (data to be captured from annual review process)



Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

We will aim to see an improved response to the Community's assessment of access to digital services and information



Business process improvement and innovation





We will aim to reduce business processing times through the use of innovative technologies. With measurement to be based on efficiencies and processing time reductions.

Figure 10 - Digital Services Strategy Success Criteria



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