



ICT STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 – 2026

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
CouncilBIZ ICT Strategic Vision	4
Strategic Alignment.....	5
Assets.....	5
Investment.....	5
IT Organisation Structure.....	7
Strategic Gaps.....	8
ICT Strategic Framework	9
ICT Strategy 1 – Service.....	9
Deliver services using innovation and creativity.....	9
ICT Strategy 2 – Innovation.....	11
Foster and support innovation.....	11
ICT Strategy 3 – Technology.....	13
Assess and implement new solutions that use appropriate technology.....	13
ICT Strategy 4 – People.....	14
Organise for success.....	14
ICT Strategy 5 – Governance.....	15
Do the right thing in the right way.....	15
Overall Summary of CouncilBIZ ICT Strategic Vision	16

Executive Summary

CouncilBIZ are reaching a pivotal and exciting time as we move towards being cloud ready due to the advancement of technology and the possibilities for shared services to be delivered in new and efficient ways. CouncilBIZ are reviewing the capability and capacity of the organization to respond to technological advancement effectively while ensuring it retains the integrity of the CouncilBIZ purpose of serving Member Councils as a true shared service.

As part of the process, CouncilBIZ has developed a number of strategic business goals and is continuously focused on ensuring they are strongly aligned to our Vision, Mission and Values. CouncilBIZ is also dedicated to providing strategic planning that is focused on delivering innovation, good governance and high quality cost effective shared services to Member Councils.

Information is a strategic resource that underpins our key functions, decision making processes and service delivery to Members. The way information is managed and the technology used to support it is central to Member Council business practices and the delivery of services.

This document describes an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy for CouncilBIZ until 2025. Although this is an ICT strategy, it is not a technology centric strategy aimed at technical specialists. It is a strategy describing how CouncilBIZ will align its investment in ICT with the overall business objectives, while ensuring Member Councils expectations are met. The aim of the Strategy is to drive improved customer service by delivering ICT services that increase CouncilBIZ efficiency and effectiveness as a shared services provider for Member Councils.

The ICT Strategic Plan is focused on pragmatic actions that we can take over the next five years. It will undergo an annual review by the Board to ensure ongoing relevance and alignment with the overall needs of CouncilBIZ and Member Councils.

CouncilBIZ ICT Strategic Vision

The Vision of CouncilBIZ is as follows;

“Inspiring and enabling members and customers through creativity, innovation and enterprise”

CouncilBIZ established its strategic plan, *CouncilBIZ 2025*, to clearly articulate its Vision, Mission, Values and Strategies that it would pursue over the next 5 years. CouncilBIZ committed to providing a strategic plan for ICT pursuant to Strategy 3 which is as follows;

Strategy 3: Technology

Goal: Assess and implement new solutions that use appropriate technology

Objective: 3.1 – Flexible technology that is simple and fast

Actions 3.1.1 – Develop ICT Strategic Plan

The ICT strategic Vision is as follows;

“CouncilBIZ will seek to innovate our ICT environment to be mobile-first and cloud-ready to enable the introduction and adoption of more flexible, cost-effective technology”.

1. Below is CouncilBIZ assumed drivers of change

- I.** Organisational Structure
- II.** Economic/Environmental impacts
 - a. Funding changes
 - b. Increasing costs of service delivery
 - c. Weather events
- III.** Council Expectations and ICT Use
- IV.** Governance
- V.** Emerging Technology
- VI.** Ageing Technology
- VII.** Asset Management

Strategic Alignment

Assets

CouncilBIZ currently operates with the following assets for delivering ICT services to the Councils;

Data Centre

- 4 servers
- Shared storage
- Network infrastructure

CouncilBIZ Managed Software

Third Party Software (local to machines)

Telstra links (Council connectivity)

Individual Council networks

On-premise Devices

- Network
- Desktops/Laptops/Mobiles/Zeros
- Printers
- Communications

Office Space / CouncilBIZ location

Future needs

Moving towards a future cloud-based and mobile-first environment would require a transition to the public cloud and a review of the software that is currently delivered to Member Councils to ensure it is compatible. All on-premise devices that are used in Member Councils will also need to ensure that they are compatible with a cloud-ready environment.

CouncilBIZ would also see a shift in the infrastructure used to deliver a secure network to Member Councils as the networking is absorbed from Telstra and brought in-house. Depending on the speed of development, CouncilBIZ would look to either manage a single network across the Member Councils or completely transition to direct internet services dependent on other variables.

The current location of CouncilBIZ staff and where they work from can be examined in line with a wider organisational strategy to ensure that the services being delivered are maximising the resources available to Member Councils to their full potential.

Investment

Current investments are predominantly to support the managed service on-premise ICT structure that exists in the CouncilBIZ environment. As CouncilBIZ operates on a cost recovery basis, there is currently little ability to make any substantial investment in R&D or future technologies.

CouncilBIZ have invested in an Innovation Manager to drive change and research into future technologies however there is currently no budget allocated to innovation or future technology development outside of the position.

Future needs

CouncilBIZ will require funding for investment into infrastructure to achieve a cloud-ready network. The funding will either be required to come from partnerships with providers or be funded by Member Councils themselves to ensure that there is capacity and capability to invest in more modern technologies. Some of the funding required will be recovered by reducing the cost of services that are currently delivered by CouncilBIZ.

Additional funding for the research and implementation of new cloud-ready software will also be required, which will come from a combination of a reallocation of current spend from current technology to a new ICT structure and potentially additional provisions from Member Councils to support initiatives which the Board deem of high importance or value for CouncilBIZ and the Member Councils.

From time to time, Government funding through grants may be available to provide financial support for new initiatives. Depending on the nature of the funding and scale of the new initiatives(s), grant applications may be able to be developed in house with support from grant managers / officers from Member Councils and / or external consulting support.

ICT funding requirements will require further development and will need to be incorporated into the CouncilBIZ Long Term Financial Plan.

IT Organisation Structure

Currently, the staffing structure is designed to support a managed service on-premise model with a significant amount of resources being directed to managing the virtual desktop and server environments. There are also significant resources that are currently allocated to help desk/support and AMS support for both IT and Technology One.

Future Needs

The requirements of the CouncilBIZ resourcing to operate in the future are likely to change significantly with a focus towards becoming cloud-ready and mobile-first, and shifting away from the managed services on-premise model. The requirement for technical officers may reduce, while the need for additional network management services will be required either internally at CouncilBIZ or outsourced by Member Councils, either through a third party or the service provider.

There is an expectation that the requests for the help desk/support team will alter with a transition to cloud software as a large number of the requests are either as a result of Citrix related concerns or due to products that are administered by CouncilBIZ IT. Upon transitioning products to the cloud, the responsibility of product management shifts to the provider, which will increase capacity for IT to spend less time on support roles.

Strategic Gaps

The current strategic gaps that exist between the long-term Vision for CouncilBIZ and the strategic alignment include;

- Infrastructure currently does not support the cloud
- Current software suite is predominantly on premise including the Enterprise Resource Planning system
- Current service agreements are structured around a managed services on premise model
- The current budget does not provide any provisions for R&D or testing innovative ideas
- The current structure is designed to maintain business as usual services and not for exploring new opportunities
- Currently there is no network management role within CouncilBIZ
- Current staff possess a skill set for operating in an on premise environment and may not currently possess the skills required for the new environment and require additional training.

ICT Strategic Framework

ICT Strategy 1 – Service

Deliver services using innovation and creativity

Objectives								
1.1 - Ensure high levels of service delivery to Member Councils								
1.2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of CouncilBIZ resources								
1.3 - Seek and maximise Shared Service opportunities								
1.4 - Deploy business systems and applications that improve customer service								
Actions		Indicative Budget	Elapsed Time	Timeframe/Resources				
				20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
1.1.1	Develop a Process Manual outlining Systems, Processes and Applications for CouncilBIZ	Internal	3 Months			X		
1.1.2	Develop an SLA for the BSS Department	\$43k	3 Months	X				
1.1.3	Conduct an Annual Review of IT policies, Process Manual and Service Level Agreements	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
1.2.1	Develop ICT performance reporting framework and tools to ensure ICT transparency, compliance and control.	Internal	6 Months		X			
1.3.1	Propose centralized Telecommunications account and CouncilBIZ managed	\$125k	6-12 Months		X			

	network management to the Board							
1.3.2	Board proposal for centralized IT hardware procurement	Internal	2 Months	X				
1.4.1	Review IT ticketing system and examine alternative options which may provide transparency, enhanced reporting and Member Council access.	Internal	3 Months		X			

ICT Strategy 2 – Innovation

Foster and support innovation

Objectives								
2.1 – Align CouncilBIZ ICT infrastructure and business tools with the overall strategic vision								
2.2 - Corporate knowledge is captured and disseminated, improving efficiencies, reducing costs and driving customer service.								
2.3 - Explore opportunities to migrate from on-premise solutions to SaaS products								
2.4 - Utilise online services to improve Member Council experience								
Actions		Indicative Budget	Elapsed Time	Timeframe/Resources				
				20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
2.1.1	Review the current ICT hardware and present a future roadmap for most-appropriate options for CouncilBIZ.	Internal	3 Months			X		
2.1.2	Propose detailed comparison report between Ci and Ci Anywhere (Technology One) to consider upgrade requirements	Internal	3 Months		X			
2.1.3	Identify and propose the deployment of a video conferencing technology as a shared service	Internal	1 Month		X			
2.2.1	Develop a knowledge centre for CouncilBIZ and Member Council use	(Part of Website Development)	N/A	X				
2.2.2	Propose a potential HR platform (SaaS) that would provide the ability for Member Councils to utilise as a shared service	Internal	3 Months			X		

2.3.1	Propose to the Board SaaS alternatives to products which are currently on-premise for consideration. These include (but not limited to); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O365 • InfoCouncil • Magiq • Tech One 	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
2.4.1	Develop a website to enable increased communications and greater online service provision	\$20k	3 Months	X				
2.4.2	Present Communications Plan to the Board	Internal	2 Weeks	X				

ICT Strategy 3 – Technology

Assess and implement new solutions that use appropriate technology

Objectives								
3.1 – Ensure maximum organizational value is achieved through CouncilBIZ ICT infrastructure used to deliver services to Member Councils								
Actions		Indicative Budget	Elapsed Time	Timeframe/Resources				
				20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
3.1.1	Lifecycle replacement of CouncilBIZ hardware performed	\$750k	1 Month			X		
3.1.2	Annual review of ICT assets entering renewal and/or replacement phase to examine alternative options in the marketplace and ensure most-appropriate option is selected.	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
3.1.3	Propose Enterprise Works required to ensure CouncilBIZ would be cloud-ready	(Dependent of 1.3.1)	3 Months			X		

ICT Strategy 4 – People

Organise for success

Objectives								
4.1 - Ensure staff possess requisite ICT key competencies for organizational success								
4.2 - Suitable training and development pathways are identified and implemented								
Actions		Indicative Budget	Elapsed Time	Timeframe/Resources				
				20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
4.1.1	Annual review of ICT organizational structure and ensure it remains suitable for current environment.	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
4.1.2	Annual review to identify ICT key personnel requirements and ensure these needs are captured in job descriptions and relevant HR documents.	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
4.2.1	Complete staff skill assessments and develop training plans to be implemented in line with ICT requirements	Internal	Ongoing		X		X	

ICT Strategy 5 – Governance

Do the right thing in the right way

Objectives								
5.1 – Ensure ongoing ICT costs are sustainable								
5.2 – Ensure ongoing Board support for future financial costs to deliver current and future strategic services								
5.3 – Further develop ICT resilience and recovery systems								
Actions		Indicative Budget	Elapsed Time	Timeframe/Resources				
				20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
5.1.1	Annual review of the business systems and applications costs to ensure sustainability and value for money for Member Councils	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
5.1.2 (Linked – 3.1.2)	Annual review of all software and hardware contracts entering renewal and/or replacement phase to ensure maximum value for money	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
5.2.1	Lifecycle management provisions are recorded in the budget and long-term financial plan supported by the Board	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
5.3.1	Develop CouncilBIZ ICT Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plan	\$45k	3 Months	X				
5.3.2	Define standardized security and risk provisions for contractual arrangements	Internal	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X

CouncilBIZ ICT Strategic Vision Link to *CouncilBIZ 2025*

To ensure that the ICT Strategic Plan aligns with the overall organizational strategy the elements that relate to the ICT Strategic Plan within the *CouncilBIZ 2025* include;

Strategy 1: Service

Goal: Deliver services using innovation and creativity

1.1 Agreed core services and user pay service offerings are established.

1.1.1 Cost/Benefit value analysis for core, outsourced and potential shared services (Considered by the Board in June 2021).

1.2 Deliver exceptional customer service with strong customer and stakeholder relationships

1.2.1 Develop Relationship Management, Marketing and Communications Plan by June 2020

Strategy 2: Innovation

Goal: Foster and support innovation

2.1 Board and organizational culture of creativity and teamwork

2.1.1 Align Job Descriptions and KPI's with Strategic Plan

2.1.3 Develop initiatives that foster and support innovation.

2.2 Dedicated resource for innovation

2.2.2 Constructively challenge and review existing systems and processes (All systems and processes reviewed by June 2025)

2.3 Share and showcase best practice solutions and products

2.3.1 Ongoing report to the Board (June 2020)

Strategy 3: Technology

Goal: Assess and implement new solutions that use appropriate technology

3.1 Flexible technology that is simple and fast

3.1.1 Develop ICT Strategic Plan (June 2020)

3.1.2 Benchmark current technology against alternative products (December 2020)

3.1.3 Continuously engage with customers to understand needs and wants.

Strategy 4: People

Goal: Organise for success

1.5 Be service delivery experts

1.5.1 Establish Training and Development Plan

1.5.2 Improve problem resolution, including reporting on open issues and escalation process

1.6 Recruit and retain highly motivated and skilled staff

1.6.1 Establish Staff Development and Performance Review System

Strategy 5: Governance

Goal: Do the right thing in the right way

5.1 Governance system that enhances our culture

5.1.1 Develop Governance framework

5.1.2 Develop/Review governance policies and delegations

5.1.3 Review organizational structure and resources

5.1.4 Establish risk management framework

5.1.5 Establish long term financial plan including asset management plan (June 2020)

5.1.6 Develop Business Continuity and IT Disaster Recovery Plan

5.1.7 Establish Compliance checklist (December 2019)