

# IT STRATEGIC PLAN 2024/28

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL



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# Glossary of Terms

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>AI – Artificial Intelligence</b>	Intelligent technology, programs and the use of advanced computing algorithms that can augment decision making by identifying meaningful patterns in data.
<b>BAU – Business as Usual</b>	Normal Conduct of Business in day-to-day operations.
<b>BCP – Business Continuity Plan</b>	The process involved in creating a system of prevention and recover from potential threats to a company.
<b>Cloud Technologies</b>	The delivery of computing sciences – including servers, storage databases, networking, software analytics and intelligence – over the internet (“the cloud”) to offer faster innovation, flexible resources and economies of scale.
<b>Change Advisory Committee</b>	An IT Change Advisory Committee is responsible for reviewing, assessing, and approving changes to the IT environment to minimize risks and ensure business continuity.
<b>DR – Disaster Recovery</b>	Involves a set of policies, tools and procedures to enable the recovery or continuation of vital technology infrastructure and systems following a natural or human-induced disaster.
<b>ERP – Enterprise Resource Planning</b>	Software that integrates and manages the essential parts of a business, such as finance, HR, manufacturing, supply chain, services, procurement, and others, providing a single source of truth and streamlining operations across the enterprise.
<b>ICT – Information and Communications Technology</b>	Incorporate electronic technologies and techniques used to manage information and knowledge, including information handling tools used to produce, store, process, distribute and exchange information.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Refers to an enterprise’s entire collection of hardware, software, networks, data centres, facilities.
<b>SLA – Service Level Agreement</b>	A contract between a service provider and its internal or external customers that documents what service the provider will include and defines the service standards the provider is obligated to meet.

# Strategy 1 Deliver safe and resilient IT Services



## OVERVIEW

Delivering safe and resilient IT services for Mid-Western Regional Council involves several key aspects. These include implementing robust security measures for infrastructure and data, developing a comprehensive disaster recovery plan, keeping all systems up to date, providing regular user training on cybersecurity and adhering to relevant regulations. IT systems critical to community services need to be modern, resilient, ethical and connected to enable continuous development.

## OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Establish a strong cyber security capability and a culture of responsibility**  
Promote roles and responsibilities across cyber security, privacy, safety, and resiliency for Council. Instil a culture across Council of greater individual and collective cyber security accountability by implementing best-practice cyber security training, awareness, and governance.
- 1.2 Adopt emerging technology responsibly**  
Council wants to use technology to provide staff with the most efficient and effective process to complete business functions. To do this Council must make sure the appropriate governance, processes, and tools to responsibly design, develop and implement technology are in place.
- 1.3 Ensure Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery requirements align with IT capabilities**  
In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, Council needs to return to “Business as Usual” (BAU) as quickly as possible. This recovery will utilise equipment that is “fit for purpose” and meet Business Continuity Plan (BCP) restore times.
- 1.4 Develop IT capabilities to support Council’s growing need for an efficient service**  
Internal IT resources need to develop and adapt to the changes in the IT environment of Council. Having a digitally capable and agile workforce is critical to ensuring that Council can respond to and deliver the services that are expected from all stakeholders.

## Strategy 2      Seek excellence, efficiency, effectiveness innovation in Council processes



### OVERVIEW

Mid-Western Regional Council services a large local government area with Office locations in Mudgee, Gulgong, and Rylstone. With employees spread over the entire Mid-Western region, investment must be made to make these employees as productive outside of the office as when they are in it.

The goal is to achieve a high standard in all Council operations, ensuring high-quality services and a commitment to continuous improvement. IT can streamline processes and maximise productivity by automating routine tasks and optimising resource allocation.

### OBJECTIVES

#### 2.1      Enable adoption of Cloud services and applications where possible

Cloud technologies have matured to a point where they need to be considered first during the procurement of new software, applications, or digital services. Adoption of Cloud services need to be in a complimentary and secure manner, while also ensuring the path of least resistance to integration with other business process is followed.

#### 2.2      Provide staff with the IT resources to work flexibly

As cloud solutions are being investigated, staff need to have access to corporate applications and services. IT assets need to be cost effective and fit for purpose.

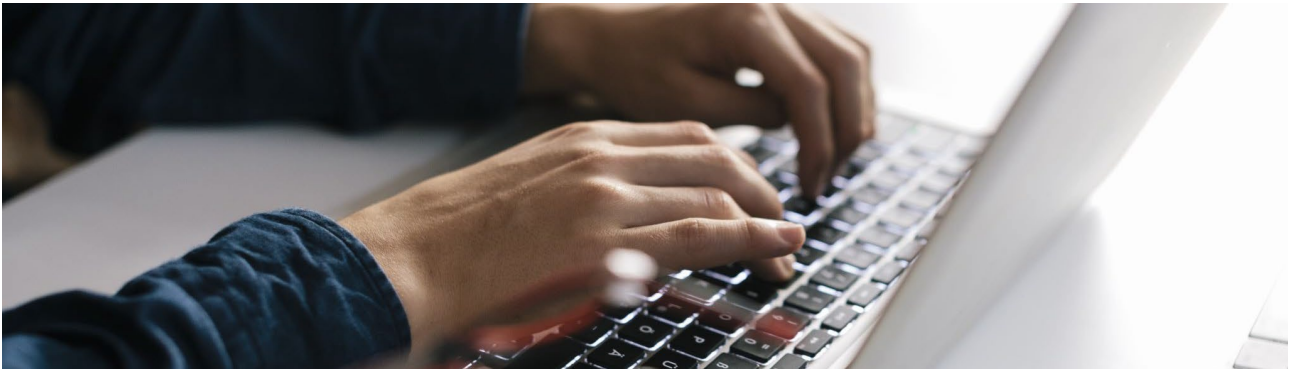
#### 2.3      Promote IT Training to staff

With the introduction of new IT systems and solutions, regular staff training needs to be provided to ensure all users are using it correctly and efficiently. Refresher training will also be delivered for applications that are currently in use.

#### 2.4      Promote a collaborative workplace

Working in groups enables staff to be quicker and more effective in their work. With this view, Council will utilise Cloud based applications to promote a collaborative workspace. This will enable the mobile workforce to participate in projects and business activities, while not being locked down to a physical location to share information.

## Strategy 3      Develop capabilities for the future



### OVERVIEW

MWRC needs to be able to adapt to changes in the global IT environment. An internal Framework for change allows all improvements, ideas and enhancements to be reviewed in the same way. This enables all changes to be reviewed on their own merit and investigated with all business units involved. Council's IT capabilities need to be aligned with current needs but also be capable of future implementations.

### OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Promote openness to IT change and improvement.**  
MWRC will leverage the appetite for change across the organisation by providing an avenue for open discussion and feedback. Any changes that are proposed will be reviewed to determine the benefit and effect on each individual business unit.
- 3.2 Endorse IT to be involved in all projects that require new systems and processes.**  
IT will be promoted as a key partner in projects that require new systems and processes. This will ensure that any new systems and processes will be able to be analysed on their integration with current solutions.
- 3.3 Focus on assisting staff to adapt to change.**  
To avoid resistance to change with current and new applications and systems, MWRC will use training to enable all staff to familiarise themselves with any new processes and procedures.
- 3.4 Encourage and support employee innovation.**  
Council will work to create an environment where employees feel empowered to share their innovative ideas to optimise business processes, by expanding open communication channels and enabling cross-functional collaboration.

# Action Plan

The following Action Plan provides details of individual actions within the relevant strategies and prioritised by the organisation. The plan describes the key actions to be achieved and the desired timeframe to achieve the action. The prioritisation categories applied are:

SHORT TERM	Implementation within 12 months
MEDIUM TERM	Implementation within 1 – 2 years
LONG TERM	Implementation within 2 – 4 years
ONGOING	Completed works over the life of this strategy

STRATEGY 1	DELIVER SAFE AND RESILIENT IT SERVICES	
Complete a Roadmap and Implementation Schedule for Council’s ERP.		SHORT TERM
Develop capabilities to quickly detect and respond to cyber security incidents		MEDIUM TERM
Create a skills matrix for the IT Staff and ensure training is prioritised.		MEDIUM TERM
Implement a Self-Service Portal for all Service Desk related queries.		SHORT TERM
Develop an IT Cyber Security Policy based on State and Federal Government recommendations and review as required		MEDIUM TERM / ONGOING
Create an Incident Response and Disaster Recovery testing schedule as per agency recommendations		SHORT TERM
Implement SLA’s with Departments that support Critical business services.		SHORT TERM

<b>STRATEGY 2</b>	<b>SEEK EXCELLENCE, EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND INNOVATION IN COUNCIL PROCESSES</b>
Complete a Roadmap and Implementation Schedule for Council's ERP	SHORT TERM
Ensure that Council's workforce has a strong understanding of fundamental technology concepts by providing training.	MEDIUM TERM
Form an IT Software Steering committee to provide direction and manage risk for IT projects.	SHORT TERM
Develop an AI User Guide to guide staff on transparency, and responsible use of AI solutions.	MEDIUM TERM
Implement Electronic Timesheets and an improved leave approval process.	MEDIUM TERM
Implement tools to enhance the electronic capabilities of outdoor staff so data can be collected and utilised more effectively	LONG TERM

<b>STRATEGY 3</b>	<b>DEVELOP CAPABILITIES FOR THE FUTURE</b>
Complete a Roadmap and Implementation Schedule for Council's ERP.	SHORT TERM
Form the IT Change Advisory Committee and embed risk management processes into the implementation and maintenance of new technical solutions.	MEDIUM TERM
Review capabilities of On-premise infrastructure and conduct technology assessments to identify areas of improvement and potential risks.	LONG TERM
Implement scalable and flexible IT infrastructure that can easily adapt to changing business needs and technology trends.	LONG TERM
Review End user device capabilities and upgrade as required to ensure support and capabilities for future implementations.	ONGOING