

Council Policy CP056 Geraldton Digital First Policy			
Officer	Manager, Economic Development and Innovation	Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Review Frequency	Annually	Next Review	2013
Council Resolution number and date			
Mayor	Cr Ian Carpenter	Chief Executive Officer	Tony Brun

OBJECTIVE

This Policy draws on the research from the Digital Strategy Report for the City of Greater Geraldton and the Mid West Region produced by Explor Consulting Pty Ltd, as well as the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge City of Greater Geraldton Report 2012. The Policy sets to accomplish the following objectives:

- To empower Geraldton together with the Mid West Region and accelerate its journey to become a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable city where people and businesses confidently use digital technology to enrich the way they live, work, learn, create and connect;
- Geraldton will be globally recognised as an exemplar for small, regional Cities around the world.

SCOPE

The policy is applicable to all of the City's formal planning processes and major projects implementation as per the recommendations stated in the Digital Strategy Report for the City of Greater Geraldton and the Mid West Region. The following are scopes of the digital strategy identified in the report:

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|-------------|--|
| Life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People of all backgrounds and ages in Geraldton and the Mid West will have the confidence, capability and access to use digital technologies to support fulfilling, productive, creative and healthy lives. • People will use online services and access digital resources in ways that promote healthy, active, safe, enriching and socially connected living. • Online services available for residents and visitors in the City and Region will be rich, extensive and easy to use. |
| Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geraldton and the Mid West's existing businesses will be using digital technologies to grow their market share and to improve their productivity. • Geraldton and the Mid West's economic base will be broader with new types of businesses able to flourish through access to broadband services and other technologies. • Geraldton and the Mid West and will have more employment |

opportunities, particularly professional employment opportunities, made possible through broadband services and other technologies.

- Geraldton and the Mid West will be a good place to establish new businesses of all sizes due to the availability of digitally enabled facilities and well-designed online government services.

Learning

- People, particularly younger people, will have greater access to a wider variety of higher education courses, through the use of online delivery within Geraldton and the Mid West.
- Students at Geraldton and the Mid West's schools and other education institutions will achieve at a higher level, supported by the well informed use of digital technologies to support effective learning and teaching.

Community

- Geraldton and the Mid West will be a more vibrant place, with the innovative but sensitive use of technology to enhance the experience of being in the city and surrounding regional towns.
- Geraldton will have a flourishing arts and cultural sector, including many digital artists and digital media professionals.
- Geraldton and the Mid West's residents and visitors will have a rich understanding of the city's activities and opportunities, created and presented using digital technologies.
- Social disadvantage and isolation will be reduced by using online services to better connect people, improve the delivery of community services and help provide people with key skills.
- Geraldton and the Mid West will have an active non-government and not-for-profit sector, with community organisations embracing the opportunities of digital technology to connect with people and to support their services.

Environment

- Residents, visitors and investors will have a greater understanding of the Geraldton and the Mid West's unique environment, ecosystems and heritage through the availability of a rich set of online resources and information.
- Geraldton and the Mid West will have a lower carbon footprint and lower energy consumption due to the use of smart infrastructure for utility services and reduced needs to travel due to leading online services.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Digital Strategy Report for the City of Greater Geraldton and the Mid West Region and attached to this Policy.

DEFINITIONS

City/CGG - Staff employed by City of Greater Geraldton to deliver operational outcomes of the strategy;

Community - represents all people in the City region including special communities of interest;

Council - elected members representing the community;

Consultation - A process of obtaining public feedback on analysis and/or alternatives that will help the City to progress and achieve the “Smarter City” status;

Crowd Sourcing - a way of completing a task, a solution to a problem, etc. by asking a wide range of people or organisations, typically by using the Internet;

Digital Economy - the global network of economic and social activities that are enabled by digital technologies;

External Stakeholder - represents all people in the City region including the local business community, Business related associations, not for profit organisation and the local community;

IBM Smarter Cities Challenge - is a corporate initiative of the information technology company IBM. The initiative seeks to highlight how forward-thinking leaders in business, government and civil society around the world are capturing the potential of smarter systems to achieve economic growth, near-term efficiency, sustainable development and societal progress;

IXP – Internet Exchange Points, are vital elements of Internet infrastructure that enable networks to exchange traffic with each other;

Stakeholder Engagement - is the broad range of organised interactions between the City, the IBM Experts and the external stakeholders before finalising and delivering the Smarter Cities Report;

Telecommuting - any form of substitution of information technologies (such as telecommunications and computers) for work-related travel.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Relevant actions and priorities will be considered for funding during the budget process. Inclusion in the Policy does not assure or commit the funding.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

To drive the strategic digital transformation in Geraldton, this Policy is built upon six overarching principles:

Principle 1: Promoting the digital economy

The City promotes the development of the digital economy by providing leadership and support for greater technology adoption and convergence of lifestyle amongst the local businesses and community. The ‘importance of the digital economy and the opportunities for innovation leading to Geraldton’s economic and social development created by the emergence of new digital technologies’ needs to be enforced.

Principle 2: Encouraging innovation and competition

The City encourages innovation and competition and support local businesses to establish new ways of doing business and seek out new commercial opportunities both locally and internationally.

Principle 3: Promoting greater access to and wide dissemination of content

The City promotes greater access to as well as development and dissemination of information and copyrighted content, in particular the use and sharing of content in the advancement of education, research and culture'. There are important economic and social benefits in promoting access to and wide dissemination of information.

Principle 4: Responding to technological change

The City supports operational reforms in responds to new technologies, platforms and services. The rollout of digital local government services is of critical in order to ensure that the City is to be able to continuously reach out and respond to new consumer requirements and market demand effectively.

Principle 5: Acknowledging new ways of interaction and collaboration

Digital technology has arguably been accompanied by changed of preference towards the way users interact and collaborate with each other, especially amongst the younger, more technologically savvy generation. It is crucial therefore the City acknowledges and recognises the need to adopt digital technology as new tools and channels for more effective interactions, collaboration and engagement with the local community and businesses.

Principle 6: Advocating an adaptive, efficient and flexible framework

The City advocates the development of a Digital Economy framework that is adaptive and efficient in response to the fast technological changes in the marketplace. This framework would provide direction and greater coherence as it reduces uncertainty and risks associated to new digital project planning and implementation carried out by the City.

KEY RECOMMENDATION

To jump-start the Digital transformation in Geraldton, the Digital Strategy Report for the City of Geraldton and the Mid West Region has outlined nine key recommendations for the City and Region to pursue:

1. Continue to be an Active Digital Technology Leader.
 - i. Convene a Leadership Alliance;
 - ii. Proactively Provide Leadership, Promotion & Advocacy
 - iii. Establish Benchmarks and Monitor Progress
 - iv. Building Upon Council's Digital Capacity
 - v. Enhancing Council eservices and create a 'MyGeraldton' Digital Services
2. Create Public Digital Platforms and Infrastructure
 - i. Extend the Wi-Fi Access
 - ii. Broaden the Role of Libraries and Other Facilities for the Community Accessing Online Services
 - iii. Commission the Development of a Geraldton App
 - iv. Establish a Common Platform for Hosting and Presenting Digital Content
3. Crowd-source and Co-create Compelling Local Digital Content
 - i. Adopt a Digital First Policy for City Content
 - ii. Introduce an Online Neighbourhood Watch
 - iii. Create a Digital Media Hub
 - iv. Establish a Digital Artist and Craft Program
 - v. Use Digital Projection and Crowd Sourced Content to add Vibrancy to the City

- vi. Create Digital Youth Hubs
4. Build Household Capacity and Confidence
 - i. Launch and Support a Campaign that Helps Households Get Online
 - ii. Build capacity for home businesses
 5. Build Small Business Capacity and Confidence
 - i. Organise Awareness Raising Sessions for Business
 - ii. Establish an Ongoing Program of Business and Technology Mentoring
 - iii. Establish Targeted Sectoral Support to Further Drive the Adoption of Digital Technology
 6. Enable New Business and Employment Opportunities
 - i. Seek to Create a Telecommuting Facility
 - ii. Investigate the Possibility of an Incubator or Startup Hub
 - iii. Review and Further Develop the City and Regional Online Marketing Strategy
 7. Focus on Building Capacity in the Retail, Tourism and Hospitality SME sectors.
 - i. Build Understanding Capacity and Capability in the Retail, Tourism and Hospitality Sectors.
 - ii. Build Infrastructure that Enhances Opportunities in the Retail, Tourism and Hospitality Sectors.
 - iii. Develop Multi-Channel Assets that Enhance the Shopping and Vibrancy Experience in Geraldton.
 - iv. Work to Ensure the Key Sectors of Retail, Tourism and Hospitality are Ahead of the Curve Over the Coming Years
 8. Support Better Access to Quality Education And Training
 - i. Develop a Workforce of the Future
 - ii. Create a Shared Education Facility
 - iii. Actively Broker Relationships with WA Education Institutes
 - iv. Establish Online Links with Overseas Universities
 9. Build Innovative, Globally Significant Smart Infrastructure for the Future
 - i. Introducing Smart Streets
 - ii. Build a Geraldton Internet Exchange
 - iii. Create a Smart Energy Hub
 - iv. Develop a Data Centre Attraction Package
 - v. Develop a “virtual power plant”

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Geraldton Digital First Policy owner is the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO shall oversee the implementation of this Policy and subsequent policies through receiving reports and giving directions through the Executive Management Team.

All strategic planning and implementation of the Geraldton Digital Strategy and recommendations will make specific reference to this policy, and choose the level of engagement that is appropriate to the circumstances. Councillors will endeavor to support and participate in external stakeholder engagement activities. The choice of engagement method and outcomes will be reported to Council through Agenda Items and briefings.

ATTACHMENTS

- The Digital Strategy Report for the City of Greater Geraldton and the Mid West Region
- Community Trustees Report

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