

BUSINESS SYSTEMS CHECKLIST

Local government reform

The resource has been adapted for the LGNSW Amalgamation Toolkit (2016) from content prepared for the Western Australian Metropolitan Implementation Committee.

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About the Business Systems Checklist

This checklist has been developed to assist local governments in identifying and planning the key activities that must be undertaken in order to ensure appropriate systems are in place to adequately support the new councils operations, and to ensure smooth migration of data and integration of systems.

The checklist was largely adapted from the "Information Communications and Technology (ICT) Checklist developed by the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ).

Business Systems Transitional Planning

- What will need to be put in place to get everyone on the network, using the same email system, sharing files and using the same software systems?
- What will be the IT platform for the new local government?
- When will the new network need to be in place?
- How much will systems integration cost? Need to consider data migration, wide-area-network expansion, additional software licences, implementation costs etc.
- What are the priorities for systems migration?
- What factors need to be taken into account when planning data migration
 - End of financial year, FBT
 - Interdependencies and integration between systems
 - What data needs to be migrated first, what systems need to be migrated at the same time?
 - Long weekends that allow for greater opportunity for scheduled "downtime"
- What is a Business Systems Transitional Plan? What factors need to be considered?
- What ICT infrastructure exists? Is it compatible?
- What ICT infrastructure will be required?
- Is there consistency in standards, policies and management practices? e.g. email usage and management. If not what needs to put in place?
- What ICT standards and governance need to be established?
- What skills will be required?
- Develop an ICT Strategy and required budget.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop a Business Systems Transitional Plan (use ICT if preferred language), outlining current state, proposed IT future state and the key activities to be undertaken to transition to new systems, and assign priorities.
2. Establish a Business Systems Transitional Planning Steering Committee, with representation from each of the amalgamating/adjusting councils.
3. Establish working groups for each of the corporate software systems, reporting to the Business Systems Transitional Planning Steering Committee.
4. Determine the "cut-over" date to the new systems.
5. Start planning the network first and start early– this will take the longest time and is critical to all other activities.
6. Engage early with vendors.
7. Communicate changes to staff.
8. Establish priorities, set timelines and assign responsibilities.

Matters to Consider:

1. Network

Determining how all staff can be connected across all local government sites will be one of the most important considerations. Operating from a single ICT Network from day one of the new local government operations will be a key success factor, and will greatly improve communication, collaboration and staff as it will enable staff to be on the same email system, access and share files and software systems. By comparison, working across multiple ICT platforms would be a considerable barrier to productivity and inhibits many other necessary functions.

Note - the cost of implementing a Wide Area Network (WAN) between all sites may be high, and the lead time is likely to be considerable – start planning early.

Consider:

- What will need to be put in place to enable you to get everyone on the same email system, sharing files and using the same networks?
- How will staff be able to connect through the networks to all offices?
- How will you provide access to staff at remote locations?
- What network infrastructure will be required to connect local government offices?
- How are the remote sites currently connected to the LG administration?
- Who are the telecommunications service providers?
- What communications contracts are in place and what term is remaining?
- Will existing network infrastructure (e.g. switches, routers, firewalls) accommodate the expansion of the network, or will it need to be upgraded?
- How are the current networks protected from external threats? What changes are required to ensure security of the network for the new LG?
- What is the primary internet connection for each LG? What is the future requirement?

Recommended Actions

1. Decide if you require a single network from day one changeover day (recommended).
2. Commence network planning early, as this will likely take the longest and is a minimum requirement for moving to one system.
3. Put together a list of all sites that require ICT network.
4. Conduct an audit of all existing network and internet links. Include number of employees, type of network (e.g. ADSL, Microwave, Fibre), workstations, servers at each location.
5. Determine what network infrastructure is required
6. Evaluate alternative networking options e.g. Microwave, Fibre, Leasing from ISP.
7. Review all current support contracts and put together a list of network vendor contacts
8. Take necessary actions to put in place a network connecting all staff across all sites.
9. Engage with vendors early.

2. Data Centre/Server Room

- Is it necessary to maintain a server room, or could this be outsourced?
- Is Infrastructure-as-a-service (IAAS) an option?
- Which server room will you use? Does it have capacity for additional servers/racks?
- How will you consolidate equipment to maximise your existing hardware investment?
- What disaster recovery practices and systems exist? What do you need to put in place?

Recommended Actions

1. Review server room options – IAAS, outsource to a data centre, internal
2. Develop inventory of equipment.
3. Review server room requirements.
4. Determine what infrastructure will be required, and cost.

5. Determine what will be the main server room and make necessary preparations.
6. Establish a secondary disaster recovery (DR) site – consider cloud DR solutions, other LG sites (within/external to your LG) etc.
7. Develop/update the IT Disaster Recovery Plan.

3. Domain and Active Directory

- What will be the new domain?
- How will Active Directory be consolidated?
- What are the interdependencies to Active Directory and Domain?
- What will be the business impact of making the changes?
- How might you mitigate risk when making changes?
- What group policies will you need?
- How changes to security and access controls will be required?

4. Antivirus

- What antivirus systems are in place? Are they compatible?
- Are anti-virus systems installed and regularly updated across all systems and devices?
- Review anti-virus and perimeter security to identify any weaknesses and mitigate any risks.

5. Email and Active Directory

- What email systems are in use and are they compatible? e.g. Exchange server and Microsoft Outlook.
- What version e.g. Exchange 2010.
- What will be involved in migrating mail boxes (e.g. exporting pst's?).
- What skills will you require to assist you in planning and undertaking email migration
- Are any email archiving systems in place and if so, how is data migrated across systems.
- How many mail boxes are there, and what's the average and total size of mail boxes to be migrated?
- What is the maximum and average size of staff email boxes?
- What is the maximum size of attachments that can be emailed/received (consider if these limitations may restrict email communications in the transition stage)
- Is there a documented email policy in place and how does this compare between amalgamating LGs?
- What are the current email address formats e.g. john.smith@nsw.gov.au or johns@nsw.gov.au or j.smith@nsw.gov.au and are they compatible.
- How will duplicate names be handled.
- Determine the email address format for the new entity.
- Consider service delivery models. Is shifting email to “the cloud” an option?
- Consider if a message announcing the LG changes is appropriate to be added to the email signature in consultation with marketing and communications (e.g. we are moving).
- How will email signatures be updated with the new contact details?
- Determine what changes are required to the email disclaimer.

Recommended Actions

1. Establish new logons and email addresses.
2. Migrate mail boxes.
3. Create new group lists based on new organisational structure.
4. Develop updated email disclaimer.
5. Implement updated email signatures.
6. Develop/update email policy.

6. Telephone System

- Are the telephone systems interoperable? I.e. will you be able to transfer calls between sites?
- How will calls be transferred between sites?
- Can telephone systems be expanded on to accommodate new LG area and staff?
- How will you provide a cost effective unified voice communications system for staff?
- What will be the main switchboard number?
- Where will the main switchboard be located?
- Will location numbers change e.g. recreation centres, libraries, depots etc?
- How will telephone number changes be communicated internally?
- How will telephone number changes be advertised to the community?
- How will you maintain a phone directory covering all sites?
- What telephone redirects will need to be put in place and for how long?
- Will staff telephone numbers change?
- What standards are you going to adopt, e.g. greeting for answering of phones, procedures to be followed.
- Do you have common guidelines and procedures for customer service?
- How can you most easily make these accessible across multiple locations?
- How will you share customer information across multiple locations?
- Do you need to establish after hours service arrangements?
- What on-hold and recorded messages will you adopt?
- If the telephone system must be upgraded or replaced, can it be sold/traded in?

Recommended Actions

1. Determine:
 - a. Telephone system interoperability - how will calls be transferred between sites
 - b. Main switchboard number
 - c. Location the call centre will operate from
 - d. Call centre hours of operation
 - e. After-hours service requirements
 - f. Any changes to telephone numbers required
2. Update:
 - a. On-hold and recorded messages
 - b. Internal phone directory covering all sites.
 - c. Phone directory on the Intranet. Consider use of photos so that staff can recognise those from other locations.
 - d. "Contact Us" pages on LG website with updated telephone number and call centre information
 - e. Stationary and publications with telephone number changes if required
3. Consider:
 - a. How the Intranet could be improved to facilitate greater sharing of information, guidelines and procedures across multiple sites.
 - b. How new technologies such as unified voice communications, video conferencing, enterprise collaboration tools, wikis etc. may be implemented to help improve internal communication.

7. Mobile

- What are the mobile requirements for the new local government?
- What contracts are in place, with which vendors, and what is the term remaining?

- What is the size of the mobile fleet?
- What model(s) of mobile devices are in use?
- Who is responsible for managing mobile devices?
- Is there a mobile phone policy? Who is entitled to a mobile, what is the process for approving mobile purchases, and what is the process of approving monthly accounts?
- Is there Mobile Device Management (MDM) software in place?

Recommended Actions

1. Carry out an ICT Audit to determine what IT infrastructure, including hardware and software exists.
2. Establish an ICT Projects Register.
3. Establish a common software and hardware register.
4. Establish appropriate policies and procedures to support good governance.
5. Develop guidelines for delegations and purchasing controls.
6. Identify changes required to existing systems and databases and carry them out.
7. Determine impacts on key applications such as payroll, recruitment, accounting, records and document management.
8. Liaise with the Finance / Accounts section to identify all the ICT assets to be transferred.
9. Address requirements for disaster recovery and business continuity.
10. Identify equipment to be relocated, make appropriate arrangements including transportation and cabling at the new site.
11. Upload personnel data from the current to new HR and payroll systems, including personnel/payroll and recruitment.
12. Transfer systems, applications, databases, emails and personal files.
13. Migrate existing agency systems to those in use by the new organisation as appropriate.

8. Corporate Software Systems

Systems consolidation and data migration to selected systems, require considerable planning and resources. Furthermore, they rely upon effective decision making surrounding the business processes of the new organisation.

Corporate software systems will include:

- Financial management
- Human Resources and Payroll
- Customer Request Management (Property and Rates)
- Asset Management
- Records Management
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Recreation Centres

Consider:

- What software will the new LG use? e.g. what property, finance, budgeting system?
- Determine impacts on key applications such as payroll, recruitment, accounting, records and document management.
- When should you start migrating data to one system?
- How will this be undertaken?
- Do your systems have the capacity for increased staff numbers, larger transaction volumes, multiple remote offices and depots?
- Identify changes required to existing systems and databases and carry them out.

Recommended Actions

1. Audit all current software systems.

2. Undertake a software inventory of all software licences, including software version, and number of licences.
3. Identify common systems between amalgamating Councils.
4. Identify critical systems that must be amalgamated.
5. Plan the data migration
6. Establish a working group for each of the corporate software systems, to determine:
 - a. the requirements of the new LG
 - b. what system will be used
 - c. how will data be migrated
 - d. when will data be migrated (e.g. for change-over day, over a long weekend, financial year end)
 - e. what the cost of systems integration/data migration will be
 - f. what new software licences are required
 - g. what the software maintenance costs will be going forward
 - h. standardisation of processes and procedures
 - i. software training required (where systems have changed)
7. Invite key users of the software systems from each amalgamating LG to part of the working group.
8. Get a current list of vendor contacts for all systems. Contact vendors early – you will need them.

9. Software Licences

- What software systems are in use?
- How many software licences do you have e.g. Office, Microsoft CALs
- How are software licences managed?
- Where are software licences located?
- What are the software licence renewal dates?
- Is there a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement in place?
- Is there software assurance on Microsoft products?
- Is software up-to-date? What versions are running?
- Are all copies of the same software on the same version?

Recommended Actions

1. Undertake a software inventory of all software licences, including software version, and number of licences.
2. Determine how many software licences do you have e.g. Office, Microsoft CALs and their versions.
3. Create a software licence register to keep track of licences and renewal dates.
4. Consider engaging a software licensing specialist to audit existing licence profile.

10. Desktop Hardware

- What IT infrastructure is in place? Is it compatible?
- What desktops, laptops, tablet devices are in use?
- What is the size of the desktop/laptop/tablet fleet?
- How are IT assets managed?
- Is there an IT asset register? Who maintains it?
- Is there an IT asset replacement program? What is in the asset replacement schedule for desktops/laptops/tablets?
- What additional hardware is required to support the transition?
- Is there a standard SOE (Standard Operating Environment)?
- What printers/multi-function devices are in use? What model, what is the size of the fleet? Are the devices compatible?
- Is “follow-you” printing enabled? If not should it be enabled?
- Determine what assets could be delayed in replacing to accommodate a smooth transition to one network (e.g. could PC replacement be stretched to 3.5years to allow for new PCs with new SOE to be installed at changeover).

- Identify equipment to be relocated, make appropriate arrangements including transportation and cabling at the new site.
- What new technologies should be taken into consideration? e.g. virtualised desktops, hybrid laptop/tablets.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop a hardware inventory.
2. Liaise with the Finance / Accounts section to identify all the ICT assets to be transferred.
3. Review IT asset replacement schedule.
4. Develop a combined IT asset register.
5. Develop a standardised SOE.
6. Determine the model(s) of desktop/laptops/tablets to be used by new LG.

11. ICT Staff

- What existing ICT staff are available and what is their capability?
- What ICT staff are available and where are they located?
- Are there any existing support arrangements with third parties?
- What will be the ICT support model going forward?
- What ICT skills do you need to support the transitional period?
- What ICT skills are required to support the new LG post-transition?
- Are there staff in other teams that could provide support during the transition? What training would they require?
- Who are the “key users” of each of the corporate systems?
- What skill sets are provided under outsourcing arrangements?

Recommended Actions

1. Develop a skills register of current ICT staff.
2. Identify what ICT skills will be required as part of the transitional planning process, and what skills will be required to support once systems have been integrated.
3. Identify what services and skills are provided under contract arrangements.
4. Identify the “key users” of each of the corporate systems, as these staff will be integral to the systems integration planning/data migration processes.
5. Identify permanent and contract ICT staff to be relocated.
6. Identify any training necessary.

12. ICT Contracts

- Review all ICT related contractual arrangements currently in force. What are the contract terms and what do they cover?
- Are there multiple service providers contracting for the same thing?
- What ICT services will be required during the transition period, and thereafter?
- What is the financial impact of existing contracts? – e.g. are there penalty clauses?
- What software licensing and hardware leasing arrangements are in place?

Recommended Actions

1. Conduct an audit of existing ICT contracts.
2. Identify what services and solutions will need to be contracted.
3. Identify a schedule for contract renewals.
4. Identify current contracts for hardware, software, services etc.
5. Review hardware and software licences, determine the implications.
6. Advise vendors of any changes as appropriate.

13. Website

The corporate website is a key marketing and engagement tool for interacting with the community. Ensuring the new organisation has a functional and engaging website sends a powerful message to the community that the new Council is functioning well.

Many councils operate a number of websites in addition to the overall corporate websites, for example for libraries, heritage buildings or for events. It is important to review these and ensure a plan is in place that will align these websites to the new Council.

- Review all existing websites.
- Will there be a single website for the new organisation?
- When will this be available?
- Start afresh or use existing website as a starting point?
- Which eServices will be offered (e.g. ePayments, eCRMs, Animal Registration etc)
- What new branding is required?
- What web services will be provided to residents moving forward by the new local government?
- Update the existing web site with relevant redirection links and revise the intranet.

Recommended Actions

1. Review all existing websites
2. Determine need for consolidating websites and / or web platforms.
3. Develop a new website business plan.
4. Secure new domain name.
5. Prepare the new website.
6. Ensure previous websites are archived and maintained in line with State Records Guidelines.
7. Compare / Standardise Application Platform for web based services
8. Compare Information Architecture (IA) of current websites to create a new IA
9. Conduct content inventory of current websites for currency, accuracy and relevancy of information moving forward.
10. Inventory of what web services current local governments are providing (Rate Payments, Parking tickets etc).
11. Allocate responsibility for maintaining information on new local government website.
12. Conduct an inventory of social media properties.
13. Develop a communications plan that considers use of the following:
 - Social media
 - Wikis
 - Community newsletters by email subscription
 - On-line community noticeboard

14. Social Media

Many councils have spent a considerable amount of time building up a following on social media and other online communications sites. It is important from a marketing point of view that the messages being delivered are consistent. It is likely that consolidation of social media accounts will be required, but doing so while keeping existing followers is key.

- In consultation with marketing and communications, review all existing Social Media accounts and platforms

15. Intranet

An intranet can be a powerful internal communications tool and can be used to develop a new corporate identity which will assist with change management through the amalgamation process.

- Determine the priority for developing a new/combined intranet.

- Establish how staff across all locations can access the intranet.
- Identify what features are required on the new intranet.

16. ICT Policies and Plans

- Set up a working group to review and consolidate:
 - ICT Strategic Plans
 - Network Diagrams
 - Backup procedures
 - Disaster Recovery Plans
 - Acceptable Use policies
 - Password Policy
 - ICT Asset Management Plan

17. Information Management

Information is a strategic resource and should be managed and planned for accordingly.

Records must be managed in accordance with *State Records Act 1998*. The naming conventions based on the Thesaurus of Local Government may have been built into an existing record system, if so it can continue to be used. Care needs to be taken with older records pertinent to councils before amalgamation e.g. if council A merges with council B and the newly amalgamated council adopts the name of council A, care needs to be taken in identifying records from the 'older' version of council A.

Consider:

- Identify where paper and electronic records are located. Consider compactuses, filing cabinets, offsite storage, electronic document and record management systems (EDRMS), shared drives, personal drives and email systems.
- Are any records kept offsite? If so, identify where and the contract terms.
- What are the EDRMS system requirements for the new LG?
- What EDRMS systems are currently in use? What is the size of the database, how many electronic records are there, is there one data set or multiple? What version is the system?
- Review the EDRMS contract terms. Can the system support the record keeping requirements for the new LG? What are the costs involved in increasing the number of licences? What are the penalty clauses for early termination?
- What are the options for migrating records?
- What are the risks involved in migrating electronic records?
- What information is saved on shared drives, personal folders and email? How can this information be captured into the EDRMS?
- Advise the State Records Authority, NSW of the local government change and seek advice specific to the custody, ownership and migration of records.
- Identify and list all records, both paper and electronic, required for the ongoing management of the local governments being amalgamated.
- Identify and list all records, both paper and electronic, to be archived.
- Revise or develop a new:
 - Recordkeeping Plan for the new local government
 - Record keeping policy
 - Retention and Disposal Schedule
 - Record Keeping procedures
- Where local government boundaries have changed, identify custody and ownership issues relating to all records
- Address security and access to electronic and paper based records.
- Provide copies of computer systems and/or storage media used to create and manage current and inactive electronic records of the local governments being amalgamated.

- Update systems that control records to reflect the movement of records.
- Create register recording details of records stored in archives.
- Advise the organisation/s storing the inactive and archived records of the new arrangements.
- Determine access arrangements to records required by staff in different locations.
- Ensure that all previous websites are archived appropriately, as well website snapshots and backups.
- Develop a record keeping training plan that identifies record keeping training requirements to ensure all staff have an appropriate level of record keeping knowledge.
- Ensure disposal exercises are undertaken with reference to approved Record Keeping Plans and Retention and Disposal Schedules.

Recommended Actions

1. Conduct a file audit to locate all physical and electronic files.
2. Create a register recording all locations records are kept, including offsite storage facilities.
3. Determine what system will be used for managing electronic records.
4. Develop a risk register for movement/migration of records.
5. Advise State Records Office.
6. Develop a record training plan.
7. Revise/develop:
 - a. a Record Keeping Plan
 - b. a Record Keeping Policy
 - c. Retention and Disposal Schedule
 - d. Record keeping procedures

18. Mail

- What will be the mail delivery address for the new LG?
- What will happen with existing PO Boxes? e.g. how long will they be maintained?
- What mail redirects will need to be put in place.
- How will correspondence be distributed between local government sites/offices?
- What time is mail delivered/collected?
- What will be the process for mail outs?
- Where are the LG contact details published? e.g. websites, brochures – etc., do these need to be updated

19. Stationery

- In consultation with marketing and communications, develop new stationery reflecting the new LG name and logo, new corporate branding, new mail address and contact numbers.
- Determine what will be done with existing stationery and advise staff.
- How will staff order/obtain access to stationery? What new processes need to be put in place?

20. Call Centre

- What will be the main call centre number?
 - How will calls be transferred between local government sites?
 - What tools will staff require enabling them to transfer calls?
 - What will be the protocol for announcing calls?
 - What are the current call centre hours? What will the new hours of operation be?
 - Amend messages on hold, after-hours and other recorded messages as required.
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- Provide switchboard staff an updated telephone directory that includes a description of staff roles for easy transfer of calls.

- What information will customer service centre staff require and how will they access it? How will they access information about the former local governments being amalgamated?
- Update the telephone groups as required (e.g. if calls are redirected or placed in a round-robin)

Where to from here?

- ❖ REVIEW - current business processes and systems
- ❖ IDENTIFY - key requirements of new entity
- ❖ CONSIDER – the ICT Strategic Framework as part of the planning process
- ❖ ANALYSE - and develop strategies for the future
- ❖ PRIORITISE - plans based on business and reputational risk
- ❖ IMPLEMENT - suitable, effective and sustainable ICT systems
- ❖ MAINTAIN - ongoing support and review