

Standard Two - Customer First

A tenet of the [Digital Framework Principles](#) is - *We will seek solutions that benefit the customer in ways that also create a benefit for Council.*

As we will discuss in standard three and four, customers take many forms and should be at the centre of every project. The level of effort that goes into understanding the customer needs is a key indicator of the success of a solution. After all, the requirements for a project are derived from the customer and business needs.

We have a responsibility as an organisation to make sure we are designing solutions that put our customer's needs first, followed by Council's. This means designing and testing from the customer's point of view, independent of our internal structures e.g. using more common terminology for departments or services, rather than the 'Council' version. That said, the best solutions also take into account that council staff are also customers/users with requirements and efficiencies of their own, making a striking a balance between external and internal best-case scenario essential.

A good example of Council working towards meeting this standard (and others) is the Customer Portal project. This project came out of several consultations with the community and staff around our existing approach to service delivery and the frustration caused by the lack of connection between our data sources. Creating a 'single view' of customer data enables transparency, faster access to information and more self-serve options for the external and internal customer.

How do we meet the standard?

Putting customer needs at the centre of our digital projects allows Council to not only improve service but deliver significant efficiency gains for Council, which we can then pass onto our customers and stakeholders. Projects that successfully meet this standard should follow these guidelines:

- Ensure adequate time and energy is given to understanding your customers needs, pain points, motivations and contexts - User research. E.g. Facilitated workshops, [journey mapping](#), [user stories](#), testing and validation with prototypes
- Step back regularly and view your project through the lens of your customer/s – are you designing the right thing, making the right decisions, solving the right problems?
- Have you built in mechanisms for regular and varied customer feedback? And how will you capture and action this feedback?
- Digital solutions should where possible free up Council staff to perform tasks of higher value to the customer.

Additional references:

- [City of Greater Dandenong IT and Digital Strategy 2020-2025](#)
- [City of Greater Dandenong Community Engagement Policy](#)
- [City of Greater Dandenong Community Engagement Planning Framework](#)