Council Connect App Strategy

Redefining Councils for a Connected Future.

Transforming perceptions of councils by positioning them as lifelong partners—driving engagement, strengthening community connections, and fostering local pride.

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1   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council Connect App is a mobile solution designed to reposition councils from transactional service providers to proactive community partners. The app will be deployed via a Commercial of The Shelf (COTS) Partnership Model . Through personalisation and gamification, the app incentivises residents to engage with underutilised services, attend events, and participate in civic and sustainability initiatives.

This expanded report provides detailed context, implementation steps, and measurable outcomes to guide decision-making. Once the platform reaches maturity, **local councils have the option for full ownership**, strengthening trust and market positioning.

To achieve this, the Council Connect team—working with a pilot group of councils—will seek **LGPro's support** in identifying grant funding for initial development and short-term maintenance. This approach ensures sustainability while subscriptions grow.

2   THE CHALLENGE: CURRENT PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL COUNCIL

Local councils face entrenched perceptions that limit engagement and innovation. Residents often view councils as bureaucratic entities focused on basic services like roads and waste collection. This narrow understanding results in low visibility of broader services, transactional interactions, and a lack of trust. Younger audiences perceive councils as digitally irrelevant, creating a disconnect in modern engagement.

- Councils seen only as providers of basic services (roads, waste).
- Interactions remain transactional, not relational, missing opportunities for long-term engagement.
- Low visibility of services across life stages, especially among youth.
- Digital disconnect and lack of modern engagement tools.
- Formal, impersonal communication style reduces approachability.

3   STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Council Connect initiative aims to shift perceptions and achieve the following objectives:

- Position council as a trusted, lifelong partner in community wellbeing.
- Increase engagement with valuable but underutilised services such as libraries, leisure centres, and sustainability programs.
- Foster community pride and ownership through inclusive and proactive communication.
- Modernise council branding and digital presence to appeal to all demographics.

4   PROPOSED SOLUTION: COUNCIL CONNECT APP

The Council Connect App combines personalisation and gamification to transform engagement. Residents input demographics and interests to receive tailored service recommendations. Gamification motivates participation through points and rewards, creating a fun and interactive experience.

4.1   CORE FEATURES

- Personalised Connector: Matches residents with relevant services and events based on demographics and interests.
- Gamification Engine: Points and rewards for civic actions such as attending events, volunteering, and participating in sustainability programs.
- Community Impact Options: Ability to donate points to charities or pool points for community grants.

4.2   REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- Discounts and passes for leisure facilities and cultural events.
- Vouchers for local businesses and discounts on workshops.
- Exclusive experiences such as behind-the-scenes tours and wellness sessions.
- Digital badges and recognition as a Community Champion.

4.3   COST ESTIMATES - THIRD PARTY PROVIDERS

- Small/medium council might pay **AUD ~$20,000-$40,000 per year** for the enterprise licence.
- Larger metropolitan council might pay **AUD $100,000+ per year** (depending on volume, integrations, features).
- Setup/one-time fees may apply.

5   IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The app will be deployed via a COTS Partnership Model to ensure rapid implementation, cost efficiency, and sustainability. Key components include:

- Deployment Model: Partner with an established COTS provider for speed-to-market.
- Cost Structure: Subscription-based Software- as- a Service model to reduce upfront costs and shift to predictable Operating Expense.
- Maintenance: Vendor-managed updates and security for futureproofing.
- Integration: API-first approach for seamless data flow and accurate tracking of engagement metrics.

6   BENEFITS TO COUNCIL

- Drives service utilisation and increases non-rates revenue.
- Inspires positive civic and sustainable behaviours aligned with strategic goals.
- Provides real-time data for evidence-based decision-making.
- Builds trust and advocacy through innovative engagement.
- Creates collaboration opportunities with local businesses and community ambassadors.

7   MEASURES OF SUCCESS (KPIS)

- App adoption and active user rates.
- Cross-service participation growth.
- Civic action engagement metrics (e.g., sustainability programs).
- Community investment and satisfaction scores (e.g., points donated to charities).

8   RECOMMENDATION & CALL TO ACTION

Councils are invited to join the pilot program, gaining early influence on app features, reduced subscription fees for three years, and measurable community outcomes within 12 months. This is a strategic opportunity to lead digital transformation and elevate the collective profile of local government.

9   APPENDIX APP DESIGN VISUALS

The following image showcases the Council Connect App design, including splash screen, onboarding flow, profile setup, and dashboard. Refer to Documents 1 and 2.