Service Design Transformation Maturity Index

The index below sets out the typical **Service Design** characteristics demonstrated by councils at each stage of their transformation maturity.

It is split into five levels (Level 1 being lowest and Level 5 being the highest).

A fuller definition of the typical characteristics of councils at each level is set out at the end of this document.

The following **Service Design capabilities** are covered.

- User research
- Design thinking
- Customer / user journey mapping
- Persona development
- Service blueprinting
- Creating service model canvases
- Prototyping
- Using Agile delivery methods
- Accessibility
- Content creation and management
- Evaluating impact.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3 l	Level 4	Level 5
User research	User research is not routinely undertaken as part of service change. Services make assumptions about user needs in the design of services. The user experience tends to be considered reactively in the face of rising complaints or feedback from members.	Services individually conduct relevant research to establish user needs before services are designed or changed. There are pockets of good practice in individual service areas, but practice is not consistent service or council wide.	There is a whole council framework in place that clearly sets out when and how user research should be undertaken and a structured approach for its delivery. User research is recognised as important and routinely conducted based on organisational priorities, and aligned to strategic outcomes but may have varying degrees of impact.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council can evidence the impact of user research on intended outcomes – for example service uptake, reduced complaints, improved performance.	Level four has been met. In addition, there is advocacy of user research at all levels of the organisation. Insights are continually gathered and used to inform iterative improvements to service delivery on an ongoing basis.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Design thinking	Design thinking is not used in any part of the organisation and / or the concept is not well understood.	Individual services or projects may be applying design thinking. The practice is not consistent and best practice approaches are not embedded.	A whole council Service Design framework in place and recognises good design practice as a foundation for effective service design. The link between service design and the achievement of outcomes is evidenced inconsistently.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council can evidence the impact of effective service design on intended outcomes.	Service design is well embedded within the authority and applied consistently across all service areas. There is strong advocacy for service design practice, and it is considered an essential ingredient in all types of service change.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Customer / user journey mapping	The council maps processes but does not consider the impact of current processes or proposed changes to processes in the context of the user experience.	Individual services or projects may apply user / customer journey mapping as part of their approach to understand service delivery. There is no organisation wide approach or tooling in place to ensure consistency of practice.	Understanding of the value of customer /user journey mapping exists council-wide. There is a framework for how this is achieved, including consistent practices and tooling.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council can evidence the impact of customer / user journey mapping on service and organisational outcomes.	Level 4 has been met. In addition, customer / user journey mapping is well embedded within the authority and is integrated to any type of process change.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Persona development	The value of personas is not understood, or personas have been created, but are too generic to be useful in the design of services.	Individual services or projects may create and use personas to drive design activity, but personas are developed in isolation and usually only because an individual has an interest in service design. There are no council standards for persona creation.	There is a whole council Service Design framework in place and recognises good design practice as a foundation for effective service design, including the creation of personas. Standardised templates are in place to enable effective data capture and representation. Personas are regularly used to support design activity.	Level three has been met. In addition, personas and impacts are actively discussed in relation to change corporately. Active and ongoing maintenance of personas is undertaken.	Level four has been met. In addition, service design is well embedded within the authority and applied consistently across all service areas, with personas regularly referred to at all levels to assess the impact of any type of change.

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Service blueprinting	The council does not understand the concept of service blueprints or carries out elements of blueprinting in isolation (e.g. process design).	Individual services or projects may be creating blueprints to understand how a service is being delivered and to envisage the future state. There is no council wide framework for delivering blueprints consistently, or use of consistent tooling.	A whole council Service Design framework in place, and this articulates how service blueprints should be created and used. Templates exist to support information capture and presentation.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council can evidence the impact of service blueprinting and a more integrated way of working.	Level four has been met. In addition, service design, including service blueprinting is well embedded within the authority and applied consistently across all service areas. There is advocacy for integrated blueprinting at all levels.

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Creating service model canvasses	The council does not understand the concept of service model canvases.	Individual services or projects may be creating canvasses, but these may be incomplete and are developed in the absence of any organisation wide guidance. Joins between services and opportunities to consider external opportunities between services are not explored.	A whole council framework is in place that sets out how service model canvasses will be used and how opportunities that cross service areas will be facilitated and managed. Standard tools and templates are used to ensure consistency. There is growing appreciation of the need for 'joined up' approaches to business architecture and design.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council can evidence holistic whole council approaches leading to beneficial outcomes.	Level four has been met. In addition, service model canvasses are impact assessed as part of the change process, with cross service impacts understood before change is enacted, typically through a business design authority.

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Prototyping	The council does not prototype at all.	Individual services or projects may be developing prototypes or iteratively trying and adapting new ways of working based on user feedback, but the practice is not widespread. The organisation does not have a framework for the overall design of services (digital and non-digital).	The council encourages iterative approaches to change, trying and prototyping new features (for software design) and new service approaches before they are refined and embedded. A codified approach to service development is in place council wide.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council can evidence the benefits of prototyping on its project costs, technology adoption and service outcomes.	There is strong advocacy for prototyping at all levels of the organisation in relation to both digital and non-digital service delivery. Senior leaders act as ambassadors for iterative change and are comfortable to explore solutions that may not always guarantee success, with the aim of improving, iterating, and enabling a better outcome.

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Using Agile delivery methods	There is no use of agile across the council, or agile is seen as a 'fad' and its value not understood.	Individual services or projects may be applying agile delivery methodologies or adapting ways of working to incorporate Agile elements, but this is not widespread across the Council. Or there is some evidence of Agile process and practice in place, but not yet an impact on mindset or culture to any significant extent.	The Council has embraced aspects of Agile delivery methods as a core enabler of transformation and is applying Agile practice and tools appropriately to key initiatives and / or ways of working. Empowered, multi-disciplinary teams are the norm, and there is evidence of effective collaboration, prioritisation and user focus, and positive cultural impacts as a result.	Level three has been met. In addition, the Council is maturing its Agile practice, with leadership commitment to, and understanding of how Agile can best be deployed to support organisational outcomes. There is evidence of increased velocity in delivery and continuous improvement.	Level 4 has been met. In addition, there is evidence of automation, engineering maturity, culture and mindset shift at all levels.

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Accessibility	Accessibility is an afterthought in relation to service delivery and / or change. The council builds for the many without upfront consideration of all user needs.	Individual services or projects may focus on accessibility and consider this as part of design, but accessibility standards and expectations are not embedded across the council.	The council is clear in its accessibility expectations and follows good practice in understanding user needs upfront and applying inclusive design practice. Standards are clearly communicated council wide with a level of quality assurance in place to ensure accessibility standards are met.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council invests in accessibility tools to maximise understanding of where improvement can be made on an ongoing basis. Change is impact assessed with accessibility considerations in mind.	Level four has been met. In addition, the council actively contributes to the development of standards external to the organisation and actively participates in national and international forums to ensure up to date understanding and applies this to its own practice.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Content creation and management	Content is managed in an ad hoc manner with no joining up of the information provided across different access channels, or different services. Content may not meet best practice and be difficult to understand or find. Inexperienced resources are often used to create content as an adjunct to the day job.	Individual services or projects are managing content effectively within their own service area, or in relation to specific platforms, but content may not be joined up across wider council services. There is some understanding of user needs, and some local standards may apply, but there are no council wide standards or expectations for content creation.	The council sees content management as a critical element of its front door. Standards are in place that define tone of voice, style, channel considerations and accessibility requirements. Quality assurance is in place. Dedicated personnel with experience in content design, work collaboratively across all council services and channels to optimise content.	Level three has been met. In addition, the council can evidence the capture and ongoing use of feedback to adapt and improve content on an ongoing basis. There are professional skills in place to optimise content for search purposes and to ensure that user needs are understood and considered.	Level four has been met. In addition, tools are used to automate aspects of content delivery and management and the council invests in understanding emerging technologies and how they might be used to improve the user experience.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Evaluating impact	Transformation and change activities are conducted without effective evaluation in place. There tends to be inadequate data to baseline benefits at the start of work and no, or limited assessment of impact throughout. Projects often continue without evidence of impact and are rarely stopped.	Individual services or projects are evaluating the impact of specific projects but evaluation may not be SMART or linked to corporate objectives to maximise benefit. There is an understanding of the need to evaluate impact but this is not consistently undertaken throughout the project lifecycle.	The council sees evaluation of impact as a critical component of transformation and change activity. There is a standard approach or guidance in place corporately and decisions to start, continue and stop transformation activity are made using data and assessed based on impact on outcomes. Periodic reviews take place to understand progress across all transformation activities.	Level three has been met. In addition, evaluation is embedded throughout the project lifecycle enabling change activities to be adapted while in flight based on the impact they are having.	Level four has been met. At level 5, slicker systems are in place to automate aspects of reporting ensuring that near real time views of impact are able to be accessed and decisions are wholly evidence based.

Maturity level definitions

The following definitions define the general characteristics of councils at each stage of their transformation journey and should be read in combination with the specific characteristics of each capability.

Level One: Level one describes the typical capabilities and characteristics of councils who do not yet have whole organisation approaches to transformation in place. These councils are characterised by having lots of individual projects happening within services and with no joining up between them corporately.

Typically, success depends on the efforts of individuals rather than on processes and established ways of working. Coordination and communication are usually limited. Senior leaders may plan strategically but do not put the mechanisms in place to translate their vision into joined up action, often becoming disappointed or frustrated when initiatives fail.

Level Two: Councils with Level two transformation capabilities may have consistent practices in place within individual service areas or projects, or in pockets of the authority. This may include templates, standard processes, reporting and some repeatable ways of working.

Cross-functional teams, with representation outside of the service area, are often pulled together to drive project delivery, but these defined ways of working do not span the whole organisation.

Typically, at this stage there is some analysis and focus on strategic outcomes, and basic benefit capture and tracking (e.g. identifying and tracking savings). Usually there are a small number of defined roles in place including Project Management capacity.

Level two organisations are beginning their transformation journey.

Level Three: At Level Three, councils have integrated transformation capabilities and are applying standard ways of working across the whole organisation, incorporating continuous learning and best practice.

Changes are managed effectively against an integrated governance structure that spans people, process, technology and financial. Teams share information across departments and effective, co-ordinated communication is in place that sets out clear organisational vision and makes the 'golden thread' between projects and organisational outcomes clear.

Roles and responsibilities are clear, enabling employees to understand their role in transformation and to be empowered to take decisions within their remit. Staff engagement is regular and enables two-way communication and problem solving. Change resistance is managed and Senior Leaders understand, and invest appropriately in, all the levers needed to deliver effective transformation.

Level three councils understand what good looks like and are developing their capacity and capability to support transformational change.

Level Four: Councils who reach Level 4 are strategic in their approach to transformation.

This means that they go beyond aligning ways of working and linking activity back to the Golden Thread, implementing and embedding consistent, predictable, best practice ways of working that support transformational outcomes.

Accurate, real time or near real time data analysis is consistently used to enable actionable insights that drive decision-making and track progress. Metrics are used to understand what is working, and what is not, enabling changes to be made where needed.

The organisation has confidence in its decision making and is mature enough to stop activity where value has diminished. Change resistance in Level 4 organisations is minimised and there is a more consistent culture across service areas due to effective communication and leadership.

Level Five: Level Five represents a best practice organisation that is fully optimised and self-optimising.

It is rare for councils to reach a fully optimised transformational capability and those that do set the benchmark for the sector.

A fully optimised transformation capability is evident in optimised processes, maximum productivity and efficiency, evidence of significantly positive impact on outcomes and the use of capacity created to drive innovation.