

ITEM 8. POST EXHIBITION - DIGITAL STRATEGY

FILE NO: S118878

SUMMARY

On 27 February 2017, Council endorsed the draft Digital Strategy for public exhibition for a minimum period of six weeks. The Strategy was exhibited on Sydney Your Say, advertised via social media (organic and targeted posts) and hard copies were made available in the City's customer service centres. The Digital Strategy was also made available to individual stakeholders.

A small number of submissions were received, which were supportive of the Digital Strategy and its direction. The submissions have not required any significant changes to the Digital Strategy. Additional content has been added in response to submissions from the Office of Small Business Commissioner regarding the benefits to small business in being digitally engaged and from Data 61 in relation to the importance of digitally skilled leadership.

The Digital Strategy is essentially a roadmap of the City's approach to digital transformation – both within the organisation and for the city in general.

The application of the principles of the Digital Strategy to all work delivered as part of Sustainable Sydney 2030 renders Sustainable Sydney 2030 as the City's "smart city" plan in a technological age.

The Digital Strategy is a principles-led framework that outlines key priorities and areas for action. It is important to note it is not an action plan in the usual sense. It is not possible to "do digital" independently of the other business processes of the City. It is a cross-cutting strategy that outlines how a digital approach can be incorporated into much of the work the City is already doing, piloting or planning in the future.

Therefore, at the core of the Digital Strategy is the premise that the City's digital future must be people-led, not technology-led. The focus is on delivering outcomes for the community in a time of technological change.

It is important to note that we are not starting from scratch. The City already has a well-established portfolio of digital and technology projects. However, by applying the principles of this Digital Strategy consistently to all of our current and future city work in this space, we will set a standard of digital excellence befitting a major global city.

The Digital Strategy has a clear vision that identifies six strategic priorities:

1. Champion digital inclusion and lifelong learning;
2. Create people-centred digital programs and services;
3. Transform how we engage with all our communities;
4. Support businesses that promote digital skills, knowledge and infrastructure required for the digital future of Sydney;
5. Actively participate in urban renewal of Sydney, advocating for, and where possible providing, infrastructure needed to ensure Sydney's global competitiveness; and

6. Innovate ethically in the information marketplace.

Recently, the market has indicated that there is interest from several providers to provide free public Wi-Fi. A free public Wi-Fi network is identified in the Digital Strategy as an opportunity to provide visitors and residents with a better experience of the city, as well as providing valuable city analytics to help run our city more efficiently and provide a platform for smart city applications. To explore these opportunities and ensure the best possible outcome for the community and the City, staff are preparing to call for Expressions of Interest for the provision of a free public Wi-Fi network in the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) note the matters raised in the submissions received following the exhibition of the draft Digital Strategy as shown at Attachment A;
- (B) adopt the Digital Strategy as shown at Attachment B;
- (C) approve advertising for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the installation of a free public Wi-Fi network in the City of Sydney Local Government Area within the next few months; and
- (D) approve funding of \$150,000 from the 2017/18 General Contingency Budget to enable EOI documentation preparation, advertising, assessment and contract finalisation for a free public Wi-Fi network in the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Summary of submissions received to exhibition of the draft Digital Strategy

Attachment B: City of Sydney Digital Strategy

BACKGROUND

1. The City sees digital technology as an enabler, rather than driving how we do things. Sydney is a city with people at its heart. This Strategy sets out how the City will keep our focus on our people and the outcomes we need to achieve for our communities in a time of continued technological change.
2. The Digital Strategy articulates key outcomes for the communities the City of Sydney serves and with whom the City works by focusing on six priority areas:
 - (a) Champion digital inclusion and lifelong learning – programs that encourage skilled, digitally-literate, resilient communities capable of accessing and enjoying the benefits of the digital economy.
 - (b) Create people-centred digital programs and services – improve the design, efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of our program and services, not just to manage costs, but to meet the changing needs of our communities and deliver a better experience.
 - (c) Transform how we engage with all our communities – use existing and new platforms to engage with residents and businesses to support the functioning of our democratic process.
 - (d) Support businesses that promote digital skills, knowledge and infrastructure required for the digital future of Sydney – supporting a diversified local economy that is more resilient and enhances Sydney’s reputation as a collaborative, connected, dynamic and innovative city that attracts talent.
 - (e) Actively participate in urban renewal of Sydney, advocating for, and where appropriate providing, infrastructure needed to ensure Sydney’s global competitiveness – using our influence to get the right infrastructure and networks in place to ensure Sydney is globally competitive.
 - (f) Innovate ethically in the information marketplace – creatively use data and city analytics to improve the performance and operation of our systems and infrastructure, including open data initiatives to benefit local communities and businesses.
3. There are two key enabling actions that will be critical for the success of the Digital Strategy:
 - (a) The City of Sydney must embrace a digital mindset within our own organisation. Cultural change is essential for the development of people-centred digital services, systems and innovative working practices and to attract talent to the organisation. We need to address our skills shortages, manage digital change and achieve greater productivity and improved performance with fewer or similar resources and investigate how we can better involve suppliers in the development of innovation solutions.

- (b) The City of Sydney is not alone in seeking digital transformation in Sydney, nor can the City achieve digital transformation of Sydney alone. We need to identify the influence we can have in promoting the digital economy and be an essential part of the wider metropolitan goals to retain and attract the talent and investment Sydney will need in future. We must enable effective partnerships with private companies, organisations, academia and other levels of government, which will be critical to the delivery of public benefits associated with a digital approach.
4. This Digital Strategy is not a list of “smart city” technology projects. The Strategy takes a broader view and instead looks to achieving outcomes for community benefit, outlining an approach and setting standards that can guide future digital and technology projects. The use of new technologies is best assessed and incorporated as part of the City’s overall program of work. This will ensure that technology is an enabler for us to achieve our objectives and that we avoid the risks associated with having a standalone list of tech-driven smart city projects that fail to deliver value for money outcomes for the community. By applying the principles of this Strategy to the City’s work in delivering Sustainable Sydney 2030, we will in fact deliver a “smart city”.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment

5. The Digital Strategy aligns specifically with Sustainable Sydney 2030 (City of Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2009); Tech Startups Action Plan (2015), Economic Development Strategy (2013), *A City for All* Social Sustainability Policy, Workforce Strategy, Resourcing Strategy and Information and Technology Strategic Plan (2016)

Organisational Impact

6. It is important to note that we are not starting from scratch – the City has already implemented many digital initiatives. This Strategy provides a context for those initiatives and, in some cases, they may need to be shaped to ensure the outcomes of this Strategy are achieved. The Strategy is cross-cutting in nature and will need to be embedded in the work and projects of the City of Sydney. It is not a new strategic pillar, nor an action plan in and of itself. Digital activity arising from this Strategy will be incorporated into project plans.
7. Digital leadership within the organisation is key to effecting successful digital change. The commitment to digital changes and the commitment to flexibility in allocation of resources needs to be embedded at an executive and Council level. The City has been recruiting two senior digital and technology leadership positions (with one position now in place) to help drive the implementation of the Strategy.
8. The Strategy has identified the need for two working groups to assist with the implementation of the Digital Strategy: an internal champions working group to encourage and embed the digital cause and help staff to adapt and innovate; and an external stakeholder relationship working group to focus on promoting the external actions, partnerships and engagement. The City is participating in the Smart City Taskforce, convened by the Committee for Sydney to work collaboratively on coordinating policy around the development of Sydney as a smart city and enabling technology integration across business and government as a way to secure our long term economic and social success.

Risks

9. Projects involving new technologies or new ways of working using technology can be expensive to implement and not always work as expected. In addition, skill shortages and/or not engaging the right skills in the delivery of projects presents a risk to the successful delivery of the outcomes of this Strategy. These risks can be mitigated by adopting a “test, learn, fail fast and iterate” approach to developing new concepts and methods. This allows the City to experiment and innovate with minimal financial and organisational risk.

Social / Cultural / Community

10. This Strategy has a strong theme of inclusion. The future success of the city depends on our residential and business communities being digitally active. We need to develop programs that encourage skilled, digitally literate, resilient communities capable of accessing and enjoying the benefits of digital technology.
11. We need to avoid the digital divide between those who are digitally engaged and those who are not, becoming entrenched. Equitable digital engagement is vital for Sydney to become a more connected and inclusive city and ensuring no one is unavoidably left behind.
12. Community expectations of government have changed with advances in digital technology. They expect high quality online services, delivered anytime, anywhere and to any device. There is also a growing expectation of transparency and accountability from government. The City of Sydney needs to continually reshape our services and how we engage with our communities to ensure we keep pace with these expectations.

Environmental

13. The advent of open data provides opportunity for the City of Sydney to better understand the environmental performance of its assets. Access to environmental information via digital technology also assists communities to build resilience.

Economic

14. Sydney will need to attract and retain the best talent from around the world to be competitive. This includes people who will work in the tech sector, but equally important is supporting small and medium businesses to realise the benefits of fully developing their digital capability for their own future.
15. We want the community, organisations and business in our local area to have the infrastructure and connectivity as well as the information, skills and capability to utilise, engage with and benefit from digital technology.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

16. Digital activity arising from the implementation of this Strategy will be incorporated into existing and upcoming project plans and budgets.
17. The opportunity to explore options for the installation of a free a public Wi-Fi network has arisen post adoption of the 2017 budget, therefore costs associated with the call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for a free public Wi-Fi network, estimated at \$150,000, are proposed to be allocated from the 2017/18 General Contingency Budget. These costs will cover EOI documentation preparation, advertising, assessment and contract finalisation for staff and expert consultants (estimated at 3 in total).

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

18. The *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* and *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)* are relevant to the Digital Strategy in relation to governance, procurement and data management.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

19. The adoption of the Digital Strategy will set the framework for how the City will approach digital and technology projects. This work will commence immediately.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

20. The exhibition period commenced immediately following Council's endorsement of the draft Digital Strategy on 27 February 2017 and closed on 10 April 2017 (six weeks).
21. This public exhibition was in addition to consultation that was conducted during the development of the draft Digital Strategy which informed the direction of the draft. The consultation was done via a survey (online and telephone) which captured the input of 462 City of Sydney residents and/or city workers to ascertain the ways in which the community currently uses digital technology and seek feedback on how the community interacts with the City online and how they envisage a networked digital future for Sydney. The main themes were:
 - (a) Confidence and optimism – the community has a generally positive view of digital technology, reporting that they feel happy, excited and curious about it, although the level of confidence within the community in using technology varied depending on age and how complex the online interactions are.
 - (b) Transparency and service – over 90 per cent of respondents stated access to government information is important and 80 per cent want to do business with the City online, with ease of use important.
 - (c) Access – faster internet and Wi-Fi hotspots were nominated as most important for Sydney's digital future.
22. The draft Digital Strategy was exhibited on Sydney Your Say, including the opportunity for people to leave a comment in the digital visitors' book, advertised via social media and hard copies were made available in the City's customer service centres. The Strategy was also made available to individual stakeholders via email and in person.

23. Briefings were provided to the NSW State Government Innovation working group, the Retail Advisory Panel, the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel, Council and staff.
24. Attendees at the Smart Cities Council Australia New Zealand “Smart Cities Forum” were also advised of the Strategy and invited to review it and make a submission.
25. Targeted social media posts were created for Facebook reaching 175,186 people and generating 2,185 clicks with engagement from men slightly higher at 60% than from women.
26. The exhibition generated a total of 21 visits to the Sydney Your Say page and 12 written submissions. Key matters raised in the submissions are summarised at Attachment A and responses provided.
27. Submissions were received from the Office of the Small Business Commissioner, Data 61 and members of the public.
28. Submissions were supportive of the directions of the Strategy and provided examples and ideas for next steps in the implementation of the Strategy. Additional content was added to the draft Strategy in response to submissions from the Office of Small Business Commissioner regarding the benefits to small business in being digitally engaged and from Data 61 in relation to the importance of digitally skilled leadership.
29. We are continuing to build relationships with key staff from a number of government agencies including Department Finance Services and Infrastructure, Jobs for NSW Destination NSW, Business Events Sydney, Department Premier and Cabinet, Data 61, the Digital Transformation Agency, the Office of Small Business Commissioner, Department Prime Minister and Cabinet Cities Unit and other local government agencies, as well as the Sydney Business Chamber, the Smart Cities Council, Australian Smart Cities Association and Committee for Sydney. This will ensure ongoing commitment to our plans and programs.

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