

Large Scale Mail Outs

Service Review

April 2016

Recommendation

That Council:

- **Adopt the recommendations for changes that will complement future digital transformation.**
- **Note the recommendations related to short term operational improvements.**

What did we want to get out of this

Proposed Outcomes:

- **A commitment to an approach that will aim for**
 - **A more efficient service that will deliver financial savings**
 - **Improved customer service and communication outcomes**
 - **Environmental benefits through reduction in paper use**

Proposed Outputs:

- **A draft strategy that will map an approach to electronic communications**
- **Advice regarding technology available to deliver the strategy including costs and potential savings**
- **A recommendation regarding the ongoing use of Groundswell**
- **A Council report with clear recommendations from Officers**

What will be presented today

What we currently do



What changes are we seeing



What can we do now to complement future digital transformation

What do we do

We send out in excess of 270,000 pieces of correspondence every year, including approximately:

- **75,000 rates notices**
- **84,000 copies of Groundswell**
- **21,000 annual report performance summaries**
- **20,000 waste calendars**
- **10,000+ notices for planning scheme amendments**
- **8,200 animal registration related notices**
- **Plus many, many more**

We use Forms Express for large volume mailings

How much we spend

In 2014/15 Council spent:

- **\$140,000+ with Australia Post**
- **\$200,000+ on our photocopy contract**
- **\$65,000+ with our mail house (Forms Express)**
- **\$200,000+ on printing costs**

Not all related to mail outs, though cost of mail outs is hidden in here somewhere.

Our performance

Based on the quantity of correspondence sent out, our performance is generally good. Some examples where we could improve:

- **In 2014/15 a missed deadline meant waste calendars were sent separately costing \$10k+ in postage;**
- **Ratepayers who own multiple properties are sent multiple rate notices and copies of Groundswell in separate envelopes;**
- **Addresses on rates notices are not personal and do not reflect our desired level of customer service.**

What about Groundswell

- **Groundswell provides Council with a unique opportunity to directly communicate with its ratepayers four times per year.**
- **Groundswell costs approximately \$27,000 to print and distribute every year.**
- **Groundswell is particularly relevant for non resident ratepayers and those that don't get information from the web or social media.**
- **Groundswell will be a useful tool to help transition to digital.**
- **A printed version of Groundswell should be phased out as we reach more ratepayers via digital means.**

What do others do

- **Low cost, digital only service more common such as insurance, telecommunications etc.**
- **Origin Energy offers traditional communication and digital options - leader in this space at 40% conversion. 50% is thought to be a saturation point.**
- **CoGG have developed 'myGeelong', an online customer portal. Growing this to be key tool for engagement with residents and service users. CoGG are delivering major business process efficiencies as part of the rollout of this system.**
- **Forms Express – Council's current mail house has a digital service offering which we will be pursuing. Common amongst other Councils.**

Supporting digital transformation

- **Review confirms the need for a transition to digital service provision**
- **Clear opportunities for improvement have been identified**
- **Actions recommended from this review build on current capabilities and will complement future digital transformation**
- **Digital taskforce is in its infancy**
- **Future adoption of guiding principles will help focus the organisation**

Guiding principles

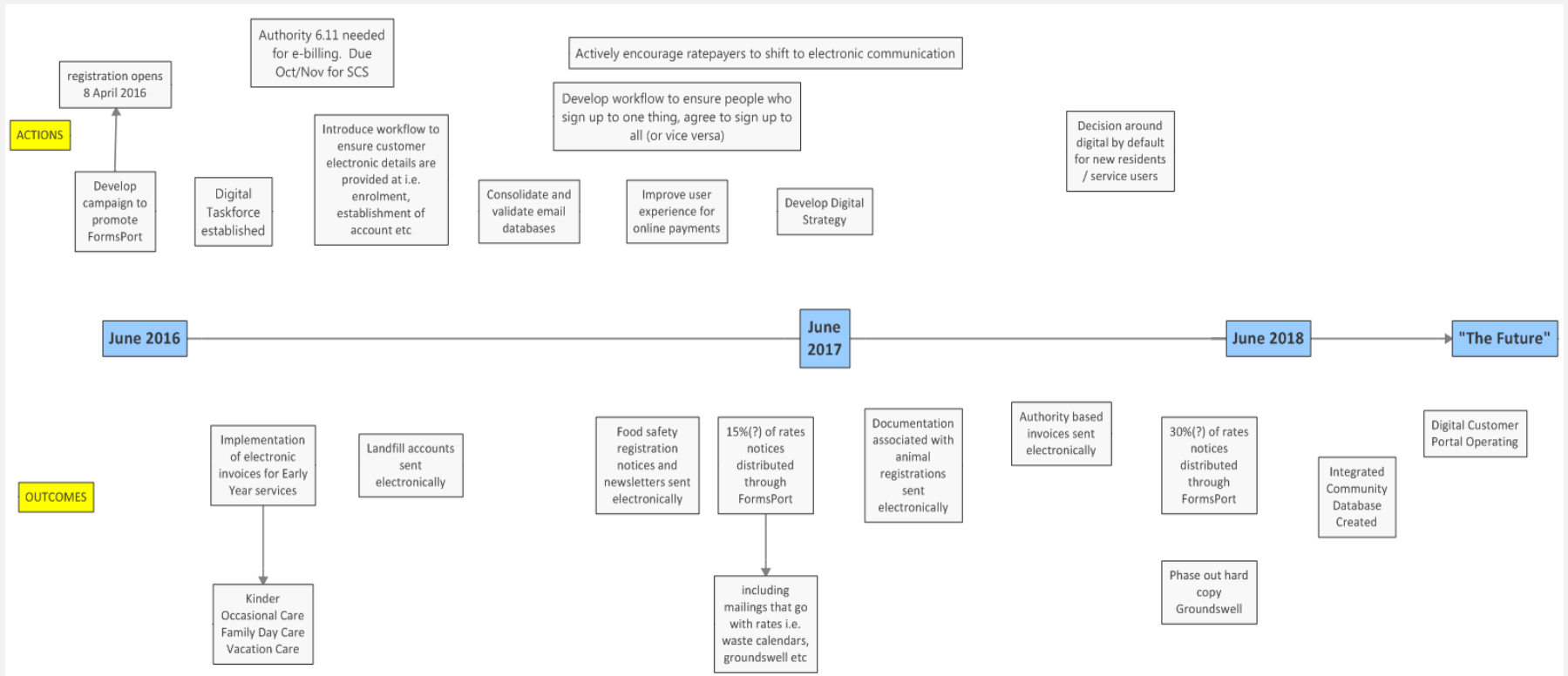
A set of guiding principles should form part of a future digital strategy to help focus the organisation.

A working draft set of principles will help to guide the pursuit of the short term improvements identified here.

These could include a sample of the following:

- **Develop and operate with a single customer database**
- **Customer focused organisation – make decisions or improvements from the customers perspective.**
- **Make it easier – implemented changes should simplify service provision for both staff and customers**
- **Consolidate contact – be more efficient, contact people less often with more.**
- **Choose digital - If a customer registers for one thing electronically then where possible they are a digital customer.**
- **Use what is available - utilise multiple communications methods efficiently.**
- **Aim for digital by default.**
- **Prioritised investment in time and effort now will result in savings later.**

Timeline to digital



Recommendations for adoption

- 1. Endorse the timeline to digital with key actions as follows:**
 - a. Rollout and promote FormsPort**
 - b. Direct convert the following to invoices sent electronically**
 - i. Landfill accounts invoices**
 - ii. Early Years Services (Kinder, Occasional Care, Vacation Care)**
 - iii. Food Safety registrations (and newsletters)**
 - iv. Animal registrations**
- 2. Investigate the use of SMS reminders to notify residents of an unpaid account, rather than doing this by post.**
- 3. Utilise existing email databases to target possible digital conversion customers.**
- 4. Phase out hard copy production of Groundswell as we reach more ratepayers by digital means.**

Recommendations for noting

1. **Ensure better allocation of costs to the service units.**
2. **Establish a central communication point for all external mail outs greater than 100. Provide advanced notice of mailings to enable the consolidation of customer contact.**
3. **Alter processes to eliminate duplication of letters being delivered to a ratepayer with multiple properties.**
4. **Alter processes to improve the customer service experience in transactional correspondence by using first names rather than initials.**
5. **Key transactional documents i.e. rates notices, animal registrations invoices etc should be reviewed by the Communications team with a view to improving the look and feel for customers.**

Financial Impacts

Item	Expected 16/17 Saving	Comment
Early Years Invoices	\$4,120	100% conversion by 1 July 2016
Landfill Invoices	\$1,330	100% conversion by 1 July 2016
FormsPort Conversion	\$710	Based on 15% conversion realised mid year
FormsPort Groundswell Saving	\$320	Based on 15% conversion realised mid year
Food Safety Invoices	\$780	Based 100% conversion realised mid year
SMS Reminder for overdue rates and animals	\$590	Based on 30% conversion realised mid year
Animal Registrations	\$570	Based on 15% conversion realised mid year
TOTAL	\$8,420	10,000+ letters