

Memorandum

City of Ryde
Corporate Services

To: Council

From: Group Manager – Community Life

Date: 2 March 2012

Subject: **Item 10 TENDER- PROVISION OF SMARTFORMS-**
Council Meeting Agenda 28 February 2012.
Supplementary Information

Our Values

Professional
Teamwork
Leadership
Ethical
Pride
Recognition

Councillors

Following a number of queries from Councillors, I have provided below some additional information in relation to the Smart Forms project. The tender report is Item 10 on the 28 February 2012 Council Meeting agenda, to be considered by Council on Tuesday 6 March 2012.

Whilst the Council is considering the results of the tender only, below is some background on the project, its objectives and outcomes that may assist Councillors in their discussions and provide a greater understanding of the project.

This project was incorporated in the General Manager's Performance Objectives, endorsed by Council in November 2011.

The key intent of the project is to:

- improve customer service
- reduce administration costs to Council in processing customer transactions
- improve timeliness and data accuracy

As the tender report details, Council has 99 customer forms on our website for customers. The project aims to convert these paper forms to electronic information, entered by the customer that can be read directly into Council's corporate systems. This will reduce double handling of information and manual entry of data. In addition the project will link these forms to a 'payment gateway' which will automatically process payments. This will reduce manual entry and receipt by Council and speed up the receipt of funds in Council's accounts. Both of these changes will improve Council's efficiency. In terms of volume, Council processes approximately 2500 forms per year, over 600 in the Development Assessment area.

The customer will also enjoy improved convenience by not having to print and post forms to council, with the associated delay in funds clearing from their accounts.

An additional benefit of the project will be improved legibility of the forms as the forms will undergo a review and rewrite. High use forms will be translated into Mandarin and Korean.

The conversion of the Development application forms was endorsed by Council as part of the Best Value Review project on the Development Assessment Process, that was recently completed by Council's Planning and Environment Group. These will form part of the Stage One project scope.

There are currently two different approaches to Smart Forms in the market, examples provided below.

A HTML format, with a number of process steps:

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Council/Rates/RatePayerCOD.aspx>


or alternatively a Adobe suite format similar to this style of form:

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Development/documents/forms/ApplicationForCertificate.pdf>

The three tenders utilise different technology, and therefore the output that is able to be delivered. This was a consideration in reaching the recommendation. The recommendation of the report is to reject all tenders and enter negotiations with companies as the anticipated scale efficiencies of undertaking the conversion of all forms was not achieved and the costs exceed Councils budget. The staged alternative will achieve the majority of the efficiency gains in stage one and can be achieved within the budget.

It is proposed that stage one of the project will focus on the conversion of our highest used forms, to achieve the highest efficiency gains. In addition to this the tender will provide the payment gateway as well as items such as training and development of Council staff and the provision of the software developer [form composer] to develop the forms to allow Council to undertake the remaining form conversion over the coming years. Depending on the success of stage one, funding allocation for the remaining stages will be considered in future budgets,

Regards,



Danielle Dickson
Group Manager – Community Life
City Of Ryde