

Case Study – Develop a Three Year Strategy to Increase Digital Skills

Scope of decision

Create an **action plan to increase digital skills** within the next 5 years.

Background

A recent Government report into productivity found that your region of Homeville has the lowest level of digital skills in the country. It found that:

- 70% of businesses said workers lack the digital skills to meet their needs
- 60% of students are below average on digital literacy skills
- certain segments lack access government and private sector services online
- low levels of digital skills weakens the economy and creates an equity gap between those without the financial means and skills to survive in a digital world and those who will thrive.

This is particularly concerning because last month your Council announced a 10-year plan to spark innovation and boost digital-based jobs which attract a higher pay. Your Council has also committed to change 90% of its paper-based forms and business on to digital channels immediately, but now you're worried that's going to backfire.

Initial outcome

The *Homeville Feed* has run a number of online stories. Social media is running hot.

A lot of negative comments have been made by members of the public in both traditional and social media. They include:

- Criticising your Council for failing to deliver basic human rights
- Fears that older people won't be able to access services
- Concerns for low income families who can't afford a computer per child at home when the poverty rate is already amongst the highest in the country
- Feeling offended about what others on social media are saying about your region, including making fun of local residents
- Complaining that a 10-year strategy will do nothing to solve the problems today
- Demands for actions and not just another strategy that sits on a shelf.

The *Homeville Feed* is running a campaign to come up with the community's own solutions. It holds a public forum at a local hall and 200 residents turn up – many share the negative comments and complaints made so far. They run more stories and videos on their website.

What next?

The state government and your Mayor have declared a digital emergency and have committed \$20million over 3 years to significantly boost digital skills in your region by developing a 3-year Digital Skills Action Plan. There's an expectation that programs will begin as soon as possible.

Your challenge is to develop a community and stakeholder engagement program to inform the development of the plan.

Stakeholders who may want to participate

Local residents, seniors advocacy groups, community services groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders, leaders from various cultural and language groups, mental health experts, Homeville City Council representatives, teachers, employer group representatives, universities, IT specialists, charities.

Issues and effects

Access, affordability, technology, equity, diversity, program types, groups with disability, older people, jobs, productivity.