

EC2 – Service NSW Easy to do Business Program

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TRIM 7924-5

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Service NSW to implement the 'Easy to do Business' proof of concept model for Wollondilly Shire Council and to consider any necessary administrative arrangements.

REPORT

The 'Easy to do Business' (EtdB) initiative was introduced by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Service NSW (SNSW) and the Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner (OSBC) to encourage investment in small business.

The EtdB scheme is designed to deliver the following benefits:

- Improved support and a single source of information for targeted businesses;
- Reduced duplication, particularly by avoiding the repeated entry of the same data such as name and address information by use of a single digital form;
- Streamlining of the processes associated with opening and growing a business;
- Improved quality of information provided to Council;
- Helping to reduce processing and assessment timeframes;
- Increased productivity with 'decision ready' applications and reduced transaction costs;
- Effective tools to help boost the local economy; and
- Enabling more jobs in the region.

The initiative focuses on coordinating and navigating through the various government approvals required by a new business owner. Initial focus will be given to the café and small bar sector to test the model and business sectors such as housing and construction will be added in the near future.

SNSW provides a digital platform and upfront information regarding what a potential new business owner requires from all of the approval authorities including Council and includes a single digital form which replaces the 48 existing forms. At this stage, there is no IT system integration required between Service NSW and Council databases, therefore removing any data-related risks.

Efficient and Effective Council
Report to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 21 May 2018

EC2 – Service NSW Easy to do Business Program

The streamlined system is based on pre-approved summary documents, which will be used by the SNSW concierge team when providing information to the customer. These documents will be specific to each Council and will be developed in partnership with the relevant branches of each Council.

SNSW will provide a business concierge service, via an online portal and a telephone hotline, to support customers through the process with additional concierge services available for customers who attend a SNSW centre in person. Detailed information pertaining to Council requirements will remain on Council's website. The SNSW concierge will provide the customer with direct links to the relevant Council pages they need to review and become familiar with as part of their research phase. Importantly, the EtdB initiative will reduce the number of times that a customer needs to contact Council and other authorities during the approval process.

SNSW business concierges will also assist the customer in submitting 'decision ready' application forms for approval by relevant agencies by ensuring that the forms are completed correctly and include all of the required information. This will reduce the likelihood of assessments being delayed due to an incomplete application and will speed up assessment timeframes. SNSW does not assess the content of the form or application – this role stays with Council.

SNSW will provide a monthly report on all Wollondilly Shire Council customers that have signed up and are progressing through the system. The EtdB initiative will provide Council with access to up-to-date business information and data which is currently hard to gather, including the number of businesses, types of business, and business locations. SNSW will also meet regularly with Council to discuss what is working well and what possible areas of improvement may exist.

In accordance with Section 5 of the Service NSW (One-stop Access to Government Services) Act 2013, a Council resolution is required to empower the EtdB Service Memorandum of Understanding. In order to satisfy the provisions of the Act to allow SNSW to provide this service, the General Manager needs to be authorised to execute the partnership documentation and to delegate customer service functions related to the administration of the scheme.

CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken with Service NSW, the Economic Development Community Advisory Committee and internally with Council's Finance, Customer Service, Planning and Community Outcomes sections.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This matter has no financial impact on Council's adopted budget or forward estimates.

Efficient and Effective Council
Report to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 21 May 2018

EC2 – Service NSW Easy to do Business Program

ATTACHMENT INCLUDED IN SEPARATE BOOKLET

1. Memorandum of Understanding, Service NSW Easy to do Business Program

RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorise the General Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Service NSW to implement the 'Easy to do Business' proof of concept model for Wollondilly Shire Council and any necessary documents be authorised for execution under the Common Seal of Council.