

HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL
DIGITAL COMMUNITY STRATEGY
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Purpose

Horsham Rural City Council's Digital Community Strategy has been created to ensure that all members of the community have the opportunity to engage with technology if they wish to do so.

The strategy has been produced in the context of the scheduled commencement of construction of the National Broadband Network (NBN) in November 2013, with high speed broadband services available from late 2014.¹

However the strategy, by necessity, addresses a wider range of issues than only those directly related to the NBN. The Strategy addresses issues of access, equipment, skill and attitude with recommendations covering a three year period.

High-speed broadband will change the way our community operates, including increasing the pace at which government services, social activities, education, healthcare and employment are digitised.

Councils that are able to capture the community and economic benefits of high speed broadband stand to attract and retain businesses and residents and improve economic and lifestyle opportunities.

Methodology

Thriving Regions undertook the following research and consultations:

- Desktop research on the activities of Councils, businesses and individuals who have responded and utilised high speed broadband access.
- Discussions with Council staff including CEO, Director Corporate Services, Director Community Services, Customer Services, IT, Economic Development, Human Services.
- Interviews with community organisations including Wimmera Regional Library Corporation, Volunteering Western Victoria, Department of Education, Wimmera HUB, Horsham College, U3A, Grampians Medicare Local, Wimmera Heath Care Group, Wimmera Primary Care Partnership, Salvation Army, Wimmera Uniting Care.
- Interviews with members of the Centre for eCommerce and Communications at the University of Ballarat
- Workshop with the above leaders of the community, addressing digital divide, free Wi-Fi, digital community, digital inclusion, funding and training?

This Strategy includes a series of Objectives (in grey shaded boxes) followed by numbered recommended actions.

¹ NBN Co website, accessed 1 May 2013

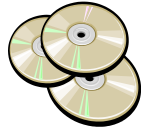
Definitions

High Speed Broadband

Download and upload speeds determine the quality and breadth of activities undertaken on the internet. Current ADSL download speeds average 10-20 megabits per second (Mbps) whereas fibre optic cable speeds currently offered by the NBN are 100Mbps.

10GB

Download a game



1.5GB

Download a movie



2MB

Download a photo



Standard ADSL	5-10 hours	50 minutes	17 seconds
NBN	15-25 minutes	2 minutes	Instant

Download speed comparison taken from iiNet.

The National Broadband Network (NBN)

Current NBN Strategy

The National Broadband Network (NBN) will deliver high-speed broadband to Horsham Rural City using three technologies—optic fibre, fixed wireless and satellite.

Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) will be available within the Horsham township. Fixed wireless will be available to Haven, Quantong, Horsham, Pimipino and Natimuk, while outlying properties will access an improved satellite service.

The first phase of construction is expected to commence in November 2013 with the final stage to commence in March 2014. The service is expected to fully operational one year after construction commences.

Coalition NBN Policy

In the event of a change of Federal Government in September 2014, the Coalition's NBN policy may alter the services delivered to Horsham Rural City.

Instead of providing fibre to the home, the Coalition policy is to provide fibre to the node (FTTN). Nodes will then connect to existing telephone lines to deliver broadband to the home. Fixed wireless and satellite services will also be included.

Analysis of the policy indicates FTTN may result in decreased download speeds (upload speeds are not mentioned) and that the service quality will decrease for all homes further than one kilometre from a node. The policy does not cover specific regional issues.

Digital Divide

Access to high speed broadband will be an increasingly important determinant of social and economic welfare. Studies² have shown “*communities and citizens that lack high speed broadband access are at a deficit in comparison to their peers*”. This deficit is commonly referred to as the ‘digital divide’.

The NATSEM report³ argues that the Australian 'digital divide' is one of income and social situation, not geography per se CLC Director Jock Given commented that

...There is a digital divide in Australia with the key factors education, level of income, age and the presence of children in a household ... if you are unable to participate in ... activities (on the Internet), there is a broadly held concern that this will be increasingly significant from the view point of social and economic opportunity.

Tim O’Leary, Chief sustainability Office at Telstra noted that modern communication technologies are driving social change at a remarkable pace.

“...more than 4 million often poor, disabled, indigenous or remote Australians aren’t ... online; they are on the wrong side of the so-called ‘digital divide’. ABS data shows 79 percent of people had internet access at home but that means 21 per cent did not. Looked at another way, that is something like 2.6 million Australian households or 4.5 million Australians who can’t use the internet because they don’t have access.”⁴

Horsham’s Digital Divide

Finding from the March ‘Horsham –A Strategy for Digital Inclusion’ workshop illustrated the local digital divide.

- ➔ Those outside the workforce - unemployed, underemployed, retired, visitors who risk being excluded from online services such as banking and telecommunications due to lack of access to equipment and connection.
- ➔ Those in unstable housing especially amongst young people – digital options for online data storage ideal, use email or voicemail as fixed address
- ➔ Those in lower socio-economic areas– unable to afford costs of internet connection at home, nor equipment hire or purchase. This has flow-on effects for school students, other education opportunities, job searching and social connections.
- ➔ Those accessing government services – services increasingly moving online excludes people without access, equipment or skills.

Digital Inclusion

This Strategy prefers to take a positive approach and talk of Digital Inclusion rather than the Digital Divide. Digital Inclusion refers to proactive strategies to ensure all community members have access to the internet if they want it, and the skills to use the internet to improve their lives through social connections, education, employment and creative expression irrespective of income, ability or disadvantage.

² London School of Economics

³ National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM), University of Canberra, 2000

⁴ Sydney Morning herald, 10 October, 2012

Context for development of a Digital Community Strategy

Our digital world

We are witnessing the rapid digitalisation of

- media – books, newspapers, TV
- government services – online services replacing shopfronts/call centres
- employment – 75% of job searching in US done on mobile phone
- commercial services – retail transactions, booking appointments
- education – online research and content delivery

Five exabytes – five billion billion bytes – of data are created every 48 hours. It was estimated that five exabytes was about equal to all the words ever spoken by mankind.

Every day we produce 300 billion emails and 20 billion SMS messages and make 7 billion calls. Tweets have grown tenfold in just three years – from 27 million to 290 million every day.

More video is uploaded on You Tube every month than the three major US television networks created in more than 60 years.⁵

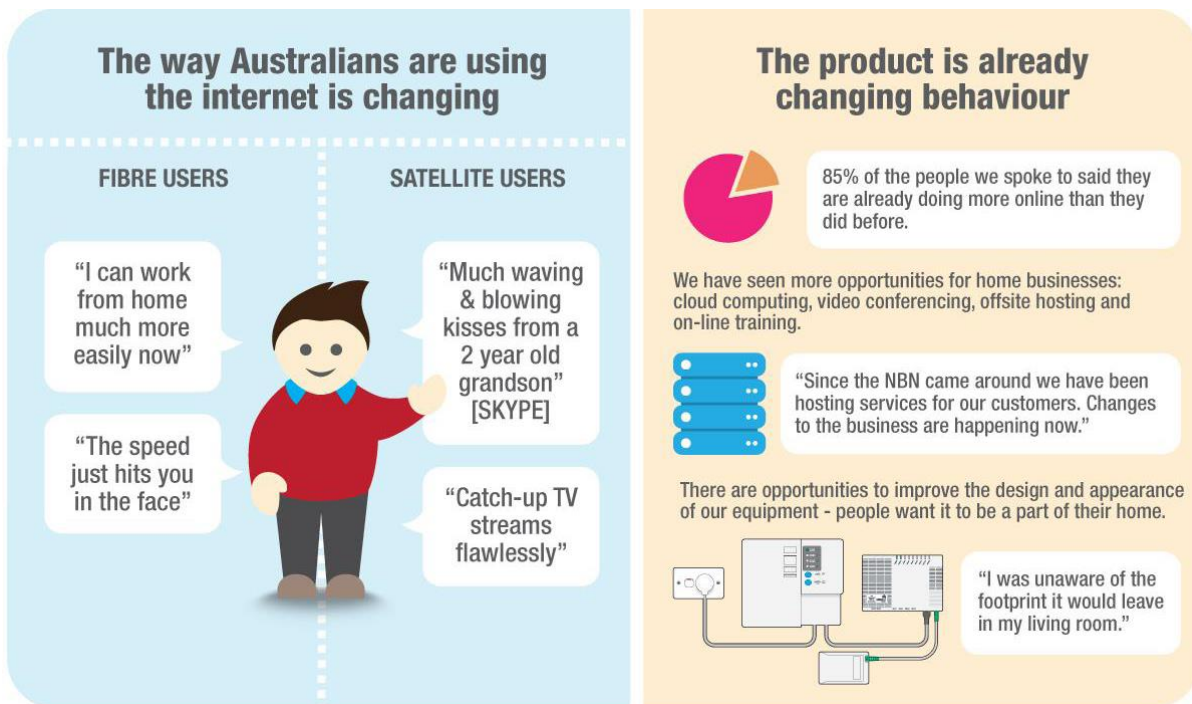


Table from NBN Limited 2012 survey results

⁵ Sydney Morning Herald, 10 October, 2012

Policy Context

HRCC Council Plan 2012-16

Goal 1 – Community and Cultural Development

Enhance the development of Horsham and surrounding areas as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community

Key Direction 1.1 – Develop collaborative partnerships with stakeholders to benefit the community

Key Direction 1.2 – Contribute to building a vibrant and diverse community

Key Direction 1.3 – Develop an environment that promotes a safe, active and healthy community, encouraging participation

Key Direction 1.4 – Contribute to building cultural activities to enhance our diverse and vibrant community

Key Direction 1.5 – Develop the municipality as a desirable place to live, work and enjoy for people of all ages and abilities

Vic Health 2011 survey

While a significantly lower proportion of Horsham residents had internet access at home (80.2% compared with 88.8% for Victoria), there was no significant difference in their use of social networking to organise spending time with friends and family (Horsham 27.5%; Victoria 35.1%).⁶

DPCD Indicators of community strength in Victoria

Connection and Inclusion benefits for individuals - Research studies show that broad networks are associated with a range of positive outcomes for individuals, including

- improved health and psychological wellbeing;
- positive parenting and child development;
- success at school;
- better employment outcomes; and
- positive aging.

Benefits for communities - Research studies show that over and above benefits for individuals, broad networks can generate benefits for communities. In general, these relate to the ability of networks to share information, influence attitudes and behaviour, and foster effective community decision-making.

- the spread of information and innovation;
- inclusive attitudes and respect;
- control of negative behaviours;
- collective efficacy;
- stronger community planning; and
- community assets turned into outcomes.⁷

⁶ <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Research/VicHealth-Indicators/LGA-Profiles.aspx>

⁷ Indicators of community strength in Victoria: framework and evidence - Why social capital can build more resilient families and communities, DPCD 2011

National Digital Economy Strategy 2011

Australian Government National Digital Economy Strategy Goals

Digital Economy Goal 1: by 2020, Australia will rank in the top five Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in the portion of households that connect to broadband at home.

Digital Economy Goal 2: by 2020, Australia will rank in the top five OECD countries in the portion of businesses and not-for-profit organisations using online opportunities to drive productivity improvements, expand their customer base and enable jobs growth.

Digital Economy Goal 3: by 2020, the majority of Australian households, businesses and other organisations will have access to smart technology to better manage their energy use.

Digital Economy Goal 4: by 2020, as identified in the National E-Health Strategy 10 endorsed by the federal, state and territory governments, 90 per cent of high priority consumers such as older Australians, mothers and babies and those with a chronic disease, or their carers, can access individual electronic health records. Through the government's investments in telehealth, by July 2015, 495,000 telehealth consultations will have been delivered providing remote access to specialists for patients in rural, remote and outer metropolitan areas, and by 2020, 25 per cent of all specialists will be participating in delivering telehealth consultations to remote patients.

Digital Economy Goal 5: by 2020, Australian schools, TAFEs, universities and higher education institutions will have the connectivity to develop and collaborate on innovative and flexible educational services and resources to extend online learning resources to the home and workplace; and the facilities to offer students and learners, who cannot access courses via traditional means, the opportunity for online virtual learning.

Digital Economy Goal 6: by 2020, Australia will have at least doubled its level of teleworking so that at least 12 per cent of Australian employees report having a teleworking arrangement with their employer.

Digital Economy Goal 7: by 2020, four out of five Australians will choose to engage with the government through the Internet or other type of online service.

Digital Economy Goal 8: by 2020, the gap between households and businesses in capital cities and those in regional areas will have narrowed significantly.

Role of HRCC

Leadership

The roll-out of the NBN to the municipality present an opportunity for HRCC to take a leadership role in creating a digitally inclusive community with many positive flow-on effects for local businesses and Council's internal processes.

HRCC is regarded as the leading organisation within the municipality in promoting digital inclusion.

Action	1. Digital Community Forum	HRCC hosts a twice-yearly Digital Community Forum which brings together stakeholders from the health, community services, education and volunteering sectors to share information on activities and initiatives in the digital inclusion space. This will help to avoid duplication and identify existing gaps that need to be addressed.
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Service Delivery

Council's service delivery in Community Development, Human Services and the Wimmera Regional Library Corporation presents an opportunity to use technology to deepen engagement with the clients and stakeholders and increase community digital inclusion.

Importantly, digital inclusion must be addressed across all areas of Council's work, and cannot be a 'stand alone' issue of the Community Services division.

HRCC's service delivery in Community Development and Human Services aims to increase digital inclusion.

Action	2. Partnerships to deliver programs in Community Services	Through HRCC's Digital Inclusion Forum, partnerships are developed to deliver programs that address the four key issues of access, equipment, skill and attitude to clients in the HACC, Maternal and Child Health, Youth, Community Development and Arts and Culture areas.
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HRCC's service delivery across all areas of work aims to increase digital inclusion.

Action	3. All Divisions plan for change	The Executive Management team lead discussion and develop plans across divisions to ensure developments in the use of technology do not restrict community access to services.
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Adoption of Best Practice

HRCC is well positioned to roll-out digital best practice across its work areas. In particular, the new Council website presents an opportunity to aim for a shift in both culture and practice in relation to online engagement and service delivery.

<i>HRCC is regarded as a leader in the provision of online services and engagement.</i>		
Action	4. Website	HRCC uses the new website as a platform for expansion of online information and service delivery, by looking at best practice and implementing change where possible.
	5. Equipment	HRCC provides modern equipment such as tablets and smart phones to a broader range of staff to assist with their work and engagement.
	6. Training	HRCC provides ongoing staff training in the use of equipment and the delivery of online services. Through engaging with staff, a change may occur in the customer service interface which would greatly modernise Council's work.
	7. Best practice	A separate study on specific Council work practices is commissioned to identify modern best practice standards within local government to which HRCC could aspire.
	8. Cultural Change	Examine ways to bring about a cultural shift amongst staff to ensure a high take-up rate of technology within individual roles and work units. The University of Ballarat research on Change Agents in Local Government in relation to environmental sustainability may be a useful resource.
	9. Social Media	Council develops a strategy for using social media to communicate with the community. Training would be required to assist with risk management.

Four Key Issues

Four key issues have become apparent for HRCC and stakeholders to address in their efforts for a digitally inclusive community.

- **Access** –barriers to internet connection due to availability or cost
- **Equipment** –barriers in access to modern equipment at a suitable cost
- **Skill** – improving capacity of community members to use equipment
- **Attitude** – overcoming fear and mistrust of digital services

Access

Free Wi-fi in the Horsham CBD

A range of cities around Australia are establishing free wi-fi in the central business districts. Access is available to all who are located in the area, with restrictions placed on the length of sessions and download activity. Adelaide, Wollongong and Coffs Harbour are some examples of cities offering this service (refer to HRCC Digital Community workshop discussion paper)

Benefits of free wi-fi:

- tourism – visitors can access internet at any time (current free wi-fi at Horsham library is very popular with travellers)
- presents Horsham as a digital city and community
- can bring about change in attitude to technology

At the Digital Community workshop held in March there was very strong support for Free WiFi however further work in the following areas was identified. Cost, hardware / infrastructure, locations, installation, ongoing charges, download restrictions and time restrictions.

How would it work?

In conjunction with a service provider (eg Telstra Country Wide) a wi-fi zone is established in an agreed area, for example outdoor public space in Roberts Place. Costs would involve establishment of the hardware, connection fees and monthly usage.

Appropriate time and download limits would apply which would enable users to have access to the internet but would prevent long-term use or large use of bandwidth. For example, a user could be able to check email, social media sites, podcast lectures, events calendars, directories, council website, and pay bills eg council rates. Time and download limits would prevent a scenario such as downloading multiple movies or running a business with free wi-fi.

Paid passes in partnership with the telecommunications supplier could be offered to users wanting access over and above the free allocation of time and downloads.

Risks to be addressed include actual costs exceeding anticipated costs, technology becoming outdated and incorrect customer expectations. However careful monitoring and reviewing costs and the implementation of a system that has the capacity to build on future technologies, and ongoing management of the process will assist in addressing these risks.

Horsham Rural City is well-known as a digital hub with free wi-fi available.		
Action	10. Free wi-fi pilot business case in CBD	<p>HRCC develops a business case for the provision of free wi-fi in the central activity district as a pilot exercise. The business case would explore issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location of free wi-fi and how user-friendly it is - Restriction in length of time per user and download limit - Commercial partnership with broadband provider - Impact on surrounding businesses - Impact on tourism
	11. Free wi-fi map	Develop a map of Horsham highlighting areas with existing free or user pays wi-fi access for distribution on HRCC and Visit Horsham websites and in hard copy at the Visitor Information Centre and in cafes and businesses.
	12. Free wi-fi hotspots across municipality	<p>Once the Horsham CBD pilot free wi-fi has been rolled out, similar exercises should be undertaken across the municipality, in particular in areas with poor mobile coverage or those where a fixed wireless tower will be constructed as part of the NBN.</p> <p>The free wi-fi location could be based at a Council asset such as NC2 in Natimuk, halls in Laharum, Wartook, Dadsells Bridge, Dooen and Telangatuk or recreational reserves/halls at Haven, Jung and Pimpinio.</p>

Internet connection through mobile phone

Internet connection via mobile phone is a growing trend in community and business access. This is made impossible in mobile phone black spots. The increase in mobile data is also causing slower connection and download times due to the increased capacity on service providers.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority found that in May 2012 there was high usage of mobile phones for internet access.⁸

Persons 18 years+ undertaking select online activities via mobile phone handsets*:	Non-smartphone mobile internet users	Smartphone internet users
> browsing websites or search for information	46%	90%
> accessed news, sports, weather updates	40%	84%
> used a social networking site	31%	71%
> streaming audio or video content	19%	55%
> paid bills	11%	38%
> downloaded audio or video content	10%	33%
> purchased goods or services	8%	33%

Mobile data connections are strong and available throughout the municipality.		
Action	13. Lobby for mobile coverage	HRCC continues to join regional organisations to lobby for improved mobile coverage including by researching black spot areas and the experiences of mobile data users in the area. This can be done through free apps and engaging users in the research.

⁸ ACMA Communications report 2011–12 series, Report 3—Smartphones and tablets - Take-up and use in Australia

Cost

Inability to afford a regular or prepaid internet connection is a major barrier for some members of the community. There are a number of good examples of low-cost or shared wi-fi connections being established in areas of socio-economic disadvantage. Often these are linked to schools, community service providers or other gathering places.

Inability to afford an internet connection is not a barrier to school students completing homework, adult education, job searching or social connection.

<p>Action</p>	<p>14. Free wi-fi in all Council facilities</p>	<p>Free wi-fi in all existing and future Council buildings and incorporation of technology into programs run by community and human services areas of Council (QR codes in Art Gallery, use of apps in playgroups or maternal health for example)</p> <p>Incorporate free wi-fi into business and operational plans for future Council projects such as the redevelopment of the Town Hall and the Children’s Hub.</p>
	<p>15. Community-Commercial Partnerships for free access</p>	<p>Through the Digital Community Forum, support the establishment of community-commercial-Council partnerships such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Free wi-fi at Salvation Army for use in job applications and homework clubs, subsidised through a partnership with Telstra Country Wide ➔ Mentoring activities and homework clubs at Volunteering Western Victoria and Horsham Library where free wi-fi, use of equipment and printing is available, involving Nexus and other HRCC service areas where appropriate ➔ Encouraging WHCG and WWHS (Natimuk) to offer free wi-fi throughout their campuses and work with Volunteering Western Victoria to provide training or mentoring

Many NBN plans will be **cheaper** than many of today’s ADSL 2+ bundle plans

From those ISPs that have announced consumer pricing, the underlying price of their NBN plans is actually cheaper per GB than their monthly ADSL & line rental equivalent plans (monthly line rental will not be required on the NBN).



Data rates are combined pricing of Internode, Exetel, iPrimus and iNet plans for the NBN v.s. their combined pricing on ADSL 2+ for equivalent usage amounts.



Equipment

Breaking the barriers of accessing equipment

Many community members who are excluded by technology may have access to a desktop computer. These have become outdated in that many of the applications used these days are too powerful for an older computer to run. Older computers are also costly to maintain and require regular manual updating of software.

The Australian Communication and Media Authority's 2012 research shows that increasingly, Australian access the internet on a laptop, mobile phone or tablet.

There were 8.67 million smartphone and 4.37 million tablet users in Australia at May 2012. Also, consumers are using these devices to provide complementary services, with 3.65 million using both a mobile phone and a tablet to access the internet.

Growth in smartphone usage has given rise to significant growth in mobile phone internet access and data usage. In comparison to other mobile phone users, smartphone users are:

- ➔ nine times more likely to go online via their handsets
- ➔ four times more likely to purchase goods online
- ➔ three times more likely to stream or download audio or video content
- ➔ three times more likely to pay bills online
- ➔ twice as likely to access social networking sites.⁹

Access to modern, user-friendly equipment is not a barrier to community members participating in the digital world.

Action	16. Database of equipment	A database of equipment available for community use to be established by HRCC and made available on the HRCC website and through partners agencies.
	17. Tablet Bank	Establishment of a Tablet Bank , to be housed at the Library (which has existing expertise and infrastructure in asset register, barcode software and loans) and mobile library for low or no cost hire by community members and community groups. Funding options include Regional Growth Fund, Green PC and commercial partnerships. WHCG may also wish to explore this option for in-home care.
	18. Disability-specific equipment	Include equipment and apps in the Tablet Bank specifically designed to facilitate communication with people with a disability .
	19. Community Training in equipment use	Development and delivery of training strategy for community members through local schools, Volunteering Western Victoria, Wimmera Hub, U3A and UB. Formal training can be offered but more importantly, individual, hands-on skills and mentoring would be made available to the digitally excluded.
	20. Community groups use of equipment	Through Council and stakeholder program delivery, develop a program to encourage community groups to use digital equipment, such as inclusive participation in community activities (Probus or CWA meetings for example) by people in nursing homes or unable to leave their own homes. This could be delivered through Council's community planning work and community development grants and activities .

⁹ ACMA Communications report 2011–12 series, Report 3—Smartphones and tablets - Take-up and use in Australia

Skill

Skill level

A key finding in this Strategy's research is that there is a mixed uptake of existing digital technology, based on skill level. This will only be augmented when high speed broadband is available and more services move to an online delivery.

Understanding the current skill levels, identifying target groups for improvement and then implementation of training in collaboration with our current training organisation will be significant in the up skill process.

Thriving Regions has been working with HUB, Horsham Library and Volunteering Western Victoria all of whom are keen to work collaboratively to ensure programs reach and impact all areas of the community.

The March Workshop identified that much of this work is being thought about and now needs to be executed in an organised and targeted manner.

The Horsham Library outlined the client base that currently use the Library's internet free Wifi service (traveller, young mothers, job seekers, middle aged, elderly, disabled and students) and with this in mind our up skilling could be tailored to suit these members.

Members of the Horsham community, including HRCC staff, are skilled in use of equipment, internet applications and software to ensure further dislocation from technology is avoided when high speed broadband is introduced.

Action	<p>21. Community/Council strategy for delivery of training</p>	<p>The HRCC Digital Community Forum coordinates the development of programs suitable for Horsham, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Identification of skill levels and training requirements for identified target groups and Council staff (i.e. need for informal training on specific applications such as Skype compared to Certificate course in IT) ➔ A range of training packages is developed – group, individual, online, in person – to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. Partnerships with Wimmera Hub, U3A, WRLC and VVW
	<p>22. IT training part of Council plan</p>	<p>An ongoing strategy for skill development targeted demographics is implemented throughout the municipality, feeding into Council's community and human services work.</p>
	<p>23. IT training as part of HRCC service delivery</p>	<p>Skills development in the form of short courses or mentoring programs linked to HRCC Service delivery areas, such as Playgroups, New Mothers Groups, HACC, Youth, Arts and Culture and Community Development, Section 86 Committees. Staff training also required to facilitate these projects.</p>

Attitude

Adjusting the community's attitude to technology and its presence in their lives will be the key to digital inclusion.

Health

The advantages of Telehealth are well-known and there are many kinds of services already in use that will be augmented by high-speed broadband:

- ➔ deliver healthcare services over a high-quality video link—for example, for a doctor, aged-care nurse or care coordinator to consult with a patient
- ➔ enable real-time remote diagnosis through the rapid transfer of very large files, including x-rays and scans
- ➔ remotely monitor patients in the comfort of their own homes
- ➔ enable busy health professionals to participate in virtual professional development without the need to travel long distances to large metropolitan hospitals or universities.

With escalating pressures on Australia's health system from an ageing population, and increased rates of chronic disease and health workforce challenges, it is critical to examine opportunities to deliver high-quality health services more effectively and efficiently.

Remote Learning

The VCE Literature Class is part of the Grampians Virtual school <http://grampiansvirtuelschool.wikispaces.com/>. Horsham College have 3 students in Swan Hill, one in Dimboola and 16 in the room class located in Horsham. The remote students dial into the class via Video Conferencing for 4 out of 5 scheduled 50 minute periods.

The system used is the Polycom Multipoint system, with a bridge provided throughout the Education Department's Virtual School's Network. This means there is quite a secure and trouble free system. However, there is a slight delay with the Multi-point system which takes a bit of getting used to. It works as expected 99% of the time.

The College also use a Learning Management System called Moodle. This is an open source program which allows all of the Virtual School classes to have a dedicated class page where all content, resources and assignments are always available. Students also communicate with the teachers via email, Facebook and text message.

The virtual school started as the Wimmera Virtual School in 2009, and then grew to become the Grampians Virtual School. Gary Schultz who started the school from the Regional office has now been seconded to rollout the virtual school state wide. Brandi Galpin has taught Literature through the virtual school since 2010, with remote students from Edenhope, Warracknabeal, Casterton, Dimboola, Murtoa and now Swan Hill.

None of this would be possible without the internet or individual student laptops. The College can't wait to see what is possible with a faster broadband connection.

The department made a short film about the class. <https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?PJPXH5>

Online Risks

Franklin D. Roosevelt stated, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Of course, Franklin did not have to worry about Internet banking. For many users, accessing account information via the Internet is a daily occurrence. The convenience of 24/7/365 accessibility to financial information overshadows any fear information could be compromised. These users come from a diverse

background, but for the most part, they make use of the Internet on a frequent, and even daily, basis.

For others, the thought of sitting at a computer and moving their money without a teller being involved to keep it straight and secure is both daunting and frightening. For some, fears are founded in the belief that should accounts be accessed from the Internet, "THEY" will get the password. Of course, "THEY" are the bad guys who are trying to gain access to your money.

The most common myth about Internet banking is that simply accessing online accounts is a surefire way to get your money stolen. While there are no guarantees that criminal activity against your account will not occur in the electronic world, the same applies to armed robbery of your local brick and mortar financial institution in the real world. Both types of crimes affect your financial institution and your money.

It is critical to address these fear barriers including understanding and identifying spam, banking online, safety and risks of opening documents and awareness of computer viruses.

Members of the Horsham community understand the real risks of technology and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to minimise those risks.		
Action	24. Local case studies	Work with Digital Community Forum partners to produce case studies for use in the media, websites and presentations that show the risks and risk mitigation for telehealth, remote learning and government and commercial transactions.
	25. Use local expertise to develop best practice	Develop best practice guidelines for local remote learning opportunities, based on Horsham College's experience and transferred to Wimmera Hub, U3A, schools and community groups.
	26. Communicate risks and build confidence	Develop educational material – case studies, video, presentations to be delivered to target groups in the municipality that explain risks and build confidence in technology.
	27. Communicate NBN implementation	Work with NBNCo to produce targeted communication material to explain the construction, availability and costs of the NBN.

About Thriving Regions

Based in Horsham, Thriving Regions is a consulting company specialising in:

- Public relations and professional communication
- Media and social media training, strategy and implementation
- Strategic Plans and business strategy development
- Facilitation and community engagement
- Executive recruitment.

Website: www.thrivingregions.com.au

Reference sites and material

Wired Community – Digital Inclusion

Wired Community @ Collingwood

Wired provides residents of the Collingwood public housing estate in inner Melbourne an opportunity to obtain a network-ready computer at no cost, along with the establishment of an ICT training hub, estate-wide intranet and communications network, email and affordable internet access for residents.

<http://www.digitalinclusion.net.au/initiatives>

Apps for Good – Centre for Digital Inclusion

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjwEdUtZy-c&list=PL6B1KF8eNXGi9Tf82ZvoLEKqcLeZeEx-l&index=5>

Promoting Digital Inclusion – Intelligent Community Forum

<http://www.intelligentcommunity.org/index.php?src=> and include info on Community Accelerators program

NBN rollout information

www.nbnco.com.au

Improving community education

Part of addressing the 'digital divide' is ensuring that not only is the community connected but has the skills training and is aware of how to best embrace the online opportunities. Armidale have set up a Digital Hub which runs free courses for the community to attend.

Armidale Dumaresq Council [War Memorial Library](#)



Need a hand with learning how to use the Internet? New courses soon for Digital Hub

Finding it difficult to negotiate the rapidly changing digital world? The Armidale Digital Hub can help. Check out the courses on offer every month, with new programs added regularly.

Library Services

Using the library as a place the community can explore the NBN before they get connected. Kiama Council has a good example of this.

"As a Digital Hub we also provide the opportunity for the community to gain the skills required to access the internet in either a group class environment or one to one training sessions."

The Kiama library is a beautiful space that inspires learning. It has "installed two sound domes which will facilitate video calls, such as Skype," and the library plans to install video conferencing equipment for the community to use. The library itself is not just welcoming avid readers but workers as well.



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This is a positive way to engage the community by offering them a trial of the service to get them inspired regarding what the NBN has to offer.

Horsham – A Strategy for Digital Inclusion

Discussion Paper



Why are we developing a strategy?

- NBN is coming!
- Statistically we lag behind in technology take up in Horsham
- We risk people being excluded from community and services
- We want to imagine what our community could be like in 5 or 10 years time with the technology that will be available

Goal: To produce a strategy to ensure

- the Horsham community benefits from high speed broadband
- No-one is left behind –reduce the digital divide
- We work together to achieve maximum efficiencies



"Intelligent Communities are those which have – whether through crisis or foresight – come to understand the enormous challenges of the Broadband Economy, and have taken conscious steps to create an economy capable of prospering in it." [Intelligent Community Forum](#)

Could Horsham be a 'Smart City'?
How can communities prosper, develop and connect with broadband?

Definitions

DIGITAL DIVIDE

Studies^[1] have shown that "Communities and citizens that lack high speed broadband access are at a deficit in comparison to their peers". This deficit is commonly referred to as the 'digital divide'
The NATSEM report^[2] argues that the Australian 'digital divide' is one of income and social situation, not geography per se CLC Director Jock Given commented that
....There is a digital divide in Australia with the key factors education, level of income, age and the presence of children in a household ... If you are unable to participate in ... activities (on the Internet), there is a broadly held concern that this will be increasingly significant from the view point of social and economic opportunity.

^[1] London School of Economics
^[2] NATSEM report 2000



DIGITAL INCLUSION

Many 'Smart Cities' are using technology to enable greater civic and community participation. Programs are being developed that bridge the immediate gap of IT access and skills.

HIGH SPEED BROADBAND

"From a consumer point of view there is one enormous benefit of the National Broadband Network: SPEED! This means the provision of download speeds up to 100Mbps, or around 10x faster than the actual speed achieved by current ADSL2+ connections, along with massive improvements in upload speeds."
www.whistleout.com.au an online ISP comparison tool.

Huge 100Mbps demand:
44% of NBN users take top speed

Top: © iStockphoto.com/Chris Hill; Bottom: © iStockphoto.com/Chris Hill; Bottom: © iStockphoto.com/Chris Hill; Bottom: © iStockphoto.com/Chris Hill



What does 'digital divide' mean in Horsham?
What is digital inclusion?
What is High Speed Broadband?

Context

[HRCC Council Plan 2012-16 - Goal 1 – Community and Cultural Development](#)

Enhance the development of Horsham and surrounding areas as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community

Key Direction 1.1 – Develop collaborative partnerships with stakeholders to benefit the community

Key Direction 1.2 – Contribute to building a vibrant and diverse community

Key Direction 1.3 – Develop an environment that promotes a safe, active and healthy community, encouraging participation

Key Direction 1.4 – Contribute to building cultural activities to enhance our diverse and vibrant community

Key Direction 1.5 – Develop the municipality as a desirable place to live, work and enjoy for people of all ages and abilities



[Vic Health 2011 survey](#)

While a significantly lower proportion of Horsham residents had internet access at home (80.2% compared with 88.8% for Victoria), there was no significant difference in their use of social networking to organise spending time with friends and family (Horsham 27.5%; Victoria 35.1%).



[Indicators of community strength in Victoria: framework and evidence - Why social capital can build more resilient families and communities, DPCD 2011](#)

Benefits for individuals - Research studies show that broad networks are associated with a range of positive outcomes for individuals, including

- improved health and psychological wellbeing;
- positive parenting and child development;
- success at school;
- better employment outcomes; and
- positive aging.

Benefits for communities - Research studies show that over and above benefits for individuals, broad networks can generate benefits for communities. In general, these relate to the ability of networks to share information, influence attitudes and behaviour, and foster effective community decision-making.



Where does Digital Inclusion fit in your organisation?

Our Digital World – Case Studies

Free Wi-Fi

A number of councils are considering giving their community and visitors free Wi-Fi internet connection.

[Wollongong - Free Wi-Fi Connecting our City Centre - June 2012](#)

"In the coming months Council will turn on free Wi-Fi in the City Centre. The Wi-Fi coverage will extend along Crown Street between Gladstone Avenue and Corrimal Street; Globe Lane and Civic Plaza. To ensure the service will meet the needs of visitors and businesses, Council has commenced a consultative process..... We look forward to working together with businesses and property owners to deliver a successful free Wi-Fi service with sufficient capabilities for all users."

[Adelaide to get free city wifi network](#)

[Coffs Harbour – free wifi in the city centre](#)

[Joondalup – city centre wifi](#)



Municipal wireless network

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Municipal wireless network (**Municipal Wi-Fi**, **Muni Wi-Fi** or **Muni-Fi**) is the concept of turning an entire city into a *Wireless Access Zone*, with the ultimate goal of making wireless access to the Internet a *universal service*. This is usually done by providing municipal broadband via Wi-Fi to large parts or all of a municipal area by deploying a *wireless mesh network*. The typical deployment design uses hundreds of routers deployed outdoors, often on poles. The operator of the network acts as a *wireless internet service provider*.

Get Connected

Wollongong City Wi-Fi is up and running. This free service is available in outdoor areas on Crown Street between Gladstone Avenue and Corrimal Street, as well as in Globe Lane, and the Arts Precinct (formerly Civic Plaza) on Burelli Street.

The Wi-Fi is a Council initiative and is part of our overarching strategy to revitalise the City Centre. To date, we've received positive feedback from residents and visitors on the service, its reliability and speed.

The Wi-Fi has a three-hour time limit and/or a 250Mb download limit per user per day. The City Centre team have laminated posters for retailers who are interested in promoting the Wi-Fi in their stores. Give the City Centre team a call for a copy. If you're having trouble getting connected, Council has set up a hotline - call 1300 135 302. You can also visit Council's website for assistance.

*How could you and your organisation use free wifi in the Horsham CBD?
How could our community use free wifi?*

Our Digital World – Case Studies

Digital Hubs

Municipal spaces are perfect places for digital hubs, where the community can improve their IT skills, access wifi and use technology they may not have at home.

Digital Hubs provide training, equipment and technical support in a free or low-cost and friendly environment.



Using the library as a place the community can explore the NBN before connecting. Kiama Council has a good example of this.

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*Would Horsham benefit from a Digital Hub?
Is work already being done? Which organisations could be involved?
Which sections of the community could be involved?*

Our Digital World – Case Studies

More than IT skills

Apps

Benefitting from high speed broadband involves more than improving our IT skills. New ways of using technology appear every day and the Apps for Good program is one way of engaging young people to use technology productively.



Social Connection

Parent Connect @ Heathdale is working to improve cooperation across the areas of education, health and community. Glen Orden Primary School is

- strengthening its connections with the parent community;
- parents will be more engaged in their child's education;
- parents will be more positive about their own learning and development;
- parent skill levels and computer literacy will grow.



Volunteering

There are many programs that involve volunteers transferring skills and knowledge to others. This can open a new volunteering market – as the IT literate in our community connect with those lacking IT skills.



*What could we do in Horsham?
What are the assets we could use?
What problems could we address?*

What happens now?

What is the role of Council in minimising the digital divide?



What is the role other organisations in minimising the digital divide?

Any other questions?

Bronwen Clark – bron@thrivingregions.com.au 0422 135 229

Sue Newall – sue@thrivingregions.com.au 0407 611 299

HRCC Digital Community Strategy Action Plan

Objective	Action	Detail	Timing
<i>HRCC is regarded as the leading organisation within the municipality in promoting digital inclusion.</i>	1. Digital Community Forum	HRCC hosts a twice-yearly Digital Community Forum which brings together stakeholders from the health, community services, education and volunteering sectors to share information on activities and initiatives in the digital inclusion space. This will help to avoid duplication and identify existing gaps that need to be addressed.	Start September 2013 and every 6 months
<i>HRCC's service delivery in Community Development and Human Services aims to increase digital inclusion.</i>	2. Partnerships to deliver programs in Community Services	Through HRCC's Digital Inclusion Forum, partnerships are developed to deliver programs that address the four key issues of access, equipment, skill and attitude to clients in the HACC, Maternal and Child Health, Youth, Community Development and Arts and Culture areas.	From September 2013
<i>HRCC's service delivery across all areas of work aims to increase digital inclusion.</i>	3. All Divisions plan for change	The Executive Management team lead discussion and develop plans across divisions to ensure developments in the use of technology do not restrict community access to services.	Ongoing
<i>HRCC is regarded as a leader in the provision of online services and engagement.</i>	4. Website	HRCC uses the new website as a platform for expansion of online information and service delivery, by looking at best practice and implementing change where possible.	July 2013 - ongoing
	5. Equipment	HRCC provides modern equipment such as tablets and smart phones to a broader range of staff to assist with their work and engagement.	Ongoing
	6. Training	HRCC provides ongoing staff training in the use of equipment and the delivery of online services. Through engaging with staff, a change may occur in the customer service interface which would greatly modernise Council's work.	2014 ongoing
	7. Best practice	A separate study on specific Council work practices is commissioned to identify modern best practice standards within local government to which HRCC could aspire.	July 2013

	8. Cultural Change	Examine ways to bring about a cultural shift amongst staff to ensure a high take-up rate of technology within individual roles and work units. The University of Ballarat research on Change Agents in Local Government in relation to environmental sustainability may be a useful resource.	2013
	9. Social Media	Council develops a strategy for using social media to communicate with the community. Training would be required to assist with risk management.	2013
<i>Horsham Rural City is well-known as a digital hub with free wi-fi available.</i>	10. Free wi-fi pilot business case in CBD	HRCC develops a business case for the provision of free wi-fi in the central activity district as a pilot exercise. The business case would explore issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location of free wi-fi and how user-friendly it is - Restriction in length of time per user and download limit - Commercial partnership with broadband provider - Impact on surrounding businesses - Impact on tourism 	2013-14
	11. Free wi-fi map	Develop a map of Horsham highlighting areas with existing free or user pays wi-fi access for distribution on HRCC and Visit Horsham websites and in hard copy at the Visitor Information Centre and in cafes and businesses.	2013
	12. Free wi-fi hotspots across municipality	Once the Horsham CBD pilot free wi-fi has been rolled out, similar exercises should be undertaken across the municipality, in particular in areas with poor mobile coverage or those where a fixed wireless tower will be constructed as part of the NBN. The free wi-fi location could be based at a Council asset such as NC2 in Natimuk, halls in Laharum, Wartook, Dadsells Bridge, Doon and Telangatuk or recreational reserves/halls at Haven, Jung and Pimpinio.	2014-2016
<i>Mobile data connections are strong and available throughout the municipality</i>	13. Lobby for mobile coverage	HRCC continues to join regional organisations to lobby for improved mobile coverage including by researching black spot areas and the experiences of mobile data users in the area. This can be done through free apps and engaging users in the research.	Ongoing

<i>Inability to afford an internet connection is not a barrier to school students completing homework, adult education, job searching or social connection.</i>	14. Free wi-fi in all Council facilities	Free wi-fi in all existing and future Council buildings and incorporation of technology into programs run by community and human services areas of Council (QR codes in Art Gallery, use of apps in playgroups or maternal health for example) Incorporate free wi-fi into business and operational plans for future Council projects such as the redevelopment of the Town Hall and the Children's Hub.	July 2013
	15. Community-Commercial Partnerships for free access	Through the Digital Community Forum, support the establishment of community-commercial-Council partnerships such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Free wi-fi at Salvation Army for use in job applications and homework clubs, subsidised through a partnership with Telstra Country Wide ➔ Mentoring activities and homework clubs at Volunteering Western Victoria and Horsham Library where free wi-fi, use of equipment and printing is available, involving Nexus and other HRCC service areas where appropriate Encouraging WHCG and WWHS (Natimuk) to offer free wi-fi throughout their campuses and work with Volunteering Western Victoria to provide training or mentoring.	2014 ongoing
<i>Access to modern, user-friendly equipment is not a barrier to community members participating in the digital world.</i>	16. Database of equipment	A database of equipment available for community use to be established by HRCC and made available on the HRCC website and through partners agencies.	2013
	17. Tablet Bank	Establishment of a Tablet Bank , to be housed at the Library (which has existing expertise and infrastructure in asset register, barcode software and loans) and mobile library for low or no cost hire by community members and community groups. Funding options include Regional Growth Fund, Green PC and commercial partnerships. WHCG may also wish to explore this option for in-home care.	2013-14
	18. Disability-specific equipment	Include equipment and apps in the Tablet Bank specifically designed to facilitate communication with people with a disability .	2013-14
	19. Community Training in equipment use	Development and delivery of training strategy for community members through local schools, Volunteering Western Victoria,	2014-16

		Wimmera Hub, U3A and UB. Formal training can be offered but more importantly, individual, hands-on skills and mentoring would be made available to the digitally excluded.	
	20. Community groups use of equipment	Through Council and stakeholder program delivery, develop a program to encourage community groups to use digital equipment, such as inclusive participation in community activities (Probus or CWA meetings for example) by people in nursing homes or unable to leave their own homes. This could be delivered through Council's community planning work and community development grants and activities.	2014-16
<i>Members of the Horsham community, including HRCC staff, are skilled in use of equipment, internet applications and software to ensure further dislocation from technology is avoided when high speed broadband is introduced.</i>	21. Community/Council strategy for delivery of training	The HRCC Digital Community Forum coordinates the development of programs suitable for Horsham, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Identification of skill levels and training requirements for identified target groups and Council staff (i.e. need for informal training on specific applications such as Skype compared to Certificate course in IT) ➔ A range of training packages is developed – group, individual, online, in person – to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. Partnerships with Wimmera Hub, U3A, WRLC and VWV 	2013-16
	22. IT training part of Council plan	An ongoing strategy for skill development targeted demographics is implemented throughout the municipality, feeding into Council's community and human services work.	2014-16
	23. IT training as part of HRCC service delivery	Skills development in the form of short courses or mentoring programs linked to HRCC Service delivery areas , such as Playgroups, New Mothers Groups, HACC, Youth, Arts and Culture and Community Development, Section 86 Committees. Staff training also required to facilitate these projects.	2014-16
<i>Members of the Horsham community understand the real risks of technology and are equipped with the skills</i>	24. Local case studies	Work with Digital Community Forum partners to produce case studies for use in the media, websites and presentations that show the risks and risk mitigation for telehealth, remote learning and government and commercial transactions.	2013-14

<i>and knowledge to minimise those risks.</i>	25. Use local expertise to develop best practice	Develop best practice guidelines for local remote learning opportunities, based on Horsham College's experience and transferred to Wimmera Hub, U3A, schools and community groups.	2014-16
	26. Communicate risks and build confidence	Develop educational material – case studies, video, presentations to be delivered to target groups in the municipality that explain risks and build confidence in technology.	2013-16
	27. Communicate NBN implementation	Work with NBNC0 to produce targeted communication material to explain the construction, availability and costs of the NBN.	2013-16