

7th July 2015**Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, POLICY, PLANNING AND
CORPORATE SERVICES****BETTER BROADBAND FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE – QUARTERLY
UPDATE ON THE ROLLOUT****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides the regular quarterly update for Economic Development Committee on the Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire programme (BBfN) and introduces a short presentation to Committee from Digital Unite, who have been commissioned by the Council to deliver a Digital Champions Network in Nottinghamshire.
2. The report also seeks Committee's approval to an extended programme management function, reflecting the additional investment secured through contract 2 and the implications of this.

Information and adviceProgress with contract 1

3. At the end of May 2015, the 'total homes passed' (THP – the contract measurement) by contract 1 of the Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire programme was 48,652. For the avoidance of doubt, that is nearly 49,000 premises with access to fibre broadband that would not have had this access without the BBfN programme. A month later, the Council announced the 250th new fibre cabinet to have 'gone live' in the programme, serving the community of Blyth in Bassetlaw.
4. Speeds of up to 80 megabits per second (Mbps) are available depending on how far the property is located from the green street cabinet that it is connected to. Information on what is involved in planning and survey work and why the outcome may mean deployment plans could change, is explained on the FAQ page of the programme's website at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/broadband
5. Phase four of the build in contract 1 is now underway. There are plans for a further 150 fibre cabinets to be installed over the remainder of contract 1 which should deliver access to fibre broadband to approximately 13,000 more premises.

Contract 2 update

6. Members will recall that Nottinghamshire received an allocation of £2.63 million from the Government to increase fibre broadband coverage in the County. This has been matched by D2N2 Local Growth Fund resources, resulting in an investment through contract 2 of £5.26 million. Nottinghamshire County Council entered into a contract with BT for these additional resources at the beginning of May, following this Committee's approval of the approach in March 2015.
7. Contract 2 is scheduled to start by the end of September 2016 and is expected to be completed in 2018. The Council has submitted a change request to minimise the time lag between the end of contract 1 and the commencement of contract 2.
8. In addition to the £5.26 million investment, the County Council has secured a further £720,000 from BDUK to enable coverage to be extended to 95% in Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood districts. All other parts of the county achieve over 96% coverage at the end of contract 2 but Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood were some way behind. The County Council's Finance and Property Committee will be considering the allocation of £600,000 of match funds for this additional BDUK investment from the capital programme at its July meeting.
9. Details of the areas covered by the existing investment in contract 2 have been published on the Council's website, and the postcode checker has been updated accordingly. Areas scheduled to be covered include Thurgarton, Holme, Caythorpe, Lound, Colston Bassett and Woodbeck.
10. BT is currently modelling the additional investment in Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood and it is anticipated that the results of this modelling work will be completed shortly. Further announcements will then be made to publicise this additional coverage and, in the autumn, give residents and businesses information about phasing of delivery through contract 2, which is scheduled to run until March 2018.

Programme management arrangements

11. The current programme management arrangements, as agreed by Committee in December 2013 and reviewed in September 2014, run until March 2016. The programme team consists of a Programme Manager, Programme Officer and Broadband Engagement Officer. The annual cost of these posts is in the region of £140,000, with additional costs incurred of approximately £48,000 on demand stimulation activity, technical support and evaluation and overheads. These latter costs are met from a combination of D2N2 revenue funding and an annual contribution from Economic Development Committee towards demand stimulation activities.
12. Given that contract 2 will run until March 2018, it is recommended that Committee approves the extension of the programme management arrangements (and the three posts concerned) until March 2018. The extended posts will be subject to formal review in the winter of 2016-17 to ensure that the resources allocated to programme management remain fit for purpose. The

costs of extending these posts to March 2018 can be accommodated within the existing broadband revenue reserve.

Demand stimulation activity

13. Members will recall that the contract with BT includes a 'gainshare' mechanism, whereby the Council will receive 69% of the revenue income derived by BT through the BBfN programme once take-up of fibre services exceeds 20%. The higher the take-up rate across the programme, the higher the rate of return for the Council. The contract mechanism is such that this return will be allocated to an investment pot and used in the future to either extend fibre coverage even further or invest in new technologies to tackle the remaining parts of the county that are left without coverage after contract 2. The gainshare mechanism remains in place for seven years after the capital build programme is complete.
14. In order to increase awareness of the BBfN programme and maximise take-up in local communities, Economic Development Committee approved the establishment of a Broadband Engagement Officer post in September 2014 and subsequently allocated revenue resources to support this work in March 2015. This is supported by £50,000 of revenue from D2N2.
15. The Broadband Engagement Officer started work in December 2014 and since that time has made good progress in building relationships with organisations and networks that can support the promotion of fibre broadband availability in the county. During the quarter there has been a step change in engagement across a number of parishes and business groups, including organisations such as Business in the Community, the Federation of Small Businesses, Nottinghamshire Business Engagement Group, Nottingham Business Venture, D2N2 and Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire who have helped with promoting the availability of fibre broadband within their networks.
16. In addition to this, the BBfN programme team have been successful in extending the Connected Voucher scheme across the whole of the county (previously, only businesses in the conurbation were eligible) and promotion of this has been well received across business groups and parish and town councils. The Connected Voucher scheme enables businesses to access grants of up to £3,000 to secure a superfast connection from a range of Government approved providers.
17. The Engagement Officer continues to monitor live cabinet data and links in with relevant areas to capitalise on publicity for example, local community events such as community lunches, village community days and partnership events. Recently the Engagement Officer attended a Community Event in Cropwell Bishop resulting in extremely positive feedback from attendees, the parish clerk and local councillors. As a result the cabinet serving Cropwell Bishop reached capacity, however this has subsequently been increased to enable additional connections.
18. The BBfN team also played a key part in the County Show which was held in May. The event enabled the team to showcase the availability and benefits of fibre broadband and gave people allowing the opportunity to come along and ask questions about how they can upgrade.

19. Additional events include regular attendance in libraries - for example, Southwell, Beeston and Sutton in Ashfield which have all been successful and well received enabling the Engagement Officer to explain the benefits and reasons to make the switch to fibre. Recently the Engagement Officer and Programme Manager attended the Rushcliffe Parish Conference to provide updates to over 70 parish and town councillors.
20. Finally, the BBfN profile on Facebook continues to generate significant interest and the number of people who have signed up to the Council's 'email me' broadband bulletin has increased from 1,400 to just over 2,000.
21. Take-up rates of fibre broadband services have increased from 10.6% in January 2015 to 13.5% as at the end of May 2015. The take-up rate is also now outstripping that achieved in BT's commercial rollout and take-up is expected to hit the 20% threshold by the end of the calendar year. In some wards, take-up is already in excess of 50% and the capacity of the fibre cabinets has had to be increased beyond what BT originally planned for.

Digital Champions Network

22. Alongside the awareness raising and promotional activities undertaken by the Broadband Engagement Officer, a contract to deliver a Nottinghamshire Digital Champions Network (NDCN) was awarded to Digital Unite earlier this year. Committee received a report on this in March 2015. The network had its formal launch event earlier in June, attended by 50 people who were interested in becoming digital champions. Digital Unite's Managing Director, Kathy Valdes, will be attending Committee to give an overview of their plans for the Nottinghamshire Digital Champions Network.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

23. Economic Development Committee receives a quarterly update on the Council's Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire programme and is responsible for agreeing revenue resources and staffing requirements for the programme.

Statutory and Policy implications

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described in the body of the report.

Financial implications

25. Where material these are noted in the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

26. That Economic Development Committee:

- a) Notes the content of this report and presentation from Digital Unite
- b) Approves the extension of the programme management arrangements to March 2018, subject to a formal review in the winter of 2016-17

Report of the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services, Jayne Francis-Ward

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Nicola M^cCoy-Brown, 72580

Constitutional Comments [SLB 23.06.2015]

Economic Development Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments [SES 23.06.2015]

The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Reports

- Nottinghamshire Local Broadband Plan
(www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/broadband)
- *Nottinghamshire Local Broadband Plan* – report to Full Council, 15-12-2011, published
- *Update on Nottinghamshire Local Broadband Plan* – report to Policy Committee, 20-06-2012, published
- *Response to Petitions presented to Economic Development Committee* – report to Economic Development Committee, 20-09-2012, published
- *Nottinghamshire Local Broadband Plan* – report to Full Council, 28-02-2013, published
- ERDF Funding Agreement, 14-05-2013
- Investing in Britain's future – Presented to Parliament by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury by Command of Her Majesty, 6-2013
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209279/PU1524_IUK_new_template.pdf
- *Superfast Broadband for Nottinghamshire* – report to Policy Committee 17-07-2013, published
- *Superfast Broadband for Nottinghamshire* – report to Economic Development Committee 09-07-2013, published
- UK Broadband Impact Study – Impact Report, SQW, 11-2013
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/257006/UK_Broadband_Impact_Study_-_Impact_Report_-_Nov_2013_-_Final.pdf
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire – Resource Requirements for Delivery Phase* – report to Economic Development Committee, 12-12-2013, published
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire* – report to Economic Development Committee 14-01-2014, published
- Superfast Extension Programme indicative funding allocation letter – BDUK on behalf of the Department for Culture Media and Sports, 25-2-2014, published
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire – Superfast Extension Programme* – report To Economic Development Committee, 11-03-2014, published

- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire – Phase One* – report to Economic Development Committee, 1-4-2014, published
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire Superfast Extension Programme* – report to Policy Committee, 4-6-2014, published
- *Update on D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan and Local Growth Deal* – report to Economic Development Committee, 1-7-2014, published
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire – Additional Staffing Resource* – report to Economic Development Committee, 16-09-2014, published
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire – quarterly update on the rollout* – report to Economic Development Committee, 18-11-2014, published
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire Contract 2* – report to Policy Committee, 07-01-2015, published
- *Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire: authorisation for contract 2* – report to Economic Development Committee, 31-03-2015, published
- *Nottinghamshire Digital Champions Network* – report to Economic Development Committee, 31-03-2015, published

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All