

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016

Agenda Item: 4

## **REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

### **BROADBAND PETITIONS - NORTH CLIFTON, WIGSLEY AND HARBY**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to propose a response from Economic Development Committee to the three petitions regarding broadband services in the parishes of North Clifton, Wigsley and Harby.

#### **(A) Petition regarding broadband services in North Clifton (Ref: 2016/0166)**

2. A petition of 20 signatures organised by North Clifton residents, calling for North Clifton to be treated as an urgent priority in the roll out of superfast Broadband

#### **(B) Petition regarding broadband services in Wigsley (Ref: 2016/0167)**

3. A petition of 59 signatures organised by Wigsley residents, calling for fibre broadband to be provided to Wigsley sooner by moving forward the roll out date.

#### **(C) Petition regarding broadband services in Harby (Ref: 2016/0168)**

4. A petition of 126 signatures organised by Harby residents, calling for fibre broadband to be provided to Harby sooner by moving forward the roll out date.

#### **Information and Advice**

5. The Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire (BBfN) programme is well on track to delivering its ambitions of 95% of premises in the county (when combined with planned commercial coverage) being enabled with access to superfast broadband (24Mbps and above) by 2016 and 98% coverage by 2018.
6. Nottinghamshire County Council is the lead Authority for the programme in Nottinghamshire but improved broadband speeds are not something which the Council has a statutory responsibility for. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that the money available under the programme is used to maximum effect and that the works undertaken: (a) supply a network capable of delivering superfast broadband speeds to the optimum number of properties and (b) is of high quality.

7. It is important to restate the position on the existing Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire (BBfN) rollout. A finite sum of money has been made available to the programme. The contracts we entered into with BT are for them to achieve maximum coverage across the County with the money available. The rollout plan BT produced and are working to is to achieve exactly that. Maximum coverage with the money available. Clearly to ensure maximum coverage their rollout plan is based on several factors including the cost and timings of the civil engineering work required, as well as the number of properties passed.
8. The residents' frustration is very much appreciated. However, the vast majority of premises within these parish areas are included in the BBfN programme, with delivery due to be achieved between October 2016 and April 2017. Some premises may be eligible for the satellite broadband voucher scheme (<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/business-employment-and-benefits/better-broadband-for-nottinghamshire-programme/basic-broadband-for-all>). However, for premises to be eligible there needs to be longer than 12 months before a fibre broadband solution will be delivered and this will not be the case for many of the premises concerned.
9. The council has already been through an acceleration process in conjunction with BT and BDUK and as a result the delivery dates of the programme are now nine months ahead of where they were originally expected to be.
10. The rollout plan is well underway with significant ongoing work being undertaken. An accepted process of the programme is that timings of broadband rollout cannot be negotiated mid-contract as this would have the potential to incur significant extra cost.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

11. It is a requirement of the Council that petitions presented to Council are considered by the relevant Committee(s) and that a response to the lead petitioners is discussed and prepared accordingly.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, 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 within the report.

### **Financial Implications**

13. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

14. That the Economic Development Committee:
  - a. notes the receipt of the petitions

- b. agrees that a response as set out in paragraphs 5 - 10 be sent by Officers to the petitioners

**Report of the Chair of Economic Development Committee**

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Phil Berrill, 74641

**Constitutional Comments [EP 08.03.2016]**

The recommendations fall within the remit of Economic Development Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Any response to a petition by the Council should be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme.

**Financial Comments [SES 08/03/2016]**

There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

None

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

Collingham, Councillor Maureen Dobson