

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

**NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES:
GIGABIT BROADBAND VOUCHER AND GREEN HOMES GRANT SCHEMES**

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Members of decisions taken under urgency procedures since the last meeting of Policy Committee.

Information

2. The Council's Constitution contains some urgency procedures to enable decisions to be taken quickly in appropriate circumstances. The Constitution requires that the use of these procedures be reported to the next available relevant committee meeting explaining the following three items: the decision, the reasons for it, and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.
3. As part of the procedure, set out below are the two recent decisions taken since the last meeting:

Date of approval	Decision taken
27/08/2020	Dual approval from the Chief Executive, as follows: a) for Nottinghamshire County Council to use all the £750,000 gainshare from the original superfast broadband agreement (contract 1) with BT, to complement Government's proposal for a Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme - top-up, targeting properties classified as rural, hamlets and isolated dwellings b) Delegate authority to Nottinghamshire County Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with legal services, to sign a formal letter of agreement with the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) committing the Council to delivering the programme
01/09/2020	Approval from the Chief Executive for Nottinghamshire County Council to submit a bid for £1.27 million to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) from the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme

Reasons for Urgency

4. The reasons for urgency for both schemes were as follows:
 - a) Building Digital UK (BDUK, the government arm supporting the delivery of broadband networks expressed their intention to issue a ministerial announcement at the beginning of September to launch the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme - top-up. This meant

BDUK needed an immediate response as to whether Nottinghamshire County Council would sign a formal letter committing the authority to the delivery of the programme. See **Appendix A** for the signed urgent decision form and **Appendix B** for the accompanying report.

- b) The Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme was launched on 4 August 2020 and the deadline for applications was noon on 1 September 2020. See **Appendix C** for the signed urgent decision form and **Appendix D** for the accompanying report.

Other Options Considered

5. These are detailed within the accompanying reports for the individual decisions.
6. Policy focus has now shifted to rolling out gigabit-capable full-fibre broadband. As of September 2020, 13.89% of Nottinghamshire properties had access to full-fibre connections. The County Council wanted to submit a proposal to the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) around the gigabit voucher scheme under the recent Getting Building Fund Initiative. It is known that Kent County Council were successful with an application to their LEP because they were already piloting the top-up scheme. However, the D2N2 LEP directed the Council not to submit a proposal on the basis that they would not support any top-up voucher schemes.

Reason for Recommendation

7. To notify the Committee of these decisions at the earliest opportunity, in line with the Constitutional requirements.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

9. As outlined in paragraph three of the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report outlining the decisions taken be noted and Members highlight any other information required.

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE
Leader of the County Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Nicola M^cCoy-Brown, Growth and Economic Development Tel: 0115 977 2580

Constitutional Comments (EP 04/09/2020)

10. This report is submitted to Policy Committee in accordance with the requirement to report to the next available relevant Committee on the use of Option C of the Urgency Procedure set out in the Constitution. The Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (RWK 07/09/2020)

11. The £750,000 gainshare from the original superfast broadband agreement is already held by the County Council having been received previously from Openreach. Whilst the County Council will be submitting the bid to BEIS for Green Homes grant funding, any funding received will be passed on to E.ON who will be undertaking all works. There is no requirement for County Council funding should the bid be successful. Therefore there are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Signed urgent approval forms and accompanying reports

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All