

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL BROADBAND PLAN****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Council of progress towards procuring a delivery partner for the Superfast Broadband project, and to offer further details of the areas of the County which will benefit from the investment.

Information and AdviceProcurement

2. The County Council is now in the latter stages of the procurement process to secure a delivery partner for the broadband initiative. The full and final Invitation to Tender for the initiative was published on 20th February 2013 to the two bidders on the national framework, BT and Fujitsu. Bids are due to be returned to the Council by 26th April 2013.
3. A formal evaluation period will then follow, with the Council anticipating reaching a decision by 20th May 2013. Clearance for State Aid issues and confirmation of the total funding package will need to be in place by that date. The Government's broadband delivery arm, BDUK, is urging the Council to have the contract signed off by the end of June 2013, to enable mobilisation to begin in July.

Intervention areas

4. Maps of each of the Nottinghamshire Borough and District Council areas are appended to this report. They will also be posted on the broadband section of the Council's website. These maps show where public sector investment in Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband is permitted through the programme (the 'white' areas). Areas shown as grey already have access to NGA broadband through one provider. Areas shown as black have NGA broadband through two or more providers. To confirm, the Council cannot invest in these grey or black areas.
5. The maps form part of the Invitation to Tender, and are now 'locked down'. The Council has to comply with strict regulations relating to competition and State Aid, and also with the Government's own requirements through the BDUK programme. It should be noted that the maps are formed from data provided by the telecommunications providers on their existing infrastructure and future investment plans. The Council does not have the ability to influence the scope of the intervention ('white') areas, due to State Aid restrictions.

6. For information, the final number of premises in each Borough or District Council area which will benefit from the investment is as follows:

District	No of premises	% of Notts premises
Ashfield	2,994	3.8%
Bassetlaw	15,599	20%
Broxtowe	2,149	2.8%
Gedling	2,867	3.7%
Mansfield	3,511	4.5%
Newark and Sherwood	26,182	33.6%
Rushcliffe	13,220	17.0%
Nottingham City	11,179	14.4%
Other	136	0.2%
Total	77,837	100%

7. The overall number has reduced significantly from the initial BDUK data (April 2011). This is likely due to commercial roll-out activity that has taken place since the original BDUK data was published. However, the Government's funding allocation to the project remains unchanged at £4.25 million. The requirement for local sources of match funding to the full £4.25 million also remains unchanged.

Financials

8. The BDUK model suggests that total funding for the project will be split into thirds, with one-third coming from central Government, one-third from local sources and one-third from the successful bidder. This would suggest a total investment in Nottinghamshire of £12.75 million. The Council will not know whether this is sufficient until bids are returned at the end of April.
9. Alongside the procurement process, the Council continues to seek alternative sources of funding to meet the existing shortfall and to enable delivery of an enhanced investment programme. An application for European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) was submitted on 7th February which, if successful, will bring an additional £2.7 million to the project. It is hoped that additional funds such as these will be used to deliver fibre coverage further into the County, therefore ensuring that the 90% superfast target is exceeded.

Mobilisation and delivery

10. Working on the basis that contracts will be signed by the end of June 2013, it is anticipated that the 'first dig' for the project will take place before the end of the calendar year. The successful contractor will need some time post contract signing to plan their delivery and roll-out activities, and to mobilise their operations to an optimum level.
11. The project must be delivered in full by December 2015. The County Council is working with its Borough and District Council partners to ensure that issues relating to planning, conservation areas, highways and way-leaves are dealt with consistently and efficiently throughout the process.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service 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

13. The financial implications are highlighted within the report.

Equalities Implications

14. An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced for the Nottinghamshire Broadband Plan and is available with the background papers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 1) Council notes progress towards the procurement of a broadband delivery partner; and
- 2) Continues to work with partners to encourage demand for better broadband across the County, and in particular in those areas that will benefit from this new investment

Report of the Leader of the County Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Nicola M^cCoy-Brown Tel: 0115 977 72580

Finance comments [DJK 18.02.2013]

The contents of this report are duly noted; the financial implications are contained within the report.

Constitutional comments [NAB 14.02.2013]

Council has authority to consider and approve the matters set out in this report.

Background Papers

Borough and District Council level 'white area' maps

Report to County Council – 20th December 2012

Report to County Council – 11th December 2011

The Nottinghamshire Local Broadband Plan and additional documentation is available at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/broadband

Equality Impact Assessment

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All