

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

10 January 2012

Report of the Strategic Director for Policy and Community Safety

DIGITAL DERBYSHIRE – BROADBAND UPDATE

1. Purpose of the Report

To update Cabinet of progress towards the rollout of superfast broadband across Derbyshire in relation to the Government's BDUK programme and other complementary activity.

2. Information and Analysis

In August 2011 the Government committed £530 million investment in the UK's broadband network with the objective of facilitating the delivery of "standard" broadband (2 Mbps minimum) across the UK and to stimulate private sector investment to deliver the best network in Europe by 2015, including future proofing investment to enable next generation broadband.

Derbyshire County Council (including Derby City) has been allocated an indicative sum of £7.39 million to deliver these objectives in identified "white areas" across Derbyshire where there is limited or no broadband provision delivered by the market.

In order to access the BDUK allocation, the Council is currently in the process of preparing the Local Broadband Delivery Plan (LBP) working closely with appointed consultants. Timescales have recently been amended with draft plans required by BDUK by the end of February 2012. This will then enable effective sign off of completed plans by the end of April. The Derbyshire LBP will include the following elements:

- Coverage analysis – identifying white areas for intervention and developing a bespoke Digital Derbyshire model for delivering a mixed technology solution to ensure broadband coverage.
- Cost and service modelling – identifying overall costs, private sector investment and likely public sector gap funding required.
- A strategic County approach to demand stimulation and education.
- Legal consideration (including State Aid, procurement etc.)
- Risk Management Plan.

The Plan will identify a preferred commercial model to go forward into the procurement and implementation phase following its submission by the April 2012 deadline.

BDUK are currently preparing a procurement framework model of approved suppliers to deliver roll out across the UK and the objective is for Derbyshire to be included in the first tranche of BDUK delivery. DCMS have indicated that they aim to have procurement completed and contracts signed for the whole country by the end of December 2012.

In order to manage the Local Broadband Delivery Plan and subsequent procurement, a cross-departmental group has been established and Project Plan developed to ensure activity is coordinated across the complex area of policy development. A key area of activity is the mapping of data provided by BDUK under the Non Disclosure Agreement and additional data collection from businesses, local solutions and other cable and infrastructure in operation across Derbyshire.

Demand stimulation and broadband promotion are vital to success and a coordinated Broadband Campaign to residents, businesses and communities across Derbyshire has yielded the following response to date:

District	Community		Business	
Amber Valley	581	17.8%	69	20.6%
Bolsover	171	5.2%	23	6.9%
Chesterfield	333	10.2%	40	11.9%
Derbyshire Dales	781	23.9%	63	18.8%
Erewash	160	4.9%	20	6.0%
High Peak	421	12.9%	45	13.4%
North East Derbyshire	327	10.0%	18	5.4%
South Derbyshire	293	9.0%	24	7.2%
Derby	78	2.4%	20	6.0%
No district specified	124	3.7%	13	3.8%
Grand Total	3269		335	

Note: The percentage figures represent the proportion per district of total response received to date

To build upon the publicity campaign, the Broadband Champions campaign will be launched in January 2012 with the aim of stimulating further demand in target communities and developing local capacity to enable local solutions to broadband access.

In conjunction with the BDUK programme, DEFRA recently launched the Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF), a £20 million fund to assist rural communities to establish superfast broadband in the most hard to reach areas – widely regarded as the last 10% of the white areas currently not covered. The Broadband Champions campaign will assist target communities to build capacity.

The Derbyshire Economic Partnership is currently facilitating a submission across the Peak District to establish a Rural Growth Network pilot following the recent Government Rural Growth Review.

The Council has also commenced discussions with Derby City Council to ensure BDUK delivery links up with the emerging city infrastructure spearheaded by Lightspeed Derby and further improvements are planned as a result of the recent Regional Growth Fund 2 award to support the Derby Employment Taskforce.

3. Financial Considerations

In order to unlock the BDUK allocation of £7.39 million, the Local Broadband Delivery Plan will need to identify equivalent match funding and options will be considered as part of the Plan's development.

We are continuing to lobby for the regional ERDF programme to be eligible for broadband investment although this would need to be business focused as opposed to domestic provision.

4. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

5. Key Decision

No

6. Call-in

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in this report?

No

7. Background Papers

Papers held within the Regeneration Team.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the progress made in regard to the Digital Derbyshire BDUK programme be noted.
- 2) That a further report be submitted to Cabinet following completion of the Local Broadband Delivery Plan.

David Lowe
Strategic Director of Policy & Community Safety