
BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Scrutiny Committee on past and future Broadband infrastructure roll out in the Borough and other projects enhancing speed for digital usage.

Summary

2. Tees Valley Combined Authorities (TVCA) with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) has committed funding for two phases of public sector funded Broadband infrastructure rollout programmes which had and will have effect for the Borough.
3. Digital Durham is managing the delivery of two Phases of the BDUK programme via Openreach in County Durham, Gateshead, Sunderland, North Tyneside and South Tyneside and the five Tees Valley Local Authorities, including Darlington Borough Council.
4. Phase 1 of the BDUK programme (2014-2017) has already delivered in the Town Centre and the Central Park Enterprise Zone plus four rural cabinets achieving a Darlington BC coverage of 93.5%.
5. Phase 2 (2018-2020) of the BDUK programme is expected to deliver in Mid 2019 in Piercebridge, Hurworth / Hurworth Place, Neasham, Barmpton, Redworth, Middleton St George with an anticipated Darlington BC coverage of 98.1%.
6. Scrutiny is asked to note the anticipated rollout plan by Openreach for BDUK Phase 2 as set out in the main report and potential alternatives.
7. Future enhancements for broadband speeds in the Borough past 2020 could come via Phase 3 of the BDUK programme for further rural areas of the Borough.
8. Additionally the Tees Valley Combined Authority aims to apply for Government programmes such as the Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) (based on full fibre solutions) which would offer new infrastructure provision for speeds up to 1 gigabit per sec level which enables 5G solutions.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that Members note :-
- (a) the current position on Phase 1 and 2 of the BDUK programme; and
 - (b) the future aspiration of the Tees Valley Combined Authority regarding LFFN.

Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

Jochen Werres: Extension 6313

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| S17 Crime and Disorder | N/A |
| Health and Well Being | Marginal inks to Heathy New Town Project |
| Carbon Impact | Effective Broadband supports home working and reduces need to travel |
| Diversity | N/A |
| Wards Affected | All Wards across the Borough. |
| Groups Affected | All community groups are affected. |
| Budget and Policy Framework | The report does not impact on the Budget or Policy Framework. |
| Key Decision | This is not a key decision. |
| Urgent Decision | No |
| One Darlington: Perfectly Placed | Supports the aims of One Darlington-Perfectly placed in community building, sustainability aspects, children support and providing a strong economy. |
| Efficiency | N/A |
| Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers | There is no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers as a result of this report. |

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Background

10. The Tees Valley Combined Authorities together with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) has committed funding for two phases of publically supported Broadband infrastructure rollout programmes. Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) a section of the Department of Culture Media and Sport has been the main driver and funder of enhancing infrastructure and speed of Broadband to Superfast (24mb/sec) in areas of the UK which have been not been commercially viable.
11. Digital Durham is managing the delivery of these two Phases of the BDUK programme via Openreach in County Durham, Gateshead, Sunderland, North Tyneside and South Tyneside and the five Tees Valley Local Authorities, including Darlington Borough Council.

BDUK Phase 1 (2014-17) in Darlington:

12. Phase 1 of the BDUK programme (2014-2016) has delivered 19 superfast fibre cabinets in the Town Centre and the Central Park Enterprise Zone plus four rural cabinets.
13. To negotiate the procurement process, Tees Valley Authorities including Darlington partnered with Digital Durham (a collaboration of Durham, Gateshead, Sunderland, North and South Tyneside). This process selected BT, the only provider available on the BDUK procurement framework and rollout has begun across the Digital Durham area, with over 10,000 premises enabled.
14. Within Darlington Borough Council 23 Fibre to the cabinet (FTTC) installation have been built and connected to high speed internet provision. Circa 2000 premises have been enabled to receive Superfast Broadband. Locations of these cabinets were the Town Centre, the Central Park Enterprise Zone and Rural areas (around Piercebridge, Merrybent, High and Low Coniscliffe, Hurworth Place and Bishopton).
15. This investment – combined with commercial rollout by BT and Virgin – has taken superfast broadband coverage levels in Darlington to 93.5% March 2017).

BDUK Phase 2 (2017-20) in Darlington:

16. BDUK has a target of 95% coverage of UK premises by 2019/2020 for Phase 2 the Superfast Extension Programme (SEP). There is in Darlington a gap after Phase 1 of 1.5% in Darlington to reach that Government target. There is

consequently a need for a second phase of the BDUK programme in Darlington which has attracted match funding via TVCA.

17. Tees Valley Combined Authority decided in late 2016 that it wanted an enhanced Phase 2 Option in the Tees Valley enabling 98.1% coverage for the Tees Valley at the End of Phase 2 and an ambition to reach 100% coverage at the end of Phase 3 (utilising enhanced gain-share)) and the new financial opportunities afforded by the Devolution Deal.
18. The enhanced Phase 2 is progressed and funded from the Tees Valley Investment Programme (no financial contributions from composite Tees Valley Councils),
 - (a) For Darlington 98.1% means an extra superfast coverage of 3612 premises post Phase 2 (2019-2020). This will be confirmed in September 2018 by Digital Durham based on postcodes, premises and confirmed timetable of delivery
 - (b) It is anticipated through modelling of Openreach that the following areas of Darlington will be covered by Phase 2 rollout currently proposed for Q2 2019:
 - (i) Piercebridge (West side of Village)
 - (ii) Redworth
 - (iii) Hurworth Place(remainder left after NYNET coverage in Phase 1)
 - (iv) Hurworth Village (remainder left after NYNET coverage in Phase 1)
 - (v) Neasham
 - (vi) Barmpton
 - (vii) Coatham Mundeville
 - (viii) Middleton St George (Oaktree Estate / St Georges Gate etc)

Total 3612 premises

19. It is anticipated that the roll out will be achieved as set out above but alternative delivery in rural Darlington is currently being considered by TVCA if Openreach and BDUK cannot confirm to the Mayor coverage of the suggested areas by September 2018. A parallel procurement exercise for a new delivery partner is considered to enable rollout in the above areas by mid-2019.

Future need for Superfast Coverage in Darlington through Phase 3 (2020 onwards)

20. Mostly Darlington's Rural Areas to the West (Killerby, Summerhouse, Denton, Walworth (Gate) and North East (Great Stainton, Barmpton) will be left uncovered by Fibre based solutions for Broadband.
21. Those areas which have not been covered by Phase 2 of the programme are eligible to bid through the Better Broadband Scheme administered by Digital

Durham for a grants in form of a voucher (up to £350 for hardware and installation) for mobile or satellite broadband connection with Superfast speeds.

22. Consideration is also given to work with the Neighbouring North Yorkshire Programme NYNET to cover the rural areas in the next Phase 3 (2020 onwards) because of their closeness of their fibre network to Darlington and the Tees Valley and their considerable rural delivery experience.

Future proofing considerations for the Tees Valley and Darlington:

23. As digital enhancements and technology are not standing still and ambitions for economic growth are underpinned by digital speeds the Tees Valley Combined Authority including Darlington Aims to stay ahead in the digital speed race.
24. In order to market the Tees Valley as a region for investment digital speeds have become a locational factor to attract investment into the region. The Tees Valley Combined Authority has subsequently earmarked Government programmes like Gigabit Vouchers for businesses, the 5G Testbed and Trial programme¹ and the Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN)² programme for up to 1gb /sec 5G technology.
25. Application for these programmes are being considered which would enhance Darlington's position in connectivity speed further in the future.

Conclusion

26. Coverage to Government USO Standard of 10mb per sec for every household in the UK is progressing well in the Tees Valley and Darlington. By end of 2020 it is anticipated that nearly 99.4% will be covered by Superfast speed 24mb/ sec in the Borough.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/5g-testbeds-and-trials-programme>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-full-fibre-networks-challenge-fund>