

POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

3 JULY 2012

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BROADBAND SCHEME

1.0 THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for £360,000, as a contribution to a countywide scheme to enable Broadband access across the Borough

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **That a contribution of £360,000 from Capital Receipts be approved to enable Melton to participate in a countywide scheme that will enable Broadband access across the Borough.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

The Government aims to ensure that all of the UK has access to the best broadband connectivity in Europe by 2015.

Leicestershire County Council have a vision to deliver superfast broadband to all premises in Leicestershire by 2017 with 90% being delivered by 2015. £4m has been allocated by Leicestershire County Council to match the Government's £3m allocation for Leicestershire. A further £300m has been allocated to provide better broadband services in the most remote areas.

The following are a list of reasons, as highlighted by the Government, as to why superfast broadband is needed in the UK :-

- Provides foundations from which the UK economy will grow and recover from the recession – to improve prosperity in the wider economy
- For the UK to be competitive in global markets
- To improve consumer power and choice, overcoming rural isolation

Broadband connectivity is a crucial issue for Melton as areas in the Borough will be unlikely to experience the benefits of market led connectivity improvements. So called Slow Spots and Not Spots can be viewed at http://www.leics.gov.uk/leicestershire_broadband_connectivity_maps.pdf

The Local Broadband Plan was signed off by Government in April 2012 which will enable the County Council to progress with procurement. Leicestershire County Council will draft up a model to support communities develop projects related to Broadband.

4.0 KEY ISSUES

There is significant evidence within the Borough that poor connectivity issues have affected both businesses and communities, especially in the Vale of Belvoir.

5.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Broadband across the Borough has direct links into the following corporate priorities:

- Support people and businesses through the economic downturn
- Meet the Economic needs of the Borough
- Maximise the potential of Melton Mowbray Town centre
- To provide high performing services that are efficient and meet customers' needs

6.0 **FINANCIAL & OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Members are asked to approve a contribution of £360,000 from Capital receipts.

7.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

8.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

8.1 There are no direct community issues arising from this report.

9.0 **EQUALITIES**

9.1 There are no direct equality issues arising from this report.

10.0 **RISKS**

10.1 No direct risks have been identified. The project is supported by Leicestershire County Council, who is the major financial contributor.

11.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

11.1 There are no climate change issues arising from this report.

12.0 **CONSULTATION**

12.1 Leicestershire County Council have undertaken a broadband survey and had over 4,600 responses with 650 of these being to the dedicated business survey. The results of the consultation will help to create a picture of where there is poor connectivity and demand for superfast broadband. This data is currently being analysed and a detailed report will be published shortly (June 2012). 2000 respondents have requested to be kept informed of any updates.

13.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

13.1 All Wards

Contact Officer: Lynn Aisbett/Harry Rai

Date: 19 June 2012

Appendices: Appendix 1 : Project Mandate (To Follow)
Appendix 2 :Business Case (To Follow)

Background Papers: BDUK Broadband Delivery Project – ‘Broadband Leicestershire (Final Redacted Summary Version) February 2012

Reference: X: C'tees, Council & Sub-C'tees/PFA/2012-13/3-07-12/LA-Broadband