

Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	20 March 2019
Officer	Dugald Lockhart
Subject of Report	Growth through Digital Infrastructure - Progress
Executive Summary	<p>This report provides a retrospective view of the achievements of the Superfast Dorset programme, and sets out in summary form the next steps that will need to be taken by the new Dorset Council and its partners to ensure that a fully future-proof digital infrastructure, both fixed and mobile, is available to meet the significant future data demands on modern digital smart places.</p> <p>This report will be supplemented by a short presentation to the committee.</p>
Impact Assessment: <i>Please refer to the protocol for writing reports.</i>	Equalities Impact Assessment: (Note: If this report contains a new strategy/policy/function has an EQIA screening form been completed?)
	Use of Evidence: Coverage details sourced from think broadband https://www.thinkbroadband.com/ and internal Superfast Dorset project data
	Budget: None directly in this report
	Risk Assessment: High - Broadband Infrastructure in Dorset remains critically reliant on Openreach – Dorset CC has experienced contract management issues through the superfast programme, these issues are not unique to Dorset.
	Outcomes: Included in body of report

Recommendation	To note the content of this report
Reason for Recommendation	
Appendices	None
Background Papers	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-economic-impact-and-public-value-of-the-superfast-broadband-programme https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-telecoms-infrastructure-review https://www.thinkbroadband.com/
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1 Progress

The council's investment through the Superfast Dorset programme has had a tremendous impact on the broadband quality and availability across Dorset, particularly the rural areas. However there remains much to do to provide coverage to the hardest to reach premises. Progress is outlined in the summary table in a "we said – we did" form.

We Said	We Did
<p>Greater availability of superfast broadband across Dorset will provide a platform and catalyst:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to drive economic growth 	<p>An independent assessment of the impact the national superfast rollout has had in its first years (2012-2016) found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £9 billion surge in turnover for businesses benefitting from the faster connections now available £690 million net increase in Gross Value Added to the UK economy A reduction of almost 9,000 individuals claiming jobseekers allowance, as well as a reduction in long term claimants by 2,500 in programme areas, accompanied by the creation of 49,000 local jobs Programme has delivered £12.28 benefit for businesses for every £1 invested by the Government and local authorities <p>An independent assessment of the 2015 SME connection voucher programme delivered £5 of short-term benefit for every £1 invested – across the Dorset project area this equates to over £5m of benefit (at no direct cost to Dorset County Council).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to transform public services 	<p>Greater availability of superfast broadband has enabled Dorset County Council to make significant savings in the running costs of its wide area network</p> <p>Providing connectivity to residents, businesses and communities enables public services to deliver services digitally.</p> <p>Better broadband and full fibre provides the foundation for the strategic ambition of Dorset council to create a digital place.</p> <p>Superfast Dorset currently working with CCG to support access to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved health information telehealth, telecare medical practice initiatives such as e-consult.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to deliver digital inclusion 	<p>65 trained and active volunteer digital champions</p> <p>Since October 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2719 total tutorials, 1,902 total volunteer hours 1,036 individual learners have benefited <p>Currently every month</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 350 tutorials 150 learners 200 volunteer hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to bring new opportunities to individuals and communities across Dorset. 	<p>Access to faster, more reliable superfast broadband delivered by Superfast Dorset: 85,030 (Jan 2019)- opening up on-line opportunities for families and individuals.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% (as close as practicably possible) superfast broadband 	<p>Current superfast coverage 97.3% (Dorset project area)</p>

<p>connectivity at 30Mbit/s by 2020</p>	<p>Approximately 3,500 more premises will be delivered through contract already in place during 2019.</p>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% connectivity to ultrafast services and businesses able to access faster services as required. 	<p>48.65% (South west of England) – This is a somewhat redundant measure since government launched full-fibre agenda. Full-fibre coverage figure for the new Dorset council area is only 2.6% (6.3% nationally)</p> <p>Connectivity for Businesses - Gigabit Voucher Scheme DCMS launched in April 2018 the £67m Programme. It provides up to £2,500 per business or up to £500 per resident (when aggregated with businesses) toward the installation of a full fibre connection.</p> <p>Dorset project area statistics:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="475 622 1129 707"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="2">Connected</th> <th colspan="2">Pipeline</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mar-19</td> <td>220</td> <td>£533,860</td> <td>298</td> <td>£693,089</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Connected		Pipeline		Mar-19	220	£533,860	298	£693,089
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% take up of superfast services by residents and businesses 	<p>Overall take-up 55.5% against initial contractual target of 20%.</p> <p>Ongoing initiatives to raise awareness of availability and benefits include Digital Norm, a new mascot demonstrating that taking a superfast service is the norm in Dorset. Campaign enabled by successful bid of £20,000 to DCMS Superfast Take-up Fund.</p> <p>Increased levels of take-up currently forecast to generate over £10m of gainshare funds for further investment into broadband improvements.</p>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of premises with access to at least 2Mbps. 	<p>The Better Broadband Subsidy scheme provides all those with the poorest speeds with subsidised access to alternative technologies (eg satellite, fixed wireless, 4G) which will deliver speeds in excess of 2Mbps - in practice speeds are usually in excess of 10Mbps</p> <p>The Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme was launched in December 2015 to provide up to £350 to upgrade end users on less than 2Mbps to functional broadband. Prior to May 2016 BDUK were centrally issuing codes, in Dorset they issued 68 of which 30 have been redeemed which are included in the numbers below (December 2018).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="564 1393 1059 1594"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Applications received</td> <td>1419</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total codes issued</td> <td>1078</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total codes redeemed</td> <td>623</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Description	Number	Applications received	1419	Total codes issued	1078	Total codes redeemed	623		
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2 Next steps

Superfast

Delivery through existing contract with BT will continue through 2019, all with full fibre. Change control and procurement activity underway to provide even more coverage - all of this will be full fibre targeted in rural areas, where delivery becomes more complex, more expensive and slower to achieve.

Full fibre agenda

Government announced its ambition for the whole of the UK to have access to full fibre infrastructure by 2033, and 50% by 2025, in the [Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review](#) (FTIR) published in July 2018. This programme is being managed by the Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) team in DCMS.

Full details of the Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC) programme, Government's largescale intervention to achieve 'Outside-In', are expected in April /May 2019. This will focus on the final 10% of the UK, which is likely to include significantly more than 10% of Dorset. Ongoing discussions with DCMS show this is likely to include a range of interventions Dorset has been piloting successfully.

Dorset was the first area of the UK to benefit from the Public-Sector Building Upgrade programme with Cheselbourne school. We are managing a further expansion of this pilot activity with DCMS, DfE and DCC school's teams to a further 19 schools across Dorset. We are also working to include several libraries in the same pilot funding from DCMS.

Digital Infrastructure Strategy refresh

A revised strategy for the new Dorset Council will be required.

Mobile and 5G

Public sector interventions in improving mobile coverage have proved to be very difficult to achieve. Further work on this is required and will be a central part of the revised strategy. A leading technology organisation has suggested that, without public intervention, small cell 5G will not come to Dorset until at least 2025.

3 Conclusion

Great progress has been made in improving digital connectivity through the Superfast Dorset programme.

Policy and technology have evolved considerably over the recent period. The full fibre agenda, market analysis and stimulation, emergent 5G opportunities and challenges and smart place applications will all need the active engagement of the new Dorset Council in order that ambitions for digital place can be realised.

Mike Harries

Director Environment and Economy

March 2019