Chorley Council

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Commercial Services	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 July 2020

ROLL OUT OF SUPERFAST BROADBAND BY BT - MONITORING

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the implementation of the recommendations made by the inquiry which reported to Executive Cabinet in August 2017.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the updates of this report be noted.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. This report seeks to provide an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the implementation of the recommendations made by the inquiry which reported to Executive Cabinet in August 2017

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	**No**

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	✓
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

BACKGROUND

5. During 2017, a task group of Overview and Scrutiny undertook a review of the roll out of Superfast Broadband. In August 2017, the Executive Cabinet accepted the recommendations in the final report of the task group. This report provides an update on progress in delivering against the recommendations.

UPDATE OF PROGRESS IN DELIVERY

6. The following information sets out the original recommendations from the Task Group, and an update on the progress in delivery.

7. Lancashire County Council

7.1. Superfast Lancashire

Updates below provided by Gemma Johnson, Superfast Lancashire Project Manager at Lancashire County Council.

Task Group Recommendation	Update
To have discussions with Virgin about the current issues in Buckshaw, Rivington and White Coppice and encourage them to provide Superfast Broadband.	**Update provided March 2020:** Virgin haven't shared any plans with Lancashire County Council (LCC). BT/Openreach (OR) have recently indicated that they are reviewing coverage – LCC will follow this up and advise. Any specific queries, please provide details to LCC.
To highlight the issues of new estates not having Superfast Broadband from the outset with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK).	**Update provided March 2020:** LCC are in liaison with Preston and South Ribble City Deal team to develop a mechanism for sharing planning updates with Developers. Once we have a process this can be shared with all districts.
To provide hints and tips on resolving broadband issues, including residents speaking to their own provider first before speaking to other providers and not placing electrical devices next to the router etc for distribution to Councillors and Town/Parish Councils.	**Update provided March 2020:** The Website was updated 12 months ago and is due for a refresh in April 2020. A help sheet has been developed to advise what steps to follow to confirm speed and coverage. This is being updated to include the latest announcements from Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK). This will be available April 2020.
To utilise different technologies available to provide Superfast Broadband to white areas (having minimal coverage and open market review failure).	**Update provided March 2020:** The Government's target is for full fibre coverage by 2025. This is extremely ambitious but is the current driver for all future investment. Recent Announcements also suggest a co-ordinated National approach to procurement. The process is still being developed by BDUK.

7.2. BT

Updates below provided by Gemma Johnson, Superfast Lancashire Project Manager at Lancashire County Council.

Task Group Recommendation	Update
To update the call centre operative information with regard to Superfast Broadband accessibility.	**Update provided March 2020:** LCC assure data submitted by BT on a quarterly basis and raise inaccessible

	evidence issues with them. The number of record issues have been reducing, resulting in call centre operatives having access to accurate timely coverage information.
To review structures in areas which flood, to ensure they are located in the best place.	**Update provided March 2020:** This is still ongoing as Openreach consider associated flooding factors within planning and delivery. If there are any specific examples or queries for Chorley, please provide and LCC will follow them up with OR.

8. **Chorley Council**

8.1. Updates below provided by Alison Martland, Principal Planning Officer.

Task Group Recommendation	Update
To consider methods of encouraging new properties to have access to Superfast Broadband from the outset	**Update provided February 2020:** The Central Lancashire Local Plan Review is to incorporate an appropriate policy about providing fibre broadband and allowing connection to the doorstep for all developments (adoption 2023). Policy preparation will be at Preferred Options stage due summer 2021. In the shorter term planning conditions will be instigated (e.g. Strawberry Fields Digital Hub.
To liaise with BT about new developments, both residential and commercial.	**Update provided February 2020:** As above, BT Openreach is a consultee to the Central Lancashire Local Plan.
To lobby Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) to give broadband the same status as utilities	**Update provided February 2020:** As above.

8.2. Updates below provided by Simon Charnock, Digital Transformation Officer.

Task Group Recommendation	Update
To raise awareness with the public and businesses that services would not upgrade automatically but must be ordered from their provider.	**Update provided February 2020:** The Council published on social media advising residents to check with their suppliers if they are on the best deal/speed. November 2020 The Council engaged with businesses regarding the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. Social Media posts and letters aimed at rural businesses went out. The scheme allows SME's to apply for up to £2,500 of funding and rural SME's up to £3,500 for support with fibre broadband installation. Expressions of interest in the scheme has been 15 businesses to date. The Council will support business that wish to apply to improve connectivity in the rural areas. Residents are

	also able to apply for up to £1,500 of funding as part of a group project should an SME in their local area apply for funding.
To support the future projects within the Digital Strategy: • Integration of My Account and E Citizen • Continuation of digital skills training to give the right training to the right people in a flexible way • Tablet loan scheme	**Update provided February 2020:** A project is underway to review and refresh the Council's website. We expect to award contract for the initial Content Management System before end of March 2020. Part of this project also includes investigation of the options available for integration between MyAccount and E-Citizen which will be looked at by the ICT team. Partnerships with Lancashire Adult Learning and Citizen Advice continue to provide free digital skills training to local residents tailored to their needs. Sessions are tailored based on to the needs of the local area working with parish councils and local venues and community groups
Tailor digital skills training to the needs of particular groups.	**Update provided February 2020:** Digital Skills training continues working with learning providers, digital champions and local community groups and venues. Sessions are tailored to specific needs; for example, a group at Brothers of Charity with learning disabilities have attended training to learn about staying safe online. Courses have also taken place specifically for the unemployed, elderly and those residents on Universal Credit due to the system not being online only. Sessions have also taken place with SME's in the borough to allow them to learn about the advantages of businesses being active online.
To ask Town/Parish Councils to advertise digital skills training in their newsletters	**Update provided February 2020:** Parish Councils receive digital copies of promotional material and this will continue. Social media channels increasingly used to promote availability of digital skills training.

8.3. Updates below provided by Chad Gray, Senior Technical Engineer.

Task Group Recommendation	Update
To include an action to investigate the provision of town centre Wi-Fi within the new Digital Strategy	**Update provided March 2020:** The next phase of Wifi rollout has begun with fibre being laid up the length of Market Street and around the new Market Walk Extension. Due to a collapsed duct, the Market Street fibre works are not yet complete, and our partners are working with LCC in order to obtain the necessary permission to dig up the highway to investigate. Once completed, additional Wifi coverage will be

	available from the Market Street/Church Street junction right up to the Big Lamp at the far end of Market Street. Additionally, we will be placing Wifi access point on the Primrose Gardens building to cover the surrounding area. The Market Walk Extension will have wifi access points placed on the 4 new CCTV columns which will provide coverage around the new extension. The CCTV poles at McDonalds and opposite the Bus station are also being brought onto our fibre network and this will enable us to place wifi on those poles too.

8.4.   Updates below provided by Zoe Whiteside, Service Lead Spatial Planning.

Task Group Recommendation	Update
To highlight the availability of good digital access within the Economic Development Strategy as a selling point for businesses to locate in Chorley.	**Update provided March 2020:** Ekosgen have been commissioned by the three Central Lancashire local authorities of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble to work on an Economic Strategy which will link into the Lancashire LIS and Greater Lancashire Plan. This work is to be tied into the emerging new Central Lancashire Local Plan and therefore a draft is estimated to be published Summer 2020.

8.5.   Update below provided by Phil Owen, Senior Business Engagement Officer (Digital).

Task Group Recommendation	Update
To work with the Combined Authority through the Digital Lancashire project to implement these recommendations.	**Update provided March 2020:** Duncan Sandford, MD of Digital Lancashire now works from Strawberry Fields Digital Hub and an additional events and marketing person has recently been added to the team. The Business Engagement Team are starting to work more closely together and collaborate on events and meetings.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

9. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

10. No risk has been identified.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

11. No comments.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

12. No comments.

MARK LESTER
DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Background Papers		
Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Rollout of Superfast Broadband	**August 2017**	**https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=56390**
Overview and Scrutiny Task Group: Superfast Broadband - Response from the Executive Cabinet	**November 2017**	**https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=57078**
Overview and Scrutiny Task Group: Superfast Broadband - Response from the Executive Cabinet	**January 2018**	**https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=57078**
Overview and Scrutiny Task Group: Rollout of Superfast Broadband – Monitoring of Recommendations	**October 2018**	**https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s90830/Monitoring%20report%20for%20Broadband%20inquiry.pdf**
Overview and Scrutiny Task Group: Rollout of Superfast Broadband – Monitoring of Recommendations	**September 2019**	**https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=117&MId=7237&Ver=4**

Report Author	Ext	Date
Portia Taylor-Black	5300	10.03.2020