

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Fastershire Community Grant Scheme Approvals Q4 2020/21																																								
Date of decision:	06.04.2021 (for Quarter 4 activity 2020/21)																																								
Decision maker:	Assistant Director Corporate Support																																								
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation – point SA78 delegated authority to Assistant Director Corporate Support for County-wide broadband deployment and digital inclusion.</p> <p>Delegated authority to the Assistant Director Corporate Support to take operational decision to delivery recommendation (a) within cabinet decision report of 18 December 2019.</p>																																								
Ward:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrow (Herefordshire) • Weobley and Leominster South (Herefordshire) • Cinderford East, Cinderford West & Ruspidge (Gloucestershire) • Blockley (Gloucestershire) 																																								
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local communities covered by each of the community projects • Gloucestershire County Council 																																								
Decision made:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That £453,448.08 from the Stage 5 Fastershire Community Grant budget is committed to the following community projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Birley, Upper Hill & Aulden ○ Nash & Knill ○ Cinderford ○ Northwick Park & Draycott 																																								
Reasons for decision:	<p>This quarter has seen the first four projects come forward for funding from the Fastershire Community Grant which was launched in December 2020.</p> <p>The four communities are very different in size, remoteness and viability. The table below details the key information relating to each project.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Community</th><th>Participating premises with <30Mbps</th><th>Other benefitting premises with <30Mbps</th><th>Selected Supplier</th><th>Total Cost £'000</th><th>Required Funding £'000</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Birley, Upper Hill & Aulden</td><td>28</td><td>17</td><td>Full Fibre Ltd</td><td>196,610</td><td>192,637.08</td></tr> <tr> <td>Nash & Knill</td><td>24</td><td>7</td><td>Airband</td><td>149,533</td><td>137,533</td></tr> <tr> <td>Cinderford</td><td>87</td><td>497</td><td>Full Fibre Ltd</td><td>3,112,006</td><td>28,675</td></tr> <tr> <td>Northwick Park & Draycott</td><td>78</td><td>110</td><td>Gigaclear</td><td>231,104</td><td>94,603</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>217</td><td>631</td><td></td><td>3,689,253</td><td>453,448.08</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Cinderford, being a small town, is the clear outlier and the exercise has done more to bring the viability of the area to the attention of suppliers than plug any major funding gap. However, it is unlikely that many similar schemes to Cinderford will come through the grant and the other three are more representative of the type of projects that will come through in the future.</p> <p>Despite the disparity in cost vs benefit, each project passed the Value for Money test detailed in the Fastershire Broadband Strategy and was therefore approved.</p> <p>These early projects have successfully proved the concept of the Fastershire Community Grant, enabling the project to facilitate superfast connectivity to 848 hitherto STD (Still To Do) premises, nearly 10% of the residual premises that are left without a contracted solution.</p>					Community	Participating premises with <30Mbps	Other benefitting premises with <30Mbps	Selected Supplier	Total Cost £'000	Required Funding £'000	Birley, Upper Hill & Aulden	28	17	Full Fibre Ltd	196,610	192,637.08	Nash & Knill	24	7	Airband	149,533	137,533	Cinderford	87	497	Full Fibre Ltd	3,112,006	28,675	Northwick Park & Draycott	78	110	Gigaclear	231,104	94,603	Total	217	631		3,689,253	453,448.08
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Highlight any associated risks/ finance/legal/ equality considerations:	<p>Finance: The required funding is already accounted for within the Fastershire capital budget (separately allocated for Herefordshire and Gloucestershire).</p> <p>Equality: Access to broadband is a factor of digital exclusion to information, education, opportunities and social networking. The community scheme is a way of addressing gaps in coverage and therefore supporting equality.</p> <p>Legal: These projects have been procured through the Fastershire Stage 5 Dynamic Purchasing System and each successful supplier has signed a DPS Agreement with the council. Grant Funding Agreements have been issued to all participating premises except in the case of Cinderford and Northwick Park where agreements have been issued to the Forest Economic Partnership CIC and Northwick Park Estates respectively.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	Alternative quotes were received for Cinderford however, the community selected Full Fibre Ltd on the grounds of best value.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None

Signed..... Date: 6 April 2021