

## Record of officer decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	<b>Fastershire Community Grant Scheme Approvals Q1 2021/22</b>																																									
<b>Date of decision:</b>	14 July 2021																																									
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Assistant Director Corporate Support																																									
<b>Authority for delegated decision:</b>	<p>Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation – updated 7 June 2021 - 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 decisions to delivery recommendation (a) within cabinet decision report of <a href="#">18 December 2019</a>.</p>																																									
<b>Ward:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three Crosses &amp; Hope End</li> <li>• Newnham (Gloucestershire)</li> <li>• Mitcheldean (Gloucestershire)</li> <li>• Badgeworth North &amp; Brockworth East (Gloucestershire)</li> </ul>																																									
<b>Consultation:</b>	Local communities covered by each of the community projects																																									
<b>Decision made:</b>	That £964,088 from the Stage 5 Fastershire Community Grant budget is committed to the following community projects; and that £4,453.63 is made available to reimburse the owner of premise in HR8 2PE for the additional cost of their FTTP connection.																																									
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	<p>This quarter has seen another four projects come forward for funding from the Fastershire Community Grant.</p> <p>The table below details the key information relating to each project.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Community</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Participating premises with &lt;30Mbps</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Other benefitting premises with &lt;30Mbps</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Selected Supplier</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Total Cost</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Required Funding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Castle Frome</td> <td style="text-align: center;">44</td> <td style="text-align: center;">26</td> <td>Airband</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£214,380</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£192,380</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Churcham</td> <td style="text-align: center;">137</td> <td style="text-align: center;">161</td> <td>Gigaclear</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£734,554</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£499,999</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Witcombe</td> <td style="text-align: center;">54</td> <td style="text-align: center;">96</td> <td>Airband</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£246,366</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£210,866</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bradley Hill</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> <td>Gigaclear</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£65,853</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£60,843</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>242</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>293</b></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£1,261,153</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£964,088</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>With the exception of Bradley Hill, each project met the value for money tests applied to the Fastershire Community Grant Appraisal process.</p> <p>The Bradley Hill project fails on each of the 3 agreed VFM (value for money) tests for the Fastershire Community Grant. Whilst the VFM test does account for the dispersal of hard to reach premises, it is a relatively blunt tool and is not designed to account for other challenging aspects of the geography. In the case of this project, there are significant issues with the gradient of the hill and the fact that it sits within a forest which will make it geographically difficult rather than the remoteness of the participating premises per se. On top of this, the supplier would be expected to dig over 1km without passing a single marketable property just to reach the project area. The project has been discussed with the Cllr Phillip Robinson Gloucestershire County Council Cabinet Member responsible for broadband who has visited the applicants and commented as follows;</p> <p><i>On Friday 25th June, I visited Bradley Hill, Soudley, with my fellow county councillor, Cllr Graham Morgan. We spent a few hours trying to ascertain some specific details regarding the circumstances of the Bradley Hill community in relation to its broadband needs.</i></p>						Community	Participating premises with <30Mbps	Other benefitting premises with <30Mbps	Selected Supplier	Total Cost	Required Funding	Castle Frome	44	26	Airband	£214,380	£192,380	Churcham	137	161	Gigaclear	£734,554	£499,999	Witcombe	54	96	Airband	£246,366	£210,866	Bradley Hill	7	10	Gigaclear	£65,853	£60,843	<b>Total</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>293</b>		<b>£1,261,153</b>	<b>£964,088</b>
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	<p><i>We learned that one resident works for the NHS and especially with disabled people. She needs good broadband to cope more effectively with the virtual meetings that this work entails. Another person is a banker, in theory based at Barnwood but now trying to work almost entirely from home and in need of better broadband to facilitate that. He has two children who increasingly have online homework. One elderly resident was worried about the failing health of his wife and how, more and more, her doctors' appointments are carried out online. He said he was currently stuck with a download speed of one mbps. Yet another person runs a well respected building company from home. Poor broadband has implications for his business. This particularly concerns me as the Cabinet Member for Gloucestershire's economy. Some local jobs partly (through subcontracting) depend on the success of his company.</i></p> <p>Cllr Morgan added</p> <p><i>Bradley Hill a small community that is in danger of being left behind, with a number of people in the business and health walks of life that really depend more and more for a service that most just take for granted.</i></p> <p>On this basis and despite the failure against the VFM tests, it was recommended that the funding should also be approved for this project.</p> <p>As part of the Fastershire project, funding is allocated to cover the risk of data error's having led to erroneous claims of superfast capability only coming to light following the contract closure. This funding was to be used to pay for those instances to be resolved. One such instance has arisen in relation to premise in HR8 2PE. This property had been claimed by BT as ready to offer an FTTP service, however the owner has since been quoted £4,453.63 to physically connect. This value will be reimbursed to the owner should they wish to instruct BT to undertake the connection.</p>
<p><b>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</b></p>	<p>Finance: The required funding is already accounted for within the Fastershire budget.</p> <p>Equality: the programme is based on reducing the barriers to digital exclusion.</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 Churcham where agreements have been issued to the Forest Economic Partnership CIC who will take the lead.</p>
<p><b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b></p>	<p>No alternative quotes were received</p>
<p><b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b></p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: 14 July 2021