



PRCC.62 16/17

Prosperous Communities
Committee

21 March 2017

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Subject: Broadband Provision Across the District – Survey Proposal

Report by:

Director of Resources

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To provide Members with the proposal to run a survey and online speed test to gather information on the current position with regard to Broadband Provision across the District.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Officers are requested to set up and run the survey and speed test to identify the current position of superfast broadband services within the District and to bring forward a further paper in June 2017 with the results.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Financial :

Financial Implications: FIN/108/17

A Capital Budget of £555k was approved as part of the 2013/14 Capital Programme to support the BDUK roll out within West Lindsey as detailed within the report. This was to be funded from Capital Receipts. Any reduction in the amount paid will result in capital receipts being available for future capital investment.

Staffing :

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

NB: Please explain how you have considered the policy's impact on different groups (for example: young people, elderly, ethnic minorities, LGBT community, rural residents, disabled, others).

Risk Assessment :

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

*Wherever possible please provide a hyperlink to the background paper/s
If a document is confidential and not for public viewing it should not be listed.*

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In December 2016 this committee requested that a survey be undertaken to assess the extent of any issues regarding broadband throughout West Lindsey. It is proposed that a dual process is run to gain the maximum information possible and to include those with and without broadband. This will be through an online speed test and a hard copy survey using in-house resources within the Business Improvement Team.
- 1.2 It should also be noted that during January 2017 we received a copy of a letter (appendix B) sent by Onlincolnshire to BDUK seeking a reversal of the current embargo on BDUK funding of Broadband activity in West Lindsey. This approach is to be welcomed.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The first part of the proposal is to have a speed test run in conjunction with Thinkbroadband.com sitting on our website. This would give us information by postcode level on who the provider is and the download and upload speeds. This however would only be the speed at the time of the test being run. This speed test is also currently being run by onlincolnshire and can be found on <http://www.onlincolnshire.org/my-area/broadband-speed-test>.
- 2.2 The second part of the proposal is for a survey to be run (draft attached as Appendix A) in which we would ask the following to complete:
 - all members to distribute up to 100 surveys to residents within their ward before the start of purdah.
 - the Citizen Panel (both online and paper respondents)
 - Parish Councils (and Parish Meetings) to advertise and pass around their parish
 - Online information for any West Lindsey residents to completeThis survey will be available electronically but for those without this facility paper copies will be made available to ensure we maximise the households surveyed. The analysis of this information will be undertaken in-house through the Business Improvement Team.

3. Promotion

- 3.1 This process will be advertised by the Communications Team through press releases and Social Media to try to get additional residents to complete. Part of the distribution will ask people to promote this survey and to pass the details onto any resident of West Lindsey who would like to take part.

4. Timescales

- 4.1 A survey of this type should be available to the public for a minimum of 6 weeks (longer if this crosses with a public holiday) to ensure sufficient time is allowed for everyone to complete. In this case as the open time is over Easter we have allowed 8 weeks. As the reports from the broadband test are sent at the beginning of each month it is recommended that the survey and test are run in line and has at least two reports from Thinkbroadband. A draft outline of the timescales are shown below:

| Action | Start date | Finish Date | Responsible Officer |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Consultation with members | 8 February 2017 | 21 February 2017 | Ian Knowles |
| Survey amendments | 22 February 2017 | 24 February 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Printing/online set up | 27 February 2017 | 3 March 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Set up online speed test | 17 February 2017 | 3 March 2017 | Alistair Wearing |
| Survey and test available | 6 March 2017 | 28 April 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Distribution of survey by members | 6 March 2017 | 26 March 2017 | Members |
| Interim report to committee | Chairs Brief 7 March 2017 | Committee 21 March 2017 | Ian Knowles |
| Start of Purdah | | 27 March 2017 | |
| Reminder out to Parishes and Citizen Panel | | 31 March 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Speed test report 1 | | 3 April 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Speed test report 2 | | 2 May 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Inputting | 13 March 2017 | 8 May 2017 | Katy Allen (support from BI Team) |
| Analysis | 8 May 2017 | 12 May 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Draft report to Ian Knowles | | 17 May 2017 | Katy Allen |
| Report to Prosperous Communities | Chairs Brief 23 May 2017 | Committee 6 June 2017 | Ian Knowles |

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The survey was agreed by members via email and has been launched as of 6th March 2017. Members are therefore asked to welcome and

support this initiative and request a further report to the meeting of Prosperous Communities Committee in June 2017.

Appendix A – Draft survey



West Lindsey District Council Broadband availability

HELPFUL HINTS FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

- Please read each question carefully. In most cases you will only have to tick one box but please read the questions carefully as sometimes you will need to tick more than one box, or write in a response.
- Once you have finished please take a minute to check you have answered all the questions that you should have answered.
- If you have any questions about this survey please email Katy Allen on katy.allen@west-lindsey.gov.uk.

Section 1: Location

1. Full postcode:

Section 2: Current availability

2. Do you currently have broadband in your home?

- Yes
 No

3. If not, why not?

- Not available
 Use it at other location i.e. work and therefore don't need it at home
 Speed too slow
 Do not want it

7. If yes, who is your supplier?

- BT
 Virginmedia
 TalkTalk
 Sky
 Plusnet
 EE
 Vodaphone
 NowTV

Other - please specify

Section 3: Issues

4. Have you had any issues with availability of the broadband? **Please tick one box only**

- Yes
- No

5. What were these issues and how long did they last?

6. Are there any comments you wish to make about broadband in your area?

Section 4: Speed test

We are interested in finding out data on the speed of your broadband. On the next page you will be taken to our website to complete a speed test. This is to identify what level of speeds are being received in the district. If you have already completed this speed test on our website please click submit below then close the next page down.

Thank you very much for your time completing this survey.

Appendix B

Lincolnshire Broadband Programme: West Lindsey District:

***Reference: Current Embargo on Broadband Deployment to West
Lindsey District:***

Dear Tony

I write to you in connection with the current broadband deployment embargo that exists within the District boundaries of West Lindsey, Lincolnshire.

It is my belief that there is adequate evidence to support a revised approach by BDUK to the current West Lindsey position.

At this point in time, it is understood that BDUK believe that there is a commercial agreement in place between West Lindsey District Council and Quickline Communications, to provide 'Superfast Broadband to 100% of premises' within West Lindsey and it is this agreement that forms the basis of the current BDUK State Aid embargo.

In December 2014, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) carried out an assessment of Quickline's proposals using the BDUK LB NGA State Aid Assessment document and established that Quickline did not have a coherent plan in plan to provide 100% Superfast broadband coverage of West Lindsey. This document was submitted to BDUK at that time and clearly demonstrated that Quickline had failed to provide significant documentary evidence required to prove NGA capability.

On 13th August 2015, Lincolnshire County Council, along with West Lindsey District council were in receipt of a document from Steve Bolan, the then Operations Director of Quickline, that highlighted the postcodes they believed they would cover with broadband at 30Mb/s and second set of data that demonstrated 'Basic' broadband coverage. This document did not cover 100% of West Lindsey District. Analysis shows that only 708 postcodes out of a total 3748 postcodes will be covered with broadband at or greater than 30Mb/s. This represents 18.8% of total postcodes.

It is worth noting at this point, that when LCC issued an Open Market Research (OMR) in May 2014, in advance of their BDUK Phase 2 project, Quickline did not respond, despite requests to do so and subsequently provided an OMR on 7th January 2015 that showed zero NGA coverage. Therefore, it is our contention that significant areas of West Lindsey are not currently covered with NGA broadband via Quickline and that there are no coherent plans to do so within the three years since our last OMR of May 2014. On that basis, we believe that these areas not covered, should be included in the current Intervention Area for Superfast deployment under the existing BDUK, LCC, and BT Phase 2 contract.

Yours sincerely

Steve Brookes

Lincolnshire Broadband Programme Manager

26th January 2017