

## **Call-in of decision E2328: Improving Access to Superfast Broadband in B&NES – the Broadband Delivery UK option.**

### **The decision:**

At the Cabinet Meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> November, the Cabinet was asked to decide whether or not to spend £25,000 to begin work on a Local Broadband Plan with South Gloucestershire and Bristol City Councils, in order to begin the process of applying for available Government funding for improved broadband infrastructure where the private sector is not delivering that, of which £1.4m is available to the West of England.

At the meeting it was agreed:

NOT to prepare a joint plan with Bristol and South Glos under the terms of the Government Broadband UK offer;  
To ALLOCATE £25,000 of funding from Development and Regeneration reserves, with a brief to be agreed by Cabinet, to identify how internet access can be brought to as many of our residents as possible.

### **Reason for call-in:**

We believe that the decision taken by the Cabinet will miss an important opportunity for the residents of Bath and North East Somerset and is sacrificing a potentially significant sum of Government funding which the Council could access. We believe that this decision will not deliver the improvements so desperately needed to broadband infrastructure for households and businesses in our more rural areas and villages.

Improving the speed and reliability of broadband internet in our rural and village communities is vital to the economic competitiveness of Bath and North East Somerset, and that in the years to come access to good internet connections should be considered a basic right of all residents. This will become increasingly the case if Bath and North East Somerset is left behind whilst our neighbouring authorities deliver improved broadband through both their own and Government investment. In particular, it is a concern that small businesses, people who work from home, and the drive to develop creative industries will be significantly disadvantaged by a lack of fast and reliable broadband.

By deciding not to draw up a Local Broadband Plan alongside Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils, the inequality of internet services between our urban and rural areas will continue to worsen.

We believe this to be unfair, potentially economically damaging, and ask that the Cabinet reconsider this decision.

### **Call-in signed by:**

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<b>Name [print]</b>	<b>signed</b>
1. Martin Veal (lead Member)	
2. Tim Warren	
3. Francine Haeberling	
4. Patrick Anketell-Jones	
5. Sally Davis	
6. Malcolm Hanney	
7. Brian Simmons	
8. Michael Evans	
9. Eleanor Jackson	<b>Via email</b>
10. Matthew Blankley	<b>Via email</b>
11. Les Kew	<b>Via email</b>
12. Vic Pritchard	<b>Via email</b>
13. Barry Macrae	<b>Via email</b>
14. Alan Hale	<b>Via email</b>