

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING	Planning, Housing and Economic Development Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING DATE:	March 1st 2016	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
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TITLE:	Digital BANES Programme 2015-2020: Progress Review	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The Panel has requested a progress update on the implementation of the Digital BANES programme 2015-2020. The report outlines progress in 2015/16 and planned actions for 2016/17.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Panel notes the report and officers' planned actions.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 Finance: Many of the actions in the Digital BANES programme are the responsibility of external bodies and organisations. Those actions which are the responsibility of the Council are to be implemented within existing budgets in the appropriate year, and/or are subject to successful fund-raising from external sources such as grants and EU funding. Many of the actions relate to using existing infrastructure and do not require additional financial resources.
- 3.2 The capital programme includes £1.040m of fully approved funding for elements of the Digital B&NES programme which are currently in delivery and there is a further £2.250m of provisionally approved funding which requires the consideration of a robust business case as part of the capital approval process.
- 3.3 The Digital B&NES programme has a target for additional revenue income of £100k in the 16/17 budget. Projects within this programme are intended to achieve this target.

- 3.4 Property: Some actions within the Digital BANES programme relate to the Council's ability to utilise its property and 'street furniture' portfolio to achieve best value and to support economic growth.
- 3.5 People: No implications; responsibilities can be covered within officers' existing job descriptions.
- 3.6 Place Directorate Plans: 'Connected' – ensuring connectivity issues are addressed. This is included in proposals linked to some of the items discussed in section 5 of this report and are being considered elsewhere in this agenda.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Equalities: The Digital BANES programme makes participation in cultural and creative activity a priority for the five year period.
- 4.2 Children: The Digital BANES programme makes children & young people's engagement in cultural and creative activity a priority for the five year period.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Digital BANES programme 2015-2020 was developed in 2014 and adopted in April 2015. It was launched on 29/04/15
- 5.2 The Digital BANES programme 2015-2020 was developed by the Council. Given Bath's extensive fibre network and its spare capacity and dark fibre, there is currently a high, future-growth opportunity for the city of Bath to become a dominant provider of ultra and superfast broadband connectivity for the greater socio-economic and e-government benefit of the citizens, businesses, the public sector and tourists in Bath while spearheading the connection of all residents and businesses including: schools, hospitals, hotels, malls, shops, restaurants and clinics throughout the city.
- 5.3 There are 5 priority themes:
- 1) Turn Bath into a **Smart City** and make provision for increasing data and bandwidth demands.
 - 2) Minimize the pressure on the already heavily-utilized existing infrastructure resources.
 - 3) Improve the ITC identity of BANES internationally.
 - 4) Provide economic growth through improved connectivity.
 - 5) Provide the infrastructure capacity for the future and not only the present.
- 5.4 For this PDS Panel, officers report on five pieces of work implemented or started in 2014/15:

(1) Connecting Devon And Somerset Programme (CDS) - Connecting Devon and Somerset has been set up to deliver next generation broadband infrastructure to areas where the market has failed to invest. It is a public-private partnership of six local authorities (Somerset, Devon, North Somerset, Torbay, Plymouth and Bath and North East Somerset) and our delivery partner BT to bring Super-Fast broadband to 90% of premises in the area covered by the CDS programme. The progress is as follows in BANES:

Cabinets live: 15

Premises connected to live cabinets: 4309 of 8821

Capable of superfast: 3151 of 7371

Premises coming soon: 1287

Estimated % completed: 57.23%

Areas connected: Batheaston, Saltford, Temple Cloud, Timsbury,

Coming soon: Blagdon, Chew Magna, Faulkland, Limpley Stoke,
Midsomer Norton, Timsbury, West Harptree

We have submitted a list of priority areas that are not currently in the programme that we hope will be included in phase 2 of the CDS programme. These include Bath Quays, Foxhill, Midsomer Norton, Radstock to mention a few. Confirmation on the exact areas and post codes that phase 2 will cover will only be made available once the tender has been awarded and the contract has been signed. A draft notification for the ITT has been received from the European Commission and the CDS management are reviewing the notification to approve and publish it in February 2016.

5.5 (2) Open Programmable City Region (OPCR) – OPCR is a software defined network which connects Academia to industry and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to previously unavailable resources and universities to universities. OPCR is funded by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and governed by a joint venture between University of Bristol and Bristol City Council, called Bristol is Open. BANES form part of the Infrastructure Delivery Advisory Group (IDAG) and an agreement still has to be reached if any private companies will join this IDAG. Some of the companies that have showed interest in the OPCR network are Google Driverless Cars and Rolls Royce. We are waiting to receive more information on the procurement and delivery timelines.

5.6 (3) Bath Wi-Fi – Having access to free Wi-Fi is essential for a thriving business community in today's marketplace. The Bath Wi-Fi network will also prove an invaluable resource in supporting the council's work to further understand and monitor how the city centre is used in order for the city to prosper and grow. We recently concluded the Bath Christmas market Wi-Fi pilot. The Wi-Fi pilot was a success and provided us with valuable information on data usage, coverage and 'subscribers'. On some days we had more than 500 people connected at the same time enjoying the various benefits of street level Wi-Fi. Following the successful pilot and based on the advice from Cube Consultancy (specialist in city council Wi-Fi), and Dentons, (specialists in Telecoms and State Aid law), we are considering the expansion of the current Wi-Fi network to cover the majority of the Bath City centre, this will be subject to a viable business case and delivery plan being in place. It is anticipated that income would be generated through advertising revenues.

5.7 (4) Open Access Fibre Network – Bath's extensive fibre network and its spare capacity dark fibre give us with the opportunity to provide an Ultra-Fast, Open Access, network to 80% of businesses within the city. Through our network we

can connect mobile phone company's base stations and 4G and 5G small cells. The network makes available new opportunities to local Internet Service Providers (ISPs), cost savings to council, while giving a platform for SME's to grow and become international businesses. The next steps will be to undertake a detailed survey on the existing capacity of our fibre network and to ascertain the necessity of expanding and future proofing our network to accommodate the commercialising of it.

5.8 (5) Rural Broadband Provision – Due to the reality that there is a lack of broadband provision in BANES it is our social responsibility to improve broadband supply and performance for the wellbeing and quality of life for citizens in our rural areas. We also want to enhance effective and active communication with citizens. As part of the Digital BANES programme we are planning to do a pilot programme in 2016 to proof the concept and technology. This part of the Digital BANES programme is included in our planning and discussions within the steering group. We will be liaising with the Parish Councils in this regard.

6 RATIONALE

6.1 The Digital BANES programme is in its second year of implementation. Officers request the Panel's endorsement of the current approach, and will continue to measure progress each year.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 The Cultural & Creative Investment Board was consulted at a meeting 19 October 2015.

8.2 The Council's Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and the Place Strategic Director have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication. The Procurement team have been involved throughout.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

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Background papers	Digital BANES 2015-2020

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