

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

Petition – Superfast Broadband in the area of Mickleham Village.

(i) Details of decision

That the response, attached as appendix 1, be approved.

(ii) Reasons for decision

To respond to the petition.

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

The meeting was attended by Sir Paul Beresford, Member of Parliament for Mole Valley and Hazel Watson, County Councillor for Dorking Hills. 22 members of the public were also in attendance at the meeting.

The petitioner requested that residents of Mickleham be kept fully informed about the progress of the open market review (OMR) process. It was agreed that the Council would work to ensure that information was forthcoming to residents and that those in attendance who were interested in receiving updates should provide their email address.

The Member of Parliament for Mole Valley also requested that he be kept informed via email about the progress of the OMR process.

Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)

None

Decision taken by:

(i) Name: Peter Martin

(ii) Portfolio: Deputy Leader Decisions

Date of Decision: 13 May 2015

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 13 May 2015

DEPUTY LEADER

Wednesday 13 May 2015

RESPONSE TO PETITION CONCERNING SUPERFAST BROADBAND IN THE AREA OF MICKLEHAM VILLAGE

The Petition

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to include the area of Mickleham Village on the 01372 telephone exchange, in the roll out of Superfast Surrey Broadband network, or to require BT Openreach to extend fibre to Mickleham.

The part of Mickleham Village on the 01372 exchange has been excluded from the Superfast Surrey Broadband network because we are too far from the "Leatherhead 1 cabinet" situated at Givons Grove. BT Openreach has upgraded the fibre as far as Leatherhead1, but admits that the cabinet is too far from Mickleham to be effective. Mickleham will be stuck with speeds of up to 4 mbps and in many cases less than 1 mbps. This will have adverse economic and social implications and prevent many people from working from home and making it difficult for school children to access and download homework. It is an unacceptable situation for a village that is half way between Dorking and Leatherhead and a 45 minute commute of London to be left out from this necessary and essential service. We are being discriminated against by reason of our geographical location. We want Surrey to install a cabinet in Mickleham to ensure we have the same access to Superfast Surrey Broadband as the rest of Surrey. We want a reliable, fast and consistent internet provision to our homes and businesses. This is our future.

Submitted by Ms Mary Flint

Signatures: 218

Response

Surrey County Council has now finished the main phase of its Superfast Surrey Broadband programme to bring fibre broadband to those areas in the county not included in commercial roll outs.

In December 2014 the Superfast Surrey team were tasked with developing options for using any remaining funds to enable a decision to be made on the future scope of the programme. Options were developed that not only acknowledged Openreach's analysis of premises with slow speeds in the Superfast Surrey deployment area but also took into account feedback from residents and businesses in the commercial rollout area that were not covered by the fibre network or who were on slow speeds.

As a result, and to ensure that Surrey County Council fully understands the extent of the remaining challenge, on the 22nd April 2015 Surrey County Council commenced an Open Market Review (OMR). This is the only way to establish a clear understanding of the latest position regarding existing and planned broadband coverage throughout the county. The review will identify all premises throughout Surrey without a fibre broadband connection or those covered by the fibre network but unable to access a fibre service including those in Mickleham.

Surrey County Council will be seeking State Aid Approval for plans to further extend broadband coverage across the County within the constraints of available funding following a process laid down by Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK). The first stage is to request current and future broadband coverage information from existing infrastructure providers in an Open Market Review (OMR). Once the broadband coverage and speed responses are analysed, a map will be produced and uploaded to the Superfast Surrey website as part of the public consultation process. This stage, which will be during Autumn 2015, is the opportunity for residents, businesses as well as any other infrastructure providers to contact the Superfast Surrey team to provide additional information that may further inform the understanding of broadband coverage across the County.

Following the public consultation phase, the Superfast Surrey team will then agree with BT Group, as part of the existing contract and within the constraints of available funding, how to target those areas identified as not having current or proposed broadband coverage or access to download speeds of 15 Mbps or above. The proposed deployment must be signed off by Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) as being compliant with State Aid Funding regulations before any deployment can commence.

The OMR, analysis of responses, mapping, public consultation and development of a new deployment plan will take many months and whether or not residents who are currently unable to access a fibre service will benefit from any subsequent deployment will not be known until the above process is completed.

With limited budgets combined with high demand for council funded services across the County Surrey County Council is conscious that there is no quick fix solution, however Surrey County Council remains committed to working towards extending fibre broadband services to as many residents and businesses as economically possible.

Mr Peter Martin
Deputy Leader
13 May 2015

