

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

Petitions

(i) Details of decision

That the response to the petition, annex 1, is 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 response to the petition was tabled at the meeting. Officers in attendance at the meeting indicated that they did not have anything further to add from that which was contained within the petition response.

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 and Cabinet Lead for Economic Prosperity

Date of Decision: 07 December 2016

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 07 December 2016

Date decision effective (This decision cannot be called-in): 07 December 2016

Deputy Leader Decisions

07 December 2016

Petition

We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to make a contribution from the Superfast Surrey (SFS) rebate to the Community Funded Superfast Broadband (SFBB) scheme of West and East Chiddingfold.

As a rural community of 116 premises we request to share in the rebate from the original SFS rollout from which we received no benefit due to our remoteness and cost of connection. We have decided to fund our own infrastructure but think it fair that SFS make a contribution as we are helping them achieve SCC target. We consider a fair contribution to be the rebate of £3.8m divided by the 20,000 target white properties. This is £190 a property. A total of £22040. This money can be contracted direct to Openreach without contravening state aid.

Submitted by Marie-Louise Papworth

Signatures: 120

Response

In order to 'plug the gap' in commercial fibre broadband rollouts, Surrey County Council has already invested heavily in the provision of fibre broadband infrastructure to communities right across Surrey. As part of the main phase of the Superfast Surrey programme, 30 exchanges and more than 600 structures were upgraded resulting in more than 86,000 premises being covered by the Openreach fibre broadband network. One of the most complex and remote exchanges to upgrade was Wormley and the upgrade of it, together with its eight cabinets, have directly resulted in more than 3,000 residents and businesses, including many in Chiddingfold, being able to access good fibre broadband speeds.

However, right across Surrey, there are still more than 15,300 premises that are not included in any commercial rollout plans and are unable to access fibre broadband speeds of 15mbps or above. This is as a consequence of cabinets or structures that have not yet been upgraded to the fibre network or have been upgraded but are too far from homes and businesses to be able to offer a fast broadband service. Whilst many of these premises are in rural areas, such as some of those in Chiddingfold, there are also others in town centres.

Surrey county council's contract with BT includes a clawback mechanism which is generating additional funding that flows into a joint investment fund when take-up of fibre broadband services in the Intervention area is higher than was modelled. BT have offered Surrey county council an advance of £3.8 million on the clawback which is known as 'Gainshare.'

Subject to Cabinet approval, the county council is planning to use the Gainshare funding to extend fibre infrastructure even further into Surrey. BT's modelling of solutions for these premises has identified significant opportunities to utilise all of the limited available programme funding. Therefore, providing financial support for community initiatives to deliver

broadband to premises outside of the modelled solution would necessarily result in some of the premises within the modelled solution being removed from the deployment plan.

Surrey County Council has carefully considered the Petition's request for funding and, in light of BT's modelling, can re-confirm the advice given to the Chiddingfold community initiative representatives at a recent meeting held with Mr. Jeremy Hunt, MP namely that Surrey county council is not planning to provide financial assistance to any broadband community initiative from the limited programme funds, nor does it plan to incorporate any community broadband initiative into the Superfast Surrey contract with BT.

Peter Martin

Deputy Leader

07 November 2016