

ANNEX 3

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)

DATE: 20 MARCH 2015
LEAD OFFICER: KATIE BRENNAN
SUPERFAST SURREY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



SUBJECT: UPDATED RESPONSE TO PETITION: PROVISION OF HIGH SPEED BROADBAND, FISHER LANE LOCALITY, CHIDDINGFOLD

DIVISION: WAVERLEY EASTERN VILLAGES

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

At the meeting of the Local Committee held on 26 September 2014 a petition was received as follows:

Petition title: Petition by the residents and businesses of Fisher Lane locality in Chiddingfold, Surrey, for the provision of High Speed Broadband.

Created by: Alan Hale

Details of petition: "The properties in Fisher Lane have never been able to access workable broadband due to factors including distance from their telephone and fibre cabinet, the status of overhead cables to their homes, increased demand on the network and the lack of investment in replacing or improving existing infrastructure. We request that urgent action be taken to provide our locality with a good, fast workable service, either by improving the existing infrastructure or by installing fibre optic cable to our area."

Signatories: There are 65 signatories to the petition representing 33 properties

UPDATE

On 26 September 2014 Superfast Surrey Programme Manager, Graham Cook, provided the Committee with a progress update on Superfast Surrey with specific emphasis on the rollout in the Waverley Borough. He confirmed that whilst the main deployment would be ending on 31 December 2014, some work would continue on harder to reach premises.

He also confirmed that a review of the premises with slow speeds (including those premises listed in the Petition) was already underway. The review was assessing if there was a viable means of improving existing speeds premises with slow speeds within the programme's cost constraints. Fibre to the Premises (FTTP), Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) (secondary cabinet) and re-parenting were all being considered.

In December the Superfast Surrey team was directed that, before any further decisions could be made with regards to the outcome of this review, they had to complete the delivery of the main phase of the contract and identify options for using any remaining funds to enable a decision to be made on the future scope of the programme.

The options developed not only acknowledged Openreach's analysis of premises with slow speeds in the Intervention Area (IA) 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, Deputy Leader Peter Martin announced on 17 March 2015 that Surrey County Council will undertake a further investigation known as an Open Market Review (OMR). This is the only way to establish a clear understanding of the latest position regarding existing and planned fibre coverage throughout the county. The results will enable Surrey County Council to identify how to prioritise the use of any remaining funds to address issues of broadband coverage and speed across the county. The review will identify all premises throughout Surrey (including those in Chiddingfold) without a fibre broadband connection or those covered by the fibre network but unable to access a fibre service.

The OMR has to follow a strict government process that involves commercial consultation, analysis, mapping and public consultation to ensure compliance with EU State Aid regulations.

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.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Waverley) is asked to note the update provided.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

N/A

Annexes:

None

Sources/background papers: Petition received at meeting on 26 September 2014.