



**Extract from Joint Strategic Committee - 2 April 2019**

**JSC/110/18-19      Enabling the Digital Future for Adur & Worthing: Extending Ultrafast**

**Purpose**

The report provided an overview of the significant opportunity available to Adur & Worthing Councils, in partnership with West Sussex County Council, to further extend our ultrafast public connectivity, by connecting additional community premises, community libraries, adult social care settings, sheltered housing, leisure facilities, CCTV, and the fibre points needed to deliver an extensive ultrafast public WiFi scheme.

A total of 31 local authority sites in Adur & Worthing (county council, district and borough sites) are already in the process of being upgraded to ultrafast speeds using 'optical fibre to the premise', with construction scheduled to complete in June 2019. This report proposes the connection of an additional 56 district and borough sites across Adur and Worthing.

Independently of our ambitions for greater digital connectivity across our public space and buildings, telecommunications supplier CityFibre has announced its commitment to invest commercially in building its bespoke 'fibre to the home' network in Adur & Worthing. This would see all premises able to access gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure by 2022, subject to the purchase of a broadband package in the usual way.

The report also outlines our development work to deliver ultrafast public WiFi, 4G/5G small cells and an Internet of Things network. With Adur & Worthing on course to having by far the most extensive and dense fibre network in the south east of the country, we have a huge opportunity to attract further government and commercial investment.

## **Summary of discussion:**

The report provided an overview of the significant opportunity available to Adur & Worthing Councils, in partnership with West Sussex County Council, to further extend the Councils ultrafast public connectivity, by connecting additional community premises, community libraries, adult social care settings, sheltered housing, leisure facilities, CCTV, and the fibre points needed to deliver an extensive ultrafast public WiFi scheme.

A total of 31 local authority sites in Adur & Worthing (county council, district and borough sites) were already in the process of being upgraded to ultrafast speeds using 'optical fibre to the premise', with construction scheduled to complete in June 2019. This report proposed the connection of an additional 56 district and borough sites across Adur and Worthing.

Independently of the Councils ambitions for greater digital connectivity across public spaces and buildings, telecommunications supplier CityFibre had announced its commitment to invest commercially in building its bespoke 'fibre to the home' network in Adur & Worthing. This would see all premises able to access gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure by 2022, subject to the purchase of a broadband package in the usual way.

The report also outlined the Councils development work to deliver ultrafast public WiFi, 4G/5G small cells and an Internet of Things network. With Adur & Worthing being on course to have by far the most extensive and dense fibre network in the south east of the country, the Councils had a huge opportunity to attract further government and commercial investment.

A Member sought clarification regarding the source of additional grant funding and how small businesses could benefit from ultrafast broadband. Officers advised that the business rate retention pool was a possible source of grant funding and the Councils were also looking at a number of alternative sources. A gigabit voucher scheme for small businesses was in operation, details of which could be found on the West Sussex County Council website.

Another Member sought clarification as to how the Call-Off sites identified in Appendix A would be linked to fibre and how future proof the proposals were. Officers advised that grey fibre spines would link the Call-Off sites and assured the Committee that optical fibre was next generation and future proof.

The Committee welcomed the proposals.

## Decision,

### The Joint Strategic Committee

- i) approved a call-off of additional 56 fibre connections in Adur & Worthing on a 30 year lease basis, using the West Sussex Gigabit Framework Agreement.
- ii) **recommended to the Councils to approve an increase to the capital budget of £2.55m to fund the proposed extension of the network, funded through external grants and contributions split as follows Adur: £1.02m and Worthing: £1.53m.**
- iii) noted that in the event that external funding is not secured, that the Councils may have to borrow to fund the capital works and that this would result in committing the Councils to additional net revenue spend of up to £105,030 per year from 2020/21 onwards (Adur: £42,010, Worthing: £63,020).
- iv) noted the work being undertaken with consultants to create an ambitious digital infrastructure programme, exploring the benefits to local businesses, communities and residents of a widespread public WiFi scheme, next generation CCTV, an Internet of Things network, and a 5G strategic prospectus.
- v) noted that a progress report will be presented to the Committee in July 2019 to confirm how the proposed extension to the fibre network will be funded, and the extent of any additional revenue spend required by the Councils.