Agenda Item 7

Digital Hertfordshire Board update

Report Author: Tony Gibbons (Hertfordshire County Council)

1   Purpose of report

1.1   This report provides an update on the work of the recently established Digital Hertfordshire Board. A parallel presentation and opportunity for questions at the Board will also form part of the update.

2   Background

2.1   The Board oversees improvements in the County's Digital capabilities and capacity and is a high priority for the growth board in 2022/23.

2.2   There are four main priorities to be delivered by the programme:
Priority 1 - Accelerating the delivery of high-quality digital infrastructure in Hertfordshire
Priority 2 - Flexing public sector assets, levers, and resources to deliver digital Hertfordshire
Priority 3 - Achieving pervasive digitisation – places, communities, and businesses
Priority 4 - Building a world class digital sector and world class digital skills.

2.3   The programme management template below outlines current progress and next steps. The current expectation is that the project is likely to be successful.

3   Implications

3.1   There are no adverse legal, financial, equalities, environmental, sustainability or other implications arising from the report and recommendations at this stage.

4   Recommendation

4.1   That the Hertfordshire Growth Board:
   a)   Notes the progress with the Digital Hertfordshire Delivery Board programme.

HGB

Progress to date

Priority 1 – Accelerating Delivery
- Toward Digital Growth team and governance board established since April.
- Project Gigabit OMR/PR completed, intervention areas being drawn up, with £140m - £237m earmarked for the combined Herts, Bucks, East Berks lot.
- Market Information Day – investigating meeting with Digital/mobile suppliers to help promote Herts as a commercially viable location and encourage growth.

Priority 2 – Public Sector Assets
- GigaHubs data set has been gathered and reviewed but at this stage does not appear to be a viable funding stream because of the overlap with Project Gigabit
- Small Cell pilot feasibility review underway for mobile coverage

Priority 3 – Pervasive Digitisation.
- LEP Top –up voucher funding bid submitted and approved

Priority 4 - World Class Digital Sector.
- Recent priority - under review

Next Steps

- Project Gigabit procurement activities to begin late 2022/early 2023.
- HCC to formally join and administer the DCMS Gigabit Scheme
- Market Information day is being planned for November 2022.
- GigaHubs position and mapping clarified.
- Finalise governance and planning arrangements

Overall RAG status	

Top Milestones	Expected End Date	Actual End Date	RAG Status
Project Gigabit ITT launched by BDUK	Spring 2023		
Market Information Day/Barrier Busting	November 2022		
LEP funding position for vouchers confirmed with £400k allocated to top up business connectivity vouchers	September 2022		
Small Cells Pilot viability review underway	October 2022		

Most critical Risks and Mitigation

1. Telecoms providers identify Hertfordshire as a challenging environment for rolling out upgraded commercial networks
2. In the event of a lack of funding for future contracts, there is the risk of harder to reach areas missing out on substantial public and commercial investment, which may result in lower number of upgraded connections in Herts
3. Digital divide in the County widens as more areas become digitally excluded.

Key:
- ● Successful delivery of the project appears to be unachievable
- ● Successful delivery of project is in doubt
- ● Project delivery is feasible but with significant issues
- ● Project delivery appears probable
- ● Project is on time, on budget and of high quality