
REPORT TO:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING:	27 OCTOBER 2010	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO: N/A
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SUBJECT:	BROADBAND IN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: N/A

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Committee notes the on-going work carried out in trying to improve the broadband infrastructure across South Derbyshire.
- 1.2 That the Committee notes the announcement by BT to upgrade the Etwall Exchange (which also covers Hilton) in Autumn 2011 to super-fast broadband, taking into account the lobbying of BT carried out by South Derbyshire District Council to improve the areas broadband infrastructure.
- 1.3 That the Council is recommended to support the successful expression of interest, in upgrading the Overseal Exchange area to super-fast broadband, by assisting the consortium being set up to apply for funding.
- 1.4 That the Council continues to raise the profile of South Derbyshire, within BT / Openreach and other relevant organisations, in relation to the poor broadband service that is available in many parts of the District.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To advise Members of the on-going work carried out on the review of broadband in South Derbyshire.

3.0 Detail

Background

- 3.1 Since 2008 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has actively been pushing for improved broadband infrastructure in South Derbyshire.

3.2 This report provides an update of the progress made in trying to improve the broadband infrastructure in South Derbyshire.

Application for Funding

3.3 Funding is available through the East Midlands Development Agency and the Rural Development Programme for England for pilot projects to demonstrate the benefits of high speed broadband access to improving the prospects and diversity of the economy of rural communities.

3.4 To apply for this funding Expressions Of Interest (EOI) had to be completed in September 2010.

3.5 The following EOI's were submitted:

- To upgrade and replace the existing broadband infrastructure for the Overseal exchange with a Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC) / Fibre To The Premise (FTTP) deployment. There are over 3100 premises in the area including 2700 homes and over 200 businesses.
- Provision of a 10Mb/s wireless Broadband service to the Community of Hilton in South Derbyshire.

3.6 Both of these EOI's were successful and were asked by EMDA to progress to a full application.

3.7 In total 10 EOI's were successful and they are now competing for the £400,000 funding available through this programme. Each EOI was match funded by the relevant supplier.

Etwall Exchange

3.8 On the 29th September BT announced that the Etwall Exchange (which covers Hilton) would be upgraded to super-fast broadband, see Appendix A.

3.9 This meant that the project for a wireless broadband service in Hilton would no longer be necessary as BT will provide the required infrastructure for super-fast broadband in Autumn 2011. Therefore this EOI to EMDA will not be progressed to a full application.

3.10 It should be noted that the lobbying work carried out by South Derbyshire District Council to get the infrastructure improved has certainly contributed to BT's decision to upgrade this exchange.

Overseal Exchange

3.11 The decision by BT to upgrade the Etwall exchange now means that the project to upgrade the Overseal exchange can be concentrated on.

3.12 The decision to apply for funding to upgrade the Overseal Exchange area was decided upon following consultation with BT, as this was the area that would provide the best return on investment in South Derbyshire. It should be noted that without some form of public sector funding the Overseal exchange area is not considered to be commercially viable to upgrade.

3.13 The bid to upgrade the Overseal Exchange has been promoted via a press release (See Appendix B), by a link from our website home page and through interviews on Radio Derby.

- 3.14 Through this process further case studies have been received which continue to highlight the problems businesses and citizens meet. These case studies will add more support to the bid to upgrade the exchange.
- 3.15 Full applications cannot be from Public Sector bodies therefore a consortium is being set up to manage the application, and if successful the project. This will include the relevant Parish Councils, The Rockwood Club, The Swadlincote District 50 plus forum, local businesses, local citizens and representation from South Derbyshire District Council.
- 3.16 The full application from the consortium has to be made to EMDA by the 26th November 2010.

Other information

- 3.17 Our website has been updated to include information on broadband. This is available at http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/community_and_living/broadband/default.asp
- 3.18 Derbyshire County Council are carrying out a survey into broadband across Derbyshire. This is available at <http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/broadbandsurvey>
- 3.19 Currently BT has 20 exchanges that serve South Derbyshire. BT has plans to upgrade 4 of these exchanges to super-fast broadband. If the Overseal application is successful this will then leave 15 exchanges unable to supply super-fast broadband.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5.0 Background Papers

- 5.1 The reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 7th May 2008, 25th June 2008, 17th September 2008 and the 10th December 2009 detail the findings and outcomes of the 2008 review.
- 5.2 The reports and/or presentations on the 9th December 2009, 20th January 2010, 24th March 2010 and 12th May 2010 detail the further progress made. Additionally verbal updates have been given as required at Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Appendix A – BT Press Release

DC10-230

September 29, 2010

6,600 MORE PREMISES IN DERBYSHIRE SET FOR SUPER-FAST BROADBAND

Two more Derbyshire locations are next for BT's fibre-based broadband roll-out

BT announced today that around 6,600 more homes and businesses in Derbyshire will be next to benefit from its £2.5 billion plans for super-fast broadband.

Breadsall and Etwall exchange areas will be upgraded by Autumn 2011.

Across the UK, 159 new super-fast broadband locations were announced today, covering more than a million homes and businesses.

Openreach, BT's local network business, is carrying out the upgrades. The technology will be available on an open, wholesale basis to all companies providing broadband services.

BT is investing up to £2.5 billion to deliver fibre broadband to up to two thirds of UK homes and businesses, subject to an acceptable environment for investment. It's the largest single commercial investment in fibre-based broadband ever undertaken in the UK, and one of the biggest civil engineering projects running at this time.

Super-fast broadband, using fibre to street cabinets (FTTC), offers much faster download speeds of up to 40Mbps, potentially rising to 60Mbps, and upstream speeds of 10Mbps, which could rise to 15Mbps in the future. BT is also trialling fibre to the premise (FTTP) broadband services, at download speeds of up to 100Mbps.

BT's fibre plans build on existing initiatives such as the upgrade of its existing copper network to deliver faster broadband as part of its pioneering 21st Century Network. This is set to offer speeds of up to 20Mbps to around 20 million homes using the existing copper network by next spring, with exchanges serving 55 per cent of UK homes and businesses already enabled.

Andrew Bacon, BT regional director for the East Midlands, said: "This latest investment in super-fast broadband is great news for many homes and businesses in the East Midlands.

"Fibre broadband has the power to revolutionise the way we use the internet. It has huge implications for the way we live, learn and do business, with massive opportunities for entertainment, education and entrepreneurs. People in the East Midlands will soon be able to experience the internet as they've never seen it before.

"We want to extend the fibre footprint and the benefits it brings to the final third of the UK where the economics pose a major challenge, but this will require a collective effort. An infrastructure project on this scale – arguably as important to the future of the East Midlands as the road or rail networks - can only be done in partnership. We're keen to talk to public and private sector organisations about how this can be achieved.

"Many factors are taken into account when making the tough decisions about where to focus our investment. We're working on ways to give people more of an opportunity to demonstrate where demand for next generation broadband is the greatest," he added.

David Campbell, Openreach's managing director of Next Generation Access, said: "We have already brought faster broadband speeds within reach of more than two million premises and we are well on our way to passing four million premises by the end of this year.

"Fibre-based broadband offers consumers far faster speeds and lets them explore new and innovative ways of doing things online and communicating with friends, family and colleagues. It is a complete and radical change in the user experience. It will also create huge economic benefits for the UK - for businesses and the health and education sectors - and help support a low carbon economy."

Super-fast speeds give customers greater flexibility in how they use the internet, with much faster downloads (a music track could be downloaded in five seconds) and much easier uploads of photos and videos. Internet users can run multiple bandwidth-hungry applications at the same time - some members of a family could be watching different high definition (HD) movies or 3D TV, while others are gaming or working on complex graphics or video projects.

For businesses, the new network will be the catalyst for many new services and applications. Computer processing and file storage will become more sophisticated and secure using cloud computing technology. There will be faster back-up of computer systems and wider use of high quality video conferencing in firms and between them and their customers.

While BT estimates that most premises in these areas will be able to access fibre-based broadband, it is likely that a minority will not initially be able to receive services due to a variety of technical and commercial reasons. Openreach is actively looking at alternative solutions for these locations.

Further information about the roll-out, including demos showing the difference super-fast broadband makes, is available at www.superfast-openreach.co.uk

Appendix B – South Derbyshire Press Release

8 October 2010

South Derbyshire residents and businesses are being urged to back the bid to further boost broadband speeds across the District.

The District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been fighting for over two years for quicker connections.

The move paid off this month when BT announced it would be upgrading the Etwall Exchange to provide super fast broadband by Autumn 2011.

Now attentions are turning to other areas of the District.

The Council has submitted a bid for £190,000 of funding from the Rural Development Programme for England to upgrade the Overseal Exchange to provide superfast broadband. BT has vowed to match fund this amount.

Cllr Charles Jones, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, said: "We will continue to fight for communities in South Derbyshire to enhance the online opportunities available to them.

" To strengthen the chances of being successful we are asking for the support of businesses and residents in the area.

" By joining together we can help to make a real difference."

Broadband speeds can be monitored at www.blimpchecker.co.uk.

Residents and businesses should use this tool to back the bid and highlight the poor speed issues experienced in the Overseal Exchange area. The information will only be used to try and improve broadband speeds.

The District Council also wants to hear about the broadband experiences of people living across South Derbyshire.

This can be done by clicking on the link at www.south-derbys.gov.uk.

Alternatively, details and comments can be e-mailed to broadband@south-derbys.gov.uk.