



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 2.1

Digital Connectivity Strategy 2022-25 Business Case

To:	Housing and Communities Committee
Meeting Date:	10 January 2022
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Councillor Lewis Herbert
From:	Noelle Godfrey, Connecting Cambridgeshire Programme Director
Key decision:	No
Forward Plan ref:	N/A
Recommendations:	<p>The Housing and Communities Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Recommend to the Combined Authority Board the approval of the Digital Connectivity Business Case, included as Appendix 1 to this report.b) Recommend to the Combined Authority Board approval of £4.5m budget from the subject to approval line in the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 to 2024/25.
Voting arrangements:	A simple majority of all Members present and voting

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report includes the Business Case for delivery of the Digital Connectivity Strategy for 2021-2025 which was approved by the Housing and Communities Committee in November 2021.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically accelerated reliance on digital connectivity in almost every aspect of 21st Century living. At a time when access to healthcare, jobs, education and training have all become highly dependent on digital connectivity, it has also highlighted and exacerbated the “digital divide”. It means that families and individuals without access to connectivity are effectively excluded from the benefits of economic growth, health inequalities are exacerbated, and children’s life chances are damaged.
- 2.2 Furthermore, it has become increasingly evident that digital connectivity can play an important part in meeting some of the key challenges of our age, from the reduction in transport related emissions to climate change mitigation and the management of scarce resources including water and energy.
- 2.3 The delivery of the Digital Connectivity Strategy 2021-25 is a key contributor to the Combined Authority’s sustainable growth ambitions for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, helping to ensure that a ubiquitous and accessible digital connectivity infrastructure is available to all – supporting effective public service delivery, thriving communities and sustainable business growth.
- 2.4 In January the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board earmarked funding of £6.3m as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan to 2025 to support the next stages of the digital connectivity programme. The budget for 2021/22 was approved, with the remaining £4.5m subject to approval of the business case.
- 2.5 The business case (Appendix 1) sets out detailed proposals for the 2022/3-2024/5 funding allocation of £4.5m to be considered for approval by the Combined Authority Board in January 2022.

Significant Implications

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The proposed budget to support the delivery of the Digital Connectivity Strategy to 2025 is £4.5m over a 3 year period, as per the table below, with delivery milestones set out in Section 6.2 of the business case in Appendix 1.

Funding profile	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Broadband	300,000	300,000	630,000	1,230,000
Mobile	370,000	400,000	170,000	940,000
Smart	120,000	110,000	40,000	270,000
Access & Inclusion	160,000	140,000	100,000	400,000
Cross cutting/Programme Delivery	550,000	550,000	560,000	1,660,000
Totals	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	4,500,000

3.2 The Combined Authority's 2021/22 Budget Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22-2024/5 which was approved in January 2021 included the overall provisional allocation of £6.3m. £1.8m was approved for 2021/22 and the remaining £4.5m for 2022/3 to 2024/25 (as per the table at 3.1 above) is subject to approval at the January 2022 Combined authority Board.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The recommendations accord with CPCA's powers under Part 4 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017 (SI 2017/251) and with the Committee's Terms of Reference as set out in CPCA's Constitution Chapter 10 para.3.2.9(b)

5. Other Significant Implications

5.1 n/a

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Digital Connectivity 2021-2025 Business Case

7. Background Papers

[Combined Authority Board Report Budget 2021/22 and MTFP January 2021](#)

[Housing and Communities Committee Digital Connectivity Strategy Report November 2021](#)