

North Yorkshire County Council

Executive Members

26 June 2020

Mobile Access North Yorkshire update

Report of the Assistant Director – Growth, Planning and Trading Standards

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to:
- 1.2 Brief executive members on the progress of the Mobile Access North Yorkshire 5G testbed and trials project which was approved by the Executive of North Yorkshire County Council on the 26 November 2019.
- 1.3 Highlight the process and timeline for developing dialogue with the potential communities and other key stakeholders
- 1.4 Set out the next steps of the project and when the Executive Members will expect a further update from the project

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Mobile Access North Yorkshire (MANY) is a 5G testbed and trials project which runs as part of a national programme agreed with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) over a two-year period which commenced in March 2020 and is due to end in March 2022.
- 2.2 The project is a collaboration of the County Council with several partners including: Quickline Communications Limited, who are the lead partners, the Universities of York and Lancaster; and a number of SME's specialising in mobile technology – Flo Culture; Cybermoor; Safenetics and Wireless Coverage.
- 2.3 The project bid for funding via the Rural Connected Communities project and received part funding from the DCMS. The remainder of the costs are financed by the SME's and Quickline Communications Limited.
- 2.4 The project is exploring the extent enabling mobile access in areas of little or no current connectivity can connect people and, therefore, improve lives. Through dialogue with the local community the aim is to unlock the potential of these forgotten areas, by proving mobile access can assist in recovering the social and economic fabric of rural communities and influence national direction on rural connectivity.
- 2.5 The MANY project will explore and highlight how mobile access connects people by:
 - improving wellbeing and mental health, specifically loneliness & Isolation
 - boosting tourism opportunities
 - providing mission critical support for the emergency services network
 - enhancing the safety of the area through environmental monitoring
 - providing a better mobile signal

3.0 Role of North Yorkshire County Council

- 3.1 The Council's role is key to the success of the project and will lead on the community engagement strategy, working with Stronger Communities and Community First Yorkshire, in order to build trust and dialogue with the potential locations which have been identified. A key goal, if the project proves successful and is financially viable, is to consider how it will be funded going forward. If the Council have to withdraw from an area, it is hoped to of proven to the mobile operators that coverage is viable and the Council will work to engage the mobile operators to work to improve coverage as part of the shared rural network proposals.
- 3.2 The project team will, also, be responsible for leading two of the four use cases – health and wellbeing and environmental monitoring.
- 3.3 The council have responsibility for the communications management of the project to raise awareness of the project and the benefits of a 5G network to the end user, the wider community and other key stakeholders.

4.0 Role of Quickline Communications Limited

- 4.1 Quickline Communications Limited are a wireless ISP operating across Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Cumbria focusing on connecting rural communities. They are the lead commercial partner and accountable body, of the project and are responsible for deploying the network and infrastructure for the period of the scheme.

5.0 Use Cases

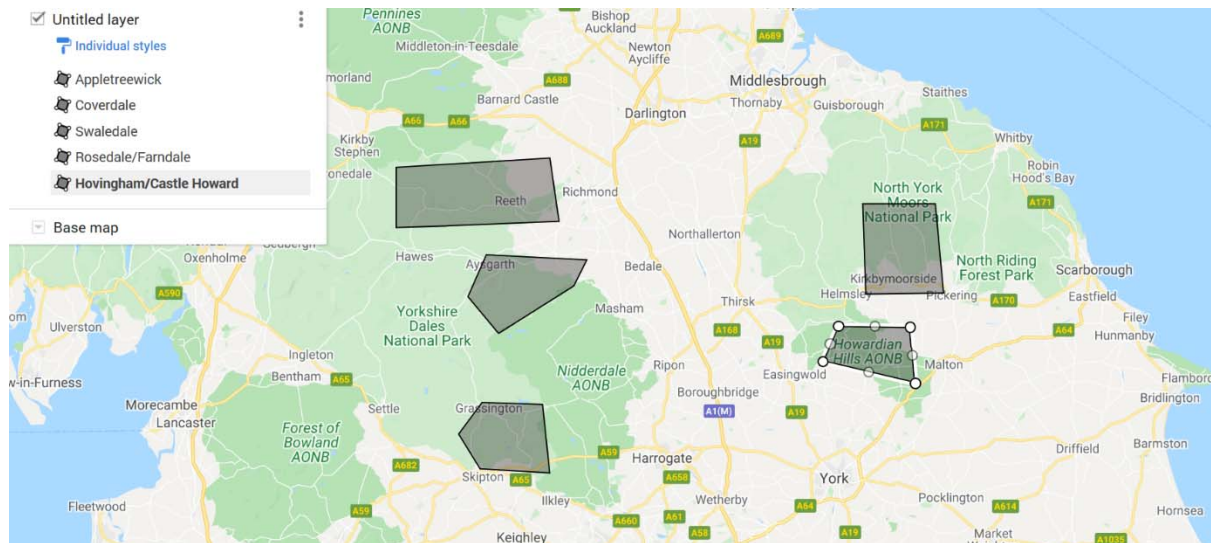
- 5.1 There are four themes the project will focus on: health and wellbeing; environmental monitoring; tourism; and emergency services. Within each of these topics, there will be several use cases that will test the project hypothesis
- 5.2 Health and wellbeing
Provide access to health care video consultation in the community
- Provide access to Health and Social Care services digitally
 - Investigate and provide solutions to combat loneliness in rural communities
- 5.3 Tourism
- Provide a tourism attraction with access to digitally enhanced services to enhance and promote the attraction
 - Provide additional temporary 5G access during an event
- 5.4 Environmental Monitoring
- Flood monitoring
 - Infrastructure Monitoring
- 5.5 Emergency Services
- Provision of 5G service for Mountain Rescue
 - Test 5G network slicing for Emergency Service Use

6.0 Proposed locations

6.1 The project is assessing the relevance of several different locations throughout North Yorkshire. It is considering the current mobile coverage within the area and the technical solution required, in addition to, health and socio economic factors including potential numbers of residents which fall within the use case categories.

The areas which are being considered are as follows:

- Appletreewick
- North end of Coverdale
- Swaledale
- Rosedale, Farndale, Hutton-le-hole and Lastingham
- Hovingham and Castle Howard



7.0 Community Engagement Phase

7.1 The community engagement strand will commence in the coming weeks once a decision on the final areas to be covered is made. The community engagement is in partnership with Stronger Communities and Community First Yorkshire. This will assess the interest and adoption of the project in the areas and start to recruit early adopters which will use the technology throughout the project. Furthermore, the consortium will develop dialogue with significant stakeholders including the wider community. Communications will support this dialogue via digital and traditional methods.

7.2 This strand will be reported on to DCMS at the end of August, however, engagement with the community will continue throughout the whole project.

8.0 Network Build Phase

8.1 The network build phase will begin in early July. This will assess the locations suitability from a coverage perspective and will be used alongside the socio-economic factors to agree the final locations to be proposed. Prior to this the consortium has done research on the types of technology which could be used within the project.

9.0 Next steps

- 9.1 The community engagement strand will proceed in late June and will be phased as we look to approach each community. It is anticipated that first phase completion being the end of August however we are aware of the current CV-19 restrictions which may prolong some of the engagements. The project will report back to members with an update on the findings of the engagement as well as the recruitment of early adopters of the technology. This will include case studies from the communities with the issues they have with the lack of mobile access and set out how the project will work to overcome this.

10.0 Recommendations

- 10.1 It is recommended that Executive Members note the content of this report. An update will be provided on the findings of the engagement as well as the early adopters of the technology.

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