

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Central Services

### Executive Member & Corporate Director Decision Meeting

11 March 2021

### Transfer of grant funding from Harrogate Borough Council to North Yorkshire County Council to facilitate the delivery of Wi-Fi and Low Powered Wide Area Networks (LPWAN) in the Harrogate Area

#### Report of the Assistant Director – Technology and Change

#### 1.0 Purpose of Report

**For the Executive Member for Access, in consultation with the Corporate Director Strategic Resources and the Executive Member for Customer Engagement to :**

- 1.1 Authorise the Corporate Director Strategic Resources to accept the £350,000 grant funding from Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) delivery of Public Wi-Fi and Low Powered Wide Area Networks in the Harrogate area.
- 1.2 Subject to final review by the County Council's legal team, recommend to the Corporate Director Strategic Resources (or sub-delegated officer) to accept the terms of the funding agreement drawn up between Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) and County Council.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 A Key decision was previously submitted to procure Wi-Fi and Low Powered Wide Area Network (LPWAN) using a competitive procedure with negotiation procurement process.
- 2.2 This procurement exercise was to be undertaken in partnership with the County Council using a £350k of grant funding secured (in September 2018) by HBC from the Leeds City Business Rates Pool.
- 2.2 Recent market engagement has suggested that (with one variant exception) procurement of new generation Wi-Fi technology and the required fibre backhaul across the Harrogate district's three core towns would be unaffordable.
- 2.3 North Yorkshire County Council was recently successful in a bid to the North Yorkshire & York Local Enterprise Partnership (NY&Y LEP) for £3m towards the installation of the same wireless networks (Wi-Fi and LPWAN) across the county.
- 2.4 It was recognised by both HBC and the County Council that integrating the WiFi and LPWAN requirements into the LEP funded county-wide rollout would provide opportunities for economies of scale and technical consistency across a wide geographical area.
- 2.5 Working with NYnet to maximise the previous investment in Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) will significantly reduce the costs required for backhaul, therefore maximising the potential coverage from this funding.

#### 3.0 Funding Award

- 3.1 On 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021, HBC's Cabinet resolved to passport the grant award of £350k to the County Council, agreeing that this course of action represents a best value decision.
- 3.2 A draft grant funding transfer agreement has been drawn up between HBC and the County Council to facilitate the transfer of the grant funding

#### **4.0 Scheme Delivery**

- 4.1 The project will be delivered through the same route as the £3m LEP funded wider programme already underway, delivering connectivity across North Yorkshire.

#### **5.0 Financial Implications and Outputs**

- 5.1 The £350,000 will be spent across the financial periods 2020-21 and 2021-22
- 5.2 The County Council will work with HBC to ensure that all required information, rollout and reporting will be provided in line with the conditions of the funding agreement.
- 5.3 The outputs will include facilitating the delivery of the wireless networks in Harrogate District will include:
- Town centre Wi-Fi with coverage for Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon
  - A Low Powered Wide Area Network that covers as much of the district as is feasible and practical.

#### **6.0 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 The acceptance of the grant funding will facilitate the delivery of improved digital connectivity within the Harrogate District.
- 6.2 Delivery of the improved connectivity does not create an environment for adverse impact on any of the identified characteristics.
- 6.3 It is important to note, however, that applications and services that may run on the networks may create positive impacts for Age, Disability, and People on low income in the longer term. These impacts should be investigated within their own projects and EIAs'

#### **7.0 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 The grant funding transfer agreement has been reviewed by the County Council's legal team.
- 7.2 The grant funding transfer agreement will be signed by HBC and County Council to facilitate the transfer of £350k to the Council to enable a delivery of this project (subject to an Officer Key Decision) in line with the LEP funded connectivity programme.

#### **8.0 Climate Change Impact**

- 8.1 Delivery of improved digital infrastructure will enable the development and delivery of other projects utilising Internet of Things (IoT) that may have a more positive impact on climate change.

- 8.2 These positive impacts could including projects such as the monitoring of highways to ensure the efficient use of scarce resources, or better monitoring of air and light pollution to enable application which will adjust usage to bring down those impacts.
- 8.3 Some negative impacts will be created in the build phase of this project but they should be minimal but more than offset by future projects that may utilise these networks.

**9.0 Recommendations**

- 9.1 That the Executive Member for Access, in consultation with the Corporate Director Strategic Resources and the Executive Member for Customer Engagement authorises the Corporate Director Strategic Resources to accept the £350k grant funding from Harrogate Borough Council for the delivery of public Wi-Fi in 3 towns and LPWAN across as much of the District as is feasible; and
- 9.2 Subject to final review by the County Council's legal team, recommends to the Corporate Director Strategic Resources (or sub-delegated officer) the acceptance of the terms of the grant transfer funding agreement drawn up between Harrogate Borough Council and County Council.

Robert Ling  
Assistant Director Technology and Change