

North Yorkshire County Council

Central Services

Executive Members

August 19th 2021

North Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Programme

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 an additional £300k in Getting Building Fund (GBF) grant funding from the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for delivery of the North Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Programme; and
- 1.2 This is in addition to the £3m already authorised for the North Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Programme.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In June 2020 central government announced the Getting Building Fund, with the aim to deliver “oven ready” local infrastructure improvements by December 2021. Funding would be awarded to LEPs across the country, which would then be allocated to specific projects within each LEP geography.
- 2.2 Following a review of initial expressions of interest the LEP was awarded £15.4million from central government to allocate to key projects within the LEP area.
- 2.2 Based on the expression of interests received, the LEP invited the County Council to submit a business case for the North Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Programme. The grant covers three main aspects, building free Wi-Fi provision to 16 Town across North Yorkshire, Extending Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) to 6 Business Parks, and delivering an Internet of Things network to 95% of North Yorkshire. The value of the funding bid was £3.0M.
- 2.3 An additional £300k has been made available from the LEP for the Digital Infrastructure Programme, enabling additional LFFN connectivity to 4 business parks (total 10) as outlined in 2.2.

3.0 Funding Award

- 3.1 As part of the original agreement with the LEP for the GBF funding a grant funding agreement was drawn-up and agreed between the LEP and NYCC. As NYCC is the accountable body for the LEP the Council is unable to enter into a Funding Agreement with LEP. However the LEP expects NYCC to abide by the terms and conditions of the funding agreement. A variation to this agreement will be made between NYCC and the LEP to add the £300K.

- 3.2 Therefore the additional £300k in funding will fall under the same terms of the existing funding agreement.

4.0 Scheme Delivery

- 4.1 The programme is being delivered via NYCC's telecom company NYnet Limited, which is a wholly owned Teckal company. The programme is building on the LFFN project, which delivered gigabit connectivity to 16 market towns across North Yorkshire.
- 4.2 The programme has three main strands: Free Wi-Fi to 16 Towns across North Yorkshire, extend LFFN to 10 business parks across North Yorkshire, and create an Internet of Things network to provide 95% geographical coverage of North Yorkshire.
- 4.3 The programme will be delivered by March 2022.

5.0 Financial Implications and Outputs

- 5.1 The additional £300k in funding will be spent across the financial period 2021-22
- 5.2 The County Council will work with the LEP to ensure that all required information and funding claims are provided in line with the conditions of the funding agreement.
- 5.3 OutputsThe additional £300k will provide funding to extend LFFN to an additional 4 business parks across North Yorkshire bring the total number of business parks with access to LFFN to 10 by March 2022.

6.0 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 An Initial equality impact assessment screening form has been completed as part of the original funding key decision and this has identified that an Equality Impact Assessment is not required. See Appendix 2.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 A variation will be made to the funding agreement between the LEP and NYCC to add the £300K.
- 7.2 As outlined in section 3.2 above, the County Council, as accountable body for the LEP, is unable to enter in to a funding agreement with the County Council for this scheme as this would essentially be an agreement with itself. However, a letter will be sent to the Corporate Director Strategic Resources (or sub-delegated officer) for confirmation that the County Council will abide by the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement in any event.

8.0 Climate Change Impact

- 8.1 A climate change impact assessment has previously been carried out, see Appendix 3. This found that there were likely to be minimal negative impacts and this is not anticipated to change with the additional funding.

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 £300k in Getting Building Fund (GBF) grant funding from the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to support the delivery of the North Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Programme

Robert Ling
Assistant Director Technology and Change

APPENDIX 1

Below is the original EIA undertaken for the initial £3m of LEP funding. This EIA screening tool found that no full EIA was required.

As this additional funding will not change anything except add an additional 4 business parks to the LFFN strand of the Programme of work, no further EIA is deemed to be required.

This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.

Directorate	Central Services
Service area	Technology and Change
Proposal being screened	North Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Programme
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Robert Ling
What are you proposing to do?	<p>The programme has three main strands:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build Free Wi-Fi access network in 16 Towns across North Yorkshire 2. Extend LFFN to 10 business parks across North Yorkshire, and 3. Deliver a LPWAN network (based on LoRaWAN standards/protocol) to enable Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity across 95% geographical coverage area of North Yorkshire
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	<p>The desired outcomes will be better connectivity for businesses on the 10 business parks identified and contributes towards government targets around gigabit connectivity.</p> <p>The LoRaWAN will support IoT connectivity enabling the council and business' across North Yorkshire to take advantage of new technologies. This will have a positive impact on the development of smart homes and particularly around monitoring services.</p> <p>The Town Centre Wi-Fi will provide free access to the internet, and federated access to Govroam and Eduroam within 16 Towns across North Yorkshire. The access will be free, but that has to be determined around access to certain websites or daily allowances to manage within the capacity of resources.</p>
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	<p>The project is a £3m investment across the 3 programme workstreams and will require a revenue stream once the roll out has been completed to ensure the projects have a lifespan beyond the funding.</p>

Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics

As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:

- To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics?
- Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important?
- Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to?

If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your [Equality rep](#) for advice if you are in any doubt.

Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage or civil partnership		X	
NYCC additional characteristics			
People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	The Wi-Fi access will help to address certain inequalities by low income families in accessing the internet. However as the access is focused around town centres it will not make a significant contribution.		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	Not that we are aware of		
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	X	Continue to full EIA:
Reason for decision	The project does not create an environment for adverse impact on any of the identified characteristics, although applications and services that may run on the investment 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'		
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Robert Ling		
Date	January 2021		

Change impact assessment

Appendix 2

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	North Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Programme
Brief description of proposal	The programme has three main strands: 1. Build Free Wi-Fi access in 16 Town across North Yorkshire 2. Building FTTP to 6 business park across North Yorkshire, and 3. Delivering an Internet of Things network to 95% of North Yorkshire
Directorate	Central Services
Service area	Technology and Change
Lead officer	Robert Ling

Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	
Date impact assessment started	December 2020

Options appraisal

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

The aim of the project is to deliver a range of digital infrastructure projects as part of the UK Government funding Getting Building Fund. Full options analysis was undertaken as part of the business case which is available, other options were not progressed due to the funding availability and coverage opportunities.

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

The proposal will be cost neutral on the council budget as the funding is coming from the UK Government Getting Building Fund via the York and North Yorkshire LEP. Services and applications which will have the potential to operate on the infrastructure will have the benefit to reduce cost to the council over the longer term but will be the subject of individual projects and climate change impact assessments.

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel	x			Reduction in emissions from monitoring services due to the IoT. Reduction in emissions from travel for those business on the business parks		NYCC will look to maximise the use of the data from the sensors aligned to the IoT network to reduce vehicle movement across the county
	Emissions from construction			x	Some emissions from construction vehicles	Where possible – ensure that vehicle mileage is reduced by planning vehicle movements / diversion routes etc	
	Emissions from						

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
	running of buildings						
	Other						
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		x					
<p>Reduce water consumption</p>		x					
<p>Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>		x					
<p>Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>		x					

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes over and above business as usual Evidence or measurement of effect Figures for CO₂e Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Enhance conservation and wildlife</p>		X				
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape</p>		X				
<p>Other (please state below)</p>						

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

N/A

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The project is an enabler for other projects to utilise and those projects may have a more positive impact on climate change 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. 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 which utilise this investment.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Robert Ling
Job title	Assistant Director Technology and Change
Service area	Technology and Change
Directorate	Central Services
Signature	Robert Ling
Completion date	January 2021

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature):

Date: January 2021