

North of Tyne Combined Authority, Cabinet

Tuesday, 4 June 2019 at 2.00 pm

Meeting to be held: Committee Room, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH

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SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA 2

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8. Investment Fund Update

- (a) **Investment Fund Update: Full Fibre Programme Bid Update** **1 - 4**

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Subject: Investment Fund Update: Full Fibre Programme Bid Update

Report of: Tom Warburton, Director of Inclusive Economy

Portfolio: Business Competitiveness

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the application by the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) to DCMS's Full Fibre Programme and ask Cabinet to re-state its support to the bid and its successful delivery.

Recommendations

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress with the bid to the Government's Full Fibre Programme;
- (2) Re-confirm NTCA's support for the bid to the Government's Full Fibre Programme with the aim of significantly improving digital connectivity across the area, especially in rural areas; and
- (3) Confirm NTCA's intention to act as the accountable body for this project and run the necessary procurement exercise – a full paper to formally approve the details of this will be brought to the July Cabinet Meeting

1. Background Information, Proposals and Timetable for Implementation

- 1.1 Cabinet will be aware that NTCA and the constituent Local Authorities have been developing a bid to the Government's Full Fibre Programme. This bid aims to significantly improve digital connectivity across the area by pooling the three authorities' purchasing power and using the Government's Full Fibre Programme investment to extend fibre deployment into both our urban and rural areas. DCMS's investment would be made into rural areas where the private sector would not invest.
- 1.2 This brief update report is to confirm that our bid to the Government's Programme has been accepted into the programme and the project team are due to present to DCMS's Commercial Panel on the 19th June 2019 and their Investment Panel on the 9th July 2019.
- 1.3 A full Cabinet Paper will be brought to the July Cabinet of NTCA to feedback from these Panels and outline the implications for delivery. For now, Cabinet are asked to:
- i. note the progress with the bid to the Government's Full Fibre Programme;
 - ii. re-confirm NTCA's support for the bid with the aim of significantly improving digital connectivity across the area, especially in rural areas; and
 - iii. confirm the Combined Authority's intention to act as the accountable body for this project and run the necessary procurement exercise – a full paper to formally approve the details of this will be brought to the July Cabinet Meeting

2. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 2.1 The successful delivery of this project will significantly improve the digital connectivity for public buildings across the North of Tyne area. This will lever significant private sector investment in the fibre connection to private dwellings and commercial buildings and thus deliver the Network of Connections Pillar of the North of Tyne's Vision

3. Key Risks

- 3.1 The current key risk is that DCMS will not allocate the funds from their Full Fibre Programme to the North of Tyne. This supplemental paper aims to ensure DCMS is clear that the bid has the full backing of the Cabinet of NTCA. Should our bid be successful then the delivery risks for the project will be reported at the July meeting of Cabinet.

4. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 4.1 At this time there are no additional financial implications to NTCA. A further paper will be brought to the Cabinet Meeting in July once the outcome of the bid to DCMS is known.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 At this time there are no additional legal implications to NTCA.

6. Consultation/Engagement

6.1 The bid team has consulted with experts in this field as part of the bid development, and engaged with a range of possible delivery partners, several of whom are interested in delivering the relevant aspects of the project.

The bid team have also engaged with schools and businesses in the region, and have confirmed the positive desire for delivery of this infrastructure. .

At its meeting on 5 December 2019 Cabinet agreed its support for negotiations with DCMS to secure [Local] Full Fibre Network funding and approved an in-principle allocation of up to £100k investment from the Business Case Development Fund to support the preparation of a robust business case to DCMS with the aim of drawing down up to £12M additional central government funding into our area.

7. Appendices

7.1 There are no appendices to this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1 There are no background papers to this the report.

9. Contact Officers

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