Appendix A: Digital Infrastructure Strategy Progress Report
June 2022

BACKGROUND
The South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy and accompanying Delivery Plan set out our approach to accelerating the development of 'gigabit capable' digital infrastructure and 5G networks across the whole of South Yorkshire and include proposals for public interventions support achieving this strategic ambition.

SUPERFAST SOUTH YORKSHIRE
The Superfast South Yorkshire team are being funded by the MCA for three years. Funding for the team and the digital agenda is being provided from 'clawback' funding from the Superfast South Yorkshire broadband programme. The team are closing out the existing broadband programme contracts whilst supporting the upcoming Building Digital UK (BDUK) "Project Gigabit". The team will also help deliver elements of the Digital Infrastructure Strategy.

PROJECT GIGABIT
The Project Gigabit programme targets properties that would otherwise have been left behind in broadband companies' rollout plans, prioritising those that currently have the slowest connections

The latest BDUK modelling suggests that up to 56,800 premises in South Yorkshire will not benefit from the commercial rollout of gigabit broadband and will require public subsidy to enable.

The Government has allocated between £61m - £103m to South Yorkshire to help fill gaps in gigabit capable digital infrastructure coverage. This information is subject to change based on emerging data and feedback.

SFSY have undertaken a lead role locally in the co-ordination of the Open Market Review (OMR) and Public Review (PR) process with suppliers which forms the pre-cursor to an Invitation to Tender (ITT).

The OMR and PR process involved consulting with broadband infrastructure providers on more than 700k unique property reference numbers (UPRNs) to request data on existing gigabit-capable coverage and as well as future provision plans for the next three years. Areas outside of these plans form the 'Intervention Area' where public subsidy can potentially be used. The supplied data is subject to an extensive assurance process by BDUK to confirm the viability of future plans and the speed capabilities of the technology deployed, as well consideration of comments submitted as part of the review.

The OMR closed in March 2022, in total,11 supplier responses were received.
- 6 'local' suppliers
- 5 'national' suppliers

Next steps
- Completion of the OMR assessment and development of the outcome report for public review
- Gigabit Voucher Priority Areas identified / Voucher pause date ~18 Jul 2022
- Public review go live date 17 Jun 22
    - Project Gigabit - Public Review Launch in South Yorkshire - https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/uk-gigabit-programme-south-yorkshire-public-review

- Develop the social value element of the Invitation to Tender (ITT)

The intervention areas will be finalised in Summer 2022, with procurement of a digital infrastructure supplier beginning in Winter 2022 and with the intention to contract and begin implementation in Winter 2023.

Project Gigabit Spring Update - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/project-gigabit-delivery-plan-spring-update/project-gigabit-delivery-plan-spring-update

South Yorkshire Broadband Statistics - https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/south-yorkshire

POLICY PAPER - UK'S DIGITAL STRATEGY
The Digital Strategy is a cross-government strategy which sets out a coherent articulation of the government's ambitious agenda for digital policy. In summary this strategy sets out existing targets in one document including the aim is to achieve at least 85% gigabit coverage by 2025 and at least 99% gigabit coverage by 2030. This links into the levelling up white paper published in February '22 which has seen digital connectivity included as mission 4 with coverage targets for the UK.

UK'S DIGITAL STRATEGY - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uks-digital-strategy/uk-digital-strategy

FIBRE IN WATER PILOT
Yorkshire Water, with a consortium of partners, has secured up to £3.2m of Government funding to pilot an innovative Fibre in Water scheme, delivering advanced broadband and mobile services via drinking water mains. The first trial of its kind in the UK, it will improve digital connectivity at The Seam (Barnsley's digital campus), Dodworth Business Park and poorly served communities in Penistone.

DELIVERY PLAN
The table below summarises progress in implementing those overarching, short-term and medium-term actions which are identified to be taken forward over the next three years.

Action	Update
Overarching actions	
The SYMCA and Local Authorities to form successful and productive relationships with all key digital infrastructure providers to seek to ensure as much gigabit capable coverage as possible by 2025. Specifically, prioritising additional actions and interventions to address the gigabit capable coverage gap	Working with providers is in progress – meetings are taking place as and when required, and a log of meetings is kept. Actions to address coverage gaps, beyond those covered in actions below, are still to be determined.
Develop an ongoing communications plan about the development and delivery of the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy and associated activities.	No progress. Links with SYMCA communications team to be established and clarity on organisation lead provided. Consideration then to be given to the role and requirements of the Communications Plan.
Goal 1 **Short Term (2 years)**	
Provide complementary interventions where appropriate to incentivise or encourage industry to accelerate delivery of gigabit-capable broadband	Projects to be identified and developed.
Map the digital infrastructure industry providers, including smaller providers, and develop a holistic and continuous engagement programme.	Tied into first overarching action - part of ongoing work for team
Enhance ongoing dialogue / relationships with both major and smaller local digital infrastructure suppliers, and identify and oversee consistent 'barrier busting' measures being put in place to support the industry infrastructure roll-out	As above. Barrier busting measures to be developed. A log of meetings is kept.
Identify support requirements and secure the necessary officer resources to support the DCMS Project Gigabit (£61m - £103m) Programme in South Yorkshire.	Supporting Project Gigabit is a priority action for the team. See separate update above.

Action	Update
1. Mapping of premises not scheduled for gigabit connectivity by 2025 to identify potential 'anchors' and utilise enabling public assets to support industry gigabit connectivity roll-outs. 2. Mapping of buildings and street furniture, to support further 4G and 5G coverage.	Part 1 will be covered / informed by Project Gigabit – which identify intervention area where further work could be undertaken regarding public sector assets. Part 2 will be informed by the outcomes of the 8 national digital connectivity pilots.
Close and monitor the SFSY Programme contracts.	Ongoing. Expected to be around 6 months of work from the full service commencement date.
Medium Term (3-5 years)	
Consider a 'drive by' rural mobile survey across South Yorkshire to map the true state of rural mobile coverage, identify gaps, and seek industry resolutions.	Further exploration required; however this could be taken forward in the short term.
Goal 2 **Short Term (2 years)**	
Design and develop a demand stimulation programme for existing SME businesses and new start-ups aligned with and supporting gigabit connectivity roll-outs. Includes exploring funding a "top up" of the Gigabit broadband voucher system to further incentivise rural deployment.	Further discussion required to assess whether to progress with a local Gigabit voucher top up scheme (which would require a minimum £500,000 funding commitment).
Continue to provide advice on connectivity for residents and businesses across South Yorkshire	This is continuing ongoing work.
Establish a Digital Forum comprising representatives from the public sector, local businesses and digital infrastructure providers	This will be taken forward as part of the wider MCA digital agenda and cover digital infrastructure, digital skills, and digital innovation and business support activities.
Goal 3 **Short Term (2 years)**	
Commission research to fill the information gap relating to the real extent of digital poverty in South Yorkshire, and the actions to address this.	Ongoing. This research has been commissioned via the SYMCA policy team.
Goal 4 **Short Term (2 years)**	
Commission and utilise consistent data sources to inform policy, delivery, and funding bids and programmes'	Annual licence for Point Topic data obtained by the SYMCA and provides quarterly updates of coverage. Project Gigabit Open Market Review data will assist in validating this information.
Adopt consistent 'best practice' planning policies and 'barrier busting' approaches/measures across South Yorkshire to support and accelerate industry roll-outs.	Ongoing. A consistent approach to planning conditions has been put in place.
Continue to provide consistent expert strategic advice and support to Local Planning Authorities and developers on digital infrastructure requirements within new developments as well as mobile telecommunications requirements and discharge of planning conditions.	
Goal 5 **Short Term (2 years)**	
Proactively work with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on future digital initiatives to capture funding and delivery opportunities for South Yorkshire, including demonstration pilots.'	This will be dependent on opportunities coming forward via DCMS, and the ability to develop bids in a timely manner.
Identify 'Lighthouse projects' which can help deliver new local job opportunities and encourage and support new innovations / projects (Also identified as a medium-term action in relation to delivering projects)	Further work required to identify projects, as well as ability to be reactive to funding opportunities. Yorkshire Water led Fibre in Water scheme has secured Government funding and is in the initial design stage of delivery.
Explore the opportunities for rolling-out of the pilot digital flood warning system to the whole of the South Yorkshire flood catchment.	Further discussion with DMBC and Environment Agency is required.
Capture relevant recommendations for Gigabit and 5G infrastructure in Economic Blueprints prepared for key growth areas identified in the SEP	To be taken forward as part of further work to develop the SEP Major Growth Area Economic Blueprints.