Housing and Infrastructure Board

Thursday, 08 December 2022

Digital Infrastructure Strategy Implementation Update

Is the paper exempt from the press and public?	No
Reason why exempt:	Not applicable
Purpose of this report:	Discussion
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Has it been included on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions?	Not a Key Decision

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Executive Summary

To consider progress with delivering key activities relating to the implementation of the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy.

What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

The Strategy aims to help improve business productivity and competitiveness; address digital exclusion and digital poverty; and make South Yorkshire places more attractive to inward investors as digitally enabled places to live and work.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- Note and comment on the key activities related to the delivery of the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel
N/A

1. Background

1.1 The South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy was approved by the Mayoral Combined Authority on the 20th September 2021, and the Delivery Plan setting out the actions to deliver the Strategy was approved by the Housing and Infrastructure Board on the 15th March 2022.

1.2 Partnership work has been ongoing throughout this year by SYMCA and Local Authorities, particularly with the support of the Superfast South Yorkshire digital team, to implement the actions set out in the Delivery Plan.

1.3 This report provides an update of progress in delivering the key early deliverable actions.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Appendix A provides a progress update in relation to key activities relating the implementation of the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy. These specifically include:

- Superfast South Yorkshire Programme
- Project Gigabit
- Gigabit Voucher Scheme
- Changes to Building Regulations relating to digital connectivity

2.2 Appendix A also provides an updated position on all the actions set out in the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 **Option 1**

To support the ongoing actions and activities South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan.

3.2 **Option 1 Risks and Mitigations**

The key risks and mitigations are considered on a project level basis and taken into account in delivering each of the actions.

3.3 **Option 2**

To not support the ongoing actions and activities South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan.

3.4 **Option 2 Risks and Mitigations**

This option would negatively impact on the successful partnership approach adopted to date and risk the loss of the consistent approach adopted across South Yorkshire to address the digital infrastructure challenges and ambitions as set out in the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy – leading to less positive outcomes for South Yorkshire.

3.5 **Recommended Option**

Option 1 is recommended to continue the shared, joined-up strategic approach to enhancing digital infrastructure provision and to maximise resource targeting and effectiveness.

4. **Consultation on Proposal**

4.1 The Superfast South Yorkshire Board has helped inform this report.

5. **Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 Each of the actions in the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan are subject to specific delivery timescales as indicated in Appendix A.

6. **Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice**

6.1 There are no specific financial and procurement implications directly arising at this time from this report.

7. **Legal Implications and Advice**

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising at this time from this report.

8. **Human Resources Implications and Advice**

8.1 Consideration of the resources for implementing the Strategy, including the roles and resource requirements of SYMCA, are being considered on a case by case basis as projects are brought forward for delivery.

9. **Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice**

9.1 Ensuring digital inclusion for all is a key purpose of the Digital Infrastructure Strategy aligning with the intentions of the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty and the inclusivity policy approach of the Strategic Economic Plan.

10. **Climate Change Implications and Advice**

10.1 The Covid19 lockdown periods have shown the importance of good digital connectivity, particularly in relation to enabling people to effectively work from home and access both public health and other services online. A positive consequence of this has been a reduction in travelling. Improved digital infrastructure / connectivity could therefore be an important contributor to meeting net zero reduction targets related to transport.

11. **Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice**

11.1 None as a direct result of this report.

12. **Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice**

12.1 There will be opportunities for publicity and marketing when the proposed schemes are being delivered.

List of Appendices Included:

A   South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Progress Update

Background Papers

None