

Housing and Infrastructure Board

26 October 2021

South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy – Scoping the Delivery Plan

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

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

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Executive Summary

To comment on the draft scope for the South Yorkshire Digital infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan.

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.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- consider and comment on the scope of the Delivery Plan to take forward implementation of the South Yorkshire Digital infrastructure Strategy.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel

Superfast South Yorkshire Programme Board 6th October 2021

1. Background

- 1.1 The South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy was approved by the Mayoral Combined Authority on the 20th September 2021, and requested that the Housing and Infrastructure proceed to preparing a Delivery Plan for implementing the Strategy.
- 1.2 Appendix A sets out initial proposals for scoping the priority actions and interventions for the Delivery Plan. The Board's views are requested on these proposals to inform the preparation of the Delivery Plan.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 There are a range of overarching policy activities that set out to implement the Strategy and deliver the ambitions of the Strategic Economic Plan. These take account of the strategic policies and actions also being developed for digital skills, digital innovation and business support by the MCA and partners.
- 2.2 The necessary resources will need to be secured to support the delivery of the Digital Infrastructure Strategy and take forward implementation of the Delivery Plan. It is essential that the Digital Strategy Delivery Plan sets out realistic and deliverable actions and interventions that can be properly resourced to ensure successful delivery of the Strategy.
- 2.3 Appendix A sets out the initial scoping ideas for these actions and interventions to inform the preparation of the Delivery Plan, including proposed priorities that are strategically important and/or need to be delivered in the short-term. These have been developed together with the Superfast South Yorkshire Programme Board.
- 2.4 The views of this Board are now sought on the scoping proposals and priorities set out in Appendix A to inform the preparation of the Delivery Plan itself. A Draft Plan will then be developed for consideration by the Board at the next meeting on the 7th December 2021.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 3.1 **Option 1**
To support the scoping and production of a Delivery Plan and contribute to identifying key priority actions.

3.4 **Option 1 Risks and Mitigations**

- A key risk with this Option would occur if partners are unable to commit to implementing the Strategy. Collaborative working in the development of the Delivery Plan should mitigate this by identifying actions, priorities and resource implications. However, implementation of the Strategy may carry additional risks still to be considered as we progress.
- A further risk would occur if there was Insufficient public and private investment to implement the Strategy in a timely manner to meet the delivery targets of the Strategy. A public funding source has been identified to support implementation of both the Strategy and the wider digital agenda, and the MCA Executive and local authorities continue to liaise and support digital infrastructure providers in delivering their roll-out plans

3.5 **Option 2**

Not to support the scoping and production of a Delivery Plan or contribute towards identifying key priority actions.

3.8 **Option 2 Risks and Mitigations**

The key risk with this option is that it may delay the implementation of the Strategy and thus the ability to address the digital infrastructure challenges and SEP digital ambitions.

3.13 **Recommended Option**

Option 1 is the preferred option to pursue.

4. **Consultation on Proposal**

- 4.1 The Housing and Infrastructure Board will oversee the preparation of the Delivery Plan, with the Superfast South Yorkshire Board acting as an Advisory Group at key stages.

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

- 5.1 Work to progress the Delivery Plan is underway, and the views of the Board will inform its development. It is envisaged that a draft Delivery Plan will be brought to the next Board meeting in December 2021.

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

- 6.1 There are no direct financial and procurement issues arising directly from this report. However, implementation of the Strategy will require financial and other resources(particularly within the MCA and local authorities) which have not yet been confirmed, although options are being explored. The Delivery Plan will assist by identifying the resource implications of proposed actions and interventions.

7. **Legal Implications and Advice**

- 7.1 There are no direct legal issues arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Implications and Advice

- 8.1 Consideration will need to be given to the resources for implementing the Strategy, including roles and resource requirements of the MCA. The Delivery Plan will assist by identifying the resource implications of proposed actions and interventions.

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 There are no IT issues as a direct result of this report.

12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice. Please also refer to consultation undertaken as per Section 4

- 12.1 There may be media opportunities related to when the proposed interventions are delivered to implement the Strategy.

List of Appendices Included

- A Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan Draft Scope

Background Papers

None