

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economic Development and Rural Affairs
Date of Decision:	10 Sept 2012
Decision Title:	Funding for rural broadband grants
Decision Reference:	4265
Report From:	Director of Culture Communities and Business Services Director of Economy Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to re-allocate unspent contingency funding previously earmarked for the Little London broadband project (decision taken by the Executive Member for Economic Development and Rural Affairs on 2 July 2010), and to use it instead for small grants to test alternative broadband technologies in locations which are not expected to receive super-fast broadband before 2015.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The focus of Hampshire County Council's Rural Delivery Strategy is on improving the quality of services delivered by Hampshire County Council and its partners in rural areas, and increasing value for money.
- 2.2. The County Council's rural priorities were revised in November 2011 (Decision Report reference number 3372) and are now:
- **Economic prosperity**, rural broadband, access to services, effective rural transport, the land based economy, energy from biomass, access to the countryside.
 - **Sustainable and resilient rural development and communities**, partnership, community engagement, affordable housing.

3. Funding for rural broadband

- 3.1 In 2010/11 the Executive Member for Economic Development and Rural Affairs set aside a contingency of £10,000 for the Little London broadband project (Decision Report reference number 1799).

- 3.2 The Little London project was successfully completed in 2011/12 and the contingency funding was not needed. Accordingly, it is now proposed to reallocate this funding to support other broadband projects.
- 3.3 It is proposed to offer small grants to members of the public living in parts of Hampshire which currently receive broadband speeds of less than 2Mbps, and which are not expected to receive faster broadband from commercial providers before 2015. The objective would be to test alternative technologies which are commercially available. These might include, but are not limited to, satellite, WiFi, WiMax, and 3G mobile phone signal booster services. Grants would be to a maximum of £300 to cover capital costs for setup and installation of new services. Appendix 1 lists applications received to date.

4. Risks

- 4.1. Inevitably there are risks associated with these projects but they have been assessed as part of the feasibility process and there is a high degree of confidence that they can be managed or overcome.
- 4.2. *Risk:* There is a risk that not all technological solutions chosen by members of the public will work.

Response: Lessons will be learned through reviewing the effectiveness of the options chosen by members of the public, and these will inform future decisions made by the County Council.

- 4.3. *Risk:* Reputational damage if any project fails to deliver: any pilot project or innovation must carry some risk of failure and this underpins the ability and willingness to try new approaches.

Response: Projects will be assessed against specific criteria and priorities by members of the Hampshire Broadband Programme project team. (As such this risk is assessed as low / moderate). In the event of any under-spend or failure of an individual project, consideration will be given to reallocating any residual funds across the other projects in accordance with the rural priorities agreed by Cabinet.

5. Timescale

- 5.1. The projects identified are ready for immediate implementation and although there will be variation within each project, the projects are scheduled for completion by March 2013.
- 5.2. Further applications for this grant are anticipated and will be considered against the agreed grant criteria.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That the Executive Member for Economic Development and Rural Affairs re-allocates unspent contingency funding previously earmarked for the Little London broadband project, and to use it instead for small grants to test alternative broadband technologies in locations which are not expected to receive super-fast broadband.
- 6.2 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services to consider and agree further applications in respect of this grant funding, in consultation with the Executive Member for Economic Development and Rural Affairs.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	

Other Significant Links

Links to Previous member decisions:		
Title	Ref	Date
Rural Delivery Strategy for Hampshire County Council	Item 5.a1 – 5.a5	July 2008
Rural Delivery Strategy for Hampshire County Council – Consultation and Development	Item 8(i) – 8(ii)	March 2009
Rural Delivery Action Plan for Hampshire County Council Decision Report	Item 7 865	April 2009 August 2009
Rural Delivery Action Plan for Hampshire County Council – Progress and Performance	1127	January 2010
Funding for Rural Delivery Strategy projects	1799	July 2010
Funding for Rural Delivery Strategy projects	3001	June 2011
Rural Delivery Strategy – progress and future direction	3372	November 2011
Funding for Rural Delivery Strategy projects: performance against 2011/11 and project proposals for 2012/13	4048	June 2012

Section 100 D – Local Government Act 1972 – background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 Successful implementation will reduce inequalities by improving service delivery in rural areas and increase access to services. Full Equalities Impact Assessment at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/rural-strategy.pdf>

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1 None

3. Climate Change:

- i) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

n/a

- ii) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

n/a

**Alternative Broadband Grant Applications
13 May 2012 to 28 August 2012**

The Alternative Broadband Grant Scheme has received 10 applications. Nine of these grants meet the award criteria and are shown below. The other application is incomplete and will be considered at a later date (once the applicant has researched the best technology to use for their location).

13 May 2012 Exbury SO45	Current broadband service: <0.5Mbps Usage: Residential Proposed solution: Click4Internet Grant amount: £199.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes
05 June 2012 East Meon GU32	Current broadband service: <1.5Mbps Usage: Residential Proposed solution: WiBe Grant amount: £270.90 Application meets grant criteria: Yes
30 May 2012 Kingsley GU35	Current broadband service: <0.256Mbps Usage: Residential Proposed solution: WiBe Grant amount: £285.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes
12 July 2012 Chineham RG24	Current broadband service: <0.256Mbps Usage: Residential Proposed solution: HiWiFi Grant amount: £264.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes

<p>20 July 2012 Kingsley GU35</p>	<p>Current broadband service: <0.256Mbps Usage: Both Proposed solution: WiBe Grant amount: £285.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes</p>
<p>30 July 2012 Chineham RG24</p>	<p>Current broadband service: <0.256Mbps Usage: Both Proposed solution: HiWiFi Grant amount: £228.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes</p>
<p>10 August 2012 Beech GU34</p>	<p>Current broadband service: <1.5Mbps Usage: Residential Proposed solution: Deltenna Grant amount: £300.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes</p>
<p>13 August 2012 Chineham RG24</p>	<p>Current broadband service: <2Mbps Usage: Residential Proposed solution: HiWiFi Grant amount: £234.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes</p>
<p>20 August 2012 Exbury Village SO45</p>	<p>Current broadband service: <2Mbps Usage: Residential Proposed solution: Click4Internet Grant amount: £200.00 Application meets grant criteria: Yes</p>