

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – Proposed RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY

Cabinet Member for Economic Development

DECISION NO:

18/00024(a)

For publication

Key decision – Yes

Subject: Kent Broadband Voucher Scheme

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Economic Development, I agree to establish and launch a Kent Broadband Voucher Scheme.

Governance: The Executive Scheme of Delegation for Officers, set out in Appendix 2 Part 4 of the Constitution (and the directorate schemes of sub-delegation made thereunder), provides the governance pathway for the implementation of this decision by officers, as it assumes at 1.9 of the scheme that once a Member-level decision has been taken, the implementation of that decision will normally be delegated to officers, so that multiple Member decisions are not required in respect of the same matter. In this instance, the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport will be the lead officer seeking to ensure that all such steps as are necessary to implement the decision are undertaken.

Reason(s) for decision: This scheme will benefit those properties in hard-to-reach (known as final 5%) locations which remain outside the scope of publicly funded and market-led broadband upgrade programmes. The Kent Broadband Voucher will offer up to £1,700 per property for the provision of a superfast or ultrafast broadband connection in these areas

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposed decision was considered and endorsed by Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee at its meeting on 9 May 2018

Any alternatives considered: The following options were considered:

1. Waiting for the Broadband Universal Service Obligation to be introduced – subject to secondary legislation being passed, this is not due to launch until March 2018. Eligible properties will then have to wait for their applications to be processed and required infrastructure to be built (estimated time 12-18 months). Only properties currently receiving less than 10mbps will be eligible and the scheme does not currently guarantee superfast broadband access.
2. Relying on the Government's Better Broadband Scheme to assist these properties. This offers subsidies of up to £350 towards the costs of installing satellite-based broadband connections. The scheme is due to end in December 2018.
3. Introducing a Kent Broadband Voucher programme offering Kent-based homes and businesses in final 5% locations up to £1,700 towards the costs of accessing a superfast broadband service. **(Preferred option).**

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None.

.....
Signed

.....
Date

Name: