



Scrutiny Advisory Board – Communities and Place Digital Infrastructure Strategy

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Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport



Purpose



- The purpose of this briefing and presentation is to engage with Scrutiny Advisory Board – Communities and Place on the development of a Digital Infrastructure Strategy which will be approved by Cabinet in November.
- The Digital infrastructure Strategy is being developed in the context of:
 - Covid-19 and recovery
 - Digital Borderlands
 - Council’s Customer Strategy, ICT plan and Workforce Plan
 - Inclusive Growth and Digital Inclusion
 - Government agenda for Digital Connectivity and Social Inclusion.

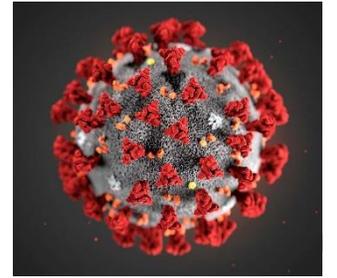


Why Now



- The importance of digital connectivity is increasing as it becomes more critical to the lives of residents and the operation of businesses. This importance has been further highlighted by the coronavirus crisis and as we recover and restart. Access to fast, reliable internet connectivity is no longer a luxury; it is a basic necessity for residents, local businesses and public services.
- Digital connectivity is playing a central role in Governments levelling-up agenda, economic growth and greater social inclusion, to local businesses and residents.
- Digital Borderlands is a key programme within the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.
- A clear digital infrastructure strategy will help secure investment in infrastructure and will facilitate delivery of a range of societal benefits.

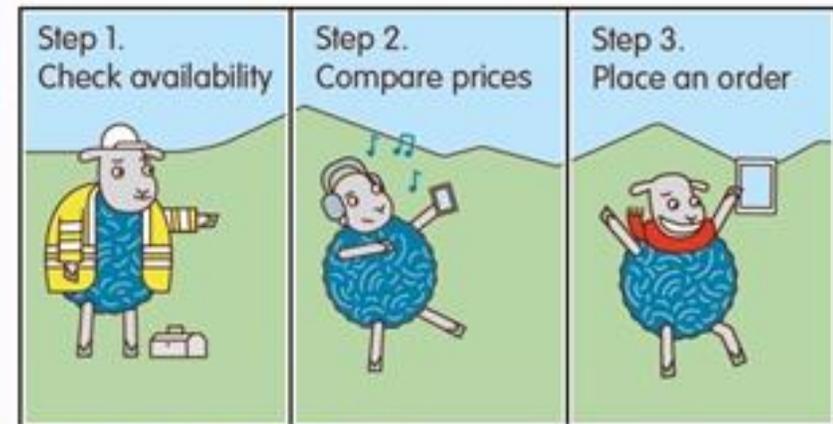
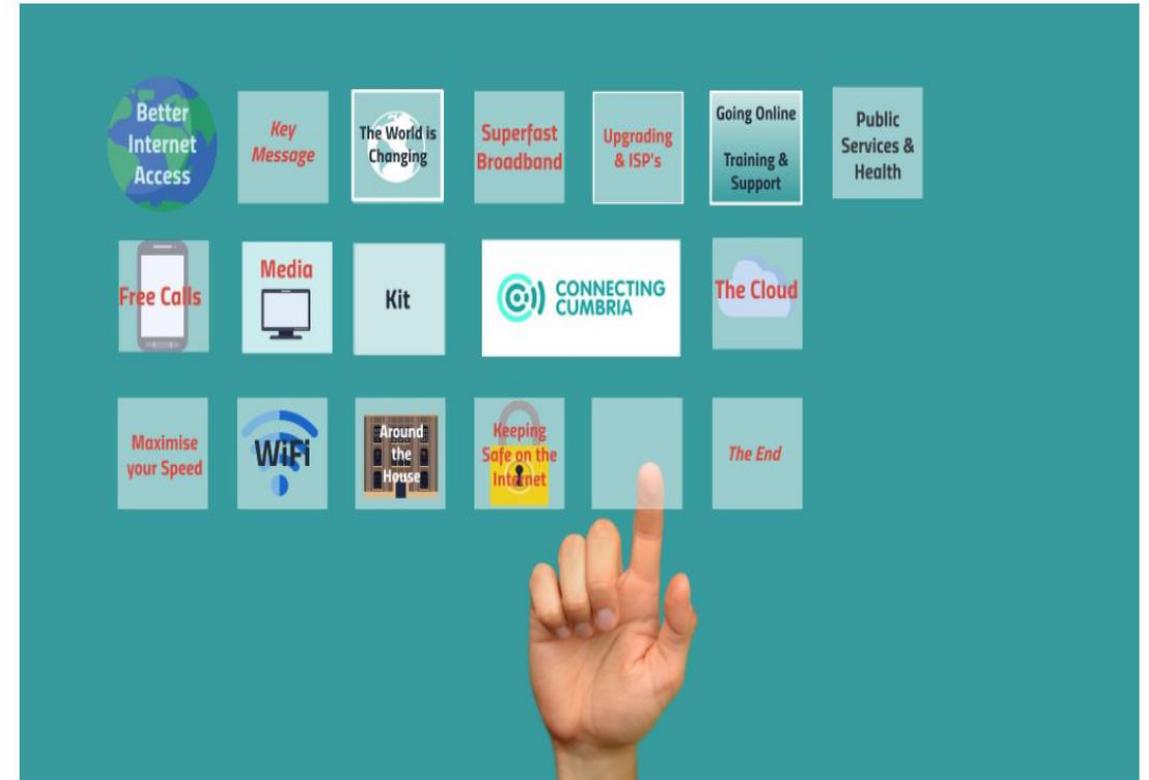
Covid-19 Context



- Digital connectivity has been critical during lockdown.
- Work patterns have changed with more home working and flexible working.
- The use of digital and online services has increased.
- Business models will have a bigger online presence.
- The council must be able to deliver as many of its services digitally to as many citizens as possible, with no-one left behind.

Connecting Cumbria

- Connecting Cumbria is a partnership between Cumbria County Council and BT and aims to bring fibre broadband to as many residents, businesses and visitors as quickly as possible with the funds available.
- The project is funded by Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), Cumbria County Council, the EU (ERDF) and BT.
- Connecting Cumbria has made a great deal of progress since starting back in 2013 with almost 95% of properties in Cumbria now able to access superfast broadband >24Mbps download.
- Deployment is now coming to a close, but further gigabit capable connectivity will be delivered through other programmes in this strategy.



Digital Borderlands



- Digital Borderlands strategic objectives
 - Borderlands to catch up with and match UK levels of connectivity
 - Equitable coverage across the Borderlands area with no place left far behind
 - Deliver the connectivity to enhance business productivity and to allow Borderlands to secure and retain globally excellent digital activity into the future.

The Digital Borderlands Voucher Scheme launched in June this year.



STORY SO FAR YOUR BORDERLANDS NEWS GET INVOLVED DIGITAL VOUCHER SCHEME

Digital Borderlands Voucher Scheme

The Digital Borderlands Voucher Scheme offers additional funding to help eligible rural businesses and residents in Cumbria and Northumberland connect to gigabit capable broadband.

Homes and businesses with broadband speeds of less than 30Mbps can use vouchers to support the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections when part of a group scheme.

Group projects are when two or more residents and/or SMEs get together to combine their vouchers towards the shared cost of installation.

Digital Borderlands funding is a 'top up' to the Government's Rural Gigabit Connectivity Voucher scheme:

	Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport GIGABIT BROADBAND VOUCHER SCHEME		Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal		Total Available Funding
Business	Up to £3500	+	Up to £3500	=	Up to £7000
Residential	Up to £1500	+	Up to £1500	=	Up to £3000

Objectives of the Digital Infrastructure Strategy

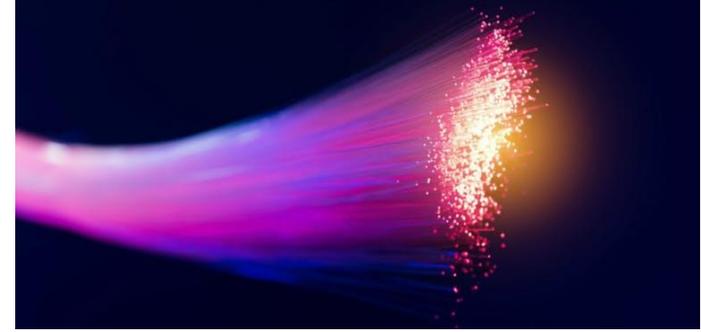


Maximise deployment of full fibre and mobile infrastructure in order to support:

- Economic growth and in particular in key industries such as agriculture (agri-tech) and tourism.
- Digital inclusion so that no resident or business is left behind.
- Delivery of more effective and efficient provision of local public services.

Specific and measurable outputs will be detailed in each project or programme in the Action Plan.

Scope of Strategy



- Extending full fibre broadband coverage, prioritising superfast not-spots.
- Gigabit capable community voucher schemes and voucher top-up.
- Connecting hub sites to full fibre.
- Funding, or seeking funding for more full fibre connectivity solutions.
- Taking steps to boost mobile coverage (4G infill).
- Looking to the future in terms of 5G research and development.
- Making Cumbria's voice heard.

Action Plan



The output of the strategy is six programmes or projects:

- Complete the superfast contract with BT to deliver fibre infrastructure to >94% of premises.
- The Digital Borderlands full fibre voucher top-up scheme.
- Facilitate full fibre connections to eligible hub sites.
- Work with UK Government to maximise our share of the £5bn of funding for gigabit capable connections to the hardest to reach 20% of premises in the UK.
- Secure funding and mobilise the Digital Borderlands 4G infill programme
 - Work with the Shared Rural Network mobile programme to inform the above.
- Work with partners on 5G research and development projects.

Next Steps



- Cabinet Report to CMT on 14 October
- Cabinet briefing on 29 October
- Cabinet on 12 November
- The approved strategy will inform the Cumbria Transport and Infrastructure Plan (CTIP) and to be part of the evidence base and suite of supporting documents.