

<b>Programme Name</b>	Digital Enterprise Programme				
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### Purpose:

The Programme Brief is an outline definition of what a programme is expected to achieve in terms of benefits, outcomes, scope and objectives. The contents of the Brief, once approved by the programme's sponsoring group, will be as the basis for developing the detailed programme definition, benefits profiles, business case, plans and governance arrangements.

## 1. Outline Vision Statement

To establish Epping Forest district as the best connected district in the region, including an aspirational target to approach 100% potential connectivity. In addition, to establish a wider West Essex / Eastern Herts Digital Innovation Zone as the best connected area of its kind in the region. The creation of this zone of digital innovation would establish it as a beacon area that service providers would recognise as open for innovation and prepared to collaborate to explore new ways of meeting demand. In doing this, to facilitate improved access to superfast broadband, free to access wi-fi and a wider range of competing service providers so that our residents and businesses can maximise the benefits of these opportunities. Through this work, to achieve sustained investment in the district's digital infrastructure to underpin the district's economic base and contribute to enhanced levels of business rate generation and retention.

In order to achieve this, to establish a coalition of willing partners across public and private sectors prepared to work together to jointly address the area's digital needs and coordinate funding resource and projects to achieve the maximum benefit in the most efficient and effective way.

Furthermore, to explore the opportunities for smart place technology and initiatives to transform the delivery of public service and understanding of the issues facing the district.

## 2. Benefits

A detailed, innovative and forward thinking digital strategy, which addresses customer-focused need and market provision, to identify and deliver on key opportunities for digital infrastructure and services across the district.

A strong coalition of public sector partners prepared to work together to achieve the best possible outcome for residents and businesses. This will lead to identifying a set of mutual needs and developing a coordinated and, therefore, more efficient and effective spend on IT / network / infrastructure projects amongst coalition partners

An enhanced level of free network access for residents, businesses and visitors through free town centre wi-fi. This will have additional benefits of driving increased town centre footfall and visitor

dwelling times, driving growth in the local town centre economy.

A wider choice of network providers for residents and businesses.

Even greater levels of superfast broadband coverage facilitating 'universal' service initiatives that are dependent upon all residents being able to access services digitally.

### 3. Risks and issues

Failure to build and maintain an effective coalition of willing partners to aggregate spend, coordinate needs and overcome administrative and governance obstacles that could prevent rapid progress being made.

Failure of public sector partners to understand and fully embrace the opportunities of the expanded network to improve, streamline and refocus services and achieve significant savings.

Failure to attract sufficient funding to pursue the necessary projects identified under the programme including partners co-funding as deemed appropriate.

Failure to attract and maintain private sector interest in the programme, including potential loss of early investment leading to a failure to attract private sector infrastructure investment, reach 100% broadband coverage and offer wider network choice.

Failure to identify appropriate and sustainable financial, administrative and governance models that enable the coalition of public sector partners to work effectively with each other across all boundaries (administrative and geographical) and work with private sector partners in innovative and challenging ways.

Failure to adequately resource the programme delivery function, impacting on the ability of the programme management to effectively coordinate the delivery of the identified projects.

The appropriateness of the prospective county council projects to our district and the levels of interest, willing and capacity at a district service level for getting involved in the projects.

### 4. Constraints

A key constraint to the ambition contained within this programme brief will be the availability of the necessary capacity, resources, budget and skills. The programme and all related projects will initially fall within the remit of the economic development team, with one economic development officer leading all workstreams. It does however need to be borne in mind that additional resource and capacity may be required to allow the programme to go 'further, faster'. Skills such as project and programme management may need to be accessed or supplemented from elsewhere in the council eg, through the transformation team and further utilisation of additional economic development resources may be required to help run the programme. Support from Essex CC has been offered in terms of facilitating contacts or providing workspace but there may also be scope for more direct involvement of the county council through secondment or co-location of resources.

The willingness of private sector partners to invest in district infrastructure. There is also a time urgency constraint in keeping the private sector partners interested as they often are working to very different pressures to the public sector and will want to see momentum at an early stage.

Available funding to procure digital strategy and willingness of public sector partners to co-fund this piece of work.

Available funding to invest in infrastructure schemes such as free wi-fi and the cost implications of the specifications of such schemes.

The ability to identify and procure suitable private sector suppliers to develop the required infrastructure and service.

The governance and procurement requirements of all the public sector organisations and partners and the degree to which these facilitate the unknown nature of potential public / private working and affect partnership working, pooled budgets and coordinated spend.

Capacity in other key public service providers eg. health to engage in developmental work and join up or coordinate plans to achieve better returns.

The ongoing EFDC transformation programme will determine how the council explores new ways of working and delivering its services. The degree to which these alternative approaches explore the digital world and look to exploit broadband infrastructure will constrain how much of a positive impact the DEP can have on that programme.

### 5. Estimated cost, effort and timescales

At this stage there is little certainty as to what the potential costs of the identified projects might be. Most are innovative and exploratory and so fixing potential costs is difficult.

A digital strategy is estimated to require in the region of £40-50k to procure, develop and deliver. This cost is intended to be co-funded in the main by the public sector partners with a potential contribution from the private sector to be defined.

A scheme to provide high street wi-fi could require a huge range of funding levels depending upon the preferred model of wi-fi provision, the scope and extent of the scheme (including how many town centres should be targeted) and the degree to which the initiative might be hung on other synchronous schemes utilising the same technology. Working through these options would be the first task of such a project. It is possible that low or zero cost solutions might be achievable through closer working with county council and private sector providers looking to explore and test new concepts in the area.

Management of the programme and the identified projects would fall mostly within the remit of the Economic Development Officer responsible for this workstream and will initially be achieved within the existing staffing resource. It should be acknowledged that there is the prospect that the totality of the Digital Enterprise Programme will account for the majority of the EDO's available time and resource. Programme leadership will come from the Economic Development Lead Officer

/ Assistant Director Planning and Economic Development with member level input from the Portfolio Holder for Technology and Support Services and administrative support from the Economic Development Assistant. Additional support could be sought through an expanded One Epping Forest Economic Board.

### 6. Outline Business Case

In an always developing digital world, positioning and marketing this district and its geographical neighbours and partners at the forefront of digital connectivity, application and innovation will be key to ensuring that the best digital outcomes are achieved for our residents, businesses and visitors.

Epping Forest district is already one of the best connected districts in Essex, given its geography and demographics ie. major rural hinterland and scattered rural settlements and has aspirations to drive its level of superfast broadband coverage as close to 100% as possible. Through its work on this, the district council has developed a strong working relationship with the county council who are keen to take a number of projects forward with the district council. Alongside this, strong relationships have also been built with a number of key national infrastructure providers and innovative service developers.

Failing to capitalise on this previous work and relationship building could open up the opportunity for other authorities to take the initiative and move these concepts forward, leaving Epping Forest to fully fund the projects from its own resources and initiative. Through developing a coalition of willing partners the potential intervention area for identified projects could stretch beyond just Epping Forest as a district and make it a more attractive investment proposition for potential partners.

Building on the work to date therefore, there are a number of digital projects that this Digital Enterprise Programme plans to explore, deliver and support.

- To create a coalition of willing public sector partners to look at the possible aggregation of needs, sharing of funding demands and the procurement of coordinated solutions
- To procure and deliver a digital strategy for West Essex and Eastern Herts that addresses the digital state of the area and identifies the strategic needs, assets and opportunities for the area to become a beacon for digital enterprise and innovative service delivery
- To explore and develop with Essex County Council a number of digital projects that will address key issues of joint priority such as traffic congestion, high street wi-fi connectivity and safe living / social care in the community
- To explore how the area's connectivity and infrastructure can be further enhanced in collaboration with private sector providers to address corporate demands, enhance provider choice and consumer experience, and act as a test-bed for new technology, concepts and ways of working
- To push on with further funding to address the remaining areas of the district without superfast broadband coverage and get closer to 100% coverage across the district. This could form part of the wider Superfast Essex broadband project running parallel with this programme or might be secured with additional private sector investment
- To support, where possible and appropriate, ways that the enhanced level of coverage and available infrastructure can inform the ongoing corporate transformation programme that

the district council is pursuing in order to transform the way it delivers its services

All of this will go towards positioning Epping Forest district and its immediate surroundings as the best connected, most forward thinking area to develop digital concepts and business, attracting economic growth to the area, enabling jobs growth and retention in rural areas and enhancing the benefits accruing to the area's residents, businesses and visitors.

### 7. Options

Epping Forest district could seek to pursue all of these projects in its own right and without the involvement of neighbouring authorities or the input of private sector providers. This would impact on the district's ability to go 'further, faster' and, in addition, this would artificially limit the scope of any digital projects or initiatives and potentially miss out on the opportunity to develop coordinated solutions for joint areas of need. Discussion held with private sector providers have indicated that their willingness to invest in test-bed concepts and projects is influenced by the scale of the solution they are being asked to deliver and delivering a solution to an individual organisation does not have the same level of investment attraction that a multi-partner project might have.

Epping Forest district could also choose to not pursue this programme of digital projects, leaving all future developments to be determined by market forces, upper tier council authorities or national government initiatives. This would risk the district falling behind if its location, assets or digital opportunities were not appealing in their own right and would put its residents and businesses at risk of not experiencing the best digital outcomes that are possible as well as denying the district council the opportunity to explore new and innovative ways of delivering its services.

### 8. Candidate Projects

It is anticipated that progress on all of the following candidate projects could be made within the current 2017/18 year. Specific timescales of delivery would be determined following authorisation and initiation of the individual projects.

Project 1 – Establish, develop and maintain a coalition of partners to work on the various strands of the Digital Enterprise Programme and act as steering group and reference group for the ongoing projects. This to include the achievement of EFDC member buy-in to the overall digital enterprise programme through the involvement of the One Epping Forest Economic Board. **Current position** – ongoing dialogue has been undertaken through a series of high level meetings one to one with private investors and public sector organisations, A Smart Places Taskforce lead by both Essex CC and Epping Forest DC has been established. A Smart Places Seminar attended by a number of partners from across the public and private sectors has already been held and a conference report produced and distributed with agreed next steps. A follow-up event is planned for June / July.

Project 2 – Commission, develop and deliver a digital strategy for West Essex / Eastern Herts to establish the joint strategic needs of the area's key public sector and private sector stakeholders, establishing the wider area as a Digital Innovation Zone to act as a beacon area for digital innovation. **Current position** – This approach was endorsed at the Smart Places Seminar. A bid for

£20,000 funding has been submitted to the West Essex POD Fund and this has been successful. Discussions have been undertaken with Essex CC and East Herts DC regarding funding contributions and initial positive responses have been received. Further discussions are to be held with Public Health England, Kaopark and Broxbourne BC.

Project 3- Achieve designation of Digital Enterprise Area in relevant plans and strategies.

Project 4 – Explore and develop options for provision of free town centre wi-fi in one, some or all of the district’s town centres. Establish the preferred models for delivery of infrastructure and sustainability of the network service and procure suitable provider to deliver.

Project 5 – Work closely with Essex County Council to explore opportunities to exploit the district’s connectivity and infrastructure to deliver new methods of service delivery that address areas of joint need and priority.

Project 6 – Work with private sector partners and service providers to explore how they might work within the wider Digital Innovation Zone to develop new technologies, explore innovative service solutions and deliver a wider choice of network provision for residents and businesses.

Linked programme A – Alongside the digital enterprise programme, EFDC is also undergoing a council-wide transformation programme which is exploring the ways in which the council can transform the delivery of its services and the way that it interacts with its customers – residents, visitors and businesses alike. This programme of transformation, including the ongoing transformation of the council’s customer contact offer, is beyond the scope of this programme and there is no intention to cover the same areas, whether intentionally or accidentally. However, the delivery of a more integrated, coordinated digital infrastructure and a planned set of digital needs and requirements that covers not only the council but also its local public sector partners, could have a positive impact on the degree to which these other programmes are able to achieve their goals and deliver the planned benefits to residents. It is therefore intended that the transformation programme team be kept fully up to date on progress with the DEP and be invited to participate in or advise upon relevant projects and workstreams as appropriate.

The Head of Transformation will be invited to be a member of the DEP programme team to establish a direct link between the two programmes as well as to assist with benefits management and change management and to bring valuable programme management advice to the programme team.

Linked programme B – running alongside these projects is the ongoing Superfast Essex (SFE) broadband programme. Continued delivery of the SFE objectives will be key to the success of the Digital Enterprise Programme. It is therefore proposed that the ongoing work of the economic development team to support the SFE programme is brought within the scope of the Digital Enterprise Programme to ensure full visibility and coordination of resource as appropriate. This is to include the work which has already begun to secure additional funding towards a Supplementary Phase of the SFE programme, co-funded by EFDC and BDUK, to address the gaps in superfast broadband coverage across the Epping Forest district.

## 9. Impact on current operations

Residents and businesses of the district and the wider partnership area are likely to see enhanced levels of real digital connectivity as a result of the programme. Not only experiencing better and more broadband choice but also the application of the infrastructure towards the enhanced delivery of services and the increased appeal of the district as a place to live, work, visit and do business.

Successfully delivered, the delivery of a coalition of willing partners across administrative, sectoral and geographical boundaries has the potential to transform the way local authorities and other public sector organisations within a non-administratively determined geographic area work together. If the identification of joint strategic needs can be combined with pooling of budgets and coordination of spend a new model for efficient and effective public sector delivery could start to emerge.

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