

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 19 September 2019

Subject: Strategic Projects Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Lion

Recommending:

That the report of the Strategic Projects Portfolio Holder be noted

Executive Summary

There are four key projects in the Strategic Projects portfolio for 2019/2020 programme. These projects cover the following areas:

- (i) Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ).
- (ii) The London Stansted Cambridge Corridor Consortium.
- (iii) Parking Review.
- (iv) Street Lighting Review.

Digital Innovation Zone

➤ *5G and Digital Connectivity*

DCMS have announced the launch of the 5G Rural Connected Communities Project. £30million of funding is available for up to 10 research and development projects that will run the course of two years. The deadline for applications is the 25th of October, and successful applicants will be notified in December of this year. A discussion on whether a bid should be submitted will take place at the next DIZ board meeting in September. It has been acknowledged by officers that the £3 million of potential funding per project is much less than was initially anticipated following conversations with DCMS. There will still be value in bidding.

➤ *Smart Place Seminars*

The next Smart Place Seminar event is now planned for September at which a number of key Digital Service challenges for voluntary organisations will be explored with academics from Anglia Ruskin University, the aspiration being that a number of initiatives can be taken forward to attract funding and develop into workable and scalable solutions.

➤ *DIZ Resources*

The five district councils and ECC have agreed to fund core resources for the DIZ to deliver the agreed strategy and undertake programme management. An 18-month secondment opportunity has been progressed with overall management retained by Epping Forest DC. Officers remain in discussion around additional financial support from Herts LEP.

➤ *Digital First approach*

The DIZ team presented on its work to an expanded meeting of the council's leadership team. This was to update on progress externally on digital and look at opportunities and approaches to ensure the district council can link its internal transformation with external investment, particularly around broadband infrastructure and digital services. It has been agreed that a small group of senior officers will oversee this work.

➤ *Local Full Fibre Network Programme*

The first meeting of the project delivery team for this £2.1 million programme has taken place following handover from the ECC set up team. The current focus is on preparing the project documentation for the DCMS Procurement and Quality Assurance stages and understanding the DCMS evaluation and management reporting requirements. Project timetables are being agreed with the health partners, together with roles and responsibilities and financial monitoring packages and it is hoped that full details of the project, once all DCMS Assurance Gates are passed, can be announced before the end of the calendar year.

➤ *Digital Innovation Strategy*

AS the DIZ strategy has now been formally endorsed by key partners. Officers are planning a launch in the autumn.

➤ *DIZ Links*

Officers produce a weekly listing of digital articles and events for DIZ Board members. If elected members would like to receive this listing please contact Mike Warr at: mwarr@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

➤ *Innovation Event*

EFDC in conjunction with BT are hosting an innovation event and workshops at the headquarters of the BT research service at Adastral Park in Ipswich. This will provide an opportunity for officers to have an insight into the latest technology, services and applications available to enhance service delivery and reduce costs. This event will be held at a yet confirmed date in November / December.

London Stanstead Cambridge Corridor Consortium

Officers have been supporting the LSCC in developing a communications strategy around lobbying for investment in infrastructure in the corridor. This involves reviewing submissions for companies bidding for the LSCC contracts and setting the key targets for the communications and marketing plans. Work is ongoing on a national rail study around increasing investment in the corridor led by the West Anglia Task force. Members of the Strategic Alliance (the core group of councils outside of London and Cambridge, including Epping Forest District Council) are at an advanced stage of agreeing to jointly fund economic development capacity. A job description has been agreed for an officer jointly funded to work on joint bids/delivery in this geography.

Parking Review

The parking review is progressing with several different elements to look at ways in which improvements, initiatives or new technology can have a positive impact on

parking in the district. The review is being led and reported through the Contracts and Technical portfolio holder.

Street Lighting Review

A review of the Parish requirements for the timings of street lighting across the District will be undertaken. It may be that there are different requirements amongst the Parishes across the District. Any changes will be reflected in specific charges for individual parishes to reflect levels of usage.