

Cabinet

UNITAS EFFICIT MINISTERIUM		
Title	Connected Places Transformation Programme	
Date of meeting	18 th July 2023	
Report of	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) for Resources and Effective Council	
Wards	All Wards	
Status	Public (with an exempt appendix)	
Key	Yes	
Urgent	No	
Appendices	Appendix A [exempt]	
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Summary

This report seeks authority to develop and deliver a Connected Places Transformation Programme, aligned to the national 'Connected Places' agenda, aimed at delivering enhanced organisational capability for the deployment of connectivity infrastructure and technology. It will unlock service innovation and help leverage investment into the borough that will maximise the economic, social, and environmental opportunities for the council, residents, and businesses.



The programme will create a new digital innovation service for place-based telecomsrelated improvements. It builds upon the existing CCTV fibre network deployment partnerships providing a step-change in resourcing for digital skills and telecoms related capabilities. The team will secure greater leverage over public and commercial investment opportunities, through a new focus on capturing of council-wide telecoms expenditure.

The programme will unlock private sector direct and indirect investment and improvements to connectivity infrastructure across the borough, including Full Fibre Broadband deployment, enhanced 4G and 5G cellular networks, Public Wi-Fi, and a new LoRaWAN Internet of Things (IoT) network.

By aligning the deployment of connectivity programmes within this overall transformation programme, the council can harness the capabilities of different state-of-the-art digital infrastructure for 'layered' connectivity benefits, increasing the opportunity for public services and residents to secure transformation efficiencies and service innovation.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the creation of a new 'Connected Places Transformation Programme', as set out in Figure 2, and the allocation of the required budget as set out in the exempt appendix.
- 2) Agrees that the Chief Finance Officer approves allocation of £2.35m of prudential borrowing towards the creation of a new 'Connected Places Transformation Programme' in line with the 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy Statement.
- 3) Delegates authority to the Executive Director for Assurance to revise or vary the proposed CCTV fibre network contract with BT to include the deployment of a boroughwide Public Wi-Fi network, provided that the cost of such deployment to the council is broadly in line with the terms as set out in the exempt report.
- 4) Approves the development of an outline business case for consideration by Cabinet, relating to deployment of an Internet of Things (IoT) Network across the borough, including exploration of potential commercial and service innovation opportunities by public sector and commercial partners.
- 5) Delegates authority to the Director of Highways, or any Director/Assistant Director with responsibility for the relevant asset, to:
 - (a) define the corporate requirements for, and
 - (b) to grant any subsequent required permission/authorisation to, attach connectivity-related equipment or infrastructure onto council assets such as street furniture and buildings.
- 6) Delegates authority to the Assistant Director for Resident Experience and Digital to develop and consult with partners and residents on draft proposals for a data ethics framework that will support and inform data

protection compliance and provide oversight arrangements for new and emerging uses of data, including how emerging sources of data can be used and/or shared within the council and partners, to enable a more data informed and holistic approach to service transformation, that will support resident needs. The framework proposals will to be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

1. Purpose of the report

Introduction

- 1.1 This report defines a new 'Connected Places' programme of work for the council for the four-year period 2023/24 2026/27 that will create a lasting transformational legacy for the council and enable improvement to services for residents and businesses. This new agenda, arising from previous 'Smart Cities' thinking, focuses on developing capabilities and creating opportunities at the intersection of innovation relating to *data*, *technology*, *and telecommunications*.
- 1.2 Guidance from the society for innovation, technology and modernisation (SOCITM) provides a simple explanation of this Connected Places agenda, as fundamentally about improving quality of life in our communities. As shown in figure 1, they argue we have reached a critical juncture for public services as change to culture, processes, business models and technology in the internet era begin to connect people, communities, and create the opportunity to shape better outcomes for all.
- 1.3 Transformation, in this space, comes from a 'whole system' approach to public service design and delivery at a local level, where services work together with integrated plans, prioritisation, policies, and resources to find ways of delivering public services that are more efficient and make the most of available data.

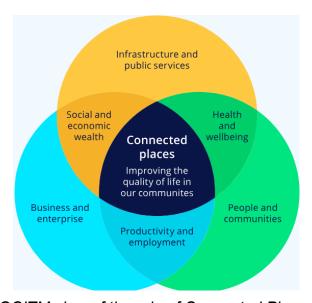


Figure 1: SOCITM view of the role of Connected Places in public services1

¹ See: Connected Places - collection prospectus - Socitm

- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to make the case for establishing the Connected Places Programme and standing up a new Connected Places Transformation Team that will deliver a connectivity-related transformation agenda. This agenda is proposed to comprise:
 - 5 overarching network deployment / infrastructure investment programmes
 - 5 corporate integration workstreams, to ensure effective integration of the programme into broader projects, programmes, and agenda.

The overarching 'Connected Places' programme is set out in Figure 2 overleaf.

Theme	Proposed programme or workstream			
Network Deployment / Infrastructure Investment Programmes:				
Gigabit Broadband Programme	Continuation of workstreams related to the 'Gigabit Broadband Programme' including development of a corporate full fibre (CCTV) network across the whole borough and further work to maintain and develop wayleave-related and other partnerships.			
4G/5G Cellular Networks Programme	Development of existing West London Alliance (WLA) workstreams into an internal programme to drive improved 4G/5G cellular networks, including reviewing corporate systems and processes, and leveraging assets for small cells deployment.			
Public Wi-Fi Programme	A new programme to deliver a boroughwide outdoor free Public Wi-Fi network, and then to explore opportunities to integrate and improve existing Wi-Fi services.			
Imagery Analytics Programme	A new programme to deliver improved service outcomes through the use of imagery analytic tools that enable service innovation, such as highways enforcement without the need to pay for a standalone camera and developing our own town centre footfall data.			
'Internet of Things' (IoT) Network Programme	A new programme to develop the business case for deployment of a council IoT network and consideration of the associated service transformation opportunities such as smart metering and environmental sensors.			
Corporate Integration	Workstreams			
Strategic Alignment and Engagement Workstream	Agree alignment to, and proactive engagement with, sub-regional, regional, and national 'Connected Places' programmes. Secure related network and use case innovation opportunities.			
Connectivity Use Case Development Workstream	Work with service areas and/or third-party partners to develop and deliver the business cases for proposed savings and income generation; helping to identify and address the barriers to service transformation.			

Data Ethics and Citizen Engagement Workstream	Supplementary workstream alongside planned citizen engagement programmes to ensure that appropriate engagement takes place with residents, businesses, public sector stakeholders, relating to opportunities and ethical considerations required in relation to delivering the Connected Places programme.
Social Value Workstream	Ongoing engagement with commercial partners and interested third parties to secure additional social value outcomes for tackling inequality and digital exclusion.
Cyber Security workstream	Supplementary workstream for existing cyber security activities to ensure that technology investments and connectivity networks and improvements are procured and deployed with an understand, design, and manage approach from a security-based mindset.

Figure 2 – Table of Proposed Connected Places Transformation Programme

Background

- 1.5 Creation of a **Gigabit Broadband Programme** was approved by *Housing and Growth Committee* in September 2020, which resourced a programme of work until March 2023 that enabled the council to support the enhancement of fibre broadband services within the borough. This included a *Wayleave Framework Agreement* workstream for the council to implement a common way of working in partnership with broadband network service providers to install gigabit-speed fibre infrastructure across the council housing stock, and through that to secure as many wider benefits as possible. The programme to date has included delivery by Community Fibre Ltd.
- 1.6 In addition, through the *Fibre West Project*, delivered through our partnership with West London Alliance (WLA) boroughs, the Council has contracted BT to secure deployment of a fibre network to over 200 existing and future CCTV columns and 39 buildings. This project is currently in the delivery phase, creating a connectivity capability for the CCTV capital programme while also generating a corporate fibre network that can be leveraged for wider connectivity benefits.
- 1.7 In February 2023, Community Leadership and Libraries Committee considered the opportunities created through the CCTV Full Business Case, including approval to contract a secure full fibre network from BT that in turn secures social value opportunities for an 'at cost' Public Wi-Fi network, alongside the opportunity for a parallel largescale rapid deployment of small cells across the council's CCTV assets. To help facilitate this, the committee delegated authority for the approval of attachments to CCTV assets.
- 1.8 Through our parallel work, as part of the WLA, the council has also benefitted from participation in the *Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator (DCIA)* project within the 'Expanding Opportunities for All' programme that has focused on developing the tools to unlock 4G/5G investment in cellular networks that will help improve capacity, to keep up with increasing demand. The council has especially focused on the role that small cells will play in unlocking the true potential of 5G for innovation. Moreover, achieving a more widespread and early deployment

of small cells across Barnet will enable the volume of 5G macro cells and masts to be kept lower.

National Context

- 1.9 There is currently a UK Government drive to speed-up the deployment of connectivity infrastructure and address risks in the Connected Places agenda. It ranges from Project Gigabit linked to full fibre broadband, to a new Wireless Infrastructure Strategy to unlock 5G network deployment, to Smart Infrastructure and Cyber Security.
- 1.10 Coordinated by Building Digital UK (BDUK), the ongoing *Project Gigabit* programme is focused on delivering full fibre broadband into harder to reach areas, which to date is focused on deployment in rural areas. Recognising the practical challenges that have limited and held up deployment across Barnet, the Council has begun working with the GLA to engage with BDUK around the day-to-day barriers affecting the pace of urban broadband deployment. We hope that such efforts will enable the government to re-think their understanding of what constitutes a hard-to-reach community.
- 1.11 In April 2023, the <u>UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy</u> was published to drive forward both demand for, and deployment of, 5G networks across the UK. It highlights that:

"5G will be the cornerstone of our digital economy. With higher capacity and lower latency, standalone 5G will drive growth in the industries of today and tomorrow, including in emerging sectors like artificial intelligence".

As part of the West London Alliance, we will seek to define West London as a UK hub for 5G Innovation, building on the previous DCIA and Expanding Opportunities programmes to define opportunity projects for demonstrating the use cases for 5G technologies.

- 1.12 In June 2023 the Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) published a call for its <u>Smart Infrastructure Pilots Programme</u>, as a small UK-wide competition between local authorities for match grant funding to demonstrate the benefit of using street furniture for connectivity network deployment. This highlights the importance of seeking to deliver 'layered connectivity' opportunities within the borough by utilising local authority assets; reinforcing confidence that the council's proposed business case for Connected Places is strongly aligned with the emerging national agenda.
- 1.13 In May 2023 DSIT published a **Connected Places Security Playbook**, that highlights how the diversity and interconnectedness of technologies needed for connected places will make them an area that is vulnerable to cyber-attacks. Such incidents could therefore lead to reputational damage, the loss of sensitive data, and damage to connectivity or physical infrastructure assets that residents are reliant upon. Building new connectivity capabilities from a 'security-engaged mindset' will be crucial for the council to ensure that new and existing networks and technologies are secure, that citizen's data is protected, and that the provision of critical services is not interrupted.

The Strategic Outline Case (SOC)

- 1.14 The proposed journey will involve securing external investment, and delivering specific direct interventions, that will enable the council to harness the potential of different types of connectivity infrastructure and emerging technologies for:
 - Improving the capability of telecoms services available to residents and businesses.
 - Ensuring council services and related decisions are more data-informed, and
 - Unlocking public sector innovation through better connectivity and new technology.

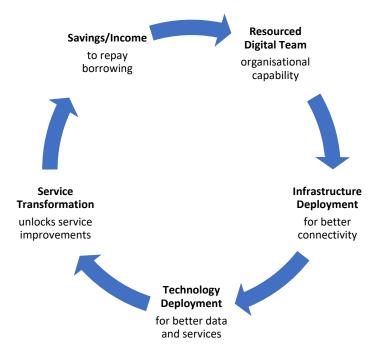


Figure 3 – Connected Places Business Case Concept

- 1.15 Figure 3 sets out the business concept that supports a virtuous cycle of investment, which comprises:
 - (i) The recognition of future income/savings as justifying the resourcing of a team with the right knowledge and skills, alongside specific network/equipment investments.
 - (ii) the team facilitates the deployment of new networks and infrastructure to deliver more affordable and effective connectivity services in the borough,
 - (iii) the new infrastructure enables cost effective corporate deployment of technologies such as computer vision software or sensors to unlock new ways of working,
 - (iv) the new technologies enable a combination of service transformation activities that unlock operational savings, or directly generate new sources of income,
 - (v) The new sources of income and operational savings are used to pay back both the initial investment in staff and equipment, as well as the ongoing operational costs.

- 1.16 The proposed team will include bringing together a suitably sized team for the scale of the programme, that will include programme and project management skills, technology deployment and network infrastructure expertise, smart cities and telecoms expertise, organisational change / business process engineering skills, and administrative support.
- 1.17 There are five key connectivity network investment programmes that will deliver connectivity or place data improvements through this business case, namely:
 - Gigabit Broadband Programme
 - Cellular 4G/5G Networks Programme
 - Public Wi-Fi Programme
 - Imagery Analytics Programme
 - IoT Network Programme
- 1.18 Supporting these programmes are two underpinning technological capabilities that are intended to be developed and delivered at a more corporate level, rather than the currently more siloed approach currently operated by service areas:
 - Layered connectivity: utilising the new (CCTV) fibre network and related columns as a shared asset and backhaul for not just the corporate collection and transfer of imagery data for both static and redeployable cameras, but to facilitate new public Wi-Fi and LoRaWAN networks. Combined with new environmental sensors, as these uses will all be collocated, they will create 'Smart Poles' from the council's fibre-connected fixed CCTV assets.
 - *Imagery analytics:* linking the existing and new cameras to software capable of processing imagery into data for viewing and analysis, including for potential future use as a 'digital twin' of the borough will unlock service innovations.
- 1.19 The SOC defines a long list of over 35 potential savings or income opportunities that could be explored further in relation to the Connected Places programme. These cover a wide range of council and public service / commercial opportunities to secure benefits, utilising a range of different connectivity solutions. However only some of the proposals will unlock financial savings and some are untested. Any such opportunities will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration.
- 1.20 From the longer list, a shortlist of 7-8 specific council service use cases were explored in detail, relating to: Estates, Highways, Housing, Social Care and Street Scene services, as shown in Figure 4 below. It is proposed that these initial use cases be developed into an Outline Business Case with detailed proposals.

Service Area	Shortlisted Innovation Proposals	Potential Benefit
Estates	Connected building management systems (BMS) for improved energy use and management.	Savings (IoT)
Estates	Becoming the responsible party for water metering of the council's own estate using smart meters.	Savings (IoT)

Health/care	Capture current council expenditure on connectivity for assistive technologies, by deploying a council IoT network.	Income (IoT)
Highways	Improve road surface condition monitoring and reporting, by using imagery from council vehicle movements automatically processed by analytics software to identify, categorise, and report issues.	Savings (5G & Imagery Analytics)
Highways	Improved traffic counting and movement analysis using existing CCTV camera network and analytics technology, supplemented with mobile cameras.	Savings (Fibre,5G, WiFi & Imagery Analytics)
Housing	Capture planned council connectivity expenditure for sensors linked to monitoring damp and mould, by deploying a council IoT network.	Income (IoT)
Street Scene	Deploy a network of temperature sensors to deliver more granular understanding of road surface temperature to enable more data informed gritting.	Savings (Fibre/loT)
Street Scene	Deploy sensors in public litter bins to optimise the frequency and timing of collection activity.	Savings (IoT)

Figure 4 – Table of proposed direct savings or income opportunities

- 1.21 The Connected Places programme is expected to unlock a far wider programme of opportunities for the council and its partners, but from the perspective of the business case contained in the exempt Appendix A, only the innovation opportunities / use cases that could generate a direct saving to the council's budget are considered as the purpose of the SOC is to demonstrate the virtuous cycle of investment from standing up a new capability within the council alongside delivery of connectivity network investments.
- 1.22 The financial context set out in the SOC is based on confidential information from other local authorities, for most savings use cases, alongside network deployment pricing figures from confidential soft market engagement with a sample of network operators across the telecoms market. As such, all financial information shared with the council and therefore informing the SOC is commercially sensitive, and hence why the SOC has only been included as an exempt appendix.
- 1.23 To successfully deliver the connected place agenda will require a parallel process for developing arrangements and tools for considering data ethics, data protection and privacy matters. The council will need to be ready to answer questions such as:
 - "How and when can one data source be appropriately brought together with another data source to allow for comparative analysis?"

 "How can council services be fairly delivered and prioritised as they become increasingly data informed and dependent on technological enhancement?"

The council will begin to explore ways of holding such conversations with residents from Autumn 2023.

2. Reasons for the recommendations

- 2.1 Creation of a new 'Connected Places Transformation Programme', and support for £2.35m of prudential borrowing, is recommended because it will resource new internal digital skills and technical capabilities that are required within the council to coordinate activity relating to a Connected Places agenda. This team will help the council to align with the growing national and regional agenda around Connected Places; and to increase organisational readiness for delivering technological transformation of public services.
- 2.2 Securing inward investment and addressing known barriers to the improvement of full fibre broadband and cellular network deployment, will improve the underlying telecoms infrastructure across the borough that most residents and businesses entirely rely upon in their daily lives. Furthermore, new network and technological capabilities across different areas of the spectrum and utilising wider connectivity tools and opportunities will deliver improved economic, social and environmental outcomes within the borough.
- 2.3 The SOC case demonstrates that the proposed Connected Places capabilities detailed in paragraph 1.16 can be resourced at no additional cost to the council over the coming decade. This is linked to a portfolio of realistic direct council savings or income generation opportunities exemplified in figure 4. The estimated savings have been adjusted down to mitigate for optimism bias or are based on a real-world case from other local authorities. In all cases they have been linked to more efficient ways of delivering the same service, or an improved service, so there will be no identifiable detriment resulting from service transformation.
- 2.4 Supporting an appropriately resourced team to deliver this agenda will ensure the council can also give attention to related considerations like *cyber security risks* from connected assets and infrastructure, as well as *data ethics considerations* relating to the collection, and use of new kinds of data like video imagery. Resourcing for such capabilities will ensure that residents and stakeholders have confidence in the safeguards that are being put into place.
- 2.5 Additionally, a more corporately joined-up capability for leading engagement around this agenda will stand a far greater chance of (a) securing effective engagement with public sector partners and government leaders to maximise opportunities for the borough, and (b) securing broader-based partnership opportunities with commercial and third-sector organisations that will provide space to explore opportunities and leverage additional social, economic and environmental outcomes from any planned investments.
- 2.6 Deployment of a Public Wi-Fi network is recommended because it has been demonstrated to be viable, in the exempt appendix, linked to favourable commercial terms secured as social value outcomes from the fibre overlay contract for the CCTV network. Such a network will deliver a range of non-cashable corporate benefits including: a network across town centres for all connected equipment, and a mechanism to transfer data back from redeployable cameras when located near

- to the existing fixed camera network, something that is being considered in relation to large event spaces in public parks.
- 2.7 However, most importantly, it will generate additional intangible added value opportunities for residents and businesses, by creating new opportunities for direct citizen engagement through the Wi-Fi arrival page (for example which may appear on a mobile telephone), while helping to address digital exclusion across the borough by providing free data and access to internet services. Such benefit will be available to all, but will be especially important for people living in, working in, or visiting the borough, who may be dependent on pay as you go access to data.
- 2.8 The operation of a new free Public Wi-Fi network, at a scale not seen in many, if any cities, will provide a transformative infrastructure anchor to support Barnet's intention to become a destination for visitors and tourists, demonstrating that all are welcome. Importantly it will unlock opportunities for digital creative and cultural activities to be developed in public spaces as part of a 2026 bid for Borough of Culture.
- 2.9 **Developing a business case for deployment of an IoT Network is recommended because** the emerging world of 'smart devices' is opening new doors to a data informed approach to real time service monitoring and delivery, provided that such deployment of sensors and devices can be achieved at both a sufficient scale, and within the existing service budgets, to enable service transformation to be viable and to achieve savings.
- 2.10 Inevitably such savings are only likely to be possible if a local authority can scale up the use of various 'sensors' in the public realm and within its buildings, in a way that will enable the maximum number of devices to become remotely connected for real time monitoring to ensure human resources are targeted only where and when they are required. Evidence from other UK programmes has demonstrated that this must go further than simply securing a fair commercial rate by leveraging the purchasing power of local authority expenditure on IoT connectivity across a wide range of sensors and devices.
- 2.11 To go a step further, our SOC recommends deploying a Council-owned IoT network, to enable the 'per sensor/device' cost to be fixed at the lowest possible unit price. With the potential for service transformation through mass migration to sensor networks then more likely cost-in when business cases for change are individually assessed. To achieve this outcome, it is recommended that the unlicensed 'Long Range Wide Area Networks' (LoRaWAN) spectrum is utilised; and presently there is no alternative network gateways available within Barnet.
- 2.12 Delegation of arrangements for granting permission to attach connectivity-related equipment to council assets is recommended because it is more straightforward to approve delegation for all types of connectivity-related equipment attachments, for all types of council asset, in one go. Previously individual delegations have been agreed in relation to each type of asset, as demonstrated by the Feb 2023 Community Leadership and Libraries Committee (CLLC) grant of delegated authority to the Executive Director for Assurance to define contractual arrangements and entering into them, in relation to the installation of attachments to CCTV assets.
- 2.13 Delegation of authority to develop and consult on draft proposals for a data ethics framework that will support and inform data protection compliance, and associated oversight arrangements, is recommended because it will demonstrate that the Council understands the importance of engaging both

positively and proactively with citizens and stakeholders around proposals for future data collection activities and greater sharing and use of collated data from smart assets and infrastructure. This will ensure the council has an ethical framework to support existing data protection duties in order to guide and inform delegated decision-making around ensuring the best possible outcomes for residents are secured through the deployment of new connectivity infrastructure and technologies within the public realm.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 **Do nothing:** Although this approach will on paper cost nothing, in terms of up-front expenditure on infrastructure delivery and resourced organisational capacity; it would result in a failure to realise income and savings opportunities, carbon-saving opportunities, and to avoid piecemeal future purchasing of connectivity. Without the programme of work proposed in this SOC, the council will continue to have to compromise on the technology that can be deployed linked to the limitations of commercially available IOT infrastructure.
- 3.2 Moreover, by doing nothing, the Council will lose the opportunity for its own expenditure on telecoms to be used to leverage inward investment, to achieve wider additional social value outcomes, and to secure economic development across the borough. As demonstrated by the extent to which Barnet has fallen behind other local authority areas in London, the 'do nothing' option is not recommended as it will fail to ensure the council has the digital skills and projects needed to secure a pace of telecoms' investment that is now required.
- 3.3 **Develop a Connected Places Programme (resourced by income):** In early 2023, a fully commercial proposition was internally considered and tested as the method for funding the delivery of the Connected Places agenda. This was based on the potential to secure a commercial income from third parties from the proposed new network capabilities within the borough. While the business case for such investment was appealing, the level of risk associated with securing a return on investment was, after detailed consideration by officers, deemed too high to be able to justify funding the programme through prudential borrowing.
- 3.4 This does not mean that opportunities to secure income have been ruled out, but rather that it was judged to be more appropriate to pivot the entire business case to instead focus only on opportunities for securing direct cashable savings based on the current cost of delivering council services. Such an approach ensures that the ability to repay borrowing, to cover expenditure related to delivery of the business case, is within the council's control.

4. Post decision implementation

Recruiting to / resourcing of the team

4.1 By Autumn 2023 the council will ensure proposed new posts have been approved and the recruitment to roles, especially technical roles, can get underway. Ideally such new roles will be appointed to by the end of the Autumn and therefore successful candidates could be arriving into post by circa January-March 2024, provided that the council finds suitable candidates first time around.

- 4.2 Where proposed roles are suitable and appropriate for an internal candidate, then this will be explored to help speed up the recruitment of the team and to ensure that the team has a suitable balance of knowledge and skills, including awareness of how the council works.
- 4.3 Current interim capabilities will be sustained over the short-medium term to support delivery of the IoT outline business case, alongside the delivery of outcomes relating to the existing Gigabit Broadband and 4G/5G Cellular Networks work programmes.
- 4.4 If suitable additional interim support emerges in the short term, then this can be considered where it could boost the team capacity with appropriate/complementary skills/experience that would enable new workstreams to be commenced without detriment to existing workstreams and work on business case development.
- 4.5 There is a desire to deliver the overall programme at pace, to help unlock corporate savings opportunities as rapidly as possible. It is equally recognised that to achieve this outcome will require delivery of most, if not all, Connected Places workstreams, in parallel. Such an approach would increase the risk of individual project failure and require greater focus and time on programme management.
- 4.6 Further accelerating the programme would involve a greater reliance on suitable interim / consultancy staff who would need to be available for a more extended period than has been costed within the current SOC business case.

Delivering the business case

- 4.7 Opportunities for grant funding will be explored, for example the governments new Smart Infrastructure Pilot Programme. If the council can successfully secure grant funding, this will help to scale up projects such as the Public Wi-Fi programme and enable the council to consider delivery of smarter and more integrated network infrastructure, together with enabling the council to appoint the further staff needed to resource the commencement of more workstreams within the programme in parallel and therefore overall acceleration of the Connected Places programme.
- 4.8 During summer 2023 there are two other key workstreams, namely finalising the contract for overlay services for the fibre network, that can then be varied to enable Public Wi-Fi deployment. Alongside work to soft market test the proposed small cells framework that the council intends to use as a mechanism for network operators to secure approval for the attachment of small cells and connectivity-related network equipment, onto council assets and street furniture.
- 4.9 The Outline Business Case (OBC) for deployment of an IoT network, and the associated savings projects to help resource it, will be developed over the course of Autumn 2023. This IoT programme and use cases workstream will require not just intensive work with several service areas across the council to develop the detail of proposed savings projects. But will also require the development of the related citizen engagement and cyber security workstreams in preparation for consideration of the Outline Business Case by Cabinet.
- 4.10 The imagery analytics-linked savings opportunities in Figure 4 will need to be carefully explored during 2023/24 to ensure that new software and tools are deployed safely and appropriately. In 2023/24 the focus will be where this supports existing services to simply capture and utilise imagery more efficiently.

4.11 From 2024/25 onwards it is then likely that there will be opportunities to realise wider savings and benefits from bringing together and cross-referencing different sources of data, or by utilising imagery data that is collected to meet the needs of multiple service areas. This later programme will rely upon wider work to explore and implement an ethical framework, in support of data protection and related obligations for handling data across the council, as well as a programme of related citizen and stakeholder engagement.

5. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

Corporate Plan

5.1 The Transformation programme will support the objectives of 'Our Plan for Barnet':

"We care for people by tackling inequalities to promote digital inclusion and helping people to have the skills, tools, and confidence to thrive in a digital era; as well as reducing poverty by taking advantage of growth sectors like digital industries to support investment in infrastructure and skills. We care for our places through safe and attractive neighbourhoods and town centres, as well as quality affordable homes that integrate well with surrounding areas, that together are supported by state-of-the-art digital infrastructure. By investing in digital placemaking transformation we will enable Barnet to be a more efficient and effective council"

Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

- 5.2 In addition to the above Corporate Plan alignment, there are two relevant performance indicators proposed within the emerging delivery and outcomes framework. Namely:
 - (i) reporting quarterly on digital inclusion with a written statement about activities delivered and outcomes achieved linked to tackling inequalities, and
 - (ii) reporting quarterly on connectivity-related infrastructure delivery, and network / technology deployment, with a written statement demonstrating how quality affordable homes will be supported by 'state-of-the-art digital infrastructure'.

Overall, both outcomes are linked to the requirement to publish an annual report. This is to be measured as a KPI/PI outcome and the associated annual reports are expected to include various indicators, some of which may not be within the council's control but should help to explain progress in relation to these themes.

Sustainability

5.3 There will be various intangible benefits through the network investments and technology deployments that are proposed in the SOC, including a wide range of service efficiency measures linked to reducing the use of materials, demand for energy, both officer time and travel, and various other benefits compared to current service delivery. Such improvements will be assessed more fully at the OBC stage

- to ensure the benefits are tracked in relation to actual planned service changes rather than case studies.
- 5.4 Rough initial calculations suggest that over 100 tCO2 per annum of carbon savings could be achieved by 2030 through the proposed service innovations. A more detailed assessment will be prepared for the OBC stage.

Corporate Parenting

5.5 There will be no specific effect on Corporate Parenting responsibilities, other than the benefits that would arise for all residents and businesses in the borough, such as the opportunity to access the internet and to have free use of data in town centres and other locations where the Public Wi-Fi network will be deployed.

Risk Management

- 5.6 The key risks to successful delivery of the programme are:
 - a) Timely securing of external additional technical staff resources to expand the capacity and capabilities of the team.
 - b) Sustaining effective corporate-level cross-council engagement and coordination around programme delivery, to ensure both continued alignment with corporate objectives, as well as shifting service plans in response to operational needs.
 - c) Procuring suitable partners for LoRaWAN network planning, deployment, and maintenance, together with computer vision software, will be crucial to the delivery of new capabilities that will unlock service innovation.
 - d) Failure to successfully implement a particular project or secure a forecast level of savings for any one specific use case could prejudice the resourcing or operation of a council service if savings are not initially treated as sitting across the wider programme until subject to more detailed consideration and testing for OBC/FBC.
 - e) That as assets become smarter and connected, they are increasingly recognised as potential new locations for cyber security incidents and a risk of associated data breeches incurring fines from the Information Commissioner, and therefore corporately we will need to broaden the focus of council cyber security activities. The new playbook recommends an 'Understand, Design, and Manage' approach within its guidelines.

Insight

- 5.7 At the heart of the Connected Places agenda is a programme to enable the whole council to secure better quality, more comprehensive, real-time data about buildings, places and the public highway that will enable the council to be increasingly data informed in the way that it delivers services to residents and businesses, and how it delivers public investment.
- 5.8 The programme will enable the council to bring together new capabilities to ensure services become even more data informed and efficient. This will include ensuring data is captured, stored, analysed, and shared in better and more efficient ways.

- a) Capturing data in a more joined-up way will enable services to access new sources of data and better utilise existing data to deliver cost efficiencies. Such changes include shared use of imagery data and wider deployment of sensors.
- b) Taking advantage of improved mechanisms for storing data in a more useful and collaborative way, such as use of the new corporate data lake.
- c) Implementing tools for improving the understanding and analysis of information, such as computer vision software that can transform imagery into metadata.
- d) Enabling greater data transparency and visibility of services and activities through the combined impact of real time data collection and new mechanisms for making data more visible and available to the public.
- 5.9 The proposed programme is underpinned by comprehensive analysis of available data relating to connectivity infrastructure and its impact / benefit within the borough. Due to the competitive commercial nature of the telecoms market in the UK, access to strong data about capacity and deployment plans is limited, and often is only shared with the council by commercial partners on a confidential basis.
- 5.10 Historically, Barnet has underperformed regarding telecommunications infrastructure deployment, mobile network capability and fibre availability; for example, Barnet still has the lowest percentage of gigabit speed broadband coverage in London, and overall, as shown in figure 5, the second slowest broadband speeds. The gigabit speed statistic is lower than other London Boroughs due to the more limited extent of the Virgin Media O2 network in Barnet from 2014, and the limited future deployment plans from Openreach.

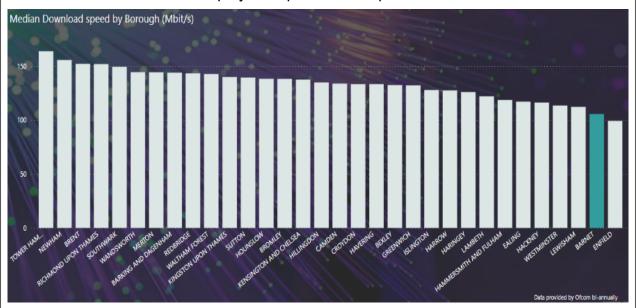


Figure 5 – Average Broadband Speeds between London Boroughs

5.11 As a result of the Gigabit Broadband Programme and more recent 'Alternative Network' (Alt-Net) investments, the amount of full fibre connected premises across the borough is increasing, but this is also happening across London and therefore Barnet needs to secure a step change in how wider parties focus on deployment in Barnet. Identified possible causes of slower broadband network investments include the need to challenge national plans and narratives about the ease of deployment in urban areas, and the understanding of practical issues that create barriers to commercial investment.

5.12 Through our wayleaves, figure 6 shows that the council has secured connections for 7335 council dwellings in the two years since January 2021. These partnerships designed to leverage housing assets to secure broadband investment have sought for no one to be left behind, and that there is special focus on ensuring that households with a greater level of vulnerability are the priority for support and receive the benefit of investment, including consideration of the affordability challenges for such households. However, the commercial basis for fibre broadband has been changing and future expectations may equally need to change, to focus around achieving a more rapid deployment of the fibre broadband service itself in the future.

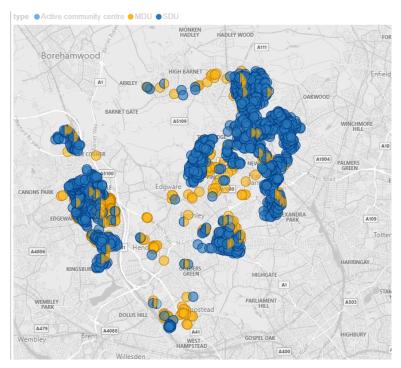


Figure 6 – Connected Council Housing Blocks (Wayleaves)

5.13 Sustaining this programme through commercial investment alone has been challenging as industry commercial controls have tightened around the cost per premises passed, and 2021 commitments to complete by 2023 must now be revised. Through this programme the council will work with the GLA and BDUK to address the identified barriers that are delaying the pace of commercial investment.

Social Value

- 5.14 Through the *Gigabit Broadband Programme*, the council has to date focused energy on securing additional social value outcomes by leveraging the access to its assets, and the investment of grant funding, to secure wider digital inclusion benefits. Such benefits have included free and reduced-price connectivity for households and community centres, as well as jobs and skills opportunities.
- 5.15 In recognition that *The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013* requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. It is noted that the *Fibre West* procurement, secured discounted rates, and a suite of employment and skills benefits for

- residents, and some wider social value proposals from BT that are being delivered sub-regionally.
- 5.16 Proceeding to agree an overlay services contract for the extension and operation of a CCTV-related fibre network within the borough enabled the council to layer-in further social value commitments that will enable the viable deployment of a Public Wi-Fi network and more rapid deployment of Small Cells that contributed to the Connected Places business case.
- 5.17 Looking forward, there are three key kinds of social value benefit available through procurements in relation to the Connected Places agenda, and these will be sought as part of any procurement or partnership programme to deliver investment:
 - a) Digital Inclusion support through free or affordable services, devices, or skills support.
 - b) Employment and Training opportunities for residents to access jobs/apprenticeships.
 - c) Direct connectivity network benefits in the form of scaled-up investment programmes, discounted network deployment or management costs, and trialling of new technology.

The two key future social value investment opportunities from the Connected Places programme will be (a) ensuring the delivery of existed committed benefits, and (b) securing social value commitments in relation to the LoRaWAN network procurement.

6. Resources Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

- 6.1 The programme will require funding over a 4-year period to support the planning, procurement, and deployment of new Public Wi-Fi and IoT network capabilities, alongside the resourcing of the staff required to deliver the programme and support services across the council to unlock savings opportunities. Details are set out in the exempt report.
- 6.2 For reasons of commercial sensitivity, and especially to ensure the council can achieve best value from negotiations with potential commercial partners in relation to proposals for network deployment and technology implementation, the detail of the potential use cases for innovation and transformation, and the nature of the longer list of opportunities, and the amount of forecast savings cannot be shared to protect commercial confidentiality.
- 6.3 The 83-page Strategic Outline Case (SOC) has been included for publication as an exempt appendix to ensure members are informed in their decision. The elements of the report that were appropriate to share publicly have been captured within the text of this public report. Greater detail about the savings opportunities will be explored for publication as part of the Outline Business Case provided that this does not undermine the council's commercial position.
- 6.4 In general terms, it can be recognised that the modelled potential savings and capture of expenditure set out in the SOC, demonstrates there is sufficient future income/savings to justify the required level of borrowing is stood up to support the proposed new capabilities, even after accounting for the likely future costs for ongoing service delivery. Such income/savings are based on proposed transformation projects linked to connectivity and/or technology investments.

- 6.5 There are also indirect savings opportunities from the Connected Places programme, that are mainly associated with opportunities for cost avoidance or to improve how enforcement is delivered within the public realm.
- 6.6 Approval of this report will result in the opportunity for the cost of the Connected Places programme and service to be funded annually from the allocated prudential borrowing proposed in the SOC.
- 6.7 Public procurement and contract procedure rules will need to be adhered to when considering the procurement of a LoRaWAN network for the borough. In terms of the procurement of the Public Wi-Fi network, this has been treated as an exceptional case due to the best value offer secured in relation to the fibre overlay contract.

7. Legal Implications and Constitution References

- 7.1 Under Schedule 3A of the Communications Act 2003, an Electronic Communications Code (ECC) is defined, and the rights designed to facilitate installation and maintenance of electronic communications networks. This is the key instrument that allows network operators to work in the public highway and deliver connectivity network infrastructure.
- 7.2 Under the Localism Act 2011, The 'General Power of Competence' (GPC) provides a basis in law for the Council to decide to deliver against a Connected Places agenda. There is presently no statutory requirement for a local authority to engage in the Connected Places agenda, although recent Government messaging has indicated strong interest in local authorities taking a more active / facilitation role in relation to network development. Recent guidelines for local authorities advise around managing the Cyber Security risks and therefore recognise the increasing role of place-based digital technologies.
- 7.3 The *Digital Economy Act 2017* makes provision about electronic communications infrastructure and services, including the creation of a broadband Universal Service Order (USO), to give all premises in the UK a legal right to request a minimum standard of broadband connectivity, now defined as 10 megabits per second (Mbps). More significantly it brought about sweeping changes including updates to the ECC and it is important for landowners like the council to note that the modifications more heavily favour network operators, and that this situation was reinforced, against the interests of public bodies like local authorities in further changes to regulations and the ECC in Spring 2022.
- 7.4 Data *capture, storage, analysis, and sharing* must ensure compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Law Enforcement Directive, and the *Data Protection Act 2018*.
- 7.5 The *Telecommunications* (Security) Act 2021, amending the Communications Act 2003, ensures that all public electronic communications networks and services are now to be protected against significant security risks by placing a requirement for security measures on the network and service providers. The accompanying *Electronic Communications* (Security Measures) Regulations 2022 and associated draft code of practice includes the technical rules and guidance for how providers can meet their legal obligations. These will be relevant considerations when the council deploys its own networks.

- 7.6 The *Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Act 2022* introduced several further changes to the Electronic Communications Code, including: the introduction of a "sharing" right, a new power to fly lines from apparatus, including poles, and related rights to upgrade or share them, as well as to upgrade and share underground apparatus. Collectively this will hopefully help minimise the extent of future street clutter from competitive networks for full fibre broadband being deployed in the streetscape.
- 7.7 In the Council's constitution, the Terms of Reference, and Delegation of Duties to the Cabinet (Part 2D) provides instruction and authority for this report as follows:

At paragraph 3.4 it states that:

"The Cabinet is responsible for the following functions:

... Approving policies that are not part of the policy framework".

At paragraph 4.1 it states that:

"an executive decision which is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates".

At paragraph 4.3 it states that:

"a decision is significant for the purposes of above if it <u>involves expenditure or the</u> <u>making of savings of an amount in excess of £1m for capital expenditure</u> or £500,000 for revenue expenditure or, where expenditure or savings are less than the amounts specified above, they constitute more than 50% of the budget attributable to the service in question".

7.8 At paragraph 6 and 6.1 it defines the Leader of the Council, and Portfolio Holder for Resources and Effective Council, as having the following responsibilities:

Leading on Council Transformation.

Leading on the Council's Digital Strategy.

Therefore, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder Resources and Effective Council has responsibility for the Connected Places Transformation Programme.

8. Consultation

Data Ethics and Citizen engagement

- 8.1 An engagement through the council's citizen's panel in Autumn 2023, will be used test several fictional example case studies for considering ways the council could better share and use data, some of which relate to this connectivity agenda. This will provide a baseline understanding about how residents feel about being asked about how data is used, to understand what appears to matter most to residents.
- 8.2 In parallel to the development of the new network capabilities and implementation of technological innovations, there will be a data ethics workstream. This will need to involve careful thinking around policies and process, internal challenge around enhanced methods of data collection and integration, as well as appropriate ways of ensuring citizen engagement and transparency around the information that is collected, how it is analysed, and how the council uses data; to ensure an ethical and legally compliant approach is maintained.

- 8.3 The two key programmes that will require appropriate consultation and engagement with citizens are:
 - a) The imagery analytics programme to ensure that there is acknowledgement of the way data will be collected and processed to deliver better service outcomes.
 - b) The IoT business case especially the nature of the service transformation delivered where this has a relevance to citizen experience or access to services.
- 8.4 A programme for supporting the delivery of these two workstreams will need to be developed in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The next steps on that journey will involve:
 - Developing a data charter for Barnet
 - Developing an ethics board including residents to discuss the planned programmes and potential analytics tools amongst interested residents alongside appropriate external input and expertise to ensure full legal compliance.
 - Ensuring appropriate broader communications are provided at the right stages in the process to the wider community across the borough, for example to reflect changes to privacy notices or similar matters that will need to be appropriately shared and discussed with or explained to residents.

Digital Inclusion and public engagement

- 8.5 Presently the council delivers several 'Get Online' weeks each year as promotional events where Digital Inclusion opportunities are highlighted to residents by our partner BOOST; these include mechanisms for accessing free/affordable devices, low-cost connectivity packages (home broadband and mobile data), as well as volunteer-led digital skills support and training programmes across the borough.
- 8.6 Resident engagement and awareness workstreams will be developed to make sure that residents are aware of opportunities to improve their experience of connectivity and to ensure residents are aware they can secure services affordably or for free. This will be crucial to realising the digital inclusion benefits from free Public Wi-Fi.

9. Equalities and Diversity

9.1 The public sector equality duty at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 has been considered in relation to the preparation of the business case and the drafting of this report, and it is noted that:

having due regard to the need to:

advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,

involved giving due regard to the need to:

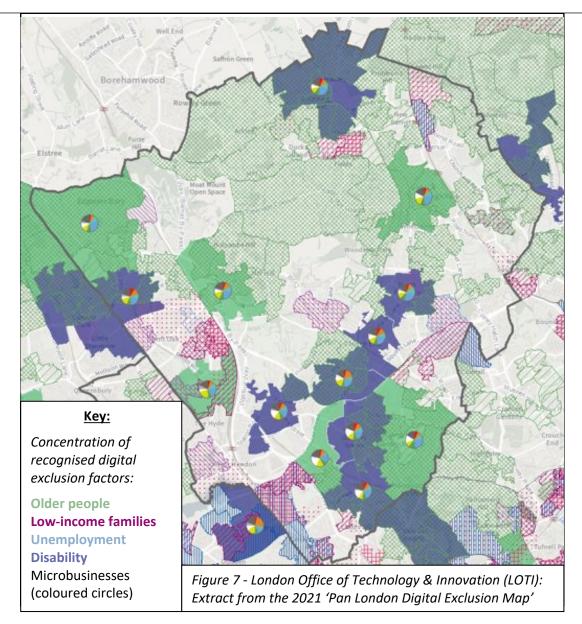
Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic,

in relation to the Connected Places agenda this mainly relates to 'digital exclusion'.

9.2 It is the view of officers that digital exclusion is closely linked to the protected characteristics of *age* and *disability*, as well as all other protected characteristics. There may also be a link to the more financially vulnerable households in the borough, especially where this financial vulnerability is linked to a higher incidence

of either low household income and/or unemployment, which tends in practice to be most correlated and therefore concentrated in areas of social housing. It will be important to explore whether digital exclusion is more closely correlated with other protected characteristics such as the incidence of pregnancy and maternity, as well as race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment in the context in which these specific protected characteristics are more disproportionately reflected within social housing. It would be beneficial to consider such alignments as part of preparation for the OBC stage. At this stage an updated EQIA will be put before Cabinet for consideration.

- 9.3 In relation to the business community digital exclusion tends to correlate with types of microbusinesses that are not currently reliant/dependent on day-to-day use of technology, such as food and beverage retailers, but where such businesses risk being left behind by economic and technological shifts within their industry. Digital exclusion for businesses tends to most closely link to educational attainment, with language limitations and the level of exposure to technology from a young age factor that are most closely aligned. Therefore, digital inclusion for businesses correlates less with any specific protected characteristic, and more with the skills and experience of the business owner and/or employees.
- 9.4 Figure 7 highlights the council's understanding of the geographical prevalence across the borough associated with recognised factors linked to Digital Exclusion.



- 9.5 The detail of the savings projects and imagery-based analytics opportunities will be defined at Outline Business Case (OBC). At this stage an EQIA will be required to assess the potential implications for residents of a protected characteristic in relation to the relevant planned network investments and the savings use cases. It is likely there will be a positive outcome in all cases; but it will be important to properly assess this to ensure the savings opportunities do deliver transformation and improvement without an identifiable negative impact for residents.
- 9.6 Recognising the risks in relation to sustaining equality of opportunity and avoiding the risks of bias emerging in relation to the sharing and use of existing and newly emerging sources of data, this report has set out the intention to ensure there is careful consideration of data ethics and appropriate systems for oversight to ensure the council acts appropriately in the context of new opportunities to share and analyse data from multiple sources.
- 9.7 It is relevant to note here that consideration of the CCTV Full Business Case by Community Leadership and Libraries Committee in February 2023 noted that:
 - "the camera estate will see modernisation through new equipment and technological innovation, such as the use of computer imagery, all new publicly

- beneficial use cases will be appropriately assessed for their impacts and related data capture and other council policies will be appropriately updated and communicated. Through membership of the London Office for Technology and Innovation, the council has access to a data ethics service, which will provide advice and support for decision-making."
- 9.8 Acknowledgement of the potential benefits and risks from technological innovation around computer imagery, as well as other sources of data, has informed the recommendation in this report to consult with partners and residents in relation to a new data ethics framework.

EQIA assessment for a Public Wi-Fi network

- 9.9 The proposed Public Wi-Fi network across town centres, parks and more widely around the borough in the vicinity of CCTV columns, will provide a new, free, means of accessing the internet and accessing digitally oriented public and commercial services. Data from Barnet's libraries indicates a sustained level of demand for the use of public computers and especially free internet access, despite the currently low bandwidths available in most libraries.
- 9.10 The expected outcome of current projects within the Gigabit Broadband Programme includes upgrading the library broadband lines to improve service and Wi-Fi bandwidth, and therefore could provide significant benefit to people who depend on this service.
- 9.11 The Connected Places programme envisages taking such improvements two steps further by firstly creating the opportunity for outdoor free Wi-Fi across destination locations such as town centres, but furthermore by delivering seamless interoperability between outdoor and indoor public Wi-Fi. Such interoperability would open up a more seamless experience of connecting with the council and benefitting from access to online services.
- 9.12 The use of splash screens when entering the proposed Public Wi-Fi network will create new, more accessible and interactive ways of securing direct citizen engagement with a localised dimension. This could for example allow for simple interactive single question surveys to be asked or campaigns banners to be flashed up on entry. Such opportunities will hopefully encourage some people with a relevant protected characteristic that are currently more limited in their ability or willingness to participate in public life, to be able to explore a greater level of engagement.
- 9.13 It will be important to consider how the needs of disabled persons may be different from the needs of people who are not disabled including any measures that are required to take account of the relevant disabilities that might otherwise present a barrier to accessing this benefit. Like particular considerations for older residents may well need to be designed-in to the way that sign-up and promotional/engagement messaging appears within the proposed Public Wi-Fi service.
- 9.14 Overall, it is recognised that the proposed Public Wi-Fi network has considered the equalities duty and given due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and that in particular the proposed network will actively help contribute towards tackling inequalities and also will help to promote a shared sense of community. Further work on opportunities to directly benefit older residents and

those with disabilities will be required in preparation for the Outline Business Case stage and an updated EQIA will accompany this report to Cabinet.

10. Background Papers

10.1 London Borough of Barnet, Housing and Growth Committee - 14 September 2020 - Item 10: Enabling Investment in Digital Infrastructure

Agenda and Minutes for Enabling Digital Infrastructure.

10.2 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 11th December 2020. Enabling Investment in Digital Infrastructure – Approval of Wayleave Framework Agreement

Wayleave Framework Template Agreement

10.3 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 18 January 2021 – Enabling Digital Infrastructure – Wayleave Framework Agreement with Community Fibre Limited.

Wayleave Framework Agreement with Community Fibre Ltd

NB/ There have been many subsequent, multi-property, wayleave decisions granted in relation to the above framework agreement with Community Fibre Ltd.

10.4 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 29 June 2021 – Enabling Digital Infrastructure – Wayleave Framework Agreement with Hyperoptic Limited.

Wayleave Framework Agreement with Hyperoptic Ltd

10.5 London Borough of Ealing, Cabinet – 22 September 2021 – *Item 20: West London Alliance SIP 1 High Speed Fibre Funding and Delivery*

West London Alliance SIP 1 High Speed Fibre Funding and Delivery.

10.6 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 28 January 2022 - Approval of sites for connection to Fibre Broadband using grant funding Approval of sites for connection to Fibre Broadband using grant funding

10.7 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director of Growth – 29 April 2022 – Work with West London Alliance to implement the Fibre West and Outcomes Accelerator Projects

WLA Collaboration Agreements Fibre West and DCIA.

10.8 London Borough of Barnet, Community Leadership and Libraries Committee - 20 June 2022, *Decision Item 11: CCTV Programme – Revised Outline Business Case & Update on the Strategic Review.*

Agenda and Minutes for CLL Committee on 20th June 2022

10.9 London Borough of Barnet, Policy and Resources Committee - 19 July 2022, Decision Item 9: Revised Budget 2022/23 and Business Planning 2023-2027

Agenda and Minutes for P&R Committee on Tuesday 19th July 2022

10.10 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers Report: Executive Director for Assurance – 16 December 2022 - CCTV Fibre Network and Services

Decision - CCTV Fibre Network and Services

10.11 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers Report: Executive Director for Assurance – 20 December 2022. Replacement and upgrade of CCTV cameras & maintenance contract

Decision - Replacement and upgrade of CCTV cameras & maintenance contract

10.12 London Borough of Barnet, Community Leadership and Libraries Committee – 7th February 2023. *Decision Item 12: CCTV Full Business Case*

Agenda for CLL Committee on Tuesday 7th February 2023