

**NOTE of SUPERFAST BROADBAND WORKSHOP held in the TIMBER PIER
BUILDING, DUNOON on THURSDAY 27 OCTOBER 2016**

Present: Lorna Elliott, Community Governance Manager
Stuart Robertson, HIE
Campbell Cameron, Community Broadband Scotland
Robert Thorburn, BT
Iain MacInnes, Digital Liaison Officer
Willie Lynch, Dunoon Community Council
Les Earle, Strachur Community Council
Councillor Bruce Marshall
Councillor Alex McNaughton
Samantha Stubbs, Argyll and Bute TSI
David McKenzie, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
Sue McKillop, Sandbank Community Council
Marion Norris, Ardentinn Community Council

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Willie Lynch Chair of the Bute and Cowal Community Planning Group welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were done.

2. PURPOSE OF WORKSHOP

To discuss in more depth the issues raised at the Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Group meeting held on the 9th August 2016 in relation to the superfast broadband rollout update and current issues that the local communities within the Cowal and Bute area are experiencing during the rollout process

3. SHORT UPDATE ON RECENT ACTIVITY

(a) HIE

Stuart Robertson provided the Group with a summary of Highland and Islands Enterprise involvement with the rollout of superfast broadband, informing the Group that HIE have a contract with BT for twelve million pounds of tax payer's money to be used to finance the implementation of superfast broadband. It is expected that 83% of premises in the Highlands and Islands region will be covered in the original contract.

(b) BT

Robert Thorburn provided the Group with a background report which covered work to date, preparatory works that have been put in place, examples of harder to reach areas and how these challenges have been overcome as well as a technical breakdown which included the kit being used and potential wireless capabilities. He informed the Group that the percentage of premises being included in the initial rollout and timeframes are on par with other local

authorities and that to date thirty six exchanges were live in the Argyll and Bute Area.

(c) Community Broadband Scotland

Campbell Cameron informed the Group that Community Broadband Scotland was set up by the Scottish Government in order to try and facilitate superfast broadband areas that were not included in the initial scheme being rolled out by HIE.

It was noted that a further 9.5 million in funding has been identified and will be aimed at the rural areas.

Community Broadband Scotland are currently involved in four projects; Giga plus, Kyles project, Loch Awe project and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park project.

4. GENERAL DISCUSSION ON POINTS RAISED BY CPG PARTNERS

A discussion was held and the following points were noted:

- Issues surrounding the implementation of superfast broadband and cabinet installation to cover the Kilmun to Ardentinny area which included missed timeframes, incorrect location of one of the cabinets and the lack of public awareness that superfast broadband was now available in the area and how customers access it.
- Anyone wishing further information on the availability of Superfast Broadband in their area should go to the Digital Scotland website.
- Community Governance Manger raised several points on behalf of the local Social Work office which included; looking more at smart technology for community workers, assistive technology to support service users and the poor speed of the wireless connectivity in the west of Cowal. It was explained to the Group that the issues raised were not the direct remit of those attending the meeting and that at present EE hold the emergency services contract and it was thought that they are looking to rollout 4G between now and the end of 2017 which will be for consumer use as well as the emergency services.

5. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Stuart Robertson informed the Group that the Scottish Government have made a commitment to produce more funding until 2021, the following was noted:

- Stage one – Conducting an open market review which will produce a picture from the industrial sector as to where to best place commercial funding. The feedback from the survey will be done at postcode level to help identify areas with service gaps.
- Areas not covered by BT cabinets will be identified to ascertain if there is a sufficient need for a service.
- Cabinet based rollout will hopefully be able to go further but won't have 100% coverage so other ways should be looked at such as bringing mobile and fibre broadband together and also individuals can look at purchasing satellite broadband, there is currently a scheme available from the Scottish Government that can provide a £350 voucher towards the cost of satellite broadband.

Actions

1. Robert Thorburn to liaise with Sandbank Community Council re lack of fibre availability to some premises in Sandbank.

2. All queries on the implementation of Fibre Broadband should be directed through Iain MacInnes, Graduate Digital Liaison Officer.
3. Robert Thorburn to circulate the link for the postcode checker to the Group.
4. The Group requested that BT and HIE look at the communication issues raised during the meeting .
5. A list of live cabinets to be circulated to the Group.
6. Robert Thorburn to send a link containing further information to the Group.
7. Robert Thorburn to update Councillor Marshall on the current position of the Clachaig area.